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Dogs follow U.S. Army Soldiers as they patrol through a village near Combat Outpost Herrera, Paktya province, Afghanistan, 13 October 2009. (U.S. Army, SSG Andrew Smith)

Military Review

Conscription, the Republic, and America's Future p15

Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D.

Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division's Role p35

Brigadier General Alan Batschelet, U.S. Army;
Lieutenant Colonel Mike Runey, U.S. Army; and
Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Meyer Jr., U.S. Army

Russia's Military Performance in Georgia p57

Tor Bukkvoll, Ph.D.

Competency vs. Character? It Must Be Both! p69

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Doty, U.S. Army, Ph.D.,
and Major Walter Sowden, U.S. Army

FEATURE: Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template p2

Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason





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FEATURED ARTICLES

2 Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template

Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason

America lost in Vietnam because of a failure to establish legitimacy and the inability to protect the people from insurgents. The same failures loom now in Afghanistan.

15 Conscription, the Republic, and America's Future

Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D.

The United States needs to expand the size of the Army and Marine Corps by reinstating the draft.

25 Transformation and the Irregular Gap

Major Kenneth J. Burgess, U.S. Army

Modernizing our Army for irregular conflicts in the 21st century will require profound changes in personnel, equipment, and unit structure.

35 Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division's Role

*Brigadier General Alan Batschelet, U.S. Army; Lieutenant Colonel Mike Runey, U.S. Army; and
Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Meyer Jr., U.S. Army*

In an era of persistent conflict and evolving doctrine, the Army must aggressively address organization, functions, and roles of the division headquarters.

43 MiTT Advisor: A Year with the Best Division in the Iraqi Army

Colonel Timothy Deady, U.S. Army Reserve, Retired

The 8th Iraqi Army Division may well become the first division-size force in Iraq to no longer require U.S. advisors.

57 Russia's Military Performance in Georgia

Tor Bukkvoll, Ph.D., Norway

Russian operations in Georgia demonstrated that a large force of organized, trained, and equipped troops could defeat a small force partially equipped by the U.S.

63 Revolutionary Management: The Role of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias* in the Cuban Economy

Terry L. Maris, Ph.D.

A thorough examination of Cuban history reveals an *evolution* of the revolution.

69 Competency vs. Character? It Must Be Both!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Doty, U.S. Army, Ph.D., and Major Walt Sowden, U.S. Army

The Army should abolish stand-alone ethical or character development training and embed it into all its training and education experiences.

77 Developing Creative and Critical Thinkers

Colonel Charles D. Allen, U.S. Army, Retired, and Colonel Stephen J. Gerras, Ph.D., U.S. Army, Retired

Two key elements of strategic thinking are creative and critical thinking. The Army must educate its leaders in these skills.

84 Empathy: A True Leader Skill

Lieutenant Colonel Harry C. Garner, U.S. Army, Retired

The leader who harnesses the power of empathy fosters better communication, tighter cohesion, stronger discipline, and greater morale.

93 Emotional Intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements Model

Lieutenant Colonel Gerald F. Sewell, U.S. Army, Retired

If Army leaders study and apply emotional intelligence, they will be more effective and successful in building strong organizations and teams.

99 The Mentorship Dilemma Continues

Major Edward Cox, U.S. Army

The "Army Mentorship Strategy" is detrimental to Army values and does not result in increased effectiveness.

Cover Photo: George Catlett Marshall by John Edward Bannon, oil on canvas, 1974. (courtesy of the Center for Military History)



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104 Getting Off the Treadmill of Time

Colonel Chris Robertson, U.S. Army, and Lieutenant Colonel Sophie Gainey, U.S. Army

The services should seek congressional support to move from a time-based promotion system to implement a system that ties eligibility to competency development.

109 "Below-the-Zone" and Command Selection

Major Vylius M. Leskys, U.S. Army

A former secretariat for Department of the Army Selection Boards asserts that the promotion and command selection board process facilitates the selection of the best officers to meet the Army's future requirements.

INSIGHTS

112 Army Chaplains: Leading from the Middle

Chaplain (Colonel) F. Eric Wester, U.S. Army

Chaplains work "in the middle" to support an ethical Army.

116 BOOK REVIEWS CONTEMPORARY READINGS FOR THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL

129 INDEX

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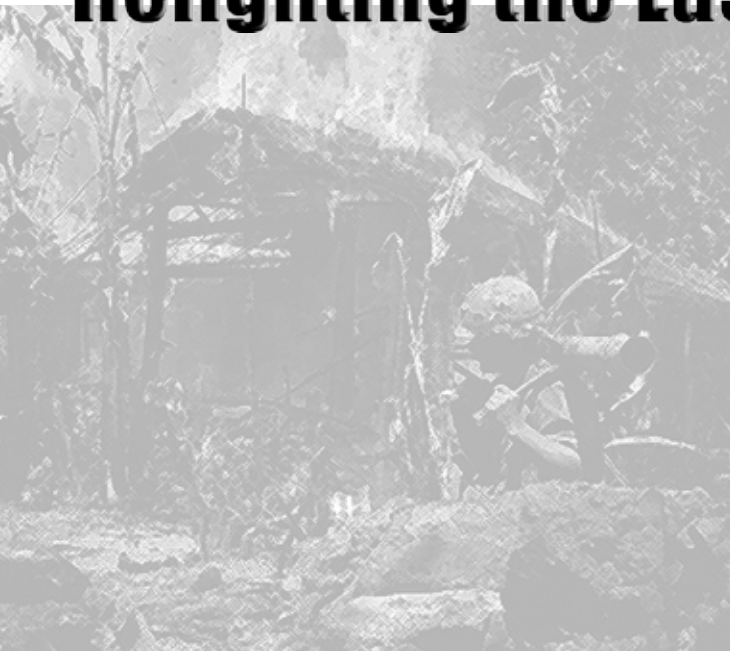
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Refighting the Last War



Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template

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PHOTOS: My Tho, Vietnam, 5 April 1968. (NARA)

A Soldier covers an injured comrade as a helicopter lands to evacuate the wounded after their armored vehicle hit an improvised explosive device in the Tangi Valley of Afghanistan's Wardak Province, 19 August 2009. (AP Photo, David Goldman)

IT IS AN oft-cited maxim that in all the conflicts of the past century, the United States has refought its last war. A number of analysts and journalists have mentioned the war in Vietnam recently in connection with Afghanistan.¹ Perhaps fearful of taking this analogy too far, most have backed away from it. They should not—the Vietnam War is less a metaphor for the conflict in Afghanistan than it is a template. For eight years, the United States has engaged in an almost exact political and military reenactment of the Vietnam War, and the lack of self-awareness of the repetition of events 50 years ago is deeply disturbing.

The Obama Administration deliberately took ownership of the Afghanistan war in its first days in office by sending more troops and ordering multiple strategic reviews. In October, as this article is being written, the Obama Administration is engaged in a very public strategic review following both a grim assessment from the President's hand-picked theatre commander, General Stanley McChrystal, and an embarrassing election fiasco in Afghanistan. President Obama certainly knows, as Presidents Johnson and Nixon did in similar circumstances, that the choice of alternatives now is between bad and worse. There is general agreement today, as indeed there was before the Diem Coup in 1963, that the war is going badly. Attacks of all types in Afghanistan have increased each year since 2003 and are up dramatically in 2009, the deadliest year yet for American forces. The Kabul government is so corrupt, dysfunctional, and incompetent that even its election rigging is buffoonish. The U.S. troop commitment has escalated steadily, a pattern familiar from the Vietnam War, and now the President must contemplate a request for another 40,000 U.S. troops or, in the words of General McChrystal's classified assessment leaked to the



U.S. Army

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter lifts off a slingload of ammunition from fire support base Myron in Cambodia, 24 June 1970.

Washington Post, face “mission failure.”² Whatever the outcomes of the President’s decision and the current Afghan election in the next few weeks, however, they will not affect the extraordinary similarity of the two conflicts.

The superficial parallels between the Afghanistan and Vietnam conflicts are eerie enough. Both insurgencies were and are rurally based. In both cases, 80 percent of the population was and is rural, with national literacy hovering around 10 percent. Both insurgencies were and are ethnically cohesive and exclusive. In both cases, the insurgents enjoyed safe sanctuary behind a long, rugged and uncrossable border, which conventional U.S. forces could not and cannot cross, where the enemy had and has uncontested political power. Both countries were wracked by decades of European imperial aggression (France, the Soviet Union), both improbably won their David-versus-Goliath wars against the invaders, and both experienced a decade of North-South civil war afterwards: all producing generations of experienced and highly skilled fighters and combat commanders.

Both countries have spectacularly inhospitable and impassable terrain and few roads, limiting the value of U.S. superiority in motor vehicles and making tanks irrelevant and artillery immobile. Such terrain forces a reliance on airpower for fire support and helicopters for personnel movement and resupply. Both wars are on the Asian landmass, thousands of miles from the United States, which requires super-attenuated logistics lines, although in Afghanistan, unlike Vietnam, where the U.S. Navy performed extremely well, there is of course no

Cam Rahn Bay, no Mekong Delta, and no coastline, largely limiting the huge advantage of U.S. naval power to SEALs and Seabees.

As in most rural peasant insurgencies, in both cases, poorly equipped guerrillas lived and hid among the people. Neither the Viet Cong (VC) nor the Taliban were or are popular. Support for either to be the national rulers was and is below 15 percent.³ In both wars the enemy deeply infiltrated our bases, and forced interpreters to inform them of our every move and word.⁴ In both countries, heavy-handed and culturally offensive U.S. troop behavior and indiscriminate use of fire support turned rural villages into enemy recruiting centers. North Vietnam received money, weapons and support from the Soviet Union; the Taliban receives it from the Pakistani Army (the ISI) and wealthy Saudis. In June 2009, the U.S. Army even reinstated the “body count” as a metric of success.⁵ (General McChrystal revoked this on taking command, but the mentality remains.)

Those are just a few of the surface symmetries. The real parallels are far more profound. There are differences, to be sure, but most, if examined, are more atmospheric than structural. And unfortunately, most are distinct *disadvantages* for the United States. Afghanistan is a patchwork of ethnic groups, unlike Vietnam, with almost no national sense of identity or nationalism. In Vietnam, the United States had complete control over the prosecution of the war; in Afghanistan, the “war by coalition” is hampered by fractured internal lines of authority and national caveats and rules of engagement that undermine unity of command. In Vietnam, the enemy was monolithic; the insurgency in Afghanistan is a complex network of networks, and that is bad news.⁶ Afghanistan is not one insurgency but several connected ones, and generalizations about U.S. enemies in Afghanistan are misleading and often counterproductive.

It is here, in the *nature* of the enemy, that the similarities begin to become far more troubling, not in their motivations, which are clearly different, but in our persistent institutional *misreading* of their motivations. In Vietnam, an intense and pervasive narrative of nationalism and reunification motivated the enemy, but the United States obtusely insisted on casting the war as a fight against the spread of communism. However, the North Vietnamese Army

(NVA) and the Viet Cong (VC) were not fighting for communism. They were fighting for Vietnam. *We were fighting against communism, but the enemy wasn't fighting for it.* Similarly, in Afghanistan, the enemy has created a pervasive national discourse, in this case of religious *jihad*. Senior U.S. and NATO officials, however, continue to misread the fundamental narrative of the enemy they are fighting, determined in this case to wage a *secular* campaign against an enemy who is fighting a religious war. The motivations of many individual foot soldiers are baser, of course, ranging from revenge to criminal to simply mercenary, but that is irrelevant. The enemy has succeeded in establishing *jihad* as their pervasive, overarching narrative. Consistently over time and space, all of their remarkably sophisticated information operations uniformly hammer home this religious message of *jihad*. Virtually all Taliban leaders, from senior military and political leaders down to sub-commanders at the district level, are *mullahs*.⁷ The implications of this have not yet sunk in. We are fighting a counterinsurgency; the enemy is fighting a *jihad*. But the intersection of how insurgencies end and how *jihads* end is historically nil, and talk of “negotiating with the Taliban” to find a political solution, as if the Taliban were some sort of unified secular political organization, is profoundly naive. You cannot negotiate with God’s divine will, and in Afghanistan you only seek negotiations when you’re losing in order to get better surrender terms. By misunderstanding the basic nature of the enemy, the United States is fighting the wrong war again, just as we did in Vietnam. It is hard to defeat an enemy you do not understand.

This problem would be fixable if the U.S. political and military apparatus could examine the enemy outside of the pervasively secular discourse created by the dominant U.S. intelligence agencies and without fear of being seen as waging a “war on Islam.” This shift in thinking is difficult, but possible. However, the two really profound similarities between the two wars are virtually *unfixable*. The

...the intersection of how insurgencies end and how jihads end is historically nil...

first of these is the political problem of *legitimacy*. Indeed, the greatest challenge from North Vietnam then, and the Taliban today, is not combat power but legitimacy.⁸

The *Sine Qua Non* of Counterinsurgency: Legitimacy

“Legitimacy” is a word that is being bandied about a lot recently in Washington. After eight years, pundits, talking heads, and government officials alike have suddenly discovered the “legitimacy of governance issue.” Unfortunately, none of them seems to understand the real one. The issue is not the moral meltdown of President Hamid Karzai over the last six months, nor his presiding over an absurdly (and unnecessarily) rigged election, nor that he is seen as illegitimate afterward by the majority of Afghans. The real issue is that President Karzai was seen as illegitimate *before* the election. The political disaster in August, which the deputy head of UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Peter Galbraith, called a “train wreck,” merely shifted Afghan public perception of Karzai from contempt to scorn. Afghans are famously polite; western opinion polls show only what Afghans think the questioner wants to hear, as their culture demands, not what they actually think.

Why does this matter to the military? Because experts largely agree that a government seen as legitimate by 85 to 90 percent of the population is the *sine qua non* of success against an insurgency. As Kalev Sepp demonstrated statistically, if you don’t have it, you lose.⁹ (This should not be conflated with popularity: having legitimacy to rule is quite distinct from being popular.) Hamid Karzai is now well below 50 percent, and probably closer to 30 percent.

Insurrections are hardly new phenomena in Afghanistan.¹⁰ Previous Afghan leaders have had varying degrees of success in subduing rural religious insurrection. The degree of that success depended on how much of the population viewed the regime as *legitimate* and how much it stayed out of the daily lives of the people. And Afghan history demonstrates conclusively that legitimacy of governance comes exclusively from two immutable sources: *dynastic* (monarchies and tribal patriarchies) and *religious*, or sometimes both.¹¹ These equate to the traditional and religious sources cited by noted sociologist Max Weber.¹²

Unfortunately, the Karzai government owes its only claim to legitimacy to Weber's third source, the legal one (e.g., western-style elections and the rule of law). This has no historical precedent as a basis for legitimizing Afghan rule at all, however, and the notion that the West can apply it to Afghan society like a coat of paint is simply wishful thinking. In essence, the Karzai government is illegitimate *because* it is elected.¹³

An American cannot declare himself king and expect Americans to see him as legitimate: monarchy is not a source of legitimacy of governance in America. Similarly, a man cannot be voted president in Afghanistan and expect Afghans to perceive him as legitimate: democracy is not a source of legitimacy in Afghanistan. And any illusions a minority of Afghans might have had about the workings of democracy since 2001 have been thoroughly dispelled by a dysfunctional parliament and the August election debacle. Elections don't make democracies; democracies make elections.

This problem of illegitimacy is especially acute at the village level of rural Pashtun society, where dynastic and religious authority has been unquestioned for over a thousand years.¹⁴ The widespread perception among Afghans that the Karzai government is illegitimate—*because* it lacks any traditional or religious legitimacy—predates Karzai's August disgrace by five years.

The revisionist camp of Vietnam historians has made the argument that by 1972, U.S. military forces in the field in South Vietnam had succeeded in temporarily halting the North Vietnamese effort to reunite the country by force, despite the huge handicaps imposed on the military by the political parameters of a limited war.¹⁵ This perspective is true in a narrow sense. But as North Vietnamese Colonel Tu famously said to Colonel Harry Summers in Hanoi in 1972, it is also irrelevant. All the military effort was tragically for naught, because politically, in Saigon, there was no *there* there. The completely illegitimate national government never

had the support of the rural population. (It is also sobering to recall that this temporary stalemate was achieved by up to 535,000 U.S. troops—about eight times the number in Afghanistan by the end of 2009, in a country which would fit inside Afghanistan four times with room for a few mountain ranges left over, at a cost of 58,159 American and as many as four million Vietnamese lives.)¹⁶

Eric Bergerud, one of the Vietnam War's best historians, has written that—

The Government of Vietnam (GVN) lacked legitimacy with the rural peasantry, the largest segment of the population...The peasantry perceived the GVN to be aloof, corrupt, and inefficient...South Vietnam's urban elite possessed the outward manifestations of a foreign culture...more importantly, this small group held most of the wealth and power in a poor nation, and the attitude of the ruling elite toward the rural population was, at best, paternalistic and, at worst, predatory.¹⁷

As Jeffrey Record further notes, "the fundamental political obstacle to an enduring American success in Vietnam [was] a politically illegitimate, militarily feckless, and thoroughly corrupted South Vietnamese client regime."¹⁸ Substitute the word "Afghanistan" for the words "South Vietnam" in these quotations and the descriptions apply precisely to today's government in Kabul. Like Afghanistan, South Vietnam at the national level was a massively corrupt collection of self-interested warlords, many of them deeply implicated in the profitable opium trade, with almost nonexistent legitimacy outside the capital city. The purely military gains achieved at such terrible cost in our nation's blood and treasure in Vietnam never came close to exhausting the enemy's manpower pool or his will to fight, and simply could not be sustained politically by a venal and incompetent set of dysfunctional state institutions where self-interest was the order of the day. This is the first of the two deeply profound replications of the Vietnam War in Afghanistan, and one which the U.S. military should consider carefully before putting its full weight behind further escalation.

Nor was Nixon's "Vietnamization" of that conflict or "Afghanization" of this one ever a viable option. As the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1954, "Strong

...the Karzai government is illegitimate because it is elected.

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and stable governments and societies are necessary to support the creation of strong armies.¹⁹ Vietnam, like Afghanistan, lacked both. In both cases, a politically appointed and promoted officer corps—more motivated by profit or loyalties to patrons than by patriotism—hobbled and hobbles the army.²⁰ The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), like the Afghan National Army (ANA), was wracked by a high annual attrition rate, which the U.S. Army obscured in both wars by providing misleading statistics referring purely to the numbers of basic recruits trained. The Pentagon continues to put out the (true but irrelevant) figure of 90,000 ANA soldiers “trained and equipped” since May 2002, not mentioning that perhaps 32,000 combat troops remain present for duty today.²¹ Like the ARVN, ANA recruit quality is poor, virtually all are illiterate, readiness is low even by the lenient standards imposed by pressure to show progress, and drug use is a large and growing problem. Behind the smoke and mirrors, the “official” annual desertion rate is down from a high in 2005 of 30 percent to “only” 10 percent, but the AWOL definition hides a lot of the desertion. Reenlistment is below 50 percent, so with five-year contracts, another 12 percent of the force quits every year. With casualties, sickness, etc., 25 percent of the ANA evaporates annually. The Army knows the ANA cannot ever grow larger than 100,000 men, double its present size, because before then annual accession will equal annual losses.²² Projections of a 134,000-man force by 2010 or a 240,000-man ANA in the future are absurd. Another sad parallel is the fact that in both wars, the U.S. military advisory effort was the absolute lowest priority for personnel assignment within the U.S. Army. Since May 2002, the fill-rate for ANA embedded trainers has averaged around 50 percent of identified billets, and most of them have been pulled from noncombat specialties (like medical or logistics) to undergo remedial combat skills training at Fort Riley themselves before being sent to teach combat skills to the ANA. Most

importantly, the ANA and the ARVN both became psychologically crippled by years of watching from the back seat as the Americans took charge of the war, and neither army learned to operate on its own or ever developed the ability to supply itself or hold the gains U.S. troops achieved. The U.S. Army likes to trumpet operations where the ANA “took the lead,” again neglecting to mention that virtually all of these are in the combat-light northern areas, and almost none of them in the combat-intensive south.

In short, absent the highly improbable self-transformation of the Afghan government into a competent, legitimate, and relatively uncorrupt institution in much less time than the South Vietnamese government had and failed to achieve the same feat, identical conditions for political and indigenous army failure will exist in Afghanistan *regardless* of any foreign military success. History also shows decisively that governments sustained on the points of foreign bayonets in Kabul do not long outlive their departures.

The Critical Difference

There is, however, one critical positive difference between Afghanistan and Vietnam—one which might salvage the war if decision makers grasp it. As we have argued, the central task is establishing legitimacy of governance to deny political control to the Taliban. In Afghanistan, as in South Vietnam, at the national level, this is simply impossible in the time available. It is beyond our power to change an entire society. However, in Afghanistan, this critical legitimacy does not have to be national; it can be local. Governance in the rural areas of Afghanistan has historically been decentralized and tribal, and stability has come from a complex, interlocking web of tribal networks.²³ If Western leaders can think outside the box created by the Treaty of Westphalia and embrace non-Western forms of legitimacy, they could possibly reverse the descending trajectory of the war. Instead of focusing energy and resources on building a sand castle at the water's edge, as we did repeatedly in Saigon after each new coup, we have argued for years that we should focus on rebuilding the traditional local legitimacy of governance in the existing networks of tribal leaders.²⁴ A culturally adept policy would seek to reestablish stability in rural Afghanistan by putting it back the way it was before the Soviets invaded in 1979. This means re-empowering the

U.S. Marine Corps. SGT Freddy G. Cantu



Village elders running for city council hold up numbers as locals cast votes during an election in the Helmand province of Afghanistan. Such elections set up highly counterproductive and destabilizing parallel governance bodies which further erode and undermine the authority and power of the local elders. The real winner of these elections is the Taliban.

village elders as contrasted with the current policy of trying to further marginalize them with local elections (and thus more local illegitimacy). Recent research has demonstrated conclusively that the Community Development Councils set up by the United Nations and the U.S. Agency for International Development in parallel to the tribal system increase instability and conflict, rather than reducing it.²⁵ Reestablishing *local* legitimacy of governance is, in fact, the one remaining chance to pull something resembling our security goals in Afghanistan out of the fatally flawed Bonn Process and the yawning jaws of defeat. The tragedy of Vietnam was that there were no political solutions. The tragedy of Afghanistan is that there is a political solution, but we keep ignoring it in favor of trying to force them to be like us.

The Crossing Axis: Strategic Military Failure

If the parallels stopped there, the analysis would be grim enough. But in Afghanistan, exactly as

The tragedy of Afghanistan is that there is a political solution, but we keep ignoring it...

in Vietnam, the political problem of illegitimacy makes a fatal nexus with the military institutional culture of Big Army, and the result is incoherence. And that is the second of the two deeply disturbing structural parallels between the two conflicts.

Since 2002, the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan—at all levels—has been based on an implied strategy of attrition via clearing operations virtually identical to those pursued in Vietnam. In Vietnam, they were dubbed “search and destroy missions;” in Afghanistan they are called “clearing operations” and “compound searches,” but the purpose is the same—to find easily replaced weapons or clear a tiny, arbitrarily chosen patch of worthless ground for a short period, and then turn it over to indigenous security

forces who can’t hold it, and then go do it again somewhere else. The great majority of our most precious resource in Afghanistan, the soldier-hour, has been wasted in this way since January 2002. Not surprisingly, with a troop-per-square mile ratio by the end of this year which will reach 1/32nd of that in Vietnam, it is not working in Afghanistan either. In Afghanistan, as in Vietnam, the enemy’s manpower pool for troops and tactical leaders is *not* his Achilles heel, because, as in Vietnam, the enemy can replace casualties at a far higher rate than we can ever inflict them. For eight years in Afghanistan we have fought *exactly* the way the enemy expected and hoped we would. The Taliban have read Vietnam history, too. (In both wars the Army has badly underestimated the enemy’s intelligence, another tragic parallel.)

As Russell Weigley brilliantly documented, war of attrition is the American Way of War.²⁶ As in Vietnam, a war of attrition in Afghanistan is doomed to failure. General McChrystal is the first American commander since the war began to understand that protecting the people, not chasing illiterate teenage boys with guns around the countryside, is the basic principle of counterinsurgency. Yet four months into his command, little seems to have changed, except for an eight-year overdue order to stop answering the enemy’s prayers by blowing up compounds

For eight years...we have fought exactly the way the enemy expected and hoped we would.

with air strikes to martyr more of the teenage boys. (Which the Germans in Konduz ignored to blow up two tanker trucks recently and killed another 40 or 50 civilians.) War of attrition is still the default position. Watching the war in Afghanistan unfold is still painfully reminiscent of watching the nightly Vietnam War newscasts with their daily reminders of the same “strategy of tactics.” Few old enough to remember the Vietnam War on TV could have watched the footage of Operation Kanjar showing the Vietnam era CH-47 helicopters clattering into Helmand Province with 4,000 Marines aboard in July 2009 to carry out yet another clearing mission without experiencing a sense of déjà vu. Yes, the Marines say this time they are staying to protect the people, but for how many years? Five? Ten?

Senior officers today often repeat the catechisms that “there is no military solution,” and that we cannot “kill or capture” our way to victory in

Afghanistan. Some officers say the Army has gotten better at counterinsurgency in the last five years. Perhaps so, but there’s little evidence coming out of Afghanistan to prove it. Big Army talks the talk of counterinsurgency but still walks the walk of attrition. Last year, for example, an Army Special Forces officer returning from a year of duty in southern Afghanistan told us that although he had pacified his district by building a relationship of trust with the elders, and had the lowest number of IED attacks and ambushes in his province for the past six months, he was rated the lowest of all the officers in his unit for promotion because he had the fewest number of “kills” during his tour of duty. If the U.S. Army’s own counterinsurgency branch promotes on the basis of attrition, it is a safe bet that the 82nd Airborne is not spending the majority of its pre-deployment training period learning to speak Pashto, sip tea properly, and understand *Pashtunwali*. In a revenge-based culture, we’re still kicking in doors, violating Pashtun honor codes by searching compounds and women, and blowing up civilians just as we have been since 2002. To paraphrase John Paul Vann, we haven’t been in Afghanistan for eight years, we’ve been in Afghanistan for one year eight times.²⁷ The Army’s embedded DNA code to “find, fix, and finish the enemy,” the article of faith



NARA

A Marine from 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, moves a Viet Cong suspect to the rear during a search and clear operation held by the battalion 15 miles west of Da Nang Air Base, 1965.



U.S. Marine Corps, LCPL Phillip Elgie

A U.S. Marine Corps sergeant clears a compound during a patrol in Nawa district, Helmand province, Afghanistan, 29 August 2009.

for General Westmoreland in Vietnam (famously called “the Concept”) was, if anything, *reinforced* by the Vietnam experience.²⁸ As in Vietnam, the U.S. Army in Afghanistan is still subconsciously determined to fight the kind of war of maneuver it likes to fight, rather than adapt its tactics to the kind of war it is actually in.

Less than five percent of U.S. forces in Afghanistan today have reconstruction (called “Pacification” in the Vietnam War) as their primary mission, another statistic photocopied from Vietnam. The percentage of personnel assigned to provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) or supporting them is almost exactly the same as the percentage assigned to village pacification efforts like the bungled Operation Sunrise and the Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program in Vietnam. And as in Vietnam, civil affairs missions are the lowest priority for assets like force protection and MRAPs. Since many of the U.S. PRTs in the south were dismembered and rolled together with maneuver forces in 2005, restrictive force protection rules of engagement have meant there have always been enough assets for another compound search, but rarely enough for the “low-priority” inspection of a school construction project in another district. This suggests a military culture long on theory, short on practical execution, and largely amnesiac of its own history.

Ironically, General McChrystal’s new strategy in Afghanistan of pulling out of rural areas to protect the bigger population centers is exactly the one the enemy would choose for us if he could. Afghans living in the larger towns are mostly merchants and small businessmen, and they are the very last citizens, besides the Hazaras, who want to see the Taliban come back into power. The Taliban know the urban garrisons will fall one by one like ripe apples once they control the rural areas and surround them, as they did when they first came to power in 1996. It is the rural people you have to protect most in a rural insurgency, not the townspeople. The Soviets learned this the hard way in Afghanistan from 1979-1989, when they too held all the populations centers and none of the countryside, and were soundly beaten. As Marshal Akhromeyev remarked in 1986, “We control Kabul and the provincial centers, but... we have lost the battle for the Afghan people.”²⁹

Even more ironically, this same critique was essentially published in the Army’s (in)famous Program for the Pacification and Long Term Development of South Vietnam (PROVN) report in 1966, which, as Andrew Krepinevich has documented, was covered up by an Army which wasn’t interested.³⁰

Provincial Déjà Vu

Another identical replication of the Vietnam War in Afghanistan is the tragic mistake of administering the country and prosecuting the war from the provincial level. As Eric Bergerud wrote of the Vietnam War:

Most political initiatives and many of the military efforts aimed at destroying the... insurgency in South Vietnam were either planned or controlled at the province level. American combat divisions normally established their tactical areas of responsibility, and thus the course of their operations, on the basis of provincial boundaries.³¹

In both Vietnam and Afghanistan, however, these provincial boundaries were artificial administrative constructs that did not, *and do not today*, correspond to any political reality on the ground. Provincial boundaries in Afghanistan are meaningless, with no correlation to any local identities or power structures. They resemble familiar state, county, provincial and Länder boundaries in the United States, Britain, France and Germany, however, so they were made the fundamental structural basis for military and political effort in Afghanistan.

Pashtun identity is rooted in a level of social organization further down, in the *woleswali* (the district) and the *alaqadari* (subdistrict). Few Pashtuns other than the handful of educated urban elites with whom Westerners interact have any sense of identity beyond this level, which is almost entirely clan based. No Pashtun would ever identify himself by his province, where we are attempting to impose external governance. Rural Pashtuns thus have no perceivable political interest in this keystone of international military and political effort in Afghanistan.

One of the most common (and most fatuous) banalities repeated by a post-2001 crop of “security analysts” about the Pashtun tribal areas is that they are “ungoverned spaces.” This is not true. The tribal areas of Afghanistan are *alternatively governed* spaces: they are governed, as they have been for a



NARA
 Marines of H Company, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, move along rice paddy dikes in pursuit of the Viet Cong, 1965.



Ralph Dayton

Members of a 6th Marines "weapons company" crossing an irrigation canal while on patrol in Helmand Province, May 2008.

millennium, by tribal law. Tribal law, implemented by the tribal elders of each clan, resolves some 95 percent of all disputes through the mechanism of the *jirga*, or council.³² When it is operating in the traditional manner, the village mullah is an integral part of the *jirga*, a spiritual advisor who ensures that the outcome conforms to the dictates of Islam, but the elders lead the process.

When it is in equilibrium, rural Afghan society is a triangle of power formed by the tribal elders, the mullahs, and the government.³³ Interestingly, these correspond exactly to Weber's three sources of legitimacy of governance.³⁴ In times of peace and stability, the longest side of the triangle is that of the tribal elders, constituted through the *jirga* system. The next longest, but much shorter side is that of the mullahs. Traditionally and historically, the government side is a microscopic short segment. However, after 30 years of blowback from the Islamization of the Pashtun begun by General Zia in Pakistan and accelerated by the Soviet-Afghan War, the religious side of the triangle has become the longest side.³⁵

Conceptually, what the West has attempted to do in Afghanistan since 2001, enshrined in the fatally flawed Bonn Process, is make the government side of the triangle the longest through the policy of "extending the reach of the central government."³⁶

However, every time a secular central government has attempted this, as did King Amanullah in the 1920s and the communists in the 1970s, it has resulted in a violent, conservative rural revolution led by mullahs and framed in terms of jihad that brought down the government. It is not a coincidence that the current conservative rural insurgency in Afghanistan led by mullahs and framed in terms of jihad has grown stronger and more virulent each year since 2002 when this misguided effort at revolutionary social engineering became U.S. and UN policy.³⁷ "Extending the reach of the central government" is precisely the wrong strategy in Afghanistan because it is exactly what the rural people do *not* want. The level of coercive social change that would be required to actually implement this radical social revolution in Afghanistan is beyond our national means. As Jeffrey Clark observed in his final analysis of what went wrong in Vietnam, "It was simply beyond the capacity

"Extending the reach of the central government" is precisely the wrong strategy in Afghanistan...

of one power to reform and reshape the society of another.”³⁸ “Extending the reach of the central government” is not the solution to the insurgency, it is one of the primary causes.

We understand that reestablishing the tribal system of governance by elders will not be easy. After eight years of doing everything wrong, there are no longer any easy solutions in Afghanistan. This is simply the least bad one. The tribal system has been wounded in many areas of the country, but not fatally in most cases. Hundreds of elders have been killed, others have sought the comparative safety of larger cities. But the Pashtun have no chiefs, no tribal “leaders.” Unlike Iraq, there are no tribal *sheiks*. Jirgas are egalitarian circles of elders in which all men are equal. Thus if the deforming pressure is removed, the traditional balance of the society will gradually rebound in most places. Cultures are inherently resilient and resistant to change. Furthermore, the argument that restoring the tribal system might not be possible in all rural communities is a poor argument for doing it in none of them.

Instead of discarding this “pair of tens” of a legitimate tribal governance and trying to draw an inside straight to a hopelessly corrupt, incompetent and illegitimate national government, the United States should be working to build on this potentially winning hand—before the stakes reach the point where eight years of bad choices make the options of folding and staying in the game equally ruinous, just exactly as they did in Vietnam.

A Way Forward Taken From the Past

Almost all American infantry officers we have interviewed in rural Afghanistan or just returned from rural operations agree that, at the tactical level of war, the United States is trapped in the kind of *Groundhog Day* loop (as in the Bill Murray film) epitomized by the paradigmatic tragedy of Hamburger Hill in Vietnam. Instead of “clear, hold and build,” what the U.S. is doing

can be characterized as: “clear, return to FOB; clear, return to FOB; clear, return to FOB.”

“Clear, hold, and build” is failing in Afghanistan for the same reasons it failed in Vietnam—because it is *sequenced and linear*—i.e., *first*, clear; *then* hold; *then* build. It is obvious to everyone that this is not actually working, because there’s no subsequent holding, and almost no real building in the Pashtun areas. (In fact, the Taliban have burned down schools faster than we could build them since 2002, and because of a lack of on-site quality control mechanisms, much of what we have built since 2002 has already fallen down.) As in Vietnam, the local security forces, which the United States relies on to do the holding, are incapable of doing so and will be for at least a decade. In Vietnam, these were the “RF-PF,” or Ruff-Puffs. In Afghanistan, we’re pinning our hopes on the Afghan National Police, the most universally hated and corrupt organization in the country, or the new “tribal militias” concept, another extraordinarily bad idea. But international forces are the only element that can provide the stable and reliable guarantee of district security necessary to break the *Groundhog Day* loop and enable all three functions—clearing, holding, and building—to take place *simultaneously*.

The best vehicle for this, based on the success of the CORDS program in Vietnam and the chas-



UH-1D helicopters airlift members of the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment from the Filhol Rubber Plantation area to a new staging area, during Operation “Wahiawa,” a search and destroy mission conducted by the 25th Infantry Division, northeast of Cu Chi, 1966.

**...the PRTs have been irrelevant
at the strategic level of war...**

sis of the provincial reconstruction team (PRT) model in Afghanistan, is to push the PRT structure down to the districts, the level of primary political importance in Afghanistan. The PRT concept has proven itself to function as a *military element*, but the PRTs have been irrelevant at the strategic level of war. Established by Big Army as a token gesture at reconstruction, they are simply too few and far between. Having an average of one PRT in the south and east for every 1.2 million Pashtuns in abject poverty, as the current ratio stands, may provide a valuable experiment in civil-military operations, but is obviously absurd as the platform for meaningful development and security. The primary reason so few American troops are engaged in the most important mission in Afghanistan is that officers get promoted by demonstrating maneuver skills, not carrying out static missions. This kind of institutional mentality is difficult to change, as soldier-scholars from Andrew Krepinevich to John Nagl have pointed out.

But the route to victory in Afghanistan, as the PROVN report indicated about Vietnam, is to change the strategy. The best way to do this, given the number of forces we have to work with, is to leverage our superiority in protecting troops with firepower and supplying them by helicopter to stand up roughly 200 district reconstruction teams (DRTs). There should be one in each district in the south and east, modeled on the PRT civilian military structure—not dabbling with an experimental handful of six or eight such DRTs, which will cause the enemy little trouble and allow him to work out countermeasures. We could leverage our enormous national engineering, logistic, and organizational supremacy to swarm the enemy with hundreds of them nearly simultaneously. The reliable local security thus provided, combined with efforts to reinforce the political primacy of the elders, could begin to allow the reemergence of their traditional and legitimate authority and leadership and create a self-reinforcing spiral of success.

Because ultimately Afghans must take ownership of their war, there will have to be one major change

to the structure of PRTs. At the district level, there must be a very obvious Afghan face on the mission. The international element of security, some 70 or 80 American men and women, should be discreetly at the center of concentric rings of security, with police “security” in the outer ring outside the FOB, and the Afghan National Army in the middle ring inside the FOB providing the visible security. The locals will know the Americans are there, able to call in fire support for the Afghan army (and the local base) if necessary, but serving as the hidden “big stick” of the local forces while they, the local forces, have the confidence to conduct security operations in support of the local tribal leaders. In fact, with a 100-man ANA presence at each, these DRTs can have somewhat fewer American personnel than the existing PRTs. Two hundred DRTs of 80 American personnel each would require roughly 16,000 men and women, about one quarter of the U.S. force in country at the end of 2009, even without the 40,000 more troops General McChrystal has requested. A garrison of 100 ANA troops at each one would require about half of the roughly 32,000 ANA combat soldiers still actually present for duty. Thus, the United States does not have a force *size* problem so much as a force *distribution* problem. The United States does not need more troops in Afghanistan so much as it needs to redistribute some of the tens of thousands of rear area troops to where they can be more usefully employed.

However, the military cannot deploy DRTs alone. Counterinsurgency is axiomatically “ninety percent political and ten percent military.” Successful implementation would require the State Department to begin to take the war in Afghanistan seriously, a tall order. There are currently more Foreign Service officers working in Rome, for example, than there are in southern and eastern Afghanistan. In Vietnam, there were hundreds of Foreign Service officers deployed in country at any given time after 1968. In southern Afghanistan today, there are less than 20. Six hundred to 800 Pashto-speaking State and U.S. Agency for International Development Foreign Service officers distributed among the 200 district reconstruction teams would be commensurate with the level of effort required. In the eight years since the start of Operation Enduring Freedom, only 13 Foreign Service officers have been trained to speak Pashto, and only two of them are apparently in Afghanistan

today, a pathetic counterinsurgency effort by the State Department by any reasonable standard.

We should not link the DRT strategy to the existing Afghanistan National Development Strategy or the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the National Solidarity Program, whose task is the “establishment and strengthening of local governing structures” such as Community Development Councils. These councils increase conflict and instability and should be terminated.³⁹ The lessons of Vietnam are again written on the wall: pacification programs like Operation Sunrise (the “strategic hamlets” program) failed largely because of centrally directed bureaucratic incompetence and insensitivity to local considerations. The DRTs must drive the local bus, not out-of-touch bureaucrats in Kabul. The strategy must be decentralized, bottom-up security and long-term nation building, based on traditional tribal leadership and legitimacy.

Conclusion

The Vietnam and Afghan wars are remarkably similar at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. Most historians today agree the conflict in Vietnam was inexorably lost because of failure on two deadly, intersecting axes:

- The inability to establish legitimacy of governance which the rural population would prefer as an alternative to the National Liberation Front (NLF) enough to risk their lives for.
- The failure of American troops to protect the people and isolate them from the insurgents by pursuing instead a war of attrition.

The same fatal axes of failure loom before the United States now in Afghanistan, and time is running out. The United States has perhaps the duration of this presidential administration remaining before NATO peels away, the Afghan and American populations grow tired of the U.S. engagement (a process which has already begun), and the Taliban consolidates its jihad into a critical mass as it did in 1996. It is not possible to create a legitimate national government in that time. A ceremonial monarchy would have provided the necessary traditional legitimacy for an elected government in Kabul, but since the Afghan monarchy was eliminated by the U.S. and the U.N. against the express wishes of more than three-quarters of the delegates at the Emergency Loya Jirga in 2002 (the single most foolish act of the war and the Afghan

equivalent of the Diem coup in 1963), the United States must now embrace the *only remaining secular alternative* to the religious legitimacy of the Taliban—the traditional legitimacy of local tribal leadership.

As Andrew Krepinevich noted in *The Army in Vietnam*, counterinsurgency success begins with protecting the people, not conducting search and destroy missions.⁴⁰ But it is the rural people you have to protect. The bureaucratic inertia of staying the political course will result in failure in Afghanistan as it did in Vietnam. The United States can succeed most quickly and most efficiently by solving the second axis of failure, that of isolating the insurgents from the rural populace by creating approximately 200 district reconstruction teams on the proven PRT chassis, one in each district in the south and east where the war is raging.

The district level is the *only* level of personal identity which matters in southern and eastern Afghanistan. By providing steady, reliable, 24/7 security in every district, led by an Afghan National Army component, and protecting the people from the ravages of both the Taliban and the Afghan Police with on-site American mentors and trainers, the traditional social preeminence of tribal elders will gradually reemerge and reestablish itself in most areas. The tribal structure is wounded, but not yet fatally. The rural villages are still full of 50- to 60-year-old men who sat in the jirgas and *salah-mashwarahs* thirty years ago as 20- to 30-year-old men, and they know how it’s supposed to work. Indeed, they *want* it to work, but they need security to make it happen.

As the system gradually comes back into balance, the radical mullahs will return to their rightful places as the religious advisors and spiritual guides for their communities, rather than remain the radical leaders they are now. This is how jihads on the Afghan-Pakistan frontier end. We have to understand the enemy before we can defeat him.

In 1983, Arnold Isaacs summarized the reasons for failure in Vietnam in his history of the final years of the war as follows:

From start to finish, American leaders remained catastrophically ignorant of Vietnamese history, culture, values, motives, and abilities. Misperceiving both its enemy and its ally, and imprisoned in the myopic conviction that sheer military force could

somehow overcome adverse political circumstances, Washington stumbled from one failure to the next in the continuing delusion that success was always just ahead. This ignorance and false hope were mated, in successive administrations, with bureaucratic circumstances that inhibited admission of error and made it always seem safer to keep repeating the same mistakes,

rather than risk the unknown perils of a different policy.⁴¹

One could again substitute the word “Afghan” for “Vietnamese” in Isaac’s assessment and apply it with equal precision to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2009. The current dual-pronged strategy of nation building from the nonexistent top down and a default war of attrition is leading us down the same tragic path. **MR**

This article reflects only the views of its authors, not the views of the Naval Postgraduate School, the DOD, the Center for Advanced Defense Studies, or Military Review.

NOTES

1. John Barry and Evan Thomas, “Afghanistan: Obama’s Vietnam,” *Newsweek*, 9 February 2009.

2. *Washington Post*, 21 September 2009.

3. See interview with Vietnam expert Daniel Ellsberg with TRNN, October 25, 2009, <<http://www.askbutwhy.com/2009/10/daniel-ellsberg-comparing-afghanistan.html>>.

4. Based on Thomas H. Johnson interviews with numerous Afghans, journalists, and military analysts in Kandahar City as well as Kandahar Air Field during May and June 2009.

5. See <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124380078921270039.html#mod=rss_whats_news_us>.

6. For example, see: Antonio Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (eds.), *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2008); Gilles Dorransoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Thomas H. Johnson, “On the Edge of the Big Muddy: The Taliban Resurgence in Afghanistan,” *China and Eurasian Forum Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2007), 93-129.

7. Authors’ interview of a senior State Department analyst, March 2009, Washington DC.

8. Thomas Barfield, “Political Legitimacy in the Land of the Hindu Kush: Ruling Afghanistan 1500-2010” (manuscript in progress, 2009).

9. Kaley I. Sepp, “Best Practices in Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review* (May-June 2005), 8-12.

10. For example, see Thomas Barfield, “Political Legitimacy in the Land of the Hindu Kush” or David Edwards, *Before the Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

11. The elimination of the monarchy under the new Afghan constitution was very likely the single greatest mistake made by the United States and the United Nations after 2001—admittedly a high bar in a full field of contestants. As an unrecoverable strategic error, it is the Afghan equivalent of the CIA-inspired coup against Diem in Vietnam in November 1963. In 2002, three-quarters of the participants in the Emergency Loya Jirga signed a petition to make the late King, Zahir Shah, the interim head of state, an inconvenient show of reverence for the monarchy, which required an extraordinary level of covert shenanigans to subvert. Even a ceremonial monarchy would have provided the critically needed source of traditional legitimacy necessary to stabilize the new government and constitution. The lesson of Japan and its Emperor at the end of World War II was tragically forgotten in the rush to modernity at Bonn; for an excellent review of political legitimacy in Afghanistan, see Thomas Barfield, “Problems of Establishing Legitimacy in Afghanistan,” *Iranian Studies* 37, 2004, 263-69.

12. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, translated by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

13. For an analysis of the 2004 Afghan Presidential election, see Thomas H. Johnson, “Afghanistan’s Post-Taliban Transition: The State of State-Building after War,” *Central Asian Survey* (March–June 2006) 25 (1–2), 1–26.

14. See generally: Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

15. See Mark Moyer, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965* 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (San Francisco: Presidio Press, 1995); Bruce Palmer, *The 25 Year War: America’s Military Role in Vietnam* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984).

16. South Vietnam held 67,108 square miles. (Apart from limited covert operations, American ground forces did not make North Vietnam part of the ground battle space due to political limitations.) Afghanistan today has 251,772 square miles.

17. Eric Bergerud, *The Dynamics Of Defeat: The Vietnam War In Hau Nghia Province* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1993) 3.

18. Jeffrey Record, “How America’s Own Military Performance in Vietnam Aided and Abetted the “North’s” Victory, *Why the North Won the Vietnam War*, Marc Jason Gilbert, ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 119.

19. Ronald Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960* (University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 379.

20. The Army has cleverly concealed the true ANA manpower numbers from the

public by publishing only the “trained and equipped” number of ANA soldiers—i.e., the total number who ever graduated from the training center throughout the history of the program, and deliberately concealing the “present for duty” number of men still in the ranks on any given day, especially the number of deployable combat troops.

21. Interview with senior U.S. intelligence official. In a speech to the Foreign Relations Council on October 26, 2009, Senator John Kerry (D. Mass) noted that there are “less than 50,000” men in the ANA. According to a 2009 RAND Corporation report, 34 percent of ANA soldiers are serving in non-combat roles. (The Long March, Building an Afghan National Army) 66 percent of 50,000 is 32,000, confirming the official’s estimate.

22. The U.S. Army Center for Lessons Learned calculated this some time ago and has briefed senior U.S. Army officials to this effect. Just paying the annual salaries of the current 50,000-man force alone would cost more than twice the entire national annual budget of Afghanistan.

23. Generally, see Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980, 2d ed.); Sir Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1958); Mukulika Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed: Opposition and Memory in the Northwest Frontier* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); David B. Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). For a similar dynamic in Pakistan, see James W. Spain, *The People of the Khyber: The Pathans of Pakistan* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962).

24. See for example: “All Counterinsurgency is Local,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2008, “No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan—Afghanistan Frontier,” *International Security*, Spring 2008, no. 4: 41-77, “Terrorism, Insurgency, and Afghanistan,” *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century. International Perspectives. Volume 2. Combating the Sources & Facilitators*. Edited by James J. Forest. Praeger Security International, 2007, “Understanding the Taliban and Insurgency in Afghanistan,” *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs* 51, no. 1, 2006.

25. Jennifer Brick, “The Political Economy of Customary Village Organizations in Afghanistan” <www-test.bu.edu/aias/brick.pdf>.

26. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977).

27. See: Neil Sheehan, *Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988).

28. Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army in Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 6.

29. Michael Dobbs, The Afghan Archive: Secret Memos Trace Kremlin’s March to War, *The Washington Post*, 15 November 1992, p. A1

30. Krepinevich, 6.

31. Bergerud, 1.

32. Carl Robichaud, “Afghanistan’s Three Legal Systems,” *Afghanistan Watch*, 9 January 2007, <www.afghanistanwatch.org/rule_of_law/index.html> (9 June 2007); for an important scholarly statement and analysis of the impact of culture on Afghan law, see Thomas Barfield, “Culture and Custom in Nation-Building: Law in Afghanistan,” *Maine Law Review* 60, no. 2, 2008, 358-73.

33. Thomas Barfield, “Culture and Custom in Nation-Building,” 354-59.

34. Thomas H. Johnson interviews of numerous district and village elders in Kandahar City, August-September 2008.

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CONSCRIPTION, the REPUBLIC, and AMERICA'S FUTURE

Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D.

THE U.S. ARMY AND MARINE CORPS are too small to do all that we ask and require of them, and the American people live comfortably with a lie. The lie is that the U.S. armed forces have sufficient men and women to do their job, that morale is high, and burdens and pains are negligible. But the American people are absent from the battlefields, and Soldiers and Marines are angry. They are angry that they have had to serve extended tours in Iraq, that stop-loss policies have prevented some of them from pursuing their dreams, that there were too few of them to correctly implement counterinsurgency doctrine, that their families have had to sacrifice much because of their repeated deployments, and that—while many of them have served two or more tours in Iraq or Afghanistan—many Americans of the same age have contributed nothing to the war effort. This is because of one fact: American political leaders made an expedient decision to place the entire burden of the War on Terrorism on a small, professional force.

This breeds anger, pain, and contempt. However, these are all out of sight and therefore out of mind. The distance between the American people and their armed forces has grown considerably since the Vietnam War, facilitating the comfortable façade that the American people have only one part to play in the Nation's wars—that of spectator. The American people must acknowledge the *need to reinstitute conscription*.

Some argue that this is not possible, primarily because the United States is no longer a cohesive, unified nation, and because Americans are too culturally damaged, too focused on consumption. According to this school of thought, consumer culture has produced selfish people incapable of sacrificing for the greater good. Others argue that conscription is not possible because political and military leaders fear the public might restrict their freedom of action. They also fear the people's will is as weak as it was when it failed the military in Vietnam. Consider the words of Andrew Bacevich in his recent book, *The Limits of Power*: "As for the hope that reinstating conscription might reenergize politics, it's akin to the notion that putting Christ back in Christmas will reawaken American spirituality. A pleasant enough fantasy, it overlooks the forces that transformed a religious holiday into an orgy of consumption in the first place."¹ This statement reveals the *zeitgeist* of the American public in the 21st century.

The U.S. Army and Marine Corps are both overcommitted, stretched beyond their capacity to succeed in their missions. Constant deployments

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PHOTO: Soldiers stand at attention during an induction of new U.S. Army recruits on the field prior to the Army's All-American Bowl football game, 3 January 2009, at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas. (AP Photo, Darren Abate)

...American people have only one part to play in the Nation's wars—that of spectator.

are wearing out Soldiers, Marines, and their families physically, psychologically, and emotionally. The United States lacks the strategic reserve to respond immediately to serious threats. As a matter of national security, the country needs to significantly expand the size of the Army and Marine Corps. The only way to do this in the current political, social, and economic environment is to reinstitute the draft.

While there is ample evidence to support Bacevich's conclusion, we must not lose sight of one fact: *the American people have not yet been asked to serve*. There has been no national debate on the subject. Political leaders have lacked the courage to initiate one, and military leaders are too uncertain of the American people and too comfortable with professional forces to challenge the status quo.

In the years after the Vietnam War, the armed forces became a "military cluster" (representing 0.5 percent of U.S. households), a professional group with its own unique system and set of values, ethics, and beliefs. They have fought the wars of the United States from 1973 to the present. The end of the draft in 1973 effectively removed the American people from the fighting; be sure, they wanted to be removed. The Vietnam War left an anti-military atmosphere in the country, and it was not until the Reagan administration that this atmosphere started to change. However, the Reagan administration made no effort to put the people back into the equation for war. The removal of the people from the Nation's wars continues to have significant ramifications, the unacknowledged net effect of which has been disastrous for the military and national security.

After the horrendous 9/11 attacks on the United States, the Bush administration declared a "War on Terrorism," promulgated a new, aggressive strategic doctrine of "preemptive war" (really preventive war); and committed the Nation to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. It also deployed U.S. forces in other parts of the world such as the Horn of Africa and the Philippines. The Bush administration relied on forces already in existence to fight this extended war. It did not mobilize the American people for

"a long, difficult struggle," though it persisted in a propaganda campaign of demagoguery through fear by naming it such. With its Manichean, black-and-white world view and bellicose rhetoric, it effectively alienated allies and told them they were not needed.

Thus, almost the entire burden of the so-called War on Terrorism fell on the regular, professional Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force and the National Guard and Reserves. The burden rested on less than 1 percent of 300 million Americans. Moreover, with the American people removed from the equation, it was easier to go to war. There was no fear of an antiwar movement such as that experienced by the Johnson and Nixon administrations.

The Bush wars are not national efforts in a way that would rouse the ire of large numbers of people. In fact, it is wrong to say, "The United States is at war." It is more accurate to say that the military of the United States is at war and the American people are either spectators or disinterested bystanders. They have no duties, no responsibilities, and no commitments. Indeed, after declaring war, the Bush administration instituted tax cuts and told the American people to go shopping. Bush never asked the American people to make even small sacrifices, nor did he appeal to their better nature. He appealed to greed and self-interest. This was not the traditional American response to a war, and this was not the traditional role of American presidents in war.

Why Conscription?

Conscription is necessary at this time because we have too few Soldiers and Marines doing too much. However, this is only a partial explanation. The threats facing the United States are real, substantial, and growing. Part of the reason for these threats is ineptitude in managing foreign affairs and military policies. The presence of American forces in various parts of the world in the past 60 years has created stability and prosperity, making it possible for people to grow their economies without fear of invasion from their neighbors. From Korea to Europe, U.S. forces have maintained the status quo. The unilateral withdrawal of U.S. forces by the Rumsfeld Pentagon, while necessary to meet the growing demands for U.S. forces in the Middle East, created new opportunities for aggression. The strategic reserve of the United States now consists primarily of air and

naval powers. United States ground forces cannot adequately respond to new or old threats.

U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine required four to five hundred thousand Soldiers in a country the size and population of Iraq, yet the United States was incapable of deploying and sustaining two hundred thousand troops. The stability achieved in recent years in Iraq is fragile, and the country will likely require the presence of substantial American forces for many years to come.

The Taliban and Al-Qaeda are recovering in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and NATO allies have failed to provide the forces or leadership necessary to prevent this resurgence.

The stability of the government of North Korea is uncertain. A change in leadership seems to be in progress. This always creates uncertainty in oligarchies, because they lack the institutional and constitutional systems for an orderly transition of leadership; and war sometimes appears to be a viable option for consolidating political power. Yet, the United States has withdrawn most of the 2d Infantry Division from South Korea.

Not satisfied with the status quo, Russia recently invaded Georgia. Russia has also worked to destabilize the government in the Ukraine and has challenged the American deployment of a missile defense system in Eastern Europe. Its naval forces are reemerging as a significant force. Yet the United States has withdrawn the bulk of two corps from Europe, and the U.S. Navy has committed considerable resources to the Persian Gulf region.

The United States is still responsible for the security of Taiwan. The People's Republic of China is rapidly expanding its navy, particularly its fleet of quiet diesel submarines, and has improved its ability to destroy communication satellites. It is modernizing its ground forces as well. Yet the United States retains no significant strategic reserve committed to conventional war.

Iran is rapidly developing nuclear and missile technologies and, by some estimates, it may pos-



A U.S. Air Force staff sergeant at McEntire Joint National Guard Base, SC, addresses new recruits during morning formation at Unit Training Assembly, 12 July 2009.

U.S. Air Force, TSGT Caycee Cook

sess the wherewithal to produce nuclear weapons and missiles capable of striking Europe in roughly two to five years.

The rapprochement between Russia and China aligns two of the most powerful nations on Earth, both of which are allies of Iran and have no affinity for the United States.

Pakistan, a state that possesses nuclear weapons, is going through a period of instability. Its new government lacks significant public support and is under pressure from the army. The disintegration of Pakistan's government would directly influence the decisions of the government of India, which is also a nuclear power. India, too, is experiencing instability and terrorist attacks.

American influence in Europe has declined. The European Union is poorly armed and frequently seems more willing to deal with Russia than the United States. This is understandable, given its dependence on Russian oil and gas and the dismissive, go-it-alone attitude of the Bush administration. The U.S. cannot count on Western Europe to provide a strategic reserve of armed forces.

General George W. Casey, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, discussed the current imbalance of U.S. forces:

While we remain a resilient and committed professional force, our Army is out of balance for several reasons. The current demand for our forces exceeds the sustainable supply. We are consumed with meeting the demands of the current fight and are

The strategic reserve of the United States now consists primarily of air and naval powers.

unable to provide ready forces as rapidly as necessary for other potential contingencies. Our Reserve Components are performing an operational role for which they were neither originally designed nor resourced. Current operational requirements for forces and limited periods between deployments necessitate a focus on counterinsurgency to the detriment of preparedness for the full range of military missions. Soldiers, families, and equipment are stretched and stressed by the demands of lengthy and repeated deployments with insufficient recovery time.... Army support systems including health care, education, and family support systems that were designed for the pre-9/11 era are straining under the pressure from six years at war. Overall, our readiness is being consumed as fast as we can build it.²

No terrorist organization, undeveloped country, or failed state possesses the wherewithal to do more than minor damage to the United States. However, China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, India, and Pakistan can alter the strategic, international situation dramatically. The mere presence of trained, ready, well-equipped U.S. forces creates stability, deters aggression, and is evidence of America's commitment to peace. The absence of American forces is an invitation to aggression. The United States needs to maintain a significant strategic reserve of ground forces ready to deploy and conduct conventional operations and maintain a significant presence in ground forces in various regions to prevent war.

The Bush administration overcommitted U.S. forces and created vulnerabilities. It squandered numerous opportunities to diminish threats and secure real allies. The Obama administration inherited this situation. It needs to restore balance, and the only way to do this without sacrificing our gains in Iraq and Afghanistan is to significantly increase the size of American ground forces.

We are not in a new environment. We have been here before. The United States has a long history of conscription. Conscription has been the nation's response to labor-intensive wars since the Civil War. In 2006, I wrote:

Many Americans believe it is wrong for the small "military cluster" to bear the full burden of war while the rest of America does

nothing. Hence, there have been calls for the reinstatement of the draft. . . . As the demand for U.S. forces around the world increases, which seems very likely after the attacks on September 11, 2001, the arguments and demands for reinstating the draft will also increase. At the end of 2005, the Army and Marine Corps were overcommitted, trying to do more than was reasonably possible with current troop levels.³

Obviously, I was wrong, at least, in part. The demands for U.S. forces in various parts of the world have increased. However, there has been *no* sustained call from any segment of American society to reinstitute the draft. The reason for this is because Americans are once again disgusted with war. Most Americans believe the war in Iraq is unnecessary, poorly planned, and poorly executed. Americans are also too enamored with high-priced, sophisticated weapons systems, which substantiate the lie that additional people are not needed for warfighting.

After World War II, the United States became a European and Asian power responsible for the security of hundreds of millions of people beyond its geographic borders. *The problem is that Americans never fully recognized what it meant to be a European and Asian power, and never fully accepted the fact that it had to have significant ground forces ready for war on day one.* Consequently, the United States was ill-prepared when war came and had to rely on conscription to meet its manpower needs. Consider the following:

- In 1939, when World War II started in Europe, the U.S. Army numbered less than 190,000 men. When World War II ended in 1945, U.S. Army ground forces numbered more than 6 million men in 89 divisions. This was the result of a conscription Army.
- In 1950, when the Korean War started, the U.S. Army numbered less than 600,000 men, formed into 10 divisions. As General Ridgway noted: "We were,

Americans are...enamored with high-priced, sophisticated weapons systems, which substantiate the lie that additional people are not needed for warfighting.

in short, in a state of shameful unreadiness when the Korean War broke out, and there was absolutely no excuse for it. The only reason a combat unit exists at all is to be ready to fight in case of sudden emergency, and no human being can predict when these emergencies will arise. The state of our Army in Japan at the outbreak of the Korean War was inexcusable.”⁴ In 1952, during the height of the Korean War, the U.S. Army numbered 1,596,419 Soldiers, organized into 20 active duty divisions. This Army was the result of conscription, and with just a few more divisions, the Army could have stopped the Chinese well north of the 38th parallel and held North Korea.

- In 1961, on the eve of the Vietnam War, the U.S. Army had 858,622 Soldiers organized into 14 active duty divisions, roughly half its size ten years earlier. In 1968, the year of the Tet Offensive, the U.S. Army numbered 1,570,343 Soldiers organized into 19 active duty divisions.⁵ In 1973, conscription ended. Many lessons have arisen from the failure of the United States to achieve its political objective of a free South Vietnam; however, one of those lessons should not be that the citizen-Soldier Army failed. Tactically and operationally, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps were not defeated in Vietnam.

On the eve of the first Persian Gulf War, the George H.W. Bush administration was in the process of drawing down American forces. The Cold War had ended and the American people were about to receive a “peace dividend,” primarily at the expense of the Army. Demobilization stopped temporarily to fight a conventional war in Iraq. After the war, demobilization continued, and the Army went from a force of almost 800,000 Soldiers to less than 500,000, and from 16 divisions to 10.

When George W. Bush came into office, the U.S. Army still numbered less than 500,000 men and women, organized into 10 divisions, but in 2001, under the heading “transformation,” the new Bush administration started developing plans to further cut the Army by more than two divisions. The terrorist attack on 9/11 put a halt to these plans, and the administration instead geared up for war in Afghanistan.

Throughout the 20th century, the U.S. Army was repeatedly understrength and ill-prepared for the wars it fought, and conscription became necessary. In each case, the citizen-Soldier Army rose to meet the requirements of war, and was successful in it.

Throughout the 20th century, the U.S. Army was repeatedly understrength and ill prepared for the wars it fought, and conscription became necessary.

Anti-Conscription Arguments and Developments

Why has the Nation not employed its traditional method of manpower procurement in the current situation? A number of arguments advance political and military explanations, and others advance social, cultural, and economic explanations. The following presents the major reasons:

- The belief that science and technology are the panacea to all human problems.
- The belief that military service should not interrupt the unrelenting pursuit of wealth and ever-greater consumption.
- The fragmentation of the Nation into small, “tribal nations,” each with its own set of values, ethics, and beliefs.
- The belief that limited, asymmetric warfare, which is not in accord with the American vision of war, is not a threat that requires the attention and participation of the American people.
- The presumed inability of drafted Soldiers to master the technologies and doctrines required to fight on the modern battlefield with sophisticated weapon systems during a single, short term of service.
- A widespread preference for professional Soldiers who are more consistent and reliable, who do not restrict their leader’s range of action, and who minimize the public’s involvement in the fighting.

To be sure, this list of arguments is incomplete, and these arguments are not mutually exclusive, but it is important to understand them.

Science and technology. After World War II and the development of the heavy bomber and strategic bombing doctrine, airpower became a panacea, the answer to avoid the carnage that occurs when two great armies clash in ground warfare. During World War II, some argued that air power was a war-winning technology.

In 1948, after witnessing two atomic bombs bring the war against Japan to an end, Eisenhower articulated the new American vision of war:

In an instant, many of the old concepts of war were swept away. Henceforth, it would seem, the purpose of an aggressor nation would be to stock atom bombs . . . Even the bombed ruins of Germany . . . provide but faint warning of what future war could mean to the people of the earth.⁶

This focus on air power was evident in 2003 in the “shock and awe” doctrine that was supposed to win the war in Iraq without the involvement of significant numbers of U.S. ground forces. The invasion was supposed to demonstrate the most recent so-called “revolution in military affairs.” The development of information technologies, stealth bombers, and precision weapons produced the strategic doctrine known as “network-centric warfare” and the operational doctrine of “shock and awe” to eliminate or minimize the employment of Soldiers.

Unfortunately, the Pentagon was wrong, again. It is hard to see a revolution in military affairs in current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The prophets of airpower and technology have again contributed to a disaster that ground combat forces had to fix.

Wealth and consumption. Consider the words of Andrew Bacevich:

For the United States the pursuit of freedom, as defined in an age of consumerism, has induced a condition of dependence—on imported goods, on imported oil, and on credit. The chief desire of the American people, whether they admit it or not, is that nothing should disrupt their access to those goods, that oil, and that credit. The chief aim of the U.S. government is to satisfy that desire, which it does in part through the distribution of largesse at home (with Congress taking the leading role) and in part through the pursuit of imperial ambitions abroad (largely the business of the executive branch).⁷

U.S. News & World Report recently reported, “America is incredibly indebted. The debt in the financial world went from 21 percent of a \$3 trillion gross domestic product in 1980 to 120 percent of a \$13 trillion GDP in 2007, reflecting an astonishing accumulation of as much as \$30 of debt for every \$1 of equity in many firms.”⁸ The evidence is overwhelming that the pursuit of wealth and greater

levels of consumption dominate American thinking and actions more than any other endeavors.⁹ Consumption influences every aspect of American life, including the Nation’s ability to produce combat Soldiers. In 2007, I wrote:

With each subsequent decade of the latter half of the twentieth-century, the American people became physically and psychologically less capable of fighting wars. In the 1990s, ROTC departments around the country complained that new recruits couldn’t run a half-mile. New physical training programs were initiated to get potential cadets up to the minimal physical condition required for service, a standard that was far below that required in U.S. Army infantry units. Recruiters had the same problem.¹⁰

This is an issue of national security that has only grown worse since the end of the Cold War. The problem, although identified during the Korean War, plagued the services throughout the Vietnam War. In 1957, Robert Osgood wrote:

Quite aside from the moral odium of war, the fear of violence and the revulsion from warfare are bound to be strong among a people who have grown as fond of social order and material well-being as Americans. War upsets the whole scale of social priorities of an individualistic and materialistic scheme of life, so that the daily round of getting and spending is subordinate to the collective welfare of the nation in a hundred grievous ways—from taxation to death. This accounts for an emotional aversion to war, springing from essentially self-interest motives.¹¹

“Getting and spending” are no longer subordinate to war; they, in fact, govern the American conduct of war. The absence of a national discussion on conscription clearly indicates that national security is subordinate to the major American endeavor, the pursuit of wealth and consumption.

Fragmentation. Some argue that the United States is no longer a cohesive cultural entity. Evidence of the Nation’s fragmentation is more than anecdotal. “According to the geodemographers at Claritas, American society today is composed of 62 distinct lifestyle types—a 55 percent increase over the 40 segments that defined the U.S. populace during the 1970s and 1980s.”¹²

Some believe that people would ignore any law that required national military service. Patriotism is thus more rhetoric than reality. Robert R. Palmer remarks that—

The tie between sovereign and subject was bureaucratic, administrative, and fiscal, an external mechanical connection of ruler and ruled, strongly in contrast to the principle brought in by the [French] Revolution, which, in its doctrine of responsible citizenship and sovereignty of the people, effected an almost religious fusion of the government with the governed. A good government of the Old Regime was one that demanded little of its subjects, which regarded them as useful, worthy, and productive assets to the state, and which in wartime interfered as little as possible with civilian life. A ‘good people’ was one that obeyed the laws, paid its taxes, and was loyal to the reigning house; it need have no sense of its own identity as a people, or unity as a nation, or responsibility for public affairs, or obligation to put forth a supreme effort in war.¹³

Arguably, the term “old regime” provides as precise a description of America at the dawn of the 21st century as it does of the new nation-states born during the French and American revolutions.

Evidence of fragmentation is visible in the recent American conduct of war. Private military firms have taken over many of the responsibilities that once belonged exclusively to the military.¹⁴ War in America has become a lucrative business, which, arguably, further diminishes the need for Americans to participate in it. The responsibilities that once belonged to the American people now belong to private military firms loyal to the dollar, not the people, the government, or the Army.

The strategic culture of limited and asymmetric war. While the Nation has fought many limited wars, the paradigm for war that occupies

The responsibilities that once belonged to the American people now belong to private military firms...

the thinking of most Americans is that of the Civil War and World War II, both of which required total mobilization. President Harry Truman remarked on the American desire for peace: “Americans hate war . . . No people in history have been known to disengage themselves so quickly from the ways of war. This impatience is the expression of a deeply rooted national ideal to want to live at peace.”¹⁵

Americans have traditionally believed that—

- The United States is a *unique* nation-state, unbound by the rules that govern other nations.
 - War is serious business, and the U.S. ought *not* to enter into it lightly.
 - Major wars are a national endeavor involving the resources of the nation.
 - We ought to conduct wars in a professional, expeditious, and unrelenting manner and bring them to a quick, decisive, and successful end.
 - A war should be strategically and doctrinally offensive—and short.
 - Its aim should be the destruction of the enemy’s main army followed by the occupation of its country, and its political, economic, social, and cultural transformation.
 - The postwar objective is to change the defeated state to one that more closely resembles the United States—a capitalist democracy.
 - War is fighting; that fighting ought to commence as soon as possible, and proceed continuously and aggressively until America achieves victory.
 - There is nothing Americans cannot achieve when fully mobilized.
 - The enemy’s identity should be unambiguous, his location certain, and his forces visible and willing to accept battle.
 - Fighting ought to produce demonstrable progress and decisive results.
 - Compromise solutions are un-American and do not justify the human cost of war or achieve the Nation’s political objectives, which are absolute.
 - The exigencies of battle ought to dictate the course and conduct of war and minimize the loss of life; political matters should not impede the efficient use of force and the expeditious prosecution of war.
- Americans believe in equality of sacrifice—the fair distribution of the war’s burdens among the adult population. They believe that the Nation’s human capital is its most precious resource, and that while Americans are fighting and dying, no

other resource should be spared to bring the war to a rapid, successful conclusion. Americans like to fight highly organized, systematic, materiel- and technology-based wars. Americans believe that war is an aberration that upsets the American tenet that man is not a means to an end, and that his “pursuit of happiness” is the end.

Americans believe in acting unilaterally and aggressively and that sustained warfare is un-American and potentially damaging to American democracy. Americans do not accept defeat. They increase effort, employ more resources, improvise, adapt, and seek new solutions. Unfortunately, few wars look like this.

The atomic bomb created modern, limited war. Nuclear weapons destroyed the Clausewitzian tenet that war is a continuation of politics by other means. There is nothing of political consequence to discuss after a nuclear exchange between the great powers. American dominance in conventional forces has ended conventional warfare, at least for the near future. Thus, the American strategic war culture does not apply to the current environment.

If Americans cannot fight the type of war they want to fight, they will not fight at all. Hence, the

withdrawal from Vietnam before the mission was complete. Hence, the anger at George H.W. Bush for not going all the way to Baghdad in the first Gulf War. Hence, the absence of a discussion about a draft even today, when U.S. ground forces are over-committed, fighting two distinctly un-American wars.

Soldiers cannot master the technology and doctrine of modern warfare. This premise is demonstrably false. Most Americans can master the technologies and doctrines required to fight effectively on the modern battlefield in one year, and with a two-year commitment, the services would have another 12 months to employ conscripted Soldiers in war or other duties in foreign lands. In one to two years, most individuals can earn a master’s degree at a good university. Surely, an individual can master using basic weapons and learn to operate as part of a team in a year’s time. In a year, the average American can meet the rigorous training requirements to perform as part of an effective combat unit. The real problem today, not faced by previous generations, is getting young Americans in the required physical condition.

The absence of a draft gives leaders greater freedom of action. Using regular forces eliminates



AP Photo, Jason E. Miczek

U.S. Army SFC R. Scott Gianfrancesco talks to Wilkes Central High students about a career in the Army in Wilkes County, NC, 30 April 2008.

the American people from war, and it greatly diminishes the role of the American people in the political decision to go to war and in military decisions concerning its conduct. Without a draft, political and military leaders can be less responsive to the American people. Uninvolved, disengaged, and in many cases disinterested, the American people have no say in the decisions made by political and military leaders. They are not part of the fight. With an all-volunteer force, political and military leaders are not as accountable to the American people as they were during previous wars. As Bacevich puts it, “The truth is that the four-star generals and admirals view citizen-Soldiers as more trouble than they’re worth.”¹⁶ Since the end of the draft, the Army has grown to look more like the Marine Corps, a small, highly trained, elite fighting force, and at the same time, *less representative* of the American people.¹⁷

Many believe it was not the Armed Forces, but the will of the American people, that failed during the Vietnam War. The specter of Vietnam still influences decisions in Washington. The will of the people was eliminated from Operation Desert Storm, and it is, arguably, no longer a factor in America’s wars. In the view of the White House and the Pentagon, this is the ideal. However, political and military leaders are shortsighted. They focus on the operational level of war too closely to see the larger strategic environment.

As Bacevich argues, does being an American simply mean that we get to consume more than any other people on Earth, drive bigger gas-guzzling cars, live in bigger houses, use more credit, amass more debt, and eat more than other people? Is this what American uniqueness means? The lesson of Republican Rome looms for us now:

Between the early centuries of the Republic’s expansion, when the grant of citizenship was used again as a means to hold the state together, citizenship essentially was a status, which conveyed certain legal powers or benefits. It was also a moral demand in that, out of historical and contemporary ethical belief and practice, it placed before a man a schedule of his responsibilities toward the patria.

Historically, citizenship had called for a payment of taxes; now Rome was so rich those taxes were no longer required.

Moreover, that same wealth did away with the military service every Roman owed his patria. Citizen mercenaries recruited from the lower classes [and foreigners], now filled the ranks and gave their allegiance to Marius, Sulla, or some other general or politician [or corporation] who promised them good pay and retirement benefits.¹⁸

Is this what we have become? Are we following the path to decline paved by the Romans?

Our Strategic Reality

The Armed Forces of the United States, specifically the Army and Marine Corps, are too small to do all that is required and are focused on the wrong threats, the least significant threats. The United States needs to reinstitute conscription and refocus its major resources on the larger threats confronting the Nation and the world. This is a matter of national security. The expenditure of 10 billion dollars a month in Iraq is irresponsible. The expenditure of a billion dollars on one aircraft is inexcusable, irresponsible, and stupid. The arguments against conscription are not as strong as the arguments for it. I believe that if the American people have pertinent information regarding today’s threats and the condition of the Army and Marine Corps, they will respond dutifully, if not enthusiastically, to conscription.

The consequences of maintaining the current policy are a deteriorating Army and Marine Corps ill-trained to perform conventional combat operations, resenting the people they serve, and suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, family problems, divorces, and a rising suicide rate. The risks to the country are failure in Afghanistan, Iraq, or some other part of the world; the inability to confront China and Russia with credible deterrent forces that preclude adventurism; and the inability to challenge aggression, short of nuclear weapons. Again, Riesenbergs reminds us that—

In citizenship, the passions normally dedicated to self and kin are directed to a higher purpose, the public good. Citizenship has survived so long and served in so many political environments because of its great inspirational challenge to individuals to make their neighbors, their fellow citizen’s life better and, by so doing, make their own

nobler. Such an aspiration made sense to Greeks and Romans in their cities just as it makes sense to us today in our vastly different environment.¹⁹

The war in Iraq was not worth the resources the United States committed to it. However, now that we are there, now that we have initiated war based on “false intelligence” and have torn the country apart, the problem is no longer an issue of resources. We have obligations. We have to deal with the situation we now face, and that situation requires a significantly larger Army. What we absolutely cannot do is leave Iraq the way we departed Vietnam.

Tom Brokaw coined the term “The Greatest Generation” to characterize the generation of Americans that suffered and lived through the Great Depression, fought World War II, and took the initial stand against the rise of international communism. This generation was not great because of how much it consumed, how big its cars and homes were, or how much credit it used. It was great because of the character of its people and its leaders. Fifty or sixty years from now, what will they call the current generation? “The Me Generation?” Life is a test of character. Is America suffering from a character deficit? **MR**

NOTES

1. Andrew Bacevich, *The Limits of Power* (New York: Henry Holt, 2008), 173.
2. General George W. Casey, “Chief of Staff of the Army Statement on the Army’s Strategic Imperatives,” before the Senate Armed Services Committee United States House of Representatives, 15 November 2007.
3. Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 36.
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16. Bacevich, 153.
17. At the same time, the Marine Corps has grown to look more like the Army. As its budget expands, as it acquires more machines, as its technology becomes more sophisticated, it necessarily acquires more war-managers and more war-technicians who replace the heroic-warriors.
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TRANSFORMATION and the Irregular Gap



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PHOTO: M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks and two M998 High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles of the 3d Brigade, 1st Armored Division, 7th Corps move across the desert in northern Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm, 1991. (U.S. Army, SSGT Reeve)

AMERICA'S DIFFICULTIES IN Iraq and Afghanistan have shaken discussions of transformation to their technological roots. The Defense Department (DOD) is beginning to realize that modernizing our Army for irregular conflicts in the 21st century will require profound changes in the human workforce. Yet, an "irregular gap" persists within the Army's current force structure.¹

On 1 December 2008, DOD Directive 3000.07 established policy oversight to improve DOD proficiency for irregular warfare. The directive prescribes the Defense Department to be "as effective in irregular warfare as it is in traditional warfare." Yet, the Army has optimized its ground forces for strategic mobility and fluid, decisive, operational maneuver against state adversaries. The organizational transformation launched in 2003 has remained unscathed despite profound changes in national security imperatives, threat perceptions, and updated military doctrine.

Transformation's initial assumptions, the Army's current organizational design, and recent strategic policy changes are incongruent. The Army's decision to expand its force with six additional brigade combat teams (BCTs) is essentially a "more-of-the-same" approach instead of making the force structure more capable given perceived future threats. Secretary Gates recently encouraged Army planners to be innovative in exploring "how the Army should be organized."² This article is one attempt to do so.

The Revolution in Military Affairs

Post-Cold War changes in international relations, a changing threat environment, and an explosion of technological innovations have led to frequent debates since the 1990s about the use of technology and organizational structures within the military. Actual and potential improvements in information technologies, precision weapons, armor, and robotic capabilities launched a theoretical movement known as the revolution in military affairs. Not only did the defense community respond with conceptions of warfare altered by technological dominance, but it also looked to exploit technology to keep U.S. power projection relevant in a post-Soviet era.

The 1991 Gulf War demonstrated the lethality of an increasingly digitized battlefield in the vast desert of Kuwait and southern Iraq. Advanced

communications, global positioning systems, and precision weapons showcased the formidable power of air-ground coordination in an increasingly Joint, combined-arms fight. However, the lack of available pre-positioned forces in the region resulted in an extensive, time-consuming build-up of combat power prior to the initiation of ground combat. Preparations for the Gulf War revealed a weakness in DOD's ability to project military ground power abroad.

Meanwhile, battle plans designed for mobile conventional ground combat in the Fulda Gap or the Korean peninsula gave way to a new host of potential contingencies. The nation became increasingly involved in third-world conflicts where pre-positioned equipment was unavailable and limited infrastructure restricted heavy vehicle movement. Not knowing where U.S. forces would go in the future, defense planners sought ways to increase strategic mobility and reduce logistics requirements for rapid deployment forces. Transformation initiatives explored lighter platforms and improvements for ground and sea mobility, and futurists identified information technologies as a combat multiplier that could revolutionize Army tactics.

Of the numerous scholars calling for major changes in military strategy and force structure throughout the 1990s, perhaps none were as influential as Douglas McGregor and Arthur Cebrowski. McGregor's *Breaking the Phalanx* called for the reorganization of the Army into mobile combat groups pre-positioned throughout the world, postured to conduct "rapid and decisive" operations relying on "superior knowledge" and "information dominance."³ Vice Admiral Arthur Cebrowski echoed similar concepts of speed, precision, and information superiority in a 1998 *Proceedings* article that popularized the term "network-centric warfare."⁴ Both authors were invaluable catalysts of change within the defense community; however, neither paid much attention to the possible difficulties of stability operations and other elements of irregular warfare. McGregor, Cebrowski, and other theorists were proposing revolutionary ways of fighting *traditional* military adversaries.

Transformation

On 12 October 1999, Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki announced the Army's transformation plan.

To adjust the condition of the Army to better meet the requirements of the next century, we articulate this vision: "Soldiers on point for the nation transforming this, the most respected army in the world, into a strategically responsive force that is dominant across the full spectrum of operations." With that overarching goal to frame us, the Army will undergo a major transformation.⁵

The transformation plan had three elements: the legacy force, the objective force, and the interim force.⁶ The division of the Army's force structure and procurement took into account the risks of an uncertain future strategic environment and the possibility that future technologies would fail to meet planners' expectations. Early planners envisioned two decades of development that would result in a futuristic objective force around 2020.

The Army would retain its traditional heavy and mechanized infantry legacy forces and continually modernize them with new technology. Maintaining the legacy force was a hedge against the rise of potential near-peer competitors, and the force would continue to be the nation's muscle in major combat operations requiring the mobility, survivability, and firepower of heavy armor.

The interim force was the short-term focus of transformation, designed to consist of interim BCTs that would fill the gap between light and heavy forces.⁷ They offered greater mobility, survivability, and firepower than light units, could self-sustain for longer periods of time, and were light enough to be rapidly transported by aircraft. The Army advertised this force as being "full spectrum capable." Interim BCT conversions filled strategic mobility and initial entry gaps identified during Operation Desert Shield and were suitable for small-scale contingencies, especially those in urban terrain.

The objective force would be the gateway to the future. "The Objective Force will combine the

The Army would sustain its traditional heavy and mechanized infantry legacy forces and continually modernize them...

deployability of light forces with the lethality, tactical mobility, and survivability of heavy forces.”⁸ Replacing Force XXI, its focus was the Future Combat System family of vehicles, weapons, and sensors: a fully networked Army of Soldiers with enhanced capabilities, armed platforms built lighter but stronger than today’s vehicles, unmanned ground and air vehicles, and a network of manned and unmanned sensors.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld further accelerated The Army’s transformation after the attacks of 11 September. He issued DOD’s *Transformation Planning Guidance* in April 2003 stating:

Some believe that with the United States in the midst of a dangerous war on terrorism, now is not the time to transform our armed forces. I believe that the opposite is true. Now is precisely the time to make changes. The war on terrorism is a transformational event that cries out for us to rethink our activities, and to put that new thinking into action.⁹

The Army adjusted its short-term transformation plan to accelerate the conversion of divisions with brigade support units to modular brigades.¹⁰ Expeditionary capabilities and Joint interdependence between the services became the hallmarks of transformation. The Army implemented these concepts

by redesigning the division-centric mass force into a brigade-centric rapidly deployable, self-contained maneuver force. In 2003 President George W. Bush summed up the new transformation concept:

A future force that is defined less by size and more by mobility and swiftness, one that is easier to deploy and sustain, one that relies more heavily on stealth, precision weaponry, and information technologies.¹¹

While the United States was initiating a protracted war against guerrillas and terrorists, the Army was implementing a force structure designed and tested for the rapid defeat of conventional military forces.

The Irregular Gap

Largely influenced by Cebrowski’s popularized notions of warfare, Rumsfeld’s guidance for the transformation was “fundamentally joint, network-centric, distributed forces capable of rapid decision superiority and massed effects across the battlespace.”¹² Rumsfeld published this written guidance immediately after the invasion of Iraq. While proclaiming the needs of the War on Terrorism, the guidance specifies, “We cannot afford to react to threats slowly or have large forces tied down for lengthy periods. Our strategy requires transformed forces that can take action from a forward position and, rapidly reinforced from other areas, defeat adversaries swiftly and decisively.”¹³

Similarly, McGregor believed “recent trends of civil disturbance” to be of “peripheral strategic importance in order to secure the ideals and habits of democracy.” He recognized that he gave “low-intensity conflict” less attention but wrote that it would be unwise to shape the military to perform these actions. McGregor claimed, “Army ground forces must be prepared to administer and control large populated areas of enemy territory until legitimate indigenous administration can be restored.” Yet, his Iraq conflict scenario culminated with the “installation of a friendly government” one day after the arrival of U.S. forces in Baghdad.¹⁴ To be fair, McGregor acknowledged the troop-intensive nature of post conflict occupations, but the overall theme of *Breaking the Phalanx* and Cebrowski’s concepts was rapid combined arms maneuver against future conventional threats, using modern technological innovations. Irregular opponents and stabilization strategies were not part of either analysis.



U.S. Army

The Future Combat Systems network employs connectivity between different weapons platforms and the Soldiers who use them.

The implicit assumption was that Soldiers trained and units specifically organized for close conventional combat could easily conduct an array of other missions.

The implicit assumption was that Soldiers trained and units specifically organized for close conventional combat could easily conduct an array of other missions. Therefore, tests used to validate the new force designs focused on traditional combat and largely ignored “the other missions.” H.R. McMaster provides the following perspective:

In constructive computer simulation exercises designed to “validate” the new design, near perfect intelligence permitted centralized targeting of large conventional forces such that long-range rocket artillery, Apache helicopters, and other fires compensated for the division’s reduction in combat power. The new division was “smaller” yet “more lethal” because the assumption of dominant knowledge gave the unit situational understanding.¹⁵

The scenarios were a throwback to the Gulf War. They ignored irregular threats and the effects of urban terrain, and inflated the merits of information technologies.

In addition to strategists’ assumptions and testing scenarios, a lack of emphasis on stability operations should not be surprising given its portrayal in the Army’s previous doctrinal literature. The 2001 version of Field Manual (FM) 3-0 embodied the lexicon of classic combined arms doctrine, the “close-with-and destroy” concept, which is often counterproductive in irregular conflict.

In stability operations, close combat dominance is the principal means Army forces use to influence adversary actions. In all cases, the ability of Army forces to engage in close combat, combined with their willingness to do so, is the decisive factor in defeating an enemy or controlling a situation.¹⁶

This statement is misleading. While the capacity for violent, small-unit, close combat is as necessary in any form of irregular warfare as it is in conven-

tional combat operations, it is rarely sufficient to achieve sustainable battlefield success. In response to the problems facing troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army published a manual on counterinsurgency in December 2006.¹⁷ Instead of “defeating the enemy,” protecting the populace became decisive. Fostering effective indigenous governance, creating political solutions, low-level intelligence gathering, law enforcement, and facilitating economic growth became just as important as “close combat dominance.”

These contradictions support Thomas X. Hammes’ argument that DOD initiatives such as those set forth in *Transformation Planning Guidance* and *Joint Vision 2020* focused primarily on high-technology conventional war and were new tools for the same job, marketed under the “rubric of transformation.”¹⁸ While DOD has adjusted its post-9/11 training strategies and doctrine, its basic organizational structure at the tactical level remains wed to antiquated defense strategies. Today’s transformation is not wrong; it is just not enough.

Changes in Policy

The 9/11 attacks and post-invasion difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan have awakened the U.S. government to the realities of 21st-century threats. This epiphany has resulted in numerous policy changes and national security directives that should encourage further changes within the Army beyond transformation’s initial organizational blueprint.

The 2005 *National Defense Strategy* encouraged defense planners to redefine past conceptions of general purpose forces, noting: “[U.S.] experiences in the War on Terrorism point to the need to reorient our military forces to contend with such irregular challenges more effectively.”¹⁹ The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)* took this guidance and sought ways for DOD capabilities to shift their emphasis to better prepare for a host of emerging threats, noting that “U.S. forces are primarily organized, trained, educated, and equipped for traditional warfighting,” and acknowledging

Today’s transformation is not wrong; it is just not enough.

the need to maintain such functions in the event of major conventional warfare. However, the *QDR* also recognized that military forces are not as capable of conducting protracted irregular warfare in the current or envisioned threat environments and recommended “rebalancing general purpose forces” to improve their capability to operate against adversaries mobilizing their populations against us.²⁰ Specifically, the *QDR* recognized the need for “multipurpose forces to train, equip, and advise indigenous forces; deploy and engage with partner nations; conduct irregular warfare; and support security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations.”²¹

The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* is a stark contrast to its 2001 predecessor. The 2001 *QDR* directed DOD to design its force structure to “swiftly defeat” enemies in two military campaigns, winning one of them “decisively.” It also acknowledged the need to conduct a “limited number of lesser military and humanitarian contingencies.”²² That same year, Bush came to office proclaiming the U.S. would not get involved in nation-building.²³ However, the attacks of 9/11 reshaped U.S. foreign-policy and led to a realization that the military was ill-prepared for the future.

The 2006 *QDR* addressed this gap. In the 2006 edition, “lesser” types of contingencies became the focal point, and an emphasis on “distributed, long-duration operations” replaced “decisive” campaigns. The desperate need to develop capabilities for unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency, and stabilization operations overshadowed the ability to compete in conventional campaigns.²⁴ With the new guidance in place, DOD should have refined its force planning construct. But, curiously, the *Quadrennial Defense Review* complemented the Army’s ongoing force structure change because it was in accord with the 2001 emphasis on decisive conventional campaigns. The modular brigade’s force design has been relatively unscathed despite ongoing discussions to make general-purpose ground forces more tailored to irregular environments.

DOD Directive 3000.05, signed on 28 November 2006, established “DOD policy and responsibilities within the Department of Defense for planning, training, and preparing to conduct and support stability operations...”²⁵ Paragraph 4.1 states:

The modular brigade’s force design has been relatively unscathed despite ongoing discussions to make general-purpose ground forces more tailored to irregular environments.

[Stability operations] shall be given priority comparable to combat operations and be explicitly addressed and integrated across all DOD activities including doctrine, organizations, training, education, exercises, material, leadership, personnel, facilities, and planning.²⁶

The directive correctly places heavy emphasis on civil-military partnerships and interagency organizations, foreign government and security force integration, and cooperation with U.S. and foreign nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. However, the directive assigns the U.S. military responsibility to perform “all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so.”²⁷ This tasking results from the realization that civilian assistance is limited while hostilities continue—essentially those periods when DOD will be most involved. The presence of non-state terrorists, intra-state insurgents, violent militias, and criminal elements will continue to present the major impediment to U.S. stability efforts. Those efforts may follow major combat operations, or coincide with U.S. interdiction against inter- and intra-state violence threatening regional stability, a humanitarian crisis, or U.S. interests abroad. Paragraph 1.3 claims that *DOD Directive 3000.05* “supersedes any conflicting portions of existing DOD issuance.” This should include the current modular brigade design.

A New Direction?

The current disparity between threat assessments, policy, and the Army’s force structure has not gone unnoticed. Shinseki used the 1999 Association of the United States Army conference to announce the Army’s transformation toward “expeditionary” forces. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates used the same venue on 10 October 2007 to budge the Army away from Rumsfeld’s concept. Gates noted

the military's aversion to irregular conflicts after the Vietnam War, leaving the Army "unprepared to deal with the operations that followed in Somalia, Haiti, the Balkans and more recently, Afghanistan and Iraq—the consequences and costs of which we are still struggling with today." He expects asymmetric warfare to "remain the mainstay of the contemporary battlefield for some time," and although he did not advocate any specific plans, Gates challenged the Army not to treat Iraq and Afghanistan as anomalies. Instead, he emphasized that the Army must develop greater advising capabilities, language proficiencies, and hone the ability "to fight smaller forces of insurgents." Additionally, he revived a term purposely abandoned by his predecessor—nation building:

Army soldiers can expect to be tasked with reviving public services, rebuilding infrastructure and promoting good governance . . . all these so-called "nontraditional" capabilities have moved into the mainstream of military thinking, planning and strategy, where they must stay.²⁸

A 2007 *Army Times* article further highlights the disconnect between the current operating environment and the force-mix available to meet its demands. Commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan are increasingly requesting "designer units," force requests tailored to their current environments. According to Colonel Edge Gibbons, U. S. Army Forces Command's plans division chief:

As [the] theater has matured, the additional capabilities required often don't match existing Army inventory for certain niche capabilities that are required based on the operating environment. It decreases readiness of the Army because it's breaking units. For every designer unit we make, that's one or more units that we break to meet that requirement.²⁹

The Army touts the flexibility of the current modular design, but it has been ill-suited to meet the demands of current theaters. Instead of adjusting the Army's force structure to embrace mission tailoring and modularity as advertised, Forces Command is discouraging the use of "designer units." Instead of changing the force mixtures available, the Army seems to be telling commanders in the field, "Make do with what you have." Regardless of the scale of

today's conflict, the Army should better tailor its force design to the current operating environment, assuming (as Secretary Gates does) that this will be more indicative of future conflict than previous assumptions foretold.

Further Changes

The Army's modular-brigade design and current workforce restructuring (based on the 2003 model) was a necessary but incremental step that fixed strategic-mobility problems and institutionalized operational successes from the 1991 Gulf War. However, today's transformation does not properly prepare the Army for future irregular conflicts.

Maneuver battalions and their subordinate units have had little or no change in organizational design under the new concept. The Army claims modularity provides increased flexibility by attaching specialized units to brigade combat teams, but numerous problems still exist. One problem is the lack of capacity in critical specialties. The Army is not fielding badly needed capabilities at tactical levels in sufficient numbers. Many of these units reside in the reserves where they are difficult to mobilize or in compartmentalized functional brigades, isolated from the brigade combat teams they typically support. Both cases lend potential problems for the combat teams and their attached functional specialists. A lack of integration makes cohesion problematic, and the inability to conduct combined collective training reduces performance.

The Army continues to promote the maintenance of a "full spectrum" generalist force, able to conduct offensive, defensive, and stability operations. It negates any concepts of general purpose forces "specialized for irregular warfare," dismissing the fact that the Army is already specialized to the degree that it has heavy, Stryker, light and airborne infantry, and various functional support brigades.³⁰ While each type of brigade is capable of conducting

Instead of changing the force mixtures available, the Army seems to be telling commanders in the field, "Make do with what you have."

full spectrum operations, they are optimized for particular threat environments, terrain conditions, and collective tasks.

The Army continues to tailor selected Stryker brigade combat teams, airborne, and air assault brigade combat teams for strategic requirements such as rapid deployment and forced-entry requirements. The heavy brigade combat teams should continue to serve as a strategic deterrent. They serve as America's dominant force in major conventional operations and conflict in open terrain. But the Army should further resource the majority of its brigade combat teams to conduct urban and population-focused operations. Limited numbers of support and functional brigades would maintain stand-alone capabilities. They would provide specialized support and detach sub-brigade units to brigade combat teams as necessary.

However, a majority of the brigade combat teams should be better optimized for operations in irregular environments focused on conducting civil security operations, defeating guerrilla fighters, and conducting interim indigenous security force, governance, and economic capacity development. The units would still be full spectrum capable (in fact, establishing and maintaining a secure environment through offensive and defensive operations is critical), but they would be designed with stability operations as their core task. These units would be no more "specialized" than a heavy brigade is for conventional offensive and defensive warfare. A detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this article; however, what follows are recommendations for further consideration.

Intelligence. The Army's current intelligence structure is still designed for top-down collection and analysis despite an often-cited shift to bottom-up information gathering. Manning should support this shift. Company headquarters and battalion staffs should have organic and robust intelligence sections that include human intelligence specialists, signal intelligence capabilities, and all-source analysts who can synthesize, interpret, and input intelligence into force-wide databases. Human intelligence specialists need to be seasoned noncommissioned officers that transfer into a military intelligence field mid-career instead of young, initial-term Soldiers.

Civil affairs. Civil affairs Soldiers primarily reside in the reserves where they can supposedly use the

functional skills they employ in the civilian workforce. Unfortunately, they are difficult to mobilize, and their civilian relevance rarely aligns with military necessity. The Army needs a sizeable increase in active component civil affairs specialists carefully selected and well educated in conflict resolution and economic development in austere environments, and with a foundation in political science, economics, and sociology. The Army can use them to help promote economic growth and improve foreign governance institutions. These specialists should form close partnerships through Joint exercises and fellowships with interagency offices such as the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Their overall capacity should increase to allow civil specialists to advise tactical leaders down to the company level.

Engineers. The preponderance of Army engineers in combat units are adept at breaching tactical obstacles such as concertina wire, doors, or walls. Construction engineers are in short supply, and they usually work in limited U.S. infrastructure projects such as large military base support and airfield construction. The Army should create battalions of construction engineers—similar to the Navy's SEABEE units—trained, organized, and equipped in trade crafts that can help provide emergency support to local populations and foreign governments during stability operations or U.S.



DOD, Petty Officer 3rd Class Ernesto Hernandez Fonte

U.S. Army PFC Michael Papp, assigned to the 19th Engineer Battalion, installs tin sheets on a roof during construction at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, 14 September 2009.

civil support missions. Tactical maneuver battalions should have a construction and assessment platoon, led by a civil engineer and composed of trade and craft specialists (plumbers, electricians, masonry etc.) that can provide support to military outposts and local communities. Additionally, battalions should have habitually attached mobility platoons of highly technical explosive ordinance disposal and demolition specialists, and military dog teams capable of explosives detection and security tasks.

Information units. The Army should increase the number of psychological, public affairs, and information operations specialists in tactical units. With the spread of information technologies, conflicts are largely shaped by U.S. citizens, the international community, and indigenous perceptions of U.S. actions. The U.S. Army must become better at influencing information media, or at a minimum, limiting the damage caused by its enemy's deliberate misinformation campaigns.

Robotics and technology. Unmanned aerial vehicles, ground-based robotics, complex software systems, advanced weapon systems, and highly automated vehicles demand increasingly specialized workforces to operate and maintain them. While the Army is trying to move toward units that are more homogeneous and toward a more generalized workforce, the environment and nature of work in the contemporary operating environment demand a high degree of training and increased specialization.³¹ The Army should staff units with the necessary resident technical experts.

Medium armor. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have identified obvious tactical mobility and protection shortfalls addressed with ad hoc procurement solutions, but unchanged in the infantry brigade combat team modified table of organization and equipment. Companies should have an organic motorized platoon of medium-weight armored vehicles tailored to missions for troop transport and crew-served weapon employment. A battalion's mobility company and higher-level armored vehicle pools should be resources for additional armored combat vehicles.

Policing units. Lastly, the Army should add additional infantry and MP personnel to existing infantry brigades to account for the manpower-intensive nature of population-based operations. Brigades are well staffed to properly coordinate the actions

of additional subordinate units. At a minimum, the Army should add an additional infantry battalion to the infantry brigade combat team and expand infantry battalions to contain four companies, a reconnaissance platoon, and an armored (main gun system or other variant) platoon. Furthermore, the Army should enhance battalion capabilities with an organic military police platoon, specializing in investigative procedures, detainee handling, and biometric technologies with a dedicated number of women to assist with female interactions in traditionalist societies. The Army's recent transformation initiatives created brigades advertised as being smaller, but more lethal. Technology cannot make up for manpower in population-focused operations.

More Effective Brigades

The Army's answer to current brigade shortages in its Iraq and Afghanistan rotational pool is to increase the supply of available brigade combat teams. Instead, more *effective* brigades should be the goal. Adding a battalion of infantry, a company of military police (with specialized skill sets and the additional capabilities listed above) would better prepare a portion of the Army's general purpose force structure for irregular conflicts while limiting the number of redundant, manpower-intensive headquarters, logistics, and field artillery units that six more brigades would demand.³²

These force structure changes would still allow modified brigades to conduct conventional offensive and defensive operations where their small-unit proficiency could defeat an adversary in a close fight, or to utilize stand-off Joint air, man-portable, and indirect weapons against distant targets. These tactics are as essential to irregular operations as they are to conventional ones. However, they are not sufficient to properly protect a population, defeat or marginalize guerrilla fighters, train indigenous security forces, or promote the development and stability of an area before conflicts occur.

Fewer brigades would be available for rotational pools, but then fewer brigades would be necessary.

Technology cannot make up for manpower in population-focused operations.

Enhanced effectiveness on a per-capita basis would make up for the smaller number of brigades. The Army should use its expected increase in end strength to shift its capability mix more in favor of irregular combat, while maintaining a necessary hedge for improbable, but potentially catastrophic major combat operations. It should optimize a large percentage of BCTs for operations in urban terrain and amongst indigenous populations. While transformation's focus has historically been a technological one, the Army should use the increase in end strength to begin a similar transformation in the workforce.³³

Yet, increased capacity is not enough. An expansion in unit capabilities must be organized to be effective. The Army's organizational structure should become flatter, further empowering lower-level leaders and encouraging lateral communications. Simply expanding the number of subordinate battalions and companies would be a start to force these changes. An even bolder move would be to cut an entire layer of hierarchy out of a tiered command structure that pre-dates Napoleon. This paradigm shift would be truly transformational.

McGregor proposed the idea of decentralizing the Army's force design and making it more flexible through the creation of combat groups. He reduced the brigade and division headquarters to one level of command. Groups (which could be designated as regiments) would consist of six to eight maneuver battalions (twice the size of today's brigades) reporting to corps-based Joint task forces. In addition to having a more streamlined command structure in an increasingly dynamic environment, Army colonels would be able to broaden their understanding of national security by serving in interagency and foreign military positions or seek greater educational experiences prior to assuming command of a regiment. In addition, cutting out a layer of command, could make a large number of staff personnel available for the remainder of the force.

The Army should integrate the skill sets listed above into the company and battalion levels, allowing for carefully tailored and locally administered actions. Battalion-level staffs (presently unchanged from their legacy structure) should have significantly increased intelligence capacities, information operations and public affairs specialists, and habitual civil affairs units. Non-combat specialists

would belong to a functional chain of command for home-station technical training. During combat operations, this chain of command would provide functional advice and staff support to brigade and higher echelons.

In summary, the Army should increase its end strength by improving its capability to conduct nontraditional operations in an irregular conflict environment. The Army should increase the number of intelligence, construction, civil affairs, and information domain specialists. It should increase the number of infantry battalions and MP units within the brigade combat teams and increase the number of technical specialists to maximize the value of advanced equipment. The Army should institutionalize modular units of medium-armored, wheeled troop transports in the infantry brigade combat team modified table of organization and equipment. It should not reserve all of these added capabilities for functional units or senior headquarters. Instead, the Army should fully integrate them into combat units—particularly the infantry brigade combat teams—at the lowest possible level. In this manner, the infantry brigade combat teams will remain full spectrum capable, but better optimized for irregular environments. The changes proposed here would allow infantry brigade combat teams to maintain their lethal capabilities while expanding to become the expeditionary units demanded by DOD 3000.07:

...units organized, trained, and equipped that, when directed, are able to provide civil security, restore essential government function, repair key infrastructure necessary to government function and to sustain human life, and reform or rebuild indigenous security institutions until indigenous, international, or U.S. civilian personnel can do so.

Despite proclamations of "the most comprehensive transformation of its force since World War II," I believe incremental steps taken by recent modularity initiatives are not bold enough to allow Army ground forces to properly prepare for and face the future challenges of conducting operations in 21st century irregular environments.³⁴ I have proposed numerous changes for consideration by defense planners and the Army community in the hope of spurring increased public discussion of the Army's future force design and capabilities. **MR**

NOTES

1. This article is derived from the author's masters monograph, "Organizing for Irregular Warfare: Implications for the Brigade Combat Team" (Naval Postgraduate School, December 2007), available at <www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA475829&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>. The 175-page monograph explores threat debates and force design proposals in greater detail than this article.
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3. Douglas A. McGregor, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997).
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8. Alan Vick, David Orletsky, Bruce Pirnie, Seth Jones, *The Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Rethinking Strategic Responsiveness and Assessing Deployment Options* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002).
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10. From 29 October 2001 until 31 January 2005, the Department of Defense Office of Force Transformation was headed by (then retired) Arthur K. Cebrowski.
11. George Bush as quoted by DOD, *Transformation Planning Guidance*, 3.
12. Donald Rumsfeld's foreword to DOD, *Transformation Planning Guidance*, 1.
13. DOD, *Transformation Planning Guidance*, 4.
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25. Gordon England, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," DOD Directive 3000.05 (28 November 2005), 1.2, <www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf>.
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29. Michelle Tan, "Deciding Who Goes, Where and When," *Army Times*, 14 October 2007.
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31. For example, the Raven and an increase in other robotics should encourage the Army to create a new MOS such as a "robotics specialist." Furthermore, drivers and weapons operators for the Army's emerging joint light tactical vehicle and future combat systems vehicles should become a designated MOS, allowing them to master the operations and maintenance of these increasingly complex systems while "passengers" focus on their primary combat tasks. An increase in biometric equipment and databases is another example of an area requiring focused training.
32. There are numerous effects a growth in unit size would create that are beyond the scope of this article. For example, base housing, installation support, and training area availability would all need to be assessed and expanded as necessary. There is an objective balance, albeit one difficult to measure, between force design effectiveness and fiscal efficiency.
33. Max Boot, "Military Strategies for Unconventional Warfare," comments at the Council on Foreign Relations, hosted by Thomas D. Shanker, 27 October 2006; <www.cfr.org/publication/11834/military_strategies_for_unconventional_warfare_rush_transcript_federal_news_service.html>.
34. Army Transformation Office, *2004 Army Transformation Roadmap*.



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BREAKING TACTICAL FIXATION

The Division's Role

**Brigadier General Alan Batschelet, U.S. Army;
Lieutenant Colonel Mike Runey, U.S. Army; and
Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Meyer Jr., U.S. Army**



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PHOTO: U.S. Army SSGT Brian Dawson participates in a cache search mission in Baghdad, Iraq, 9 October 2009. (U.S. Army, SPC Benjamin Boren)

CAMPAIGNING OVER THE LAST HALF DECADE has left an indelible mark on Army professional discourse and doctrine. When it comes to counterinsurgency operations, we are a small-unit Army. Tough fighting and persistent nonlethal operations both in the streets of Baghdad and on other fronts for the last five years has proven just how critically important it is for tactical leaders and Soldiers to reside directly with their host nation forces, among the very population that they protect. In contact with opposing forces, the Army has transformed. Modularity provided a means and a way to meet the strategic requirement of rapid response and intervention, yet the chosen strategic solution caused Army leaders to refine tactics for the modular, deployable formations. Combat and transformation have caused America's land-power leaders to make the tactical level of war their focus for close to a decade.

The Army has virtually ignored the divisional headquarters role in today's modular force. This, with the past decade's tactical orientation, will likely prove detrimental to the current counterinsurgency mission and to fighting and winning decisive campaigns. Doctrine development verifies this point. The current division field manual, *Division Operations*, was published in 1996. The most current field manual, FMI 3-91, is currently only a draft, dated early 2006. The successful execution of full spectrum operations in a modularized force that operates on a fully committed rotation cycle requires the full advantage of division headquarters capabilities and roles. We may overlook this point if we remain fixated on the tactical elements of counterinsurgency.

Attention to the tactical level—specifically the brigade combat team and below—has unnecessarily diverted attention away from the operational level of war. The division headquarters bridges the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of complex, full spectrum military operations. In an era of persistent conflict and evolving doctrine, the Army must aggressively address the division headquarters' organization, functions, and roles.

Division Headquarters Redefined

Today's division headquarters has broken the ties to Cold War structures. The Army sprinted to modularize brigade combat teams, but the division headquarters evolved more slowly. Operational success increases with favorable outcomes at the tactical level, but not exclusively. Many view

Many view the division commander as a provider who allocates resources to teams. This is tactical myopia.

the division commander as a provider who allocates resources to teams. This is tactical myopia. Divisions do manage enablers—true. However, the division commander and his staff provide other critical functions to the modular forces, especially in counterinsurgency. The division brings coherence to tactical efforts: combined planning and operations across vast operational environments, interagency coordination, and commander and key leader engagements that shape the future operational environment for months and years.

Acknowledging the power and limitations of brigade combat teams is a critical first step toward redefining the division headquarters. In today's modularized force, it is the division commander and his staff—no others—who combine the capabilities of brigades and key enabling units to coherently fight widely scattered battles and engagements. The modular brigade is a very powerful organization, but it is the division commander who pulls together these brigades—all trained at disparate locations—and provides them a unifying vision. The commander focuses everyone on the end state that extends beyond unit rotational time lines and changing task organizations. The commander's staff then plans and directs actions, creating solutions to achieve the desired future, in concert with other units and agencies, coalition partners, and host nation leaders. Lacking a robust and more experienced staff, brigades simply cannot take on such scope or touch on all the elements of power. The teams have limits, and they best serve the Army when the teams' leaders acknowledge these limitations candidly.

For example, a brigade combat team commander can track and

engage insurgents who operate in his battlespace, but live in another team's operational area and receive supplies through a third. Combat teams simply cannot effectively fight that effort alone. Further, highly acclaimed fusion cells—organized, resourced, and run largely by the division and special operations—enable the team commanders and their staffs to see across their boundaries, yet they cannot direct cross-boundary action. Only the division commander, by guiding and empowering his key staff officers, can coordinate this effort across team boundaries. While some may reply that the division faces the same problem with adjoining divisions, division operational environments span hundreds of linear kilometers, while the combat teams' operational environments, though still large, are far more limited. Counterinsurgent targeting gains much more coherence inside the division's operational environment. The division's staff can also better manage the combined special operations efforts that coincide in time and space with the team's tactical efforts and direct the over-arching campaign—with lethal and nonlethal elements against larger threat groups and networks. The division extends the effectiveness of companies and battalions, synthesizing their myriad tactical efforts over time and across organizational, national, and regional boundaries.



U.S. Navy, Petty Officer 2d Class Todd Frantom

U.S. Soldiers direct Iraqi civilians to stay orderly during a medical outreach and medicine delivery to Iraqi civilians at Iraqi National Police Headquarters in the Aamel community of southern Baghdad, Iraq, 2 December 2008 .

This also applies in nonlethal operations such as civil affairs, information operations, and command group and key leader engagements. Brigade combat teams are critically important and perform each of these functions superbly, but they also require everything that a division commander, his deputy commanders, and staff can provide. Brigade commanders and their staffs must stretch to meet non-standard missions. In Iraq, the division, with the assistance of its partnered provincial reconstruction team, supports tactical efforts by engaging leaders at the provincial and large city level. Issues such as budget execution and planning, essential service redistribution and rebuilding, and engagement with ministry level officials begin at the division level. Results of these engagements and efforts then flow down to the teams.

In today's operating environment, the division is the juncture of complex tactical actions and operational and strategic efforts. The division commander and his staff identify, create, or enable exploitation of tactical opportunities and link them to stated campaign goals. Corps headquarters cannot do this effectively, because they are too far away from the tactical efforts. Battalions and brigades may see and act on certain opportunities, but they cannot carry the effort very far. The division, however, takes the corps' broader complex view of the operational environment and translates that into tactical applications. Most importantly, the division commander's headquarters is the first echelon of command that can combine interagency and multi-national lethal and nonlethal efforts to achieve unified action. Brigades, even when resourced with enhanced provincial reconstruction teams and other nonlethal enablers, cannot bring sufficient capacity or depth to the interagency or multi-national arenas. They simply are not designed for these tasks. Attempts to hang more and more enablers onto the brigade structure overburden the brigade staff and exceed

the brigade commander's span of control. Such an approach requires the brigade combat team to do what a division staff does, a requirement that the team cannot accomplish.

The division headquarters overlaps the operational and strategic levels of war in new ways. The commander in the operational environment in Baghdad makes critical decisions with operational and strategic implications unique to his level of command. A strong division headquarters empowers modular teams enhanced with appropriate key enablers to accomplish their missions in a coherent, synchronized manner. The division brings unique, robust enablers and the ability to coordinate lethal and nonlethal efforts. By synchronizing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; public affairs and media engagement teams; funding sources; legal depth; and intelligence structures, the division controls a host of functions to enable effective division-wide efforts. Further, only the division has the authority to place liaison office cells at host nation government, police, and military organizations to unify these efforts.

Seeing the problem with a deeper and longer view sets the stage for the division in its operational context. Commanders, staffs, and flags rotate in and out of operational environments, but the mission remains nearly the same. Before the 4th Infantry Division deployed to Baghdad in November 2007, its staff researched earlier Multi-National-Division Baghdad mission statements and commander's intent statements dating to November 2004. The similarities were striking. Each successive division flag that assumed Multi-National-Division Baghdad's mantle consistently focused on securing the population, enabling the host nation security forces, and transitioning to civil governance. The conditions continue to change, but the mission and end state have proven reassuringly consistent.

While most division commanders and their staffs figure out the requirement for the extended operational view, they often expend a lot of energy up front by writing new operational plans prior to deployment. Indeed, we did this ourselves. After about three months of experience in theater, the newly arrived division staff discovers that its mission and desired end state were similar to those of the division headquarters they replaced. In the end, they adapt their operational efforts to the ongoing

...the division commander's headquarters is the first echelon of command that can combine interagency and multi-national... efforts to achieve unified action.

campaign plan and end state from corps and higher, updating them around the margins and realigning priorities, allocations, and focus. This takes nothing away from the commander and his power to influence, command, and direct those within his command structure.

The commander continues to be the critical factor. His will carries major operations from concept through execution. While a division commander's decisions range from the tactical through strategic level, he uniquely shapes the operational level of war. There is something to be said for a newly formed commander-staff team conducting a thorough review of prior divisional operations and the corps' campaign plan. Unless the operational environment, strategic mission, or end state have changed substantively, the incoming division's operational framework will closely resemble that of the division headquarters it is about to replace.

Upon deployment, division commanders and their staffs fall in on campaigns orchestrated by corps and force level commands. The rotational division headquarters conducts one long-running operation in that campaign. The division's subordinate units—as they move through their rotation cycles—continue to fight the battles and engagements and sustain other full spectrum efforts. Such a construct seems simple. Adopting it in practice has proved challenging.

Part of that challenge is accounting for operational-level dynamics. While always involved in the tactical realm, the division commander consistently considers the campaign plan provided by his higher headquarters, the assets and enablers, and the dynamics of the division's operational environment. His aim point, as he sorts through the daily and weekly challenges, remains the end state. He focuses and refocuses himself and his team on it, despite the tyranny of the urgent, the pressures of the news cycles, or the targeting tempo. Masters of battalion and brigade leadership, division commanders resist being drawn too far into the tactical sphere. Although tactical issues clearly deserve the commander's and division staff's attention, the division commander deliberately commits to

the end state. The tension of the tactical is never fully resolved—Army leaders are experienced and successful at this level, and tactics are undeniably important. Resisting the tactical pull and remaining in the operational sphere is decisive.

The division staff, almost more than its commander, must start and finish securely planted in the operational realm. Each staff team must be committed to creating the conditions and aligning the resources to produce the desired future—the one inherited through the campaign plan and the operational framework and directed with higher fidelity and focus by the division commander. Yet the long view cannot be the staff's sole focus. It must foster relationships with the modularized brigades and enablers ready to respond to opportunities that emerge from tactical developments.

The staff must anticipate and remain responsive to the dynamic situation as the division progresses toward the end state. By also establishing and strengthening working relationships with other agencies, host nation forces, and coalition headquarters, the division staff will leverage these strategic partners

to create conditions for long-term progress and prevent strategic reversals. In Baghdad, a division staff coping with insurgent sanctuary in Sadr City is an example of a staff working to accomplish a long-term mission to achieve the end state. Together with tactical and strategic partners, the divi-

sion commander and his staff account for the rapidly shifting political, social, and military dynamics.

Setting the conditions for secure provincial elections is another division effort that spans the levels of war and requires synchronization across them, especially in working in partnership with Iraqi Security Forces. Brigade combat teams simply cannot and should not handle the full scope of the synchronized effort. This is not to minimize the fact that success, in large measure, hinges on the teams' efforts. An operational approach enables the division staff to span the tactical through the low-strategic levels of modern war. By synchronizing the tactical efforts while remaining focused on the extended view, the division more effectively operates with higher and other headquarters, agencies, and partners.

Resisting the tactical pull and remaining in the operational sphere is decisive.

Renewed emphasis on the division headquarters does not necessarily make that echelon of command effective. Performance in three broad areas dictates a division's effectiveness:

- The division commander's ability to span the tactical operations through strategic conditions over time.
- The staff's ability to organize and act to create the conditions that lead to realizing the commander's vision.
- The ability of the division commander and his staff to gain unified action with other agencies and partners as they move toward a common end state.

Success begins with the division commander. His communicated will and vision provide the staff, brigade combat teams, and key enabling units a common focus. In Baghdad, the principles found in FM 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*, are bearing out, despite the complexities and uncertainties of the operating environment. Modularized brigade combat teams and enablers conducting full spectrum operations across vast distances thrive under a commander-centric system. The division commander sees his world differently than team commanders see theirs.

Viewpoint

Army doctrine articulates the environment of military operations as complex but linear: see yourself, see the enemy, and see the terrain. In counterinsurgency, we ask which enemy insurgent groups are inherently shadowy, ill-defined, and overlapping. What about terrain? The variables of terrain now include the physical, environmental, social, political, infrastructure, and cultural. The division commander must mentally grasp this vastly expanded environment in all its nuances and make sense of incredibly chaotic events. His staff assists, but ultimately it is the commander who must "see" the division's environment at the sufficient level of detail and then effectively communicate his vision to his team, interagency, and host nation partners.

By design, division headquarters evolve into nonstandard formations. Currently, Multi-National Division-Baghdad controls six maneuver brigades [September 2009]. At one point, ten operated in the province. The headquarters leadership also integrates into the division efforts and controls key enablers envisioned in doctrine: a military police brigade, an

engineer brigade, a combat aviation brigade, and a civil affairs battalion. What we did not anticipate, though, were the myriad of extras required of a modular division headquarters.

The span of influence extends well beyond coalition forces. The division commander will become partners with a host nation corps headquarters, three army and two police divisions, and two area commanders that resemble corps commanders in purpose. The division commander attaches advisory teams to these organizations and augments them with personnel from the division staff. He also supports and integrates these organizations with a State Department-led provincial reconstruction team and coordinates with other government agencies, private voluntary organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to improve security and reconstruction efforts across the province. The staff must extend itself and its processes by enabling the commander to coordinate effectively with these agencies. Coordination among these disparate agencies is complex and often conflicting, but a well-integrated and mutually supporting division staff greatly enhances the division commander's span of control and influence.

Other organizations that support the division are frequently attached to the division special troops battalion. This catch-all organization provides command and control for such organizations as the mobile public affairs detachments, the psychological operations company, and other key enablers that do not have a large enough footprint to be self-sustaining. Multi-National Division-Baghdad's division special troops battalion has expanded to the size of a small brigade. Built for flexibility, the battalion allows the division commander to both control and support these smaller key enablers across the division and among our interagency partners.

Expanding the division's span of control and influence among units, attachments, and interagency partners is challenging enough, but the division must also extend its planning time horizons while it coordinates current operations. The division commander's mind must consider the day's leader engagements with host nation civic leaders as well as the immediate security crisis while gauging the division's progress toward long-term campaign objectives. Matters of immediate importance incessantly pull energy to the near-term, largely because

today's events shape tomorrow's potentials. The division commander uses the staff to force extended operational-view thinking, not only in planning, but more importantly in assessments. The division commander and staff must coordinate efforts with host nation forces and other agencies who share different views on time. While brigade combat teams and their partnered Iraqi units provide security for the populace day to day, and brigade combat teams with their enhanced provincial reconstruction teams engage local governance leaders routinely, the challenge of time is magnified at division. Instead of days and weeks, divisions deal with months, yet easily become caught in the crisis of the day. We have found that division commanders and staffs must operate with the tensions created by dealing with current crises while moving toward end state on extended time horizons.

Span of control and influence, coupled with broader time horizons, leads to the challenge of operating at all levels of war simultaneously. A common critique of Army senior leaders is that many revert to "Squad Leader 6." As the division commander walks the ground and drives the same routes as his Soldiers do, day in and day out, he sees the operational environment through a tactical lens. The commander then applies his operational and strategic lens to the very same view; but rarely do subordinate commanders see this, often because those commanders engage the division commander almost solely on tactical issues. Through his staff and engagements with his higher headquarters, the division commander also functions regularly in the operational and strategic realm. The commander keeps this extended operational view through regular plans updates, operational plan reviews, and frank discussions with his key leaders on the long-term outlook in light of the immediate situation. At the end of the day, though, the division commander fights to retain the operational perspective, while regularly communicating with the tactical

...the challenge of time is magnified at division. Instead of days and weeks, divisions deal with months...

and strategic worlds. The division commander and staff are the only elements that regularly span all of these levels and synchronize the efforts across them.

Experience bears out the truth that the division commander requires able deputies and senior officers to extend his vision and influence more than the standard organizational chart allows. The "Deputy Commanding General" model works well, especially when additional colonels operate in key positions to extend the division commander's vision into action and provide him key information for critical decisions. The commander's success rises and falls, in large measure, on the cohesiveness and effectiveness of his senior leader team. He empowers these senior officers and provides them with a clear frame of reference with which to work. This team exists both inside and outside of the headquarters in important areas beyond the practical reach of the brigade combat teams. This senior leadership



U.S. Air Force, SSGT Luke P. Thelen

Members of the Salah ad Din Provincial Reconstruction Team, local provincial sheiks, and U.S. Army leaders eat together on 23 August 2009, during an Iftar dinner. The Iftar dinner is the traditional evening meal during the Islamic month of Ramadan.

team clearly distinguishes the division effort from the brigade combat team effort.

This leadership team, with its experience and authority, empowers the division-wide key leader engagement plan. Much energy is expended training company, battalion, and brigade leaders how to engage the key leaders at their local level. In today's form of warfare, the ability of the Army's junior leaders to engage actively with the local population is essential to their tactical success. However, brigade combat teams are limited in their capacity to actually reach and engage with key leaders at the city and provincial level. Their areas of operation are densely populated and extremely complex both culturally and physically, demanding the attention of a brigade commander and his deputy. Only the division brings seniority that other social, political, religious, and military cultures respect at the operational level. The division's four general officers (including the engineer brigade commander) not only control many aspects of doctrinal divisional functions, they also engage city and provincial key leaders regularly. In many ways, the generals have become diplomats in uniform, integrating their engagements with, and in many cases in support of, newly created provincial reconstruction teams from the State Department.

Enabling these key engagements requires staff commitment and work. The division in Baghdad has addressed this in two ways. First, three experienced, handpicked colonels work as empowered division commander representatives.

One works directly with the host nation corps commander and chief of staff and has a team of coalition officers and senior NCOs assisting him and liaising with the division staff. He works directly with the deputy commanding general for maneuver and the division's G3 to coordinate operations and develop and support host nation forces.

Another colonel serves as the senior uniformed officer on the provincial reconstruction team, functioning as its deputy director. In close coordination with the division G9 and civil affairs battalion commander, this senior officer spans the interagency gap. He must see both short- and long-term, helping to coordinate the immediate humanitarian support and ensuring that the division's civil-military efforts do not conflict with long-term plans to reconstruct the city and province.

A third colonel serves in a forward capacity, close to the host nation government, and is the first line for coordinating key leader engagements with the community. Skilled in the host nation language and experienced by serving within the current operational environment, he has essential relations and connections with the provincial and city leaders. Augmented by a small forward team and a robust engagements cell in the division headquarters, this colonel does a lot of the front-end work for the division commander and deputy commanders in the host nation political realm.

Limitations

The current way of fighting divisions presents three problems. First, we are overly fixated with the tactical level. Proper balance between small-unit and brigade combat team efforts with the division fight does much to alleviate that problem and actually improves the tactical performances of the brigades and battalions. Second, the division commander and his staff must continually reevaluate their thinking about the operational environment and its complexities. They must expand their vision of the operational problem in terms of time, geography, and population. Multi-National Division-Baghdad is working to do that in several ways. Finally, to be effective, the division staff must reorganize to engage communities outside of the Army organization. The commitment of robust liaison teams led by senior officers is a solution that worked for us.

Modern war levies ever-increasing demands on the division commander and his staff. Yet, our current emphasis on small-unit counterinsurgency risks ignores the division's role in full spectrum operations. Giving serious, professional consideration to the division headquarters organization and employment effectively bridges the tactical with the strategic application, thus empowering the tactical efforts of small units and brigades.

...our current emphasis on small-unit counterinsurgency risks ignores the division's role in full spectrum operations.

The division level headquarters does so much more than just provide and allocate enablers. While today's brigade combat teams are super-empowered compared to their Cold War predecessors, they can only accomplish so much. The division commander and his staff can operate in the tactical through strategic realms and get the division to fight right.

In the near term, the Army must adjust the Human Resources Command's current manning goals and requirements for division headquarters to fill the modified table of organization and equipment requirements in theater. Contractors are part of the solution, but military leaders are a necessity. At a time when the Army is looking to draw down deployed forces, the need for capable and robust division staffs is actually increasing.

Division headquarters that are slated for deployment must work both early and quickly to orchestrate manning requirements, fill duty positions, develop staff interrelationships, and conduct external processes. These deploying headquarters will gain situational understanding of their new operational environment quite early. They accomplish this through networked communications with forward units and shared knowledge portals, through collaborative operational planning to cover the overlap of units, and by engaging with Center for Army Lessons Learned and Battle Command Training Center representatives. Division headquarters preparing to deploy must resist the urges to rewrite the operational plan from scratch and to bring their divisional patch to the fight. We learned the hard way. Unit pride has its place, even when deployed, but it takes a back seat to serving as a multi-national division headquarters with a non-standard task organization.

In both the mid- and long-term, the Army must relook how it staffs, equips, and employs its division headquarters. Current organizational and conceptual frameworks have proven insufficient for the demands levied by FM 3-0 and our operational needs.

The Army can overcome this by—

- Allocating the required personnel and resources *before* deployment for interagency and host nation military liaisons and senior military transition teams at the host nation division and corps headquarters.

- Allocating and training sufficient personal security detachments, thereby enabling the expanded division staff to provide their key leaders with the mobility the operational environment requires. The current structure simply does not provide this critical enabling element.

- Investing in the education and competencies of division staff officers and creating a separate career path for service on division staff. The School of Advanced Military Studies and similar programs are moving in this direction, and the U.S. Army Training and Doctrinal Command recently supported this initiative. It must continue on a broader scale.

In the realm of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, education, personnel, and facilities, we can get the doctrine and organization close, but preparing our personnel requires that we provide them with the proper training, leader development, and incentives to continue to serve. Intermediate level education provides some grounding in division staff work, but not enough. We must invest in division staff officers and reward their continued service at this echelon.

Best practices are emerging from the field, and our table of organization and equipment must account for what we are learning now or risk being whittled away by those tasked to reduce resource demands.

The Army is at a crossroads. Do we continue to remain fixated on brigade combat teams? Or do we expand our thinking to include not only combat teams but also divisions operating in complex and dynamic environments? We will continue to build, train, and deploy extremely capable brigade combat teams, but the Army must now give division-level operations their due by resourcing and shaping the modern division headquarters for full spectrum operations. **MR**

MITT ADVISOR:



A Year with the Best Division in the IRAQI ARMY

Colonel Timothy Deady,
U.S. Army Reserve, Retired

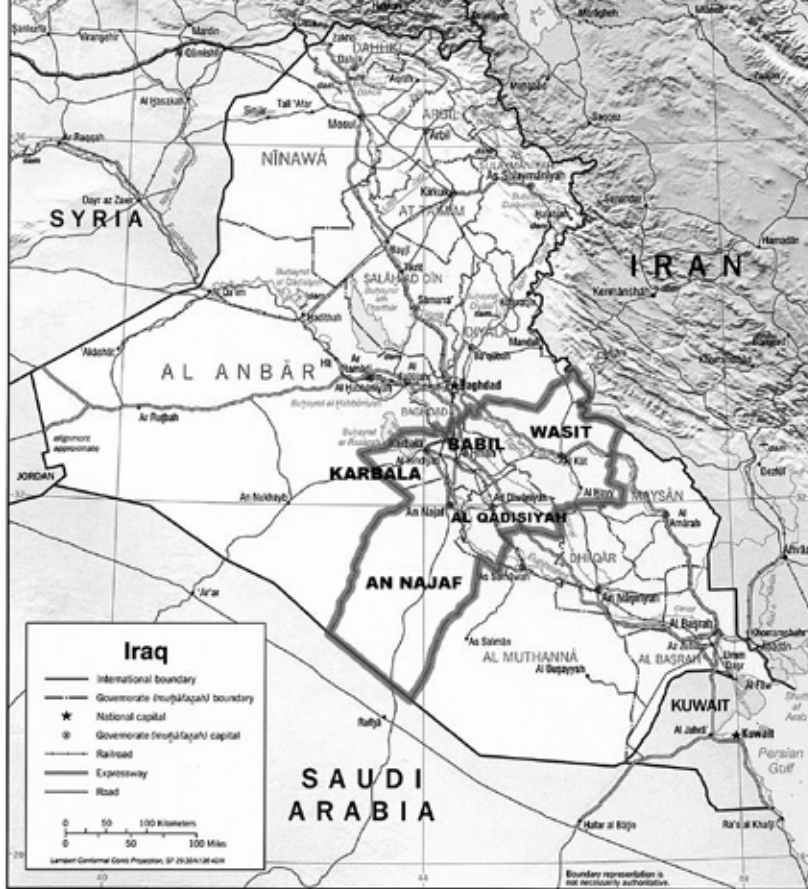
Colonel Timothy Deady served as 8th Iraqi Army Division MiTT Team Leader from December 2007 through November 2008. His previous assignment was as Commander, 2d Brigade, 100th Division, US Army Reserve in Owensboro, Kentucky. He also served as a battalion observer/trainer and training group commander in the 85th Division. COL Deady has a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago, and M.S. in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He retired from the Army Reserve in 2009 following 30 years of active and reserve service.

PHOTO: The author speaks with Colonel Hassan, the Iraqi Army's 8th Division Chief of Staff, about humanitarian aid options of benefit to the Iraqi people, 3 June 2008, at Camp Echo, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force, Airman 1st Class Matthew Plew)

AMERICAN SOLDIERS have been advising the Iraqi Army since 2004.¹ During military transition team (MiTT) training at Fort Riley in late 2007, the few published references describing advisors' experience at division level or higher dated from the Vietnam War. Articles covering the recent advisor experience in Iraq dealt predominantly with the tactical level. This article focuses on the 8th Iraqi Army Division (8IA) in 2008. Senior American and Iraqi commanders regarded this unit as top-tier, arguably the best in the Iraqi Army in terms of tactical competence and the ability to provide security in its area of responsibility while conducting operations driven by Iraqi intelligence. Iraqi Ground Forces Command and Ministry of Defense routinely praised the 8th Division as the Iraqi Army's best.² The commanding general's leadership and the division's operational successes and proficiency in personnel actions, training, and logistics have all been cited as the top in the Iraqi Army. The division has been selected as the test-bed for initiatives being considered for the rest of the Iraqi Army. As more Iraqi divisions achieve higher levels of operational readiness, they are likely to follow the path marked by 8IA.

The size and quality of Iraq's Security Forces continued to improve and the level of violence in the country dropped significantly during 2008. Changes in the status of U.S. forces in Iraq, coupled with the need for U.S. forces in Afghanistan, will almost guarantee fewer American troops in Iraq. Although the future number and composition of U.S. forces in Iraq are not yet determined, it appears clear there will be fewer U.S. combat units but a continued role for American advisors. This article will share observations likely to remain relevant to future advisors at division and higher levels.³

By 2008, it was clear that Iraqi Security Forces needed to take the lead in securing the country to meet U.S. and Iraqi interests. How best to accomplish this became the benchmark by which the 8th Iraq Division transition team prioritized its actions. The team's goal was to build the division to a level of readiness that no longer required advisors.



8th Iraqi Army Division

The division's area of responsibility included five predominantly Shi'a provinces stretching from the Iranian border in the East to Saudi Arabia in the Southwest, plus portions of some adjoining provinces.⁴ This arc of land between Baghdad and the port of Basra covers almost one third of the country. The division's 17,500 soldiers were organized into four infantry brigades, transportation and engineer regiments, plus divisional signal, intelligence, military police and headquarters companies. Each of the division's four brigades was headquartered in a different province, and the division headquarters was in a fifth province. In January 2008, only two of the provinces in the division's AOR were under Iraqi control.⁵ All five were by October 2008. The division went from 10 to 16 infantry battalions in 2008. Unlike most divisions, the 8th Division

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remained directly subordinate to the Iraqi Ground Forces Command.⁶

In 2008, Major General Oothman Ali Salih Farhood began his fifth year in command of the 8th Division. Highly regarded by senior Iraqi and coalition leaders, the general declined promotions to command the Basra and Diyala Operations Commands while awaiting creation of a corps command that included the existing 8th Division area of responsibility.⁷

In August 2007, Diwaniyah, the capital of Qadisiyah province and the location of 8th Division headquarters, was the indirect-fire capital of Iraq; the city receiving the greatest amount of incoming mortar and rocket fire. Operation Wathba Al-Asad (Lion Pounce) successfully regained control of the city in late 2007. As the 8th Division and coalition forces continued to build stability in the area, the transition team's efforts shifted from coaching the division in combat

operations to assisting it in force generation, sustainment, and training. In 2008, the division went from being supported by a battalion from the 7th Iraqi Army Division to providing forces to commands in provinces outside its area of operations. At different times during the year, six of the division's battalions operated out of sector, earning the 8th Division a reputation as a unit with expeditionary capabilities.

8th Division MiTT

The standard division MiTT structure was 15 Soldiers—seven officers from captain to lieutenant colonel, and seven NCOs from staff sergeant to master sergeant—led by a colonel. Through most of 2008, just over half of the Iraqi Army's fourteen divisions were resourced with a standard MiTT. The 8th Division MiTT had six captains and majors, five NCOs, and four other Soldiers, which made the team the same size as a standard division MiTT for a time, albeit with Soldiers junior in rank.⁸

The 8th Iraqi Army Division MiTT was under administrative control of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division, a part of Multi-National Division-Center. Located at Camp Echo near the division headquarters in Qadisiyah province, the team

was under operational control of Multi-National Division Center-South (MND-CS). The MiTT was the senior U.S. unit subordinate to the Polish divisional commands leading MND-CS. In October 2008, MND-CS relinquished its role and the team came under the operational control of the 2/4 Brigade Combat Team. U.S. transition teams advised all four of the division's brigades and some of its infantry battalions. Some were "external" teams formed at Fort Riley, and trained there, in Kuwait, and in Iraq. After training, teams transferred to the units that owned the battlespace in which they were located. Other brigade and battalion transition teams in the division were "out-of-hide" teams formed internally from their parent brigade combat teams.

A Commander-centric Organization

Decision making in the 8th Division typically resided with more-senior officers than would be common in an American combat unit. The MiTT team leader partnered with the 8th Division commanding general, his deputy, and the division chief of staff. Both coalition force units and subordinate Iraqi commands regularly asked the team to help obtain decisions and actions from the division command group. Because of this, the division MiTT was often involved in high-level decision making with respect to promotions, reliefs for cause, operational decisions, equipment allocation, unit basing, and force protection. The team leader often served as the catalyst for action from the division command group. This was particularly important in an organization so leader-centric in its planning and decision making.

The other advisors partnered with entire staff sections. Deciding which division staff officers to engage to get a decision was crucial because it was normal for one quarter to a third of an element to be on leave at any given time. With experience, it became clear what types of decisions each officer had the authority to make, and which were the prerogative of the section head. Advisors learned to decide whether to seek resolution

from the principal staff officer, the head of a subordinate section, or the command group.

The commanding general approved a surprisingly large amount of actions that would be routine staff work in a U.S. formation, including repair parts requests and fuel allocations.

Iraqi brigade commanders sometimes sent requests through their MiTT advisors for assistance in getting decisions from the commanding general. Because this did not support Iraqi security forces self-sufficiency, advisors generally encouraged Iraqi commanders to contact General Oothman directly.⁹

Division Troop Leading Procedures

The Iraqi Army planning process has been jokingly described as both "division troop leading procedures" and "delay, decide, deliver, adjust."¹⁰ Such tongue-in-cheek comments correctly convey that planning in the Iraqi Army is less deliberate and faster than American officers are accustomed to. The division G3 once remarked to his advisor, "Too much planning causes too many problems." In another context, these observations could seem disparaging. However, the comments are instructive in understanding how each army's planning appears to the other.



8th Division Commanding General, MG Oothman, is joined by the Division G2, COL Khadem, in a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Noori al Maliki following a discussion of security concerns in the country's south, 2009.

MAJ Thoms C. Long

...U.S. planning processes seem overly complex and time-consuming.

Through a U.S. lens, Iraqi planning appears underdeveloped and reactive. Viewed from the other direction, U.S. planning processes seem overly complex and time-consuming. Yet the Iraqi Army system is flexible and responsive, and it works well at lower echelons. An Iraqi battalion can respond quickly to a new threat or situation. A senior U.S. officer observed an Iraqi unit depart five minutes after being notified of a hostage situation. In less time than it would have taken a typical U.S. unit to complete the abbreviated Military Decision Making Process, the Iraqi Army unit had killed the kidnappers and released the hostages. While this planning model works for the Iraqi Army against today's threat, it may prove inadequate against future, larger-scale threats. This is particularly true for a division headquarters once the Iraqi Security Force gains more aircraft, indirect fire assets, and other enablers.

Before beginning the process of assisting an Iraqi Army counterpart in planning an operation or program, advisors had to understand the commanding general's guidance. Initiatives that did not have his approval stood no chance of success. For major undertakings, the most productive sequence was for the team leader to meet with him to determine his level of interest and planning guidance. Once assured of this, it was certain the division staff would work closely with the MiTT. The staff principal and MiTT advisor would meet regularly to discuss the project or initiative.

Conducting interim progress reviews was especially useful when working with less-motivated staff officers. About half of the primary staff performed to a standard that would fit well with a coalition force staff. However, without the deputy commanding general's or chief of staff's participation in interim progress reviews, some Iraqi officers would seek to placate their advisors without achieving much. Keeping senior leaders informed was important to ensuring progress.

In early 2008, Iraqi Ground Forces Command directed 8th Division to return the battalion that

had been on loan from the 7th Division for several months.¹¹ Knowing the battalion was scheduled to return to Anbar (its home station), the MiTT offered to work with the division staff in planning. The division G3 declined the offer, stating that his commanding general had not directed him to do it. MiTT advisors then offered to assist in developing courses of action to maintain security after the battalion's departure. This was also politely declined because it had not been ordered. The 8th Division staff conducted little contingency planning. They typically relied upon the commanding general for a directed course of action before beginning planning.

Noncompliance Not Uncommon

One of the more puzzling aspects of working with the 8th Division was the unit's ability to disregard written orders from higher commands with apparent impunity. The events related to the return of 7th Division's battalion provided insight into how opaque 8th Division decision making could be. Less than a week before the unit was to return, no preparations for the battalion's return to home station had been made. The Iraqi Ground Forces Command MiTT and Iraq Assistance Group contacted the division MiTT to ensure the Division was planning to release the unit. Since the division had not planned for this (because the commanding general had not approved it), the team recommended that Iraqi Ground Forces Command send a written order, reinforcing the originally specified release date. The order was prepared and sent.

The day after receiving the order, it became less confusing why no planning had taken place. The commanding general traveled to Baghdad and personally appealed to the Ministry of Defense. This resulted in the battalion's attachment to 8th Division being extended for a number of weeks. U.S. advisors at all echelons were understandably surprised that this was acceptable in the Iraqi Army. Weeks later, as the new deadline approached, plans were made to transport the battalion back to Anbar and to backfill its security positions in the province. One did not need to ask if the commanding general had approved the plan.

A similar refusal demonstrated that even the Ministry of Defense was not exempt from division-level noncompliance. At one point it emerged that 8th Division had millions of rounds of AK-47 rifle

ammunition in excess of authorizations. The Ministry sent a written order for the unit to ship large quantities to other installations. The division did not comply.

Coalition advisors to the Ministry of Defense contacted the MiTT for assistance. The 8th Division conducted a physical recount of ammunition and reported that higher headquarters had not properly debited rounds consumed in operations from the unit's account. This revealed that the division actually had less than the original excess amount. When the Ministry of Defense then ordered the unit to ship a percentage of this revised amount elsewhere, the division again declined to do so. The MiTT shared the concerns of the higher echelon advisors with 8th Division. However, after a few such requests, both the Ministry of Defense and coalition force advisors gave up on the effort. Neither of these incidents appeared to hurt the division or the commanding general.

Understanding both groups' interests, the MiTT was able to contribute to a solution. At the time, approximately 40 percent of the division was equipped with M16s. Late in 2007, the Iraq Assistance Group halted M16 fielding to 8IA because 8IA had a number of soldiers in the ranks who had not completed basic training. By working with the division to stop the "street hire" practice, and communicating this in a letter to Iraqi Ground Forces Command, the MiTT gained approval to resume M16 fielding. By the time most of the division's rifles were M16s, the division began the process of exchanging 7.62 mm ammunition for 5.56 mm, freeing up AK-47 stocks for other Iraqi Army units.

It was not unusual for coalition advisors to request division MiTT assistance to get an Iraqi unit to comply with Iraqi orders. The team's standard reply was that the MiTT would ensure our Iraqi counterparts had received and understood the requirement. The MiTT certainly did not have the power to enforce Iraqi decisions or coalition force desires on the division. In fact, attempts to force a decision typically backfired, thereby damaging interpersonal relations. Early in the process of releasing the 7th Division's battalion, one MiTT advisor stated the coalition position too forcefully and too often. The predictable result was that this officer had to rebuild the relationship with his Iraqi counterpart over the next few months.



The author with members of the 8th Division staff and MiTT advisors at the 8th Division headquarters compound in late 2008.

courtesy of author

Reassignment, not Dismissal or Retirement

The Iraqi Army lacks a functioning retirement system. Rather than dismissing officers who were no longer performing in their prime, the division routinely reassigned these officers and sometimes created new, lateral roles to shunt them aside. The unit was well over-strength at senior ranks, but this did not appear to be of concern at Iraqi Ground Forces Command or at the Ministry of Defense.¹² Viewed through an American lens, the Iraqi Army was tolerant of weak performance and a degree of corruption.

A technique that sometimes worked to get weak performers removed from key Iraqi Army positions was for coalition advisors to provide written statements by those who witnessed misconduct. A brigade MiTT had been unsuccessfully attempting to have the deputy commander removed for many months. The deputy had been identified as corrupt, inept, and hostile to coalition forces. He routinely stole items (typically loading his car with unit property before going on leave), undercut the MiTT's effectiveness, and was ineffective in coordinating the staff. Despite this, the MiTT team leader's recommendation for removal to the brigade commander was unheeded. The commander also declined to address this with the commanding general. When the division MiTT chief raised

these concerns, the commanding general remained unconvinced of the need to remove the brigade deputy commander.

However, the brigade MiTT team recorded their observations in signed statements. Within a week after reading the translated witness statements, the division commanding general visited the brigade. After personally interviewing the brigade commander, the deputy, and the brigade MiTT team leader, the commanding general decided the allegations were credible. Within days, he removed the officer from his position and reassigned him. This was the typical sanction for senior officer misconduct.

Relationships

Very little good can happen without a solid relationship between an advisor and his counterpart. As Margaret Nydell notes in *Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Modern Times*, “A good personal relationship is the most important single factor in doing business successfully with Arabs.”¹³ Working together to solve problems, while having the cultural awareness and ability to see things from the Iraqi viewpoint, are straightforward ways to build rapport. Being able to provide something that an Iraqi counterpart would not otherwise have is also a good way to build the relationship. While MiTT teams have a small budget, and the rules on what Iraqis can purchase are somewhat restrictive, teams can provide goods and services that benefit the Iraqi Army and build cohesion.¹⁴ Some of the guidelines the 8th Division’s MiTT team developed may serve as a useful jumping-off point for other advisors:

- Set low expectations. The MiTT’s primary currencies are advice and communications.
- Do not provide things that undercut the Iraqi systems being developed.
- Gauge a counterpart’s interest level by the degree to which he is willing to expend resources and work on the solution.
- Coach counterparts into mastering Iraqi Army systems and processes.

With coalition forces from eight nations serving at MND-CS headquarters in Diwaniyah, the support provided by units partnering with 8th Division units varied widely. Some were willing to provide items available through the Iraqi Army supply system. Because their repair parts system is notoriously slow and unresponsive, Iraqis were understand-

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ably willing to accept items from partners. Some coalition forces regularly provided spare vehicle parts to one Iraqi unit. Yet, every time a coalition unit provided something also available through the Iraqi Army system, it delayed the Iraqis’ mastery of their own cumbersome system.

Construction material, medical supplies, and vehicle parts were among the items some coalition force units regularly provided. This undercut the MiTT’s efforts to have the Iraqi soldiers master their own system. The team often successfully deflected such requests with responses such as, “As the MiTT, we can provide whatever you wish—as long as it is advice.” Repeated enough times with a smile, the message was clear. The frequency of such requests dropped greatly, but never quite ceased.

Even when coalition force advisors *could* provide something, it was often advisable to have one’s Iraqi counterparts put some “skin in the game.” On one occasion, the coalition had gravel available to fill in muddy sections of an often-used road. Rather than merely fill the areas, which available coalition force assets could have easily done, a productive discussion on roles ensued. The Iraqi Army provided transport and labor for the project, thus building their own capabilities while the coalition demonstrated its willingness to work with them.

When the team was willing to provide an item in order to avoid failure in a critical Iraqi Army mission, it was also advisable to ask the Iraqi Army to complete and submit a supply request. Even if the submission didn’t result in getting the item from the Iraqi Army supply system, it served two functions. It ensured Iraqi counterparts understood and were competent at using their own system, and it provided a document that advisors could trace by working with coalition counterparts in the Iraqi Army supply system. This “shadow tracking” at higher nodes in the supply chain by MiTT members was useful in identifying whether there were

flaws in the manner the requests were prepared, or systemic problems.

Among the most valued services that advisors could facilitate was access to coalition medical care. The Iraqi Army, like the country as a whole, was short physicians. The 8th Division MiTT was able to link division soldiers, and in rare instances family members, with coalition force medical support. Each instance helped build relationships with key Iraqi leaders who were important to the success of the MiTT's work with the 8th Iraqi Army Division.¹⁵

Cultural Considerations and Differences

When an Iraqi counterpart asked for something, it was normally safer to answer, "This could be a problem" rather than "perhaps" or "I'll check." A MiTT officer asked an Iraqi counterpart, "When you say 'maybe' or 'we'll see,' it usually means 'no.' Yet when I say 'maybe,' you take it as a 'yes.' Why the difference?" His counterpart responded, "You come from the most powerful Army in the world. We know you could paint the sky orange if you wished." One expert advises, "If it is unreasonable, illegal, or too difficult, the correct form is to listen carefully and suggest that while you are doubtful about the outcome, you will at least try to help. Later you express your regrets and offer instead to do something else in the future."¹⁶

There was no reluctance on the part of Iraqi officers, even the colonels who served as the 8th Division primary staff, to partner with junior U.S. Army captains and senior NCOs. American NCOs were treated with the same courtesy as officers. On the many occasions when the MiTT dined with Iraqis, table positions were generally by rank order. U.S. NCOs sat in and among Iraqi officers. Indeed, since the senior advisor normally sat with the senior Iraqi present at any event, it was prestigious for Iraqis to be paired with an advisor.¹⁷

The Iraqi Army does not assign its NCOs or warrant officers (senior NCOs) with responsibilities similar to their peers in the U.S. Army. Other than sporadic work with the division sergeant major, all Soldiers on the MiTT spent the vast majority of their time working with Iraqi officers.

One of the places where differences in the two armies' cultures were evident was at meetings. Intelligence information was not widely shared.

Daily staff meetings began with a review of the current situation, as would an American update briefing, but the G2 had information to share only one or two days per month. Even that was usually a report on an event that had occurred, not actionable intelligence. Their rationale was that the staff as a whole didn't possess the "need to know."

The primary text on Arab culture used by transition teams during training at Fort Riley advised, "Arabs place great value on personal interviews."¹⁸ The commanding general's interview of the brigade deputy commander who was eventually relieved was evidence of this. Even candidates for battalion and brigade command were personally interviewed by Iraqi Army selection boards in Baghdad.

Iraqi officers, like other Arabs, "are confident that that the rejection of a request may be reversed if top-level personal contact can be made."¹⁹ Had the transition team better understood that this cultural norm sometimes trumped military standards on adherence to orders, we would have been less surprised by many of the events related here.

New participants at Iraqi Army meetings were often taken aback by the tone with which staff officers would address their superiors. Loud, emotional appeals were not uncommon and could cause an American Soldier to wonder whether someone was putting himself in danger of being fired. However, the MiTT came to appreciate that in Arab culture, "raising the voice, repeating points, even pounding the table for emphasis may sound angry, but in the speaker's mind, they merely indicate sincerity."²⁰

Two hours was about the maximum length for a productive meeting. Anything longer risked being terminated early by common (Iraqi Army) consent. Meetings were useful for sharing information and providing leaders a forum for addressing subordinates. They were less productive for developing a plan or obtaining a decision. An Iraqi leader hosting an event would not permit himself to appear weak or permit extensive focus on flaws in his organization. An October 2008 logistics conference represents an example. The agenda, developed jointly by Iraqi officers and their coalition advisors, called for presentations from 0900 until 1500. After an extended, and unplanned, talk by a senior Iraqi officer, the conference was back on schedule by lunchtime. As lunch ended, the Iraqis announced that the meeting



Soldiers from 8th Iraqi Army Division's 30th Brigade, conduct an After Action Review following company training at Numaniyah in the Fall of 2008.

was over, all goals having been accomplished. While some substantive discussions did continue into the afternoon, these were in smaller groups of peers from different organizations, unlike the morning session which included Iraqis ranked from NCOs to general officers.

The values of the two cultures account for a number of other differences. It is said, "Arabs will rarely admit to errors openly if doing so will cause them to lose face. *To Arabs, honor is more important than facts.*"²¹ This may partially explain why they did not make decisions in large gatherings. Opinions shared in small groups among peers or by officers and their direct subordinates are less confrontational and more likely to produce results.

Conducting after-action reviews was a new practice in the division. They occurred during training, but not at higher levels. When the concept was introduced, there was reluctance to raise any criticisms in front of leaders. Iraqi leaders were also initially averse to repeating training to improve performance. Serving as observer/controllers at battalion-level training, advisors convinced division leaders of the benefit of sharing observations and recommendations after training. Units readily used sand tables during AARs, and came to look forward to improving performance during subsequent iterations of a training scenario. The Iraqis eventually came to accept practices that were initially different from their norms.

Like the rest of the Army, officers in 8th Division lived on base away from their families and typically took two four-day periods of leave per month. While the top three leaders would adjust their planned absences based on operations and the situation, most of the primary division staff typically did not. This resulted in unexpected situations, such as primary staff officers being absent at critical times. Absences of key leaders were common during planning or execution of important events. When asked about this, 8th Division leaders normally responded that competent deputies

were present. The realization that, in the fifth year of the insurgency, one cannot put family life on hold forever, and their cultural view of fate likely played into this attitude toward absences.²²

Relationships with Higher Headquarters

Logistics and personnel systems in the Iraqi Army are complex, not well understood, and still relatively new. A standard request for training ammunition requires 12 signatures, a non-standard request 16. Compared with U.S. Army supply procedures, personal contact and good relationships with counterparts throughout the supply chain are vastly more important to meeting units' needs than accurately following procedures.

Thus, Iraqi Army officers can profit from maintaining regular contact with their colleagues at senior headquarters. The G1 was particularly successful because he traveled to Baghdad weekly to follow through on pay problems, promotion backlogs, and other personnel actions. His achievement in having the Iraqi Army's best record in personnel matters was closely linked to these regular visits.

In 2008, any U.S. Soldier with a Common Access Card had easier access into and around Baghdad's International Zone (formerly the Green Zone) than Iraqi officers with all but the highest-level access badge. This paradox meant there was a distinct advantage for Iraqi Army officers to travel with

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their advisors. It also served the MiTT's interests to meet advisor counterparts at higher headquarters.

When working with 8th Division staff officers with less initiative, the MiTT found it useful to arrange travel to make it easier for the staff to meet their counterparts.²³ The MiTT also learned that it was useful to invite senior Iraqi Army leaders to the division's conferences. Reflecting cultural values, good relationships generally proved more successful to solving problems than did solely adhering to procedures.

MiTT Organization

The year began with MiTT team members performing advisory functions that closely matched the standard roles on the team's organization chart. Most members performed similar functions both internally and in working with the Iraqi Army. For example, the advisor for the Iraqi Army G3 (operations) was also the team S3; the G1 (personnel) advisor was responsible for team administration; the team medic advised Iraqi medical professionals.

After an uprising by the Mahdi Army, the 8th Division demonstrated the ability to suppress any resistance in its area in less than 24 hours.²⁴ By mid-2008, months had passed without MiTT participation in combat operations.

While early in 2008, the MiTT's four additional positions were filled, by October all but the colonel had departed without replacement.²⁵ Because the team leader was not part of the battalion team that formed the core of the division MiTT, the start and end dates of his tour of duty were offset from the rest of the team. By summer, it was clear that logistics and sustainment were the division's greatest needs. With the improvement in the operating environment, the change in teams and a decrease in overall strength, the incoming MiTT took on different roles than their predecessors.

An offset in "relief in place/transfer of authority" dates proved to be a benefit for the incoming team. Rather than relying solely on a standard ten-day

transition process with their departing counterparts for situational awareness, the incoming team spent several months with the experienced team leader. Instead of directly following the previous organizations, the leader decided to structure the team to focus on the division's greatest need. As a result, the incoming transition team had three logistics advisor instead of one.

With fewer assigned members, the team had some advisors partner with multiple staff sections and units.

One advisor worked with the G3 (operations) and G7 (training), previously two different positions. The team was reduced from two intelligence officers to one, who partnered with both the G2 (intelligence) and the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance company commander. Another technique that worked for the team was adjusting the internal-external balance. In the outgoing team, most members had roles of near-equal importance on both sides of the walls that separated 8th Division from Camp Echo. By focusing one of the new team members on coalition reports and internal administration, most of the incoming team was able to spend more time with their Iraqi counterparts.²⁶

Another successful tool in organizing the newly-arrived team was a one-month azimuth check. As with any new team, there were unknowns regarding relationships, workload, and battle rhythm. One cannot align advisors, counterparts, and responsibilities precisely based on the situational awareness on the first day. The team therefore planned and executed a 30-day re-look of roles and responsibilities. This provided all team members a chance to shape their work environment after a month of building situational awareness. The adjustments made in roles, responsibilities, and the rating chain after the first 30 days prepared the team for success later in the year.

Small Unit on a Coalition Base

The 8th Division MiTT was one of a number of small U.S. units on a base where non-Iraqi allies predominated. A continuing challenge involved how and where to provide the greatest lasting benefit to the division staff, the separate companies, and two Iraqi battalions without transition teams located in Diwaniyah. The division MiTT found that good relationships with other U.S. and coalition forces increased the team's effectiveness in assisting the division.



courtesy of author

Commander of 8th Iraqi Army Division, 30th Brigade, gives feedback to his 1st Battalion after an assault conducted at Numaniyah in 2008.

During 2008, Ukrainian and U.S. military police who usually focused on professionalizing Qadisiyah's civilian police, also helped assess the division's military police company's readiness. A Bosnian explosive ordnance disposal platoon conducted training with 8th Division's ordnance disposal company, later incorporated into the 8th Field Engineering Regiment. A Polish MiTT team worked with one of the Iraqi infantry battalions in Diwaniyah.

When not otherwise engaged, Soldiers and vehicle crews from other U.S. units participated in convoys and mounted combat patrols with the team. The participation of these crews was particularly helpful. Every vehicle and crew provided by another unit meant that three MiTT advisors (driver, vehicle commander, and gunner) could work with their Iraqi counterparts, rather than simply contributing to the three-vehicle minimum required for a patrol.

Sub-MiTT

Forming small, task-organized MiTT elements, augmented with soldiers and vehicles from other units, was a useful technique. Sub-MiTTs traveled to other bases to work with different elements of the

division. At one time, the team was able to simultaneously deploy two sub-MiTTs while continuing work with key leaders at the division headquarters. The team executive officer led three soldiers from the MiTT, one of the team's Iraqi National Military Advisors, and augmentees from the parent brigade combat team to the training base at Numaniyah, where they coached an Iraqi battalion through Warrior Training.²⁷

The communications and logistics NCOs, one of the team's contractors, and personnel and vehicles borrowed from the provincial reconstruction team's security detachment comprised another sub-MiTT. This group worked at the Besmaya training center, overseeing the fielding of M16 rifles to other units within the division. During this period, the G7 advisor continued to work with his counterpart at division headquarters to resolve problems and coordinate with the units undergoing training and their advisors.

Cooperation with others was quite beneficial on a base without a major U.S. unit present.²⁸ Every U.S. unit in Camp Echo reported to a different higher command located elsewhere. Despite the "stove-piped" reporting chains, the units shared

situational awareness to improve their unity of effort and effectiveness. Sharing scarce resources, whether power tools, a plotter printer, or other information technology assets built a spirit of cooperation that contributed to mission success. With time, the MiTT was able to borrow vehicles and crews to form multiple convoys large enough to employ sub-MiTTs.

Advisors, Communication, and Situational Awareness

A contracted military advisor support team consisting of two special operations/foreign internal defense specialists (retired senior Special Forces NCOs) and two retired Iraqi brigadier generals who were former instructors at the Iraqi Army's Staff College augmented the MiTT. These four contractors made important contributions to the team's success. The U.S. contractors possessed the same skills and experience as their active duty counterparts. Both had spent multiple years in the Central Command area of operations during Operation Iraqi Freedom. With only one NCO on the team from a maneuver branch, the advisors expanded the team's capability to provide training.

The Iraqi National Military Advisors helped overcome the Iraqi Army's cultural aversion to raising problems or having substantive discussions during large meetings. They provided instant feedback to the MiTT by confirming (or questioning) statements made and recommending follow-up questions. They were seen as a safe, non-attribution channel in which to raise problems or to share observations on what was really going on. The Iraqi National Military Advisors also clarified discrepancies between U.S. and Iraqi Army military terminology that confused the team's interpreters, none of whom had military experience beyond basic soldiering. They also provided insight to how the Iraqi Army was supposed to function and attended informal office chats between the MiTT and staff principals.

U.S. contractors possessed the same skills and experience as their active duty counterparts.

Communication is crucial to success in an organization as large as an Iraqi division. In 2008, the Iraqi Army's internet system extended only to division level. To supplement communication the division MiTT established biweekly logistics and operations/training conference calls with MiTTs from 8th Division's subordinate brigades and battalions.²⁹ These calls were useful forums for understanding priorities and problems. Higher Iraqi headquarters also conducted audio and video conferences with division counterparts using the MiTT's more robust electronic communication media.

The Iraqi commanding general regularly hosted commanders and senior officers from the coalition divisions, the Multi-National Corps, the Multi-National Security Transition Command, and the Coalition Army Advisory Training Team. Special operations units and coalition brigades and battalions partnered with 8th Division subordinate units. Because multiple coalition force units had regular contact with elements of the division, each unit that partnered with or visited might garner information about the division that the transition team didn't have.

For situational awareness, the MiTT was the best single source to know what was happening across the division. It was therefore important to attend senior-level Iraqi Army and coalition force meetings and share information with coalition units. There were times when information in the advisor and coalition force channels was more current than that in Iraqi channels. The ability to share information with both 8th Division and coalition forces improved unity of effort and the situational awareness of all. For technological and cultural reasons, the division did not maintain 24-hour operations. The MiTT was able to maximize its effectiveness by matching the schedules of their senior Iraqi Army counterparts, rather than attempting to maintain 24-hour operations.

Success Building on Itself

During the course of the year, 8th Division's successes led to other opportunities. The division and the MiTT were proactive in working with the Iraqi Ground Force Command and Ministry Of Defense in improving the unit's logistics. When the Ministry Of Defense and its advisors decided to jump-start the Iraqi Army's poor repair parts

system by “pushing” repair parts to units, it selected the 8th as the first division to receive a shipment of 27 pallets of HMMWV spare parts.

When fielding of M16 rifles resumed, joint Iraqi and coalition cadre conducting weapons training at Besmaya were impressed with the manner in which the soldiers of 8th Division conducted themselves. Saying that “they showed up on time, with the proper equipment, and ready to train” may be faint praise in some circumstances, but by doing so the division differentiated the 8th from other Iraqi Army divisions. The division’s performance led to additional opportunities to replace its AK-47s. It moved to the top tier of units equipped with the new rifles and was also selected to receive a new intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance system.

“Iraqi Good Enough”

While the term “Iraqi good enough” might initially sound pejorative, it simply acknowledges that one cannot realistically use U.S. Army metrics such as Unit Status Report ratings, Mission Essential Task List proficiency, or Army Training and Evaluation Program standards in measuring success in building the Iraqi Army. The phrase represents the coalition’s attempt to quantify how proficient the Iraqi Army needs to become. Speaking of Afghanistan, the commander of the Combined Security Transition Command, Major General Robert Cone, stated, “We don’t need to make these cops as good as the 82nd Airborne. We just need to make them two-and-a-half times better than the enemy.”³⁰

While one can quantify and compare elements of combat power between symmetric forces, it is awkward to quantify the effectiveness of the Iraqi Army over its insurgent and militia enemies. But with all the metrics of violence (the numbers of improvised explosive device attacks, indirect fire, suicide bombers, etc.) down sharply and indicators of economic activity increasing in its area of responsibility, the 8th Division exceeds both the “Iraqi good enough” and “two-and-a-half times better” measures of success.

The quotation most frequently referenced during MiTT training is also the most useful to remember in working with the Iraqi Army. As T.E. Lawrence counseled, “Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it for them.” Advisors tempted to insert themselves into an Iraqi operation should always

DIVISION MiTT LESSONS LEARNED

- The decisive operation is to coach, teach, and mentor the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to lead their nation’s security. Any activity that does not support this is secondary, at best.
- A good relationship with your Iraqi counterparts is paramount. Without this, you are combat ineffective.
- The goal is to get your ISF unit good enough that you are not needed. Work yourself out of a job.
- The Iraqi Army is centered on the leader. Be careful not to encourage Iraqi counterparts to take actions not supported by their superiors.
- MiTT teams need to coordinate with counterparts up and down the coalition force advisor chain. Think of yourselves as observer/controllers embedded with an Iraqi unit for a year.
- Don’t expect an Iraqi Army counterpart to admit an error or otherwise show weakness in public. Expect Iraqi Army officers to be more demanding with you in public than in private. Perception of “honor” trumps fact.
- A “yes” from your counterpart means he will try. “We will see,” “perhaps,” or anything less than a definite “yes” is a polite “no.”
- Expect planning much closer to execution, with less detail. Most operations look like the previous one; even brigade operations appear like SOPs. FRAGOs can happen surprisingly quickly.
- Following Iraqi Army processes is often not adequate for results. Routine actions (e.g. supply, personnel) are more likely to succeed if accompanied by personal contacts with counterparts in higher commands.
- Personal appeals to higher authority are common in Arab culture. Expect your counterparts to skip levels in the chain of command with appeals. Advisors should expect to be treated as appellate authorities, particularly when visiting subordinate Iraqi units. “This could be very difficult; who normally handles such matters?” is a safe response to an unexpected request.

...one cannot realistically use common U.S. Army metrics... in measuring success in building the Iraqi Army.

reconsider Lawrence's advice before acting. If an event meets "Iraqi good enough" standards, it is normally better to let it continue without interruption and later address concerns and recommendations in an after-action review. Inserting coalition force solutions, particularly as an operation is unfolding, risks undermining the confidence that comes with proficiency.

Coalition advisors can help with two of the three main challenges hindering more rapid improvement in the Iraqi Army. Military transition teams and coalition partner units will continue to help their counterparts improve logistics and medical care, but cannot aid in establishing a retirement system. The lion's share of change needs to come from echelons above division. Authorizing repair parts stocks at unit level and substituting a direct-exchange system in lieu of paper requests,

particularly for high-use items, would go far in improving Iraqi Army logistics. While Iraq lacks doctors, the Army is particularly short, having lost many physicians to the Ministry of Health. The third major shortcoming, lack of a functioning military retirement system, coupled with concerns for colleagues, keeps too many weak and marginal performers in senior positions. Clearly, decisions on whether and how to address these problems lie with Iraq's civil and military leadership at the most-senior levels.

By nature, advisors are problem solvers. This discussion of the challenges the 8th Iraqi Army Division faced and overcame highlights its progress. During Warrior Training, one of the division's battalions was praised as the best the cadre had ever trained. Trainers were forced to revise situational training scenarios in order to ensure the unit remained challenged. The division clearly sets the standard for a new army building itself.

During 2009 the 8th Iraqi Army Division attained a readiness level that permitted the withdrawal of its U.S. advisors. I hope the experiences recorded here can aid other transition teams in coaching, mentoring, and teaching their partnered units to similar results. **MR**

NOTES

1. Originally named Advisor Support Teams, the units advising the Iraqi Army were re-named military transition teams in 2005. See *On Point II*, Dr. Donald Wright and COL Timothy Reese, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008, 462.

2. Iraq's Ministry of Defense (MOD) is the equivalent of America's Department of Defense. The Iraqi Joint Headquarters parallels the Joint Staff. The Iraqi Ground Forces Command is a three-star headquarters that is equivalent to the U.S. Army's Forces Command.

3. Border Transition Teams, Police Transition Teams, Logistics Training and Advisory Teams, and teams advising the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and Joint Headquarters may also find the viewpoint from Iraqi Army Division advisors instructive.

4. From east to southwest, the provinces are Wasit, Babil, Qadisiyah, Karbala, and Najaf. Provinces are often identified by their capital cities. Using this convention the provinces are Kut, Hillah, Diwaniyah, Karbala, and Najaf. The cities of Karbala and Najaf contain the two holiest sites of the Shi'a branch of Islam — the Imam Ali Shrine in Najaf and the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala. Both cities see millions of pilgrims walk there during annual religious festivals including Ashura, Arbaeen, Shabaniya, and the important dates in the lives of the Imams entombed there.

5. A province's Province Iraqi Control (PIC) status determined, among other things, who exercised authority for approving military operations. While the Memorandum of Understanding for each province was slightly different, in general when a province came under PIC, this authority transferred from the senior coalition commander to the Governor.

6. Most Iraqi Army divisions are subordinate to Operational Commands (OCs). These are joint headquarters, typically exercising command and control over Army and police units in a particularly important province (e.g. Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Ninawah). The OC may be commanded by an Army or police Lieutenant General or Major General who reports directly to the Ministry of Defense.

7. Iraqi officers are generally called by their rank and first (given) name; that convention is followed here. For ease of comprehension, Iraqi officers in the article are referred to U.S. Army rank equivalents rather than Iraqi titles. MG Oothman was promoted to Lieutenant General in 2009. For more on him see Michael Gordon's cover story in the *New York Times Magazine*, 3 August 2008.

8. Only male US Soldiers serve on MITT teams at battalion through division level. Female Soldiers serve on the transition teams advising motor transport regiments and logistics battalions.

9. One person acting "as an intermediary between two other persons is very

common in Arab society. Personal influence is helpful in getting decisions made and things done, so people often ask someone with influence to represent them (in Arabic this process is called *wasta*)." Margaret K. Nydell, *Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Modern Times* (Intercultural Press, 2006), 25.

10. In the U.S. Army, Troop Leading Procedures is the problem-solving methodology typically used at company level and below. Since a battalion is the lowest echelon with a staff, planning at company level is primary the responsibility of the commander. The Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) is exercised by staffs at battalion level and above and can take days or weeks. (See chapters 3 and 4 of FM 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Productions*). The targeting cycle employed by field artillery and information operations professionals is, "detect, decide, deliver, assess." The caricature above correctly points out that Iraqi Army (IA) planning begins much closer to execution and typically involves more improvisation once an operation begins. The 8th Division commanding general's guidance was typically so specific as to be a Directed Course of Action.

11. The Iraqi Army does not have well-defined command relationships such as operational control (OPCON) and administrative control (ADCON). Whenever battalions worked with other divisions, there were routinely problems, followed by negotiations about which unit would provide rations and fuel support, during the initial days of the new relationship.

12. The 8th Division Headquarters was authorized five colonels and nine lieutenant colonels. At one time, there were 14 colonels and 33 lieutenant colonels assigned. The Iraqi Army's practice of internally furloughing weaker officers calls to mind the Japanese corporate practice of moving those shunted aside from the center of action to window seats. In one instance, a G4 was moved to a newly created position overseeing transportation in order to make room for his more-energetic deputy. However, advisors should not overly praise a strong deputy directly to a weak superior. Competent subordinates who visibly outperform less-capable supervisors risk being transferred out.

Unemployment remains a problem and may be a contributing factor. In late 2008, the 8th Division conducted a registration of veterans from the Saddam-era army living in its area of operation. This screening process would determine whether these men were eligible for service in the new army, or a future retirement stipend. During a two-month period 886 former officers and 18,171 former enlisted soldiers registered, more volunteers than the division's authorized or existing strength.

13. Nydell, 22. Advisors commonly expressed a similar sentiment regarding their

Iraqi counterparts: "They don't care what you know until they know that you care."

14. Transition Team Integration Funds were eliminated at the start of Fiscal Year 2009. The Quick Response Funds that replaced them were limited to short-term, one-time expenses to prevent mission failure.

15. Coalition Forces offered medical care to save the life, limb, or eyesight of Iraqi Army soldiers. The rules for coalition force care for others were more restrictive and subject to change. Advisors should know the criteria and procedures for medical care before offering assistance.

16. Nydell, 18.

17. The selection and training of MiTT team members is extremely important, but beyond the scope of this article. While 8th Division would certainly have benefitted from more experienced advisors, the captains and NCOs on the 8th Division MiTT team were quite effective at coaching senior Iraqi field-grade officers.

18. Nydell, 31.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid, 29. Emphasis in the original.

22. Ibid, 28. Nydell notes that while the sense of fatalism captured in the phrase "Inshallah" (if God wills) is often "overemphasized by Westerners . . . it still needs to be considered, since it is often encountered."

23. Air movement requests were how the team requested rotary-wing transportation. The fledgling Iraqi Air Force provided the first flights to 8th Division in late 2008.

24. The Mahdi Army's name in Arabic is Jaysh al Mahdi. Coalition force members typically refer to it as JAM.

25. When a MiTT, BTT or PTT team experienced a casualty, or otherwise lost a team member, the vacancy would be filled by a soldier with the proper grade and specialty from a "bench" of trained soldiers at Fort Riley. When their team completed its year, the Soldier from the bench would be reassigned to another team or a staff

position. The 8th Division MiTT team leader's position was filled by an officer re-missioned from a Border Transition Team. Three positions on 8th Division MiTT were filled by officers/NCOs who had not yet completed a one-year tour. As MiTT casualties decreased, fewer of these were available, and 8th Division MiTT strength declined from 15 to 12 Soldiers.

26. Faced with the choice of performing a familiar role or an unfamiliar one, most Soldiers choose what is comfortable. When each team member had a balanced set of responsibilities, some MiTT team members put more weight on the foot planted on the U.S. side of the wall separating the U.S. and Iraqi camps. Restructuring roles so that most team members had fewer responsibilities on Camp Echo made it easier for most of the team to spend more time with their Iraqi Army counterparts.

27. This three-week event combined issuing M16s and HMMWVs, rifle marksmanship and collective training through battalion level.

28. Until 2/4 BCT arrived late in 2008, the 8th Division MiTT was the senior U.S. unit at Camp Echo and in Qadisiyah province. The largest U.S. unit by manpower was a platoon from the 511th MP CO.

29. MiTT teams were ADCON or OPCON to the coalition brigades/divisions responsible for the provinces in which they were located. In 2008, the MiTT teams aligned with 8th Division were subordinate to three different brigade combat teams (BCTs). Since brigade MiTTs did not report to the division MiTT (and battalion MiTTs were not subordinate to brigade teams) the use of conference calls and sharing daily/weekly reports was important for situational awareness throughout the advisor chain.

30. The Unit Status Report evaluates an organization's ability to perform its mission based on personnel, training, and equipment status. Army Training, Evaluation Plans, and Mission-Essential Task Lists identify the missions and tasks each type of unit must be able to perform.

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Russia's Military Performance in Georgia

Tor Bukkvoll, Ph.D.

IN AUGUST 2009, Russia celebrated the one-year anniversary of its military campaign in Georgia. In the Kremlin's view, the war was a demonstration of the Russian armed forces' renewed ability to fight conventional wars. Independent observers have also partly shared that point of view. The Russian president has promised that the lessons drawn from the conflict will lead to changed priorities in arms purchases. Inspired by the lessons of the war, the Defense Ministry promised additional funds for the Russian armed forces and proposed changing its structure from division- to brigade-sized units to improve the armed forces' ability to fight small wars, such as the one with Georgia.¹ This article summarizes the domestic Russian debate and draws some preliminary conclusions about the Russian armed forces.

The Ground Offensive in South Ossetia

From the Russian military's point of view, the most successful part of the campaign in South Ossetia was the performance of the Russian ground forces in expelling Georgians from the area. The degree of success, however, is relative. How impressive the performance of the Russian ground troops looks depends on the size of Russian numerical superiority in the conflict. Early estimates suggest there were between 15,000 and 25,000 on the Georgian side and between 20,000 and 30,000 on the Russian side. About 3,000 South Ossetian troops and 9,000 Abkhazian troops are included in the Russian figures.² If those figures are true, one could argue that the Russian numerical advantage was significant but not decisive. However, some claim that the number of troops on the Russian side has been severely underestimated. Andrei Illarionov, former economic adviser to Vladimir Putin and now a Russian opposition figure, claims that Russia might have had up to three times the number of troops Georgia had. According to Illarionov, most independent Russian experts now think there were at least 40,000 Russian, Abkhazian, and North Ossetian troops in theater, and that an additional 40,000 Russian

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PHOTO: A column of Russian armored vehicles on their way to the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali, somewhere in the Georgian break-away region, South Ossetia, 9 August 2008. (AP Photo, Musa Sadulayev)

troops were mobilized across the border in Russia.³ If these higher estimates are true, the accomplishments of the Russian ground offensive look less impressive than they initially did.

Russian equipment was either similar or inferior to Georgian equipment; Russia had the most equipment plus reserve stocks. In addition, the Russian forces' fighting ability was a decisive element. In particular, the coordination between artillery and infantry worked well.⁴ This must be an encouraging sign for Russian political and military leaders, and goes some way toward justifying Russian president Dmitry Medvedev's claim that the operations in Georgia demonstrated the renewed quality of the Russian military.

Clearly, Russia's ability to conduct and execute large and complicated military operations has survived the difficult 1990s. According to U.S. military personnel who trained the Georgians, one of the major reasons for the Russian victory was that the Georgian forces trained at the tactical level, but underwent only limited reorganization and training at the operational and strategic levels. The Georgian forces had few well-educated, trained officers at higher levels.⁵ Accounts of Georgia's performance in the conflict describe declining professionalism in higher echelons. Reports from the battlefield tell of Georgian soldiers who fought well, but within an increasingly chaotic organization.⁶ The same was not the case for the Russian forces.

However, one should not rush to conclude that the ongoing professionalization of the Russian army has become a success.

Several sources claim that detachments from the airborne troops and special forces carried out the brunt of the fighting on the ground.⁷ Thus, one could argue that the land campaign in South Ossetia demonstrated that the contract infantry (*kontraktniki*) is far from battle ready. One Russian commentator compared the use of airborne troops and special forces in traditional infantry roles to hammering a nail with an expensive microscope rather than with a regular hammer.⁸ There are serious doubts about the quality of many Russian contract soldiers. Even army chief of staff General Vladimir Boldyrev admitted in September 2008 that many of them are no better trained than conscripts.⁹ On top of that, military leaders sent conscripts to the theater of operation against official policy. Russian

military authorities denied this for a long time, but faced with undeniable evidence, the general staff had to admit that it sent "insignificant numbers of conscripts" to Georgia.¹⁰ However, there might also be other reasons why the airborne troops fought alongside (or in the place of) the infantry. One of these was probably that their deployment by air behind enemy lines was too risky because of the Russian Air Force's inability to suppress Georgian air defenses.¹¹

Second, it is not clear how much close contact fighting there actually was. One Russian source claims that this war was fought primarily by artillery and aviation.¹² The short duration of the war probably limited the amount of infantry-on-infantry fighting that could take place.

Third, the dynamics of the ground campaign would probably have been better if the Russian army had been able to use more helicopters to deploy and relocate soldiers in the theater of operations. According to Russian army sources, this took place only to a very limited extent.¹³ Problems flying over the Caucasus Mountains delayed the introduction of helicopters in theater, and even when they arrived, they were of limited help. The helicopters previously integrated with the army transferred to the air force in December 2003. According to Russian helicopter pilots, the air force commanders were quite busy with the air campaign and had little or no time to plan helicopter operations in support of the ground troops.¹⁴ A decision to return the helicopters to the ground forces is now under discussion. In addition, the survival of Georgian air defenses and Georgia's possession of man-portable air defense systems made such operations dangerous. Russian helicopters do not have much protection against man-portable air defense systems, which means that Russia's main battle tanks could not count on helicopters to provide surveillance and protection the way they do in many other armies.

...deployment by air behind enemy lines was too risky because of the Russian Air Force's inability to suppress Georgian air defenses.

Fourth, the ambush of the ground troops' commander in South Ossetia was a sign of a serious failure in the ground operation. Only five of the 30 armored vehicles in his column survived. While ambushes do take place in war, this incident indicates a failure of intelligence and surveillance.

Fifth, there have been reports of ground units not being sufficiently resupplied with ammunition.¹⁵ "We simply ran out of ammunition, and they surrounded us with grenade launchers," a Russian tank commander explained to the newspaper *Moskovskii Komsomolets* after two Russian tanks were blown up during the fighting in the village of Zemo-Nikozi.¹⁶

The Air Campaign

Russia's inability to suppress Georgian air defenses was probably the most serious flaw in the Russian war effort. Officially, Russia has admitted to the loss of four Su-25 fighters and one Tu-22 strategic bomber. However, in domestic Russian discussions, the figures most quoted are seven or eight Su-25s.¹⁷

At the outset of the conflict, Russia had about 14 times as many fighter aircraft in the area as Georgia. Despite the fact that air superiority was probably as decisive for the Russian victory as the well conducted land operation, this part of the campaign is also the one most heavily criticized. Besides the unwillingness and/or inability to support ground troops, the air campaign was unable to suppress Georgian air defense systems. Although finally silenced, the modernized Soviet-era Georgian air defenses were operational and a nuisance for the Russian air force throughout the five days of conflict. In the end, fighter aircraft could not suppress them; ground units took them over.

Russian authorities blame Ukraine for substantially strengthening Georgian air defenses prior to the war.¹⁸ Soviet-made, medium-range air defense systems, sold to Georgia from Ukraine, did play an important role, and Russian fighter aircraft were generally not equipped with efficient anti-radiation missiles. Russia is perfectly able to produce such missiles. Why it did not use them is unclear, but one source claims that Russia has not ordered them for a long time because of their high cost.¹⁹ Serious weaknesses in Russian electronic-warfare capabilities may help explain the long survival of the Georgian air defenses.



AFP Photo, David Mdzinarishvili

Debris reportedly from a Russian bomber shot down near the village of Dzevera some 100 km from Tbilisi, 9 August 2008.

I should point out, however, that suppression of enemy air defenses is seldom easy, even with sophisticated anti-radiation missiles, good electronic-warfare capabilities, and well-trained pilots. The Georgians did what the Serbs did in the Kosovo war. They turned their air defense systems on and off so that they were difficult to detect.²⁰ In the Kosovo campaign, 35 percent of all air effort was against enemy air defenses.²¹

Iurii Nekachev, the former deputy commander of Russian forces in Transcaucasia, thinks lack of training is a major reason why Russian pilots were unable to suppress Georgian air defenses. According to Nekachev, "A pilot who flies 40 hours a year instead of the required 200 cannot become an elite flyer, and if you are not an elite flyer, you are shot down."²² Furthermore, aging Su-25s were the core of the Russian fighters in Georgia. Bad weather severely inhibits these planes, and they have poor night-fighting capacity.²³

One of the more puzzling aspects of the campaign is the use of a Tu-22 medium range strategic bomber. At the time, Russia said the plane had been carrying out surveillance missions at high altitudes, and S-200 long-range air defenses sold to Georgia by Ukraine downed it. Independent experts, however, suspect that Russia used the plane to bomb Georgian airfields because it can carry about 20 times as much ordnance as an ordinary fighter.²⁴ This would have been a rational use of the plane except that Russia did it before the Georgian air defenses

were defeated. Ukraine denies having sold S-200s to Georgia, and if the Tu-22 only did air-surveillance instead of bombing, it would probably have flown too high for the Buk and Osa air defense systems.

Jointness

Some post-war Western accounts talk about a breakthrough in Russian jointness.²⁵ This assessment contradicts the prevailing view in the domestic Russian debate. Perhaps Western analysts assumed jointness because of Russia's parallel army, air force, and navy operations, but Russian observers talk about a lack of joint operations or coordination among fighter aircraft and ground forces. Although Russian military leaders increasingly give it lip service, they have not yet accepted jointness as an axiom as the West has. The lack of air support for the ground forces in this case, however, was probably as much due to lack of doctrine, training, and technology as to resistance to the idea per se.

Naval operations off the coasts of Georgia and Abkhazia, and a cyber campaign against Georgian government websites, have received considerable attention, but probably did not seriously affect the outcome of the war. A naval task force of 11 ships from the Russia Black Sea fleet participated in the naval operation. They landed naval infantry on the coast of Abkhazia and sank one Georgian missile boat. Their main purpose, however, seems to have been to organize a naval blockade, something that would only have been of real significance if the war had lasted much longer. Similarly, the cyber campaign did not fundamentally affect the military fight.

The most serious deficiencies in the Russian campaign were in communication, command, and control. This is an officially recognized weakness in Russia, and a source of worry for both political and military leaders. Improvements in this area depend on satellite capacity, and Putin's repeated efforts to speed up the fielding of the Russian equivalent of GPS, GLONASS (the Global Navigation Satellite

System) is just one example of the urgency with which political and military leaders regard this problem. The most optimistic hope is that GLONASS can become operational sometime before 2011. In the absence of satellite support, the troops communicated by radio or ordinary mobile phone, and the ability to deliver high precision strikes was limited.

Another deficiency was the Russian lack of unmanned aerial vehicles, the development of which became a low priority in the meager 1990s not only because of poor funding but also because the Russian military never showed much interest in them. Russia used only the tactical Pchela unmanned aerial vehicle in the operation.²⁶ According to Colonel Valerii Iakhnovets, who was responsible for the employment of the Pchela in the conflict, the images it sent back were so poor that they were basically useless. He also complained that the vehicle "flew so low you could hit it with a slingshot and roared like a BTR armored personnel carrier."²⁷

However, one of the first deficiencies Russia has addressed is unmanned aerial vehicles. Russia is buying new ones from Israel in a purchase that is a serious exception to its policy of armament self-sufficiency.²⁸ One reason the Russian military is going abroad for the new vehicles is its distrust of the domestic arms industry. General Vladimir Shamanov, head of the Air-landing Forces, held a meeting with Russian unmanned aerial vehicle producers and their presentations did not impress him. He exclaimed, "It's all . . . so typically Russian. [They] put together something and then try to pass it off as . . . useful."²⁹

The absence of satellite communication and unmanned aerial vehicles impedes the use of Russia's relatively modern precise munitions. For example, many units fitted with the laser-guided Krasnopol artillery missile could have used the missile in Georgia, but they needed something or somebody to detect a target for them and mark it with a laser beam. Unfortunately, Russian special forces operating behind enemy lines are not trained to operate with the artillery.³⁰ This does not necessarily mean that the Russian military sees the lack of precision munitions as a big problem. General Vladimir Moltenskoï claims that the Russian forces were in possession of precision weapons but that there was no real need for them in South Ossetia.³¹ The use

Although Russian military leaders increasingly give it lip service, they have not yet accepted jointness as an axiom...

of overwhelming fire has a prominent place in Russian operational thinking, and if you are not much concerned with collateral damage, you might even prefer the psychological effect of heavy artillery to the less intimidating effect of precision munitions.

Conclusion

A Russian victory was predestined because of the Russian forces' overwhelming numerical advantage, but Russian land forces fought better than many had expected. The flaws of the Russian campaign seem mainly to have been a result of shortcomings in technology and organization. Russia has not been able to equip even its most advanced detachments with much of the Soviet-designed but still quite advanced hardware that the country actually can produce. At times, Russian forces are not even able to make efficient use of the modern equipment that they have procured. Successful phasing in of new weapons and weapon systems often requires substantial changes in organization and training, which seems to be a particular weakness of the current Russian armed forces.

The Russian military's own interpretation of the war presents it with a major dilemma. On the one hand, there is a natural tendency to brush criticism

aside in order not to blemish the portrait of a successful campaign. On the other hand, admitting failure, especially with regard to weaponry, can be a powerful way to pressure political authorities for more resources. In an attempt to do the latter, deputy chief of the general staff General Anatolii Nogovitsyn has complained that the armed forces for the most part had to fight with old Soviet weapons.³²

Despite the official figures of 64 dead and 323 wounded, four Su-25s and one Tu-22 downed, and an unidentified number of artillery pieces and armored vehicles destroyed, Russian operations were successful in Georgia.³³ Russia demonstrated that a large force of Soviet-organized, trained, and equipped troops could defeat a small force organized, trained, and partially equipped by the U.S. However, the conflict also revealed many Russian shortcomings and inadequacies. It would be wrong to conclude that the victory was the result of successful military reform in Russia.

More funds can fix some of the deficiencies highlighted in this analysis. For example, money can provide the Russian armed forces with better fighter planes and anti-radiation missiles. Russia is already able to produce them, although some parts of the Russian defense industry now have more orders than they can handle. Sukhoi, for example, can deliver new planes in only three years.³⁴ Other types of equipment, such as unmanned aerial vehicles and satellite-based command and control systems, will take longer to procure.

Russia's technological base is still insufficient, and improvements here require not only additional funds, but also new cadres for the design institutes, a better organized and managed defense industry, and a better and less corrupt procurement system. Russian military corruption is still on the rise. According to retired General Alexandr Kanshin, up to 30 percent of the funds allocated to defense are currently stolen or misused.³⁵

In addition to needing better equipment, the Russian military services need to overcome organizational and cultural incompatibilities that are obstacles to jointness.

Russia seems to be pursuing the current radical military reform with more vigor than it has most other post-Soviet reform programs. However, it is still too early to tell to what extent it will deal with the shortcomings discussed here. **MR**



AFF Photo. Stringer

Makeshift grave markers stand on the mass grave in which lay the coffins of Georgian soldiers killed during the conflict with Russia, outside of Tbilisi, Georgia, 2 September 2008.

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3. Interview with Andrei Illarionov on *Ekho Moskvy*, 24 June 2009, <www.echo.msk.ru/programs/figure/600923-echo/>.
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A U.S. Army K-9 military working dog from 10th Mountain Division sits at the entrance of a school during a Mega Shura meeting with local Afghan leaders in Jalrez, Afghanistan, 30 September 2009. (U.S. Army, SGT Teddy Wade)



REVOLUTIONARY MANAGEMENT

The Role of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias* in the Cuban Economy

Terry L. Maris, Ph.D.

TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD the Cuban-Soviet alliance of the Cold War era seems solid, but in fact, it has been steadily deteriorating for many years. When Portuguese colonial rule was overthrown in the 1974 Angola coup, three factions emerged in the quest for control of the country. Organized consistent with ethnic and racial characteristics, these three distinct rebel movements came forth: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the Union for the Total Independence of Angola, and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola. The United States supported the National Front while the Soviet Union backed the Popular Movement. Given their previous experience in Africa, dating back to the 1960s, the Cubans were apparently tasked by their Soviet colleagues to represent their interests in the field.¹

From the beginning of this intervention, it appears that Soviet and Cuban goals differed. The most thorough account is found in Piero Gleijeses' comprehensive book, *Conflicting Missions*.² Based upon access to previously classified documents, his interpretation of events differs on a number of counts. Most significant is his assertion that Fidel Castro decided to commit troops without consulting his Soviet counterpart, Leonid Breznev. The latter, engaged in strategic arms limitations negotiations with the United States, believed Cuba's action to be hasty and poorly timed.³ This event was a bellwether of divergence of Cuban and Soviet interests and set the stage for further weakening in bilateral relations. Additional points of conflict soon developed that pulled the two nations further apart.

A Conflicted Alliance

The degradation of the Cuban-Soviet relationship became more pronounced due to what were to become irreconcilable differences on several key issues. Most prominent was the widely divergent view of the Reagan administration held by the two countries. While the Soviet Union was inclined to seek a degree of rapprochement with the United States during Reagan's first term in office, Cuba was alarmed by the threat of his increasingly strident foreign policy toward Latin America. The Council for Inter-American Security produced a bold report in 1980 titled *A New Inter-American Policy for*

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PHOTO: Vedado neighborhood, Havana, Cuba, May 2009. (courtesy of the author)

the Eighties. This report, better known as the *Santa Fe Document*, was the core of Reagan's Central America foreign policy. It called for a militaristic approach in supporting friendly Latin American governments, with a transparent motive of lessening Cuba's influence in the Western Hemisphere by means such as the creation of Radio Marti and the Caribbean Initiative. Meanwhile, the Soviets ignored Cuba's concerns and publicly declared their intention to wean Cuba from its considerable dependence on Soviet military aid.⁴

The apparent prosperity of the Cuban economy in the 1980s was the result of a "sweetheart" arrangement between Cuba and the former Soviet Union. Commodity exchanges between the two countries operated not by the usual protocol of international trade, but by special arrangements. Cuba exported nickel and sugar to the Soviet Union, which paid in rubles at a price that was a significant multiple of the world market price. In turn, Cuba imported oil from the Soviet Union at prices well below market value. Most of these imports were used in Cuban industry, but a portion of them was sold to other countries at a profit. In addition to these substantial subsidies, the Soviet Union allowed Cuba to run up bilateral debt to an estimated \$23.5 billion by 1990.⁵

As both the Soviet's and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance's economic fortunes began to decline, it became evident that the generous subsidies and trade agreements upon which Cuba had for so long depended would be adversely affected. With increasing fiscal and political problems in the Eastern Bloc, Cuba and the Soviet Union found less and less common ground. Once close allies in Angola, Cuba and the Soviet Union abruptly halted military cooperation in the war-torn African nation. Cuba launched several bold initiatives, including the Mariel boat lift of 1980, the introduction of the *Guerra de Todo el Pueblo* (The War of all People), the formation of the *Milicias de Tropas Territoriales* (Militia Territorial Troops), and the *Sistema de Direccion y Planificacion de la Economica*, the Soviet economic planning model.⁶

The Special Period

Fidel Castro apparently foresaw an economic disaster forming on the horizon because, as early as January 1990, he gave it a name, the *periodo*

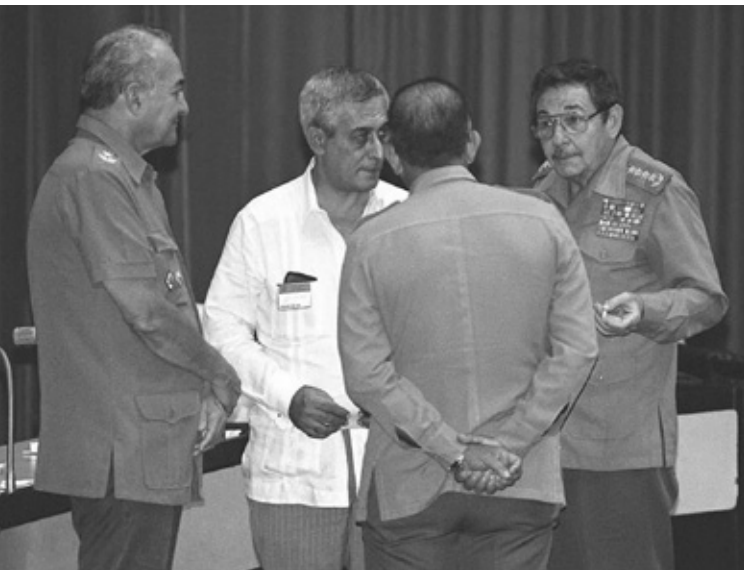
especial or "Special Period in Time of Peace." He publicly acknowledged Cuba's dependence on Soviet oil, saying that if those shipments ceased altogether it would essentially bring about a special period in time of war. However, if Cuba restructured its economy to facilitate certain imports and exports, the situation would not be as severe; therefore, it would be a special period in time of peace.⁷

In 1991 Cuba's economic foundation suffered serious structural damage induced by the rapid disintegration of the Soviet Union. The military solidarity of the Warsaw Pact and the economic stability of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance imploded. As the Soviet Union broke apart, it became obvious that Russia could not sustain the huge subsidies upon which Cuba had become so dependent. The abrupt termination of the "oil-for-sugar" program led to immediate crises in Cuba. Energy-dependent sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, transportation, and manufacturing, experienced perilous drops in productivity.

Even prior to the "special period," Cuba had begun to explore new ways to improve its economy. Raul Castro, in his role as the minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, designed and implemented a novel education and training program. Under the direction of Raul's close friend, General Julio Casas Regueiro, high-ranking officers were carefully selected to attend some of the most prominent business schools in Western Europe to acquire the skills deemed necessary for the salvation of the Cuban economy.⁸ In apparent contradiction of the tenets of socialism, the Cuban military quietly embraced the teachings of capitalism. These *Raullistas* were especially impressed with the wisdom of management guru Peter Drucker, world renowned consultant W. Edwards Deming, and Harvard Business School professor John P. Kotter.⁹ In his book *The New Economics*, Deming is quoted as saying:

The prevailing style of management must undergo transformation. A system cannot

In apparent contradiction of the tenets of socialism, the Cuban military quietly embraced the teachings of capitalism.



AFP Photo, Adalberto Roque

Then Minister of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), Major General Raúl Castro (right), discusses the new Foreign Investment Law with other military and civilian members of the Cuban Parliament during a recess. On the left is General Julio Casas Regueiro, first deputy minister of the FAR, 29 July 1995.

understand itself. The transformation required a view from the outside.¹⁰

By 1993, the full impact of Cuba's economic decline was realized. Gross domestic product (GDP), adjusted for inflation, had fallen by 35 percent from its 1989 level, while GDP per capita was down by 42 percent over the same period. Inflation rose from 0.5 percent to 26 percent. The productivity of key industries dropped precipitously: fish and shellfish by 63 percent, sugar by 48 percent, nickel by 36 percent, and citrus by 32 percent. Exports declined by 80 percent and imports by 75 percent. These economic conditions led to the reintroduction of consumer-goods rationing, drop in the value of the peso, rapid growth of the black market, and widespread discontent among the Cuban people.¹¹

In Pursuit of Perfection

To replace the outdated and ineffective Soviet strategic management system, a totally new system was created: *El Sistema de Perfeccionamiento Empresarial* (the System of Enterprise Perfection). According to Latell, the system had three principal objectives:

- To promote greater self-sufficiency in the FAR and reduce its dependency on the USSR.

- To increase efficiency and productivity in military factories producing uniforms, small arms, and consumer goods.

- To provide a model that could be adopted elsewhere in the economy.¹²

Phyllis Greene Walker described the System of Enterprise Perfection as a logical extension and interpretation of Deming's concept of Total Quality Management. She describes it as "the notion of trying to reach perfection." In explaining how the Cubans applied Deming's work to their unique economic circumstances, she says of the System of Enterprise Perfection, "It has attempted to improve managerial control over enterprises in order to achieve greater efficiency and productivity. To be able to say what's different about the Cuban model, as opposed to what Deming writes of Total Quality Management I really can't say . . . the Cubans have . . . taken from his work what they deem relevant to their situation."¹³

Although it was obvious that the Soviet economic model had to be abandoned, Fidel and his advisors were hesitant to embrace the System of Enterprise Perfection model without reservation. They decided to apply the principles on a trial basis in one of the leading enterprises in the *Union de la Industria Militar* (the Military Industrial Union). The Ernesto Che Guevara factory in Manicaragua was selected as the test site. Under the leadership of Division General Julio Casas Regueiro, a group of "consultants," who came to be known as the *Grupo de Perfeccionamiento Empresarial*, proceeded to implement dramatic changes in the management and production processes at the plant. Results were so favorable that, within a year, system practices were applied to all 230 enterprises in the union.

As the revolution matured and evolved, the demarcation between the roles of the military and civilians became less clear. With the Revolutionary Armed Forces assuming a more prominent position in the rebuilding of the Cuban economy, three distinct types of soldiers have emerged in succession.¹⁴

Immediately following the initial success of the revolution, military officers formerly engaged in martial responsibilities were reassigned to commercial duties. Tasked with the goal of attaining economic self-sufficiency, these "civic-soldiers" assumed leadership positions predominately in agricultural and construction management.

Following the introduction of the system, yet another type of soldier emerged. Utilizing the latest management and organizational methods, the “technocrat-soldier” functioned much like most executives who had completed their formal business school education in the United States and other developed countries. Following initial and widespread success within the military-industrial complex, their management acumen quickly spread to other state enterprises. Prototypical of this type of soldier is General Julio Casas Regueiro, former deputy minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and currently the minister of defense.

The most recent type of soldier is the “entrepreneur-soldier.” This class of officers is currently the vanguard of the Cuban economy. Although some are loyal Raulistas, many more represent a younger generation, less motivated by political allegiance to the party than to the economic viability of their respective commercial enterprises. They are more likely to follow the teachings of Drucker than Marx.

The Cuban Corporate World

The term “socialism” typically does not conjure images of large business enterprises, international finance, and governing boards. However, with the advent of System of Enterprise Practices over the past three decades, Cuban socialism has created a hybrid version of capitalism while continuing to embrace the revolution. Admittedly, the Cuban economy is quite small compared to those of developed nations throughout the world, but its growth has been remarkable given the circumstances within which it functions. The *CIA World Factbook* estimates that, for 2008, GDP was over \$54 billion with a real growth rate of 4.3 percent. A labor force of over 4.9 million is employed in three major sectors of the economy: services (60.6%), agriculture (20.0%), and industry (19.4%).¹⁵

...Cuban socialism has created a hybrid version of capitalism while continuing to embrace the revolution.

Civilian Enterprises

The largest of the Cuban business enterprises is the *Corporacion de Industrias Mixtas de Exportacion*. Although exact figures are elusive, it purportedly consists of well over 1,000 separate enterprises with annual revenues exceeding one billion U.S. dollars. Among the many companies in its network are *Abdala*, a recording studio; *Havanatur*, a travel agency; *La Maison*, a fashion store; and *Rapiditos*, a fast food chain. Two large financial institutions are also included. *Banco Financiero Internacional* is a secret institution with approximately 20 branches in Cuba. Its clients are foreign firms that prefer to engage in transactions that are outside the review process associated with the National Bank of Cuba. A corollary financial institution is the *Banco de Inversiones*. The source of its capital is unknown, despite rumors of significant Israeli private-sector influence.

Military Enterprises

The *Grupo de Administracion Empresarial* controls those businesses under explicit military management. Although the entire enterprise is overseen by Raul Castro, the “chairman” of *Grupo* is Julio Casas Regueiro. The “president” is none other than Raul’s son-in-law, Colonel Luis Alberto Rodriques Lopez-Callejas. The exact size of *Grupo de Administracion Empresarial* is not known outside the members of the top echelon of Cuba’s government. Its business interests are primarily with tourism and foreign direct investment. Representative of the vast number of lucrative businesses generating hard currency revenues are *Aerogaviota, S.A.*, air transportation; *Habanos, S.A.*, tobacco and rum; *Gaviota, S.A.*, hotels; *Sermar, S.A.*, shipyards; *Tiendas de Recuperacion de Divisas*, “dollar stores”; and the *Palacio de Convenciones*, events management.¹⁶

While it once had a peak troop strength of about 300,000 in 1990, the Cuban military now consists of only an estimated 45,000 personnel. Forced by macro-financial exigencies and direct orders from Fidel, the Revolutionary Armed Forces transformed itself from one of the most competent combat forces in the region to one of the most entrepreneurial corporate conglomerates in the Americas. Today, it is estimated that the military controls more than 60 percent of Cuba’s economy. With Raul’s interest

...the Revolutionary Armed Forces transformed itself from one of the most competent combat forces in the region to one of the most entrepreneurial corporate conglomerates in the Americas.

in free market economics, coupled with the large number of senior government positions held by generals loyal to him, it is likely that military control of the economy will continue to grow.¹⁷

An Unconventional Economic War

The small but determined band of fighters that launched the Cuban revolution with the attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953 grew into a formidable guerrilla army that brought down a corrupt regime. Hardened by nearly six years of combat under the most austere conditions, a cadre of men emerged under the leadership of the young Fidel Castro. Today, a half-century later, several of these same men are now waging an unconventional economic war under the command of Fidel's younger brother, Raul. In some of their battles they have suffered losses (e.g., sugar), while in others they have experienced impressive victories (e.g., tourism). Exhibiting an enigmatic "order of battle," the *Fuerzas Armadas*

Revolucionarias is now engaged in full-scale combat, albeit a combat of debits and credits rather than bullets and bombs. The tactical and strategic choices it makes will definitely impact Cuba and the world of global commerce for many years to come.

Colonel Alex Crowther of the Strategic Studies Institute postulates five possible post-Fidel scenarios. From most to least likely they are—

- Stable succession.
- Stable transition.
- Unstable succession.
- Unstable transition.
- Chaos.

Crowther is of the opinion that, with Raul Castro unquestionably in control of the government, a stable succession has already occurred. However, the question is, "Who will succeed Raul?" Whoever it may eventually be, it is likely that the selection process has already begun under the watchful eye of the Cuban senior military leaders. Just as "the FAR took political and administrative control after



AP Photo, Javier Galeano

Cuba's President Raul Castro sits next to Fidel Castro's empty chair during a session of the National Assembly of Popular Power, Cuban Legislature, in Havana, 1 August 2009. Cuba suspended plans on for a Communist Party congress and lowered its 2009 economic growth projection.

the collapse of the Batista dictatorship” (during the Special Period), they will almost certainly orchestrate the next “change of command.”¹⁸

Economic and political change in Cuba is imminent. Experts disagree exactly when and how it will occur, but not *if* it will occur. Under the most plausible scenarios, the FAR will play a major role in deciding who will lead the country in the post-Castro era. Although many among the world media appear to have only recently noticed the presence

of senior Cuban military officers in prominent commercial enterprises, a group of Cuban expatriates, analysts, and scholars have been watching their rise to power over the past three decades. There are too many independent variables to be able to make an accurate and valid forecast regarding the near future of Cuba. However, a thorough examination of Cuban history reveals an *evolution* of the revolution that personifies the principles of both strategic and military management.¹⁹ **MR**

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Competency vs. Character?

It Must Be Both!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Doty, U.S. Army, Ph.D., and Major Walter Sowden, U.S. Army

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not reflect those of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

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PHOTO: A safety brief with Soldiers and Airmen of the Kapisa-Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team at Forward Operating Base Morales-Frazier in the Kapisa province of Afghanistan, 13 August 2009, prior to a mission. (DOD, SGT Teddy Wade)

Competence without character is perversion and our greatest threat.

—Dr. James Toner¹

ENVISION AN ARMY where Soldiers never sit through classes and stacks of PowerPoint slides on ethics and leadership. Imagine an Army without classes focused solely on the seven Army Values. Picture an Army in which character development is intentionally part of literally everything we do. Does it sound far-fetched or unreasonable? It shouldn't.

As our Army looks to the future, we need to examine how we educate and develop Soldiers and leaders to have the character and competence that compose the non-negotiable contract between our Nation and its military professionals. Our proposal is to get rid of almost all stand-alone ethical or character development training and education across the Army. No more sexual harassment classes. No more "law of land warfare" classes. No more legal briefs on conflict of interest and taking bribes. Instead, our proposal is to embed ethical and character education into *everything we do*, into all training venues, all educational experiences, everything. This significant cultural change will not only be more productive and efficient, it will ultimately be more effective, more pedagogically sound, and require fewer resources.

We understand that we are asking for an enormous and revolutionary change by calling for this now. Our Army's leaders will have to fundamentally change their mind-set and approach to training, education, and development for character development in our Soldiers. Such complete cultural change in how the Army trains, educates, and develops Soldiers will not be fun or easy. This type of change in an organization as large, diverse, and effective as the Army will have to come from the top-down *and* the bottom-up.

Where Are We Now?

Why this proposal? Why now? Our Army will continue to operate in some of the most morally ambiguous and complex environments in history—with no end in sight. Our Chief of Staff, General George Casey, appropriately calls this an era of persistent conflict. Casey and other senior

leaders recognize that this era will have an effect on the moral and ethical development and climate of our Army.

Our Army is without question the most competent and experienced, best trained and equipped, Army in the world. Our training models, systems, and centers are easily the best, most advanced, and most effective in the world, and our technological superiority is equally impressive. Our Army is an Army where “training is king.” And rightly so. However, as we look to the future and take a critical look at ourselves (as professionals must do), we find a competence-character mismatch.

Interestingly, this same topic was addressed 12 years ago by now retired Colonel Darryl Goldman in “The Wrong Road to Character Development,” *Military Review*, January-February 1998. In the article, Goldman also focused on the need for a cultural change due to the compartmentalized nature of our “character” training. He correctly notes that in the Army we “fail to provide young adults with the training and education required for appropriate cognitive development and change”—which means the current methods are not achieving the results we want.²

Evidence of the Problem

A recent review of the Army’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) curriculum revealed that more than 90 percent of the curriculum focuses on developing competency while less than 10 percent concerns character education. Additionally, only about 5 percent of Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) instruction in both the Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Education System focuses on ethics and leadership. Is this 5 percent character to 95 percent competence ratio what the Army wants to espouse?

And what about character-focused training and education in our units? The competency vs. character mismatch exists in our units (in terms of time dedicated to each), and experiences compound it. For example, look at any unit’s training schedule and compare the time spent on competency with

the time spent on character. How often has a squad had to redo a squad tactical exercise lane because it didn’t go as planned? Contrast that with how often an instructor had to redo a class on the Army Values. Clearly, we have a mismatch. In addition, the Army has recently started eliminating chaplain slots from schoolhouses through a plan to shift these ethics classes to distance learning. For many years, these classes were the responsibility of the chaplains. These are all examples of a systemic failure to understand and implement a holistic ethical leadership education and development strategy for our Army.

The Army has unwittingly adopted an ineffective corporate model for character *training*. However, people learn best from experience. Training to teach a skill involves attempting to cram a large amount of experience into a short time frame. This is usually in the form of a lecture or class. This approach is effective only if the intent is to arm the learner with a skill. This is a great method if the outcome is to *teach* a Soldier how to load and clear a weapon or change the tire on a truck. However, this is not the way to *develop* someone, especially in the moral or ethical arena. You cannot teach someone in a class via PowerPoint how to recognize a moral dilemma, weigh the potential effects of a decision, and behave in the morally correct way. The only way you can do this is by developing—changing—a person.³

Like most topics we teach in the Army, we currently teach ethics and values in a compartmentalized manner. This is evident as you examine unit training schedules. We refer to classes that fall under the umbrella of moral and ethical education (respect, ethics in warfare, sexual harassment, violence at home and in the work place, etc.) as “mandatory training” or “chain teaching.” To execute this training, the Army typically issues commanders or instructors “canned” PowerPoint slide decks and orders them to train all members of their unit on that particular topic by a given date. These classes are an hour-long session on the unit-training schedule. During that hour the commander, or another leader in the unit, delivers the training. Once the training is complete, the “block is checked,” and the unit moves on to the next task.

...90 percent of the [ROTC] curriculum focuses on developing competency while less than 10 percent concerns character education.

This method is not an effective way to develop an individual or imprint a value regarding the culture of an organization.⁴ In fact, it can actually have the opposite effect. This method of transferring knowledge on these important subjects is not unique to company-sized units. It is how moral and ethical training takes place throughout the Army at all levels. Sadly, it does not work and may even be counterproductive:

This propensity to create new, isolated initiatives to address varied human relations misconduct has been the fundamental failure in the way the U.S. military has addressed character development since the Eisenhower administration. We continually assume that secluded enterprises addressing ethics, morals, or values are consequential just because they give the impression that ‘we are doing something.’ In fact, this fallacious faith in new, detached projects is evidence that they do more harm than good by diverting the attention of those in leadership who have the authority to cause real change.⁵

In October 2008, the Army held a Sexual Assault Prevention and Risk Reduction Training Summit. At the summit (whose guest speakers included the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff), the Army announced its new “I.A.M. Strong” campaign to help prevent sexual assaults in the Army. Why would the Army need to address issues of respect for service members in 2008? One of our seven Army Values is “respect.” We are confident that most people in the Army have the seven Army Values memorized. However, memorizing them is not enough. For the Army Values to be meaningful, we must internalize them, embody them, and live them. We can and should be better than this.

A powerful example of the “bumper sticker” mentality of our Army Values occurred in 2005 during the court martial of a Soldier charged with forcing an Iraqi off a bridge over the Tigris River. During the sentencing phase at the Soldier’s court martial, Lieutenant Colonel Nate Sassaman, his battalion commander, testified that every member in his battalion carried a card “based on Army Values” and “knew Army Values—inside and out—and in fact, strictly followed them.”⁶ But carrying a card printed with the Army Values, or being able to recite them, is a far cry from understanding what

...carrying a card printed with the Army Values, or being able to recite them, is a far cry from understanding what the words mean...

the words mean, believing in them, internalizing them, and ultimately embodying the values into one’s thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors.

Recently, during interviews conducted with 12 former brigade commanders who had commanded troops in Iraq or Afghanistan, we found there were frustration and discontent with how the Army currently conducts training and education in the area of moral and ethical development. The following themes emerged from those interviews:

- The Army does not do a good job of developing Soldiers morally and ethically.
- Character competency is as important as tactical competency for the future of our Army.
- If I had to do it all again, I would spend more time developing my Soldiers’ competency in character.
- Classroom training in ethics is not effective.

Five of the brigade commanders had to relieve or reprimand a platoon leader or platoon sergeant for either detainee abuse or violating rules of engagement or escalation of force rules. A battalion commander in Iraq, who was involved in an Article 15-6 investigation on the circumstances leading up to an instance of kidnapping and gruesome death, stated that it would take a “special commander” to have prevented this unfortunate incident (because of the derogatory climate that existed in the unit following the highly publicized rape and murder of a young Iraqi girl). When asked if the Army has such “special commanders,” he responded, “yes, but only very few.”⁷ How do we grow and develop these special Soldiers and leaders to operate in a complex and morally ambiguous environment that will most likely continue for several years to come?

Training–Education–Development

The primary problem is that the Army does not have a model for character and leader development. We have a piecemeal, catch-as-catch-can training checklist that attempts to *teach* Soldiers character and ethics. We expect leaders to give subordinates

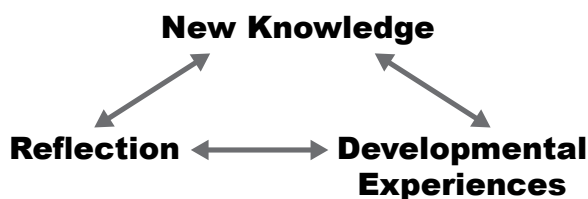
“on-the-job-training” in character without an explicit model or strategy and without equipping the leaders with the knowledge and tools to do the job. Our Army must do better than this.

Character must be developed, not taught. Training results in a skill, education results in more or new knowledge, and development results in a changed person. Therefore our Army needs to develop character, and to undergo development, people must undergo a transformation that fundamentally alters how they think, feel, and behave. In short, there must be permanent change. For example, we can train (transferring skills and abilities) a leader on mentoring techniques. We can educate (transferring knowledge) a leader on the human development process behind those same mentoring techniques. Finally, we can develop (lasting changes in one’s identity, perspectives, and meaning-making system) leaders by creating an identity in which they see themselves as a mentor and leader developer.⁸

Soldiers reveal their character through their behavior—in the context of their daily lives and while displaying their competency. A good test of Soldiers’ character is how they behave when something has gone wrong. Character does not reveal itself in a vacuum. The construct of “character” is visible in what we do all the time (although we often do not think in these terms). As such, our Army needs to morally *develop* ethical leaders for complex contingencies.

How do people develop character? The research in this area is a mixed bag. A powerful pedagogical method, espoused by Dr. Lee Knefelkamp from Columbia University, is to get people out of their comfort zone—make them feel uncomfortable by facilitating discussions on subjects they don’t want to talk about. This process causes cognitive dissonance in individuals’ minds, which challenges their beliefs and leads to change.

The Army needs to take a holistic view of character development. A common model used for development is:



A good test of Soldiers’ character is how they behave when something has gone wrong. Character does not reveal itself in a vacuum.

Our goal needs to be to intentionally create opportunities and set the conditions for Soldiers to understand and internalize James Rest’s four stages of moral development:⁹

- Moral recognition
- Moral judgment.
- Moral intention.
- Moral action.

We need to develop Soldiers who are more intellectually and morally complex and have the moral courage to act on their beliefs and values. This is much easier said than done. Successful programs “begin with a model that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimension . . . and a program as diverse as values clarification, moral dilemma discussion, role-playing, and conflict resolution.” Additionally, there is evidence “that moral development can continue into adulthood, and that particularly dramatic changes can occur in young adulthood in the context of professional school education . . . [M]oral and ethical development occurs in a variety of settings, both formal and informal.”¹⁰

Our Army needs to create these formal and informal settings and practice (role-play, rehearse) moral intention and moral action. The biggest gap in the Rest model is the step between moral intentions and moral actions. Often, our Soldiers know the right thing to do, but (often due to misplaced loyalty) lack the moral courage to actually do it. There are many examples from our current conflicts (the Bagram Air Base beatings, Abu Ghraib, Operation Iron Triangle); Soldiers knew the right thing to do but failed to do it. Toner notes that this fundamental problem has a solution: “A major problem with ethics education is that it cannot be crammed into neat compartments and nice-sounding, desired learning outcomes. . . There is no ‘magic bullet’—no always-certain ethical compass. We must teach moral reasoning, not just ‘core values’ or ‘ethical checklists.’”¹¹

Albert Bandura has described the choice to do nothing (or look the other way) “as moral disengagement”:

...Soldiers know the right thing to do, but (often due to misplaced loyalty) lack the moral courage to actually do it.

Simply stated, moral disengagement is what happens to human beings when they're stretched beyond their emotional and psychological capacity. Their bodies, psyches, minds, and souls disengage from events around them and they become detached, in an almost dissociative state. Unchecked, a person will 'reconstrue,' or use strained logic to justify their amoral behaviors.¹²

This era of persistent conflict has stretched, and will continue to stretch, Soldiers beyond their emotional and psychological capacity:

To develop good character, students need many and varied opportunities to apply values such as responsibility and fairness in everyday interactions and discussion . . . [T]hrough repeated moral experiences students . . . develop and practice the moral skills and behavioral habits that make up the action side of character . . . in a learning and moral community in which all share responsibility for character education and attempt to adhere to the same core values.¹³

How do we create developmental experiences and introduce new knowledge to develop Soldiers morally and ethically? It is not that hard, but it takes time, thought, and mentorship. A start is to provide Soldiers real-world simulated experiences, similar to a tactical exercise lane, and add realistic contexts and situations to confront. Develop real-world problems they must tackle and struggle with. Create opportunities for Soldiers and leaders to practice ethical decision-making and analyze vignettes from a variety of ethical lenses (outcome-focused, rules/process-focused, values-focused). While we expose them to complex, multi-task, tactical operations, we must embed morally intense variables into the equation. We should attempt to get Soldiers out of their comfort zones, create anxiety, and require them to make difficult decisions that do not necessarily have a right answer, but that do have consequences.

Quality coaching and mentorship (guided reflection) must be ongoing throughout the process. A leader, coach, or mentor should help students find meaning in their experiences and examine their perceptions and decisions. Leaders and coaches should also pass along their experiences without passing judgment. We have intentionally chosen the word *coach*, not *teacher* or *counselor* because it is important how we deliver the message. In order for someone to change, he must develop, and this takes realism, experience, and repetition. The bottom line is that training is ineffective when trying to develop people. "It isn't until the 'leader-in-training' is required to live through a problem and has to figure it out first hand that it soaks in."¹⁴

This idea is not new. Integrating training, education, and development in one holistic model of competence development is beginning to infiltrate into the Army culture. Our Army is slowly moving toward an adaptive leader training and development model. Because of the ever-increasing complexity of the modern battlefield, Soldiers and leaders must make split-second, hyper-important decisions that have second- and third-order and sometimes strategic effects. Not *trained* in particular skills, but *developed* to have certain characteristics and traits—Soldiers and leaders will have to be nimble physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally—and have strength of both character and competence. All Soldiers have to have the ability to think critically and act resolutely.

As mentioned above, an important aspect of the developmental model is reflection. Reflection is a concept that many people in the Army either don't like or don't know about, but it is vital to character development. Reflection involves a person (or group) thinking about, writing about, and discussing in detail an experience, idea, value, or new knowledge. Moreover, for reflection to be developmental, someone (a squad leader, a platoon sergeant or leader, coach, mentor) must push the envelope and facilitate a reflective experience that takes the individual out of his or her comfort zone.

...to be developmental, [one] ...must push the envelope and facilitate a reflective experience that takes the individual out of his or her comfort zone.

What It Looks Like In Action

Let's look at two key components of character—respect and integrity. Topics such as respect and integrity should not be compartmentalized in Soldiers' and leaders' brains. Respect and integrity are not vague, theoretical terms that we should think about and talk about occasionally. They must be who we are. Soldiers cannot understand and display respect and integrity in terms of being “on duty” or “off duty.” The recent sex scandal involving drill sergeants and recruits is an example of this “on duty” vs. “off duty” mentality.

For example, a platoon leader can discuss the importance of accurate property accountability and readiness reporting while conducting a motor pool inspection. A battalion commander can initiate a ten-minute discussion about respect at the end of a training meeting. A company commander can discuss conflicting loyalties with fellow commanders or Soldiers while eating in the dining facility. During a selected “down” time in a mission rehearsal exercise, a platoon sergeant can insert a five-minute discussion on the importance of accuracy in reporting. Opportunities such as these are numerous, and it is worth remembering that, from a developmental perspective, “omission of discourse is not value-neutral education. There is no such thing. Omission is a powerful, even if unintended, signal that these issues are unimportant.”¹⁵ Consequently, when our Army, in any venue, fails to address moral and ethical implications, a clear message has been sent to the audience: “Right now, this is not that important.”

A start in implementing this change can occur in our schoolhouses if instructors simply ask themselves, “What are some of the ethical challenges that occur in my subject (maintenance management, tactics, first aid, communications, intelligence, firing safety, supply management, convoy operations, etc.)?” The instructor can then infuse the challenges into the curriculum or through pedagogical techniques. For example, a class on how to conduct preventive mainte-

nance checks and services on a vehicle can include a discussion on the importance of accurate materiel readiness reporting. She might say, “Your fellow Soldiers may be put at risk if you report a vehicle fully mission capable, when it really isn't.” The long-term solution will have experts in the field of character development assisting TRADOC and our schoolhouses with integrating character and competency lessons in curricula.

The individuals who can best change this culture in our Army are those selected to lead Soldiers at the company, battalion, and brigade level—commanders and command sergeants major. These key leaders have the most direct influence on Soldiers and subordinate leaders and should lead the way in changing culture (and climate) in our Army. They also set the culture and climate in their units so that Soldiers are, and *feel they are*, a part of the team. Key leaders in an organization have the most success in changing its culture.¹⁶

Therefore, commanders and command sergeants major at all levels should challenge each other and challenge their Soldiers to help change our culture. This is not resource-intensive. We can and should make subjects such as honesty and integrity a common part of the conversation in motor pools, forward operating bases, training areas, orderly rooms, and athletic fields. We should talk



U.S. Army, SSG James Selesnick

Soldiers from the Public Affairs Office listen to an NCO at Joint Security Station Zafaraniya, eastern Baghdad, Iraq, 18 April 2009.

We can and should make subjects such as honesty and integrity a common part of the conversation in motor pools, forward operating bases, training areas, orderly rooms, and athletic fields.

openly and comfortably about what these words mean. We should have open, honest dialogues on the topic of respect (*What does it look like? What does it not look like?*). These discussions do not have to be formal classes on a training schedule. Developing people to be more morally and intellectually complex (as opposed to training or even educating them about the subjects) requires taking them out of their comfort zones and talking with them, not to them.

Commanders and other leaders should have young Soldiers lead discussions in these areas. A platoon leader can ask a specialist to give an example of a conflict between loyalty and integrity. Two platoon sergeants can discuss what respect does *not* look like in front of their platoons. A group of Soldiers can role-play examples of honesty. Peer interaction on these difficult and uncomfortable topics is one of the most effective developmental techniques. We are limited in this area only by our imaginations, and we do not need to set aside a one-hour block of instruction to initiate such discussions.

Ensuring Soldiers in a unit genuinely have character (and are competent) is a leadership and command responsibility at its most basic level. Like most “issues” in the Army, this is simply a leadership issue. Historically, “commanders are responsible for everything a unit does and/or fails to do.” This is a simple, yet powerful concept. Interestingly, in terms of accepting responsibility for the “character” climate and behavior in a unit, we can learn something from our Navy comrades-in-arms. If our Army adopted the Navy’s concept that “if the ship runs aground, it is the captain’s responsibility,” it would create a different paradigm in commanders’ minds. Commanders will realize that if they fail to properly and fully develop character in their Soldiers, they are setting the conditions for failure.

Changing a Culture

The shift we are advocating would be a revolutionary change in the Army’s culture, not an incremental or methodical one. To be effective, leaders at the highest levels of the organization would have to require it. These leaders need to create, drive, and propel this change to ensure it affects every facet of the Army’s leader development and education systems.¹⁷ The current status quo separates competency and character-based development. The new paradigm will always develop competence and character simultaneously—and thus increases the time spent in character development.

After the cultural shift, competence and character will be a part of everything we do. As a guide to propel this change, we propose to use John Kotter’s eight steps in changing an organization’s culture:

1. Establish a sense of urgency (from the top-down *and* the bottom-up).
2. Create a guiding coalition (to take the ball and run with it).
3. Develop a vision and strategy to integrate character and competence.
4. Communicate the change vision using senior leaders.
5. Empower broad-based action by removing barriers to change.
6. Generate short-term wins by integrating character education into our curriculums.
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change (by integrating character education into our training venues).
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture by challenging others in the organization to talk about the change.¹⁸

There will be a steep learning curve for instructors and leaders on how to create and facilitate these uncomfortable conversations. However, a good part of the strategy to implement this change is to “just do it.” We need to set the conditions and create opportunities for Soldiers to think about the way they understand difficult issues such as killing, murder, torture, rape, and how to relate to detainees and foreigners. Soldiers need to test and challenge their thoughts, beliefs, and values. This simple first step will actually be a huge step toward addressing the cultural change we propose.

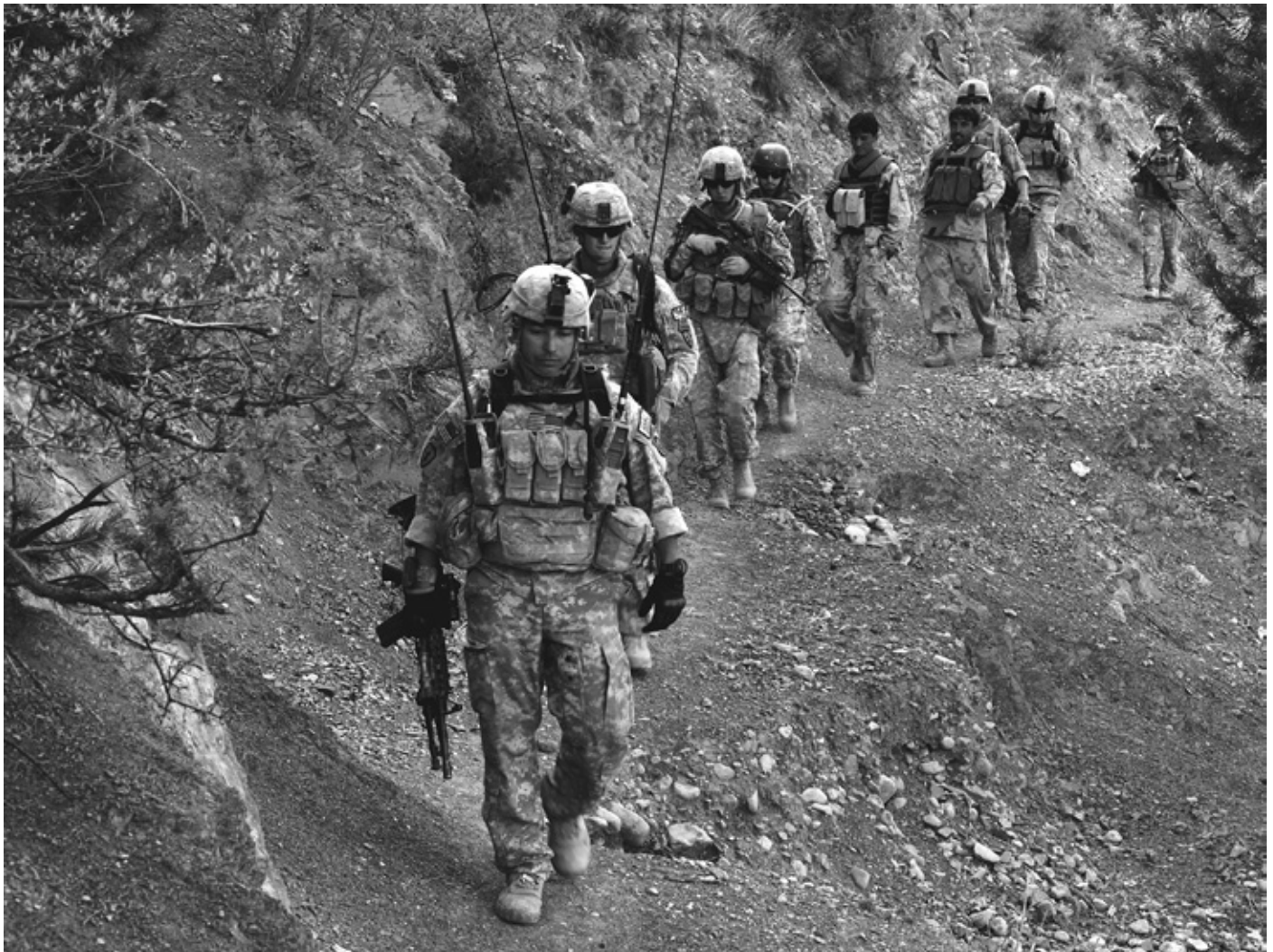
If the Army decides to make this cultural change, it will actually save time and money. The net saving

occurs because Soldiers will no longer have to sit in classrooms and theaters for ethics-related training. Our Army will have transformed into a profession where character and competence training, education, and development occur simultaneously—with

the outcome being Soldiers who understand and have internalized what it means to be an American Soldier. Ultimately, our Army and our Nation will benefit from such a change. It is the right thing to do, and now is the time to do it. **MR**

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U.S. Soldiers and Afghan border policemen walk along a mountain trail during a patrol in the Paktiya province of Afghanistan, 13 October 2009. (U.S. Army, SSG Andrew Smith)

DEVELOPING Creative and Critical THINKERS

Colonel Charles D. Allen, U.S. Army, Retired; and
Colonel Stephen J. Gerras, Ph.D., U.S. Army, Retired



IN APRIL 2009, Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited each of the senior service colleges to present his rationale for budget recommendations to the president. We can infer that his purpose was to communicate the critical priorities for the Fiscal Year 2010 national defense budget directly to emerging armed services senior leaders.¹ His FY 2010 recommendations challenged the existing advice and direction of the service leaders and would result in the cutting of major weapon systems.

In explaining his concerns about the Future Combat System (FCS), Secretary Gates related a conversation he had with the senior Army leadership about the design of the FCS variant of the infantry fighting vehicle. The vehicle had a clearance of 18 inches from the ground and a flat bottom hull. His comment was stark: the design revealed, “No lessons learned.”² The strategic investment in the FCS program had produced an inherently flawed vehicle. His message was clear: “What were we thinking?”

Several contemporary books and articles question our leaders’ abilities to think strategically about the challenges we face after 9-11. Tom Rick’s *Fiasco* and Bob Woodward’s *The War Within* are outsider accounts of ineffective policy- and strategy-making by senior civilian and military leaders. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen stressed the need to “think ahead at the strategy level” in his guidance to the Joint Staff because we were “still more reactive than anticipatory.”³ Some within the Army have also cited the lack of strategic thinking. (See Paul Yingling’s “A Failure in Generalship;” Steve Gerras’ “The Army as a Learning Organization;” and at the institutional level, David A. Fastabend and Robert H. Simpson’s “Adapt or Die.”)⁴ Several senior leaders have touted the innovations in the operational force, but pointed to ineffective strategies and failures of institutional processes within the Department of Defense.⁵ These leaders have observed that we were too busy to think, that we failed to see the big picture, and that our decision making was faulty.

Many senior Army and DOD leaders have said we need to develop better strategic thinking skills for the 21st century security environment.⁶ The requirement stems from a realization that the complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity of the current environment mandates a move away from Cold War methodologies and assumptions. As recent history suggests, a large gap exists between the Army’s desire to develop strategic thinking skills and what actually happens.⁷

This article presents a definition of strategic thinking and then focuses on the two key antecedents of strategic thinking—creative and critical thinking—and

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presents the Army War College approach to educating students in these skills.

Strategic thinking is the ability to make a creative and holistic synthesis of key factors affecting an organization and its environment in order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and long-term success. Strategic thinking meshes anticipated requirements with future organizational capabilities to ensure the organization “wins” in the future.

Examples of failures in strategic thinking abound. They include the recent failures of U.S. auto companies to understand the key factors facing their industry. Of greater significance is our own failure of strategic thinking in the formulation and acceptance of the many pre-war assumptions about Iraq. The core elements of strategic thinking are the ability to think creatively and critically about national security issues. We believe research in cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and decision making can and should inform the Army’s calculus for developing strategic-thinking skills.

Creative and Critical Thinking in the Army

We believe that providing students with the fundamentals of how to think about the challenges at the strategic level is vitally important because of the unpredictability of both the internal and external environments in which we operate. Consequently, our senior leadership must be skilled in developing and applying creative strategies to circumstances about which we have limited current knowledge or understanding. Creative thinking, therefore, is a critical element of strategic thought and is necessary for successful leadership of our military.

Creativity is the ability to produce novel ideas that others value. Individuals, groups, and organizations at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels need to be creative to provide new and effective approaches to challenges and understand the interaction between an organization and its external environment. The national security and contemporary operating environments are inherently volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.⁸ Operating effectively requires leaders who have the sophisticated cognitive skills appropriate for the multiple demands of such environments. They must learn quickly, adapt when necessary, anticipate the future, be mentally agile and versatile, and look at issues in the correct contexts.⁹

Creativity requires developing new ideas and concepts that are effective in resolving situations at hand. Creativity is as much about observing the internal and external environment and finding problems as it is about problem solving. Particularly at the strategic level, we must be sensitive to how we even *define* problems, since very often the specificity or breadth of the problem statement will limit the generation of viable solutions. The terms “novelty,” “quality,” and “appropriateness” are commonly used in definitions of creativity. These terms apply equally to problem definition as to the other components of decision-making processes.

Creative thinking is a cognitive process that supports divergent and convergent aspects of problem solving and decision making. Thinking creatively provides a means to identify that a problem exists and, therefore, helps with problem definition. It also gives rise to the generation of multiple alternatives and a range of options in this divergent component. Through the application of critical thinking, alternatives are analyzed and judged for effectiveness and appropriateness in solving the problem. The convergence on the problem solution results in a decision for implementation. However, our predilection for quick answers and easy solutions hinders the process of divergent and convergent thinking.

Our profession requires its leaders to be not only creative but also critical thinkers. Creative out of necessity, and motivated out of desperation, our adversaries rapidly adapt to changing circumstances. Our enemies will be creative, so we must be, too. Creativity and innovation must inform senior leaders in critically deciding what to do and how to do it. As Professor Diane Halpern notes, “Critical thinking is the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal directed.”¹⁰ In essence, critical thinking is about using processes to evaluate and select information in order to improve one’s judgment and make better decisions. While this paper does not outline the critical-thinking process, there are good references for detailed analysis of how to do critical thinking.¹¹

...our adversaries rapidly adapt to changing circumstances.

How do we develop these judgment skills in Army leaders? In the academic context, one way is to teach logic and reasoning skills that are typically the focus of philosophy. A second way is to emphasize questioning and self-reflection skills that are usually the focus of education and psychology.¹²

One can apply these methods in an environment that is context-free or context-dependent. Context-free development focuses on teaching thinking skills irrespective of a specific subject. Context-dependent development centers on teaching the same skills for a field of study. Based on our experiences at the War College, we think the best way to teach critical thinking skills to military leaders is to provide context-dependent skill development that incorporates philosophy's focus on critical thinking and education and psychology's focus on self-examination.

We argue that we can best develop strategic thinking skills if we—

- Use a multidisciplinary perspective to provide knowledge about thinking skills.
- Practice applying these skills in a context-dependent setting under the purview of a knowledgeable leader or facilitator.
- Encourage and motivate the routine application of strategic thinking skills to important issues by creating a healthy environment in schools and units.

Critical Thinking— the Good and Bad News

The Army has some structural and cultural processes and norms that facilitate critical thinking. The military decision-making process is a rational, methodological approach for making decisions. The joint operation planning process uses it for tactical planning. Followed correctly, it should lead to the best (or at least a better) decision given the degree of uncertainty and complexity of the situation. The challenge is that a wide range of opportunities for failure in critical thinking and a bad decision accompany each step of the military decision-making process. From receiving the commander's initial guidance to generating courses of action, from evaluating courses of action to listing assumptions, innate biases and fallacious reasoning can lead the decision-maker astray. The availability heuristic (recalling the most vivid events) and egocentricity (thinking one's beliefs are better than anyone else's) can lead the unit down the wrong road if the

commander thinks his intuition is infallible and that the last way he dealt with a problem will work in the next case. At the end of the day, a leader must appreciate not only the value of the process, but also the importance of critical thinking.

The U.S. military has other attributes that facilitate critical thinking. For one, the military is extremely diverse. Rich and poor; black, brown, and white; Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and non-believers serve in the U.S. military. Diversity of thought can remove some obstacles to critical thinking and supports creativity and the cultivation of innovative solutions to pressing problems. Of course, the success inherent in leveraging diverse viewpoints and opinions depends on the commander's ability to listen to them.

Unfortunately, the combination of the Army's diversity and its emphasis on the military decision making process does not seem to be overcoming the challenges the Army faces as it attempts to become better at strategic thinking. The Army's biggest obstacle is its hierarchical nature and cultural norms. Reflective skepticism as a technique to improve judgment and decision making is difficult to embrace if officers or NCOs are not comfortable disagreeing with the boss, or even the boss's boss. This is especially difficult if senior leaders have egocentric tendencies toward extreme self-confidence because of numerous accolades and promotions. Unfortunately, leaders who have not taken careful steps to ensure the information they receive from their subordinates is "ground truth," even if it disagrees with their view, seem to be more the rule than the exception.

Because of its preeminence among the world's land forces, the Army has developed the ethnocentric view that the Army way is the best way. The impact of this ethnocentric (in addition to egocentric) view of the world is that the Army often struggles with cultural awareness, which is an artifact of faulty critical thinking. The intense focus of the Army recently on developing culture-savvy officers testifies to this shortcoming as well as a step toward meaningful change.

***Diversity of thought can
remove some obstacles to
critical thinking...***

An often overlooked requirement for successful creative and critical thinking is the concept of dialogue. The Army's hierarchical nature resists dialogue. Dr. Peter Senge asserts, "There are two primary types of discourse: dialogue and discussion. Both are important to a team capable of continual generative learning, but their power lies in their synergy, which is not likely to be present when the distinctions between them are not appreciated."¹³ If commanders and leaders are more interested in discussion than real dialogue, they reduce opportunities to challenge personal assumptions. Several things must occur for dialogue to begin in a command and staff meeting, a troop unit, or staff group at the Captain's Career Course. Most important among these is the requirement that participants regard each other as professional colleagues, not subordinates and superiors. In addition, someone must serve as a facilitator who "holds the context" of dialogue.¹⁴

In *Adapt or Die*, Fastabend and Simpson posit, "Critical thinking is also an aspect of environment. To foster critical thinking, Army teams must at times leave rank at the door. 'Groupthink' is the antithesis of [creative and] critical thinking and exists in organizations in which subordinates simply mimic the thinking of their superiors."¹⁵ To develop its critical-thinking capability, the Army must educate, train and select officers comfortable with putting their position power (i.e., their rank) to the side to facilitate better judgment through reflective skepticism. Jim Collins in *Good to Great* found that the leadership in great companies was not only about vision, it was "equally about creating a climate where truth is heard and brutal facts confronted. There is a huge difference between the opportunity to 'have your say' and the opportunity to be heard. The good-to-great leaders understood this distinction, creating a culture wherein people had a tremendous opportunity to be heard and, ultimately, for the truth to be heard."¹⁶ This requirement applies not only to unit leaders but also to facilitators and instructors in the educational system.

How to Improve

Given these challenges and obstacles, how do we make Army leaders better at creative and critical thinking? First, we must teach leaders the knowledge, skills, and terminology associated with thinking competencies. These are acquirable intellectual skills. As suggested earlier, the best way to teach thinking skills

to Army leaders is to provide context-dependent skill development. Officers need to learn these thinking skills within the Officer Education System in Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The real meat of strategic thinking development, however, will occur as TRADOC instructors and facilitators highlight strategic thinking opportunities in the vast array of topics in the TRADOC curriculum.

This recommendation, however, has one single but critical antecedent to success. First, TRADOC should develop in its instructors the requisite skills to enable strategic thinking in a *context-dependent* environment. Most important among these is the ability to facilitate dialogue. TRADOC instructors should understand when it is appropriate to offer direct presentation of information (lectures and demonstrations); when it is best to have a discussion; and most importantly, when to facilitate a context-dependent dialogue to develop conceptual skills. Second, not only does TRADOC need to develop the facilitation skills of its instructors, it needs to select instructors that have the background, intelligence, and requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure success. Such changes would raise the quality of TRADOC instruction.¹⁷

Not fully appreciated is the secondary effect of a strong TRADOC climate: its graduates will report to troop units where they can model these behaviors when they discuss complex issues. As Fastabend and Simpson note, "Army leaders must create an environment where critical thinking is the norm and reasoned debate replaces unspoken dissent. Critical thinking is a learned behavior that is underpinned by education. The Army education system . . . can be our most effective lever of cultural change. Many of our most important cultural shifts can trace their origins to the school house."¹⁸

Of course, Army officers will not immediately pin on the eagles of colonels and become strategic thinkers upon selection for a senior level college. Hence, we have the Adaptive Leaders Course as part of professional military education and the

Army leaders must create an environment where critical thinking is the norm and reasoned debate replaces unspoken dissent.

Basic Officer Leadership Courses (I-III) for pre-commissioning sources and the initial training programs, whose goal is to develop officers with adaptive capacities and mental agility early in their careers.¹⁹ The Intermediate Level Education course at Fort Leavenworth includes lessons in both creative thinking and critical thinking in its L100 Leadership block of instruction. Junior field grade officers gain understanding of these thinking skills and have the opportunity to apply them effectively in operational assignments after graduation.

The thinking skill development that should occur in troop assignments will happen only if the culture of the Army begins to place a high value on it. Within the constraints of the Army force generation model, it simply makes sense that during the first year of the reset cycle, new battalion and brigade commanders and their subordinates should attend further facilitated training. Such training should focus on developing creative and critical thinking skills as well as maintaining a climate that facilitates dialogue. Opportunities to apply creative thought and critical analysis are ubiquitous in our current tactical and operational environments; we see them daily in media reports from the field. If the Army really cares about strategic thinking, it must devote time and resources to its development.

The War College Approach

The Army War College has long recognized the need to educate its students in creative and critical

thinking skills, but has struggled with finding the best way to introduce the material and develop competencies. For several years, the two topics were presented in a combined lesson during the core curriculum. Through the after-action review process, we realized that the single lesson either covered one topic in detail while giving short shrift to the other, or that both topics were addressed superficially. The realization fortunately coincided with a core curriculum revision that mandated a ten-day core course on strategic thinking in academic year 2006. The new course incorporated a full lesson for both creative and critical thinking. The intent was to introduce students to the concepts of creative and critical thinking early in the academic year so they could be applied in seminar discussions throughout the remainder of the year. In order to develop as critical and creative thinkers, students not only have to learn the concepts, they must practice applying the concepts under the watchful eye of an experienced facilitator.

The survey lessons provided are context-dependent. The seminar sessions begin with a presentation by the faculty of the key concepts and predominant models to ensure that students have the foundational knowledge and a frame of reference for the topics. Within each session, a brief exercise gives students the opportunity to apply the concepts followed by an after-action review facilitated by the faculty to draw out the salient

CREATIVE THINKING	CRITICAL THINKING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide the student with a greater understanding of the individual and group creative problem solving processes. ● To increase the student's ability to be innovative and creative in an environment marked by ambiguity, complexity, and change. ● To increase the student's awareness of and appreciation for the competencies required by a strategic thinker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To comprehend the wide range of critical-thinking skills relevant to strategic leaders. ● To comprehend the importance of reflection and self-awareness to identify the impact of biases, assumptions, fallacious reasoning, and egocentric thinking on the decisions we make as strategic leaders. ● To apply critical-thinking skills to real-world situations such as current events, strategic decision making, and ethical challenges.

Table 1. Elective objectives.



DOB

Student Seminar 7 during the Theater Strategy and Campaigning course in the U.S. Army War College core curriculum. December 2008 to January 2009.

points. This questioning and reflection reinforces development of the thinking skill.

The Army War College also offers separate elective courses in these topic areas taught by faculty subject matter experts. While the lesson and elective course objectives (Table 1) are different, the scopes of the elective offerings are essentially the same. The creative-thinking elective is a senior leader-level course to help students deal with the issues and problems they are likely to encounter that require creative and innovative solutions. This course uses exercises that present unusual and challenging situations requiring creative solutions. The applicability of creative problem-solving techniques to strategic issues such as defense policy and domestic security is examined. Similarly, the critical-thinking elective aims to enhance the development and application of critical-thinking skills to analyze and evaluate complex issues and identify and argue the underlying assumptions that provide the foundation of strategic dialogue. The course develops students' critical-reasoning skills.

In each course, multiple perspectives give students a foundation in the concepts and theories of these cognitive skills. In each seminar session, there is an opportunity to test the concepts and confirm "proof of principle" through several methods. The electives' early lessons aim to develop self-awareness and specific thinking skills that support more complex application later in the courses. For the creative-thinking elective, students complete instruments like the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator,²⁰ the Kirton Adaption-Innovation Instrument,²¹ and Belbin's Team Roles²² that reveal their prefer-

ences for creative styles as individuals and provide insights into their behavior within groups—either as members or leaders. In-seminar exercises demonstrate the concepts in action for individuals and teams. An example is a project planning simulation that demonstrates the improvement in creativity and decision quality by groups.²³

In addition to in-house faculty, we offer the perspectives of visiting outside scholars and practitioners for topics such as strategic intuition and climate for innovation. The diversity of thought and material demonstrates the value of tapping into non-conventional (civilian) sources to find ideas that may have applicability for military problem sets. For each session in the creative-thinking elective, students make journal entries to capture their personal reflections on the concepts presented and assess their relevance to their past experiences and future positions.

Case studies are incorporated that present historical events and tough issues that require strategic thinking—creative and critical—to discern areas of concerns and underlying causes. Students attempt to define the problem and then examine the potential solutions. In the academic year 2010 core curriculum, we piloted such a case study using the enduring Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For the integrative lesson, students were required to use concepts from creative and critical thinking to gain a holistic appreciation of the complexity of the problem and the many perspectives that have thwarted solutions over the past half-century.

In the critical-thinking elective, students adopt the lens of strategic decision-makers in a variety of

selected cases and scenarios that require the application of a model of critical thinking, along with additional tools and techniques to develop a rich understanding of the benefits and challenges of applying critical-thinking methods to realistic scenarios. Students also choose contemporary cases and make presentations on strategic-level military issues such as Pakistan and North Korea in order to examine points of view and underlying assumptions. In addition, other issues outside our students' traditional comfort areas, like education reform in America and the national financial crisis, lead to rich discussions.

How do we know that our approach to educating our students on strategic thinking works? The short answer is that we don't. We do, however, have end-of-course surveys and anecdotal comments from our graduates in the field that suggest they are better prepared to operate at the strategic level in the operational and institutional force. Both creative and critical thinking are among topics governmental, educational, nonprofit, and corporate organizations request for workshops and the Senior Leadership Staff Ride program. Clearly, once exposed to the concepts of strategic thinking, people see value in it.

Conclusion

The continued development of strategic-thinking skills is imperative for a successful Army. Issues currently facing the military will also benefit significantly from the application of strategic-thinking

competencies. First, creative and out-of-the-box ideas are essential to success as the Army strives to develop a culture of innovation across the force, but only to the extent that critical thinking is applied to those ideas to reach viable solutions to complex issues. Creative thinking involves a divergence of thought. Critical thinking involves a convergence and analysis of thought to weed through poor ideas and identify the good ones. Creative thinking tends to be wasteful of time and energy without critical thinking. Without creative thinking, potential solutions may never be explored or discovered. Our leaders must recognize and acknowledge their natural shortcomings in strategic thinking and then take action to encourage the essential skills of creative and critical thinking.

Empowered subordinates will contribute to the decision-making process as Army leaders learn how to facilitate dialogue to encourage creative and critical thinking. Most studies on decision making show the benefit of collecting various points of view and perspectives. The overall quality of the final decision and its implementation improves. Numerous studies also show that empowered subordinates enjoy higher job satisfaction and have a stronger desire to remain in the military.²⁴ The context for the Army is not getting simpler. Sophisticated decision making must accompany sophisticated understanding. The application of the strategic-thinking skills will begin to move our leaders, and our Army, in that direction. **MR**

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EMPATHY

A True Leader Skill

**Lieutenant Colonel
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To lead successfully, a person must demonstrate two active, essential, interrelated traits: expertise and empathy. In my experience, both of these traits can be deliberately and systematically cultivated; this personal development is the first important building block of leadership.

—William G. Pagonis, *Leadership in a Combat Zone*

IN HIS CLASSIC 1991 *Harvard Business Review* article, “Leadership in a Combat Zone,” Lieutenant General Gus Pagonis outlines a path to effective leadership by focusing on the development of two fundamental leadership traits: expertise and empathy. There is little disagreement among military professionals that leaders must be proficient at systems management. But what about empathy? How did empathy, a word that conjures preconceptions of excessive sensitivity and interpersonal emotional connectivity, become a building block of leadership? The term seemingly would better apply to the realm of doctors and counselors than to those charged with fighting wars. As a professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, I found it intriguing that FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, elevated empathy to an essential attribute for Army leadership. I began wondering if our middle-level Army leaders really understood its definition and applicability to a leadership climate. Attempting to satisfy my curiosity, I deliberately injected the concept of empathy into several classroom discussions. While most students understood the obvious definition of “placing yourself in someone else’s position,” few could elaborate on its specific application in operations and professional development. I looked at the doctrine, and found little on the application of empathy:

Army Leaders show a propensity to share experiences with the members of their organizations. When planning and deciding, try to envision the impact on Soldiers and other subordinates. The ability to see something from another person’s point of view, to identify with and enter into another person’s feelings and emotions, enables the Army leader to better care.¹

Why is it so important to see things from the Soldier’s point of view, to “identify with and enter into another person’s feelings and emotions?” The U.S. involvement in extended operations and its focus on counterinsurgency, has brought a renewed awareness of war’s human dimension. Humans desire supportive relationships, and empathy is the foundation that builds trusting relationships. The leader who harnesses the power of real empathy fosters

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PHOTO: Two U.S. Soldiers clear the halls and classrooms of the recently refurbished Al Faw Middle School in the Sadr City district of Baghdad, Iraq, 11 August 2008. (U.S. Air Force, TSGT Cohen A. Young)

better communication, tighter cohesion, stronger discipline, and greater morale throughout his or her organization.

In this article I discuss empathy, its elements, and its role in fostering trust by building relationships within the organization. A close examination of personal and professional development will demonstrate how essential empathy is for creating trusting relationships among subordinates and leaders. Finally, I will discuss empathic awareness and how to overcome the “empathy deficit.” Many leaders are not empathetic by nature, and for them it must become an acquired skill. With a few simple techniques and the will to develop this foundational attribute, leaders will discover improved relations in both their professional and personal lives.

Empathy in Leadership

Empathy is an abstract tool that leads to tangible results.² In 2005, the Melbourne Business School’s Mount Eliza Center for Executive Education initiated the Leadership Index Project, for which they interviewed over 627 business and organizational leaders. The survey captured the specific issues and concerns of managers in Australian organizations. It also demonstrated how the challenges faced by these managers are similar to or different from those of their counterparts, both regionally and globally. The survey found that, out of 20 leadership qualities, empathy and caring toward employees ranked 4th.³

Emerging theories on leadership clearly illustrate this course. A predominate characteristic of these new approaches is the term “empathy.” Typically, in classroom discussions, concepts like “compassion,” “pity,” and “sympathy” often emerge as components of the definition. While often used interchangeably, these terms possess very different meanings in the emotional connections among humans. Sympathy is the most general term. It ranges from friendly interest in another’s taste or opinion to emotional identification, often accompanied by deep tenderness. Pity has the strongest emotional connotation. Pity might sometimes suggest a tinge of contempt for one who is thought to be

inferior because of suffering or inherent weakness. There is also a frequent suggestion that the effect, if not the purpose of pity, is to keep the subject in the weakened or inferior state. Compassion, originally meaning fellowship between equals, has come to denote imaginative or emotional sharing of distress or misfortune with others considered or treated as equals. It implies tenderness and understanding as well as an urgent desire to aid or spare. It implies greater dignity than pity, but also greater detachment in the subject. Empathy has the least emotional content; it describes an often-cultivated gift for vicarious feeling, but the feeling need not be one of sorrow.⁴ Dr. Carl Rogers, the famed psychotherapist and pioneer in humanist psychology defined empathy this way:

Empathy means entering into the private perceptual world of the other and becoming thoroughly at home in it...To be with another in this way means that for the time being, you lay aside your own views and values in order to enter another’s world without prejudice. In some sense it means that you lay aside yourself.⁵

So while empathy is an emotional connection with the other person, it is not based on sorrow, guilt, suffering, or weakness, but on developing a mutual relationship. To understand another’s thoughts, feelings, reactions, concerns, and motives, we need to use our cognitive abilities to

stop and think about the other person’s perspective. We need to have the emotional capacity to care for that person’s concern. Caring does not mean we agree with their positions, logic, or views, or that we would change our positions; but it does mean we would be in tune with what that person is going through. We need to acknowledge their thoughts, feelings, and concerns.⁶ Empathy is often associated with sensing another’s feelings.⁷ Many people believe that it is the single most important quality in developing human relationships, and most consider it a learned skill.⁸

In the field of organizational development, empathy implies risk on the part of the leader. It requires increasing one’s level of humility and lowering one’s perceived position of power. As the leader

Empathy is an abstract tool that leads to tangible results.

demonstrates empathy, he reveals his feelings and values to the organization.

Empathy is the ability to express one's own emotions maturely, and it represents a complex skill that varies among individuals. It can develop positive relationships and improve problem-solving and decision-making abilities, and lead to fulfillment of personal goals and greater organization development.⁹

Organizational Development

Organizational structures can be mechanistic or organic. Mechanistic structures are the traditional hierarchical arrangements featuring clearly defined roles, centralized control and decision-making, predictable and accountable skills, close supervision, and information flowing vertically from the top to the bottom. Within a mechanical structure, standardization via standard operations procedures are the norm, as are status conscious leadership and slow, steady performance promotion. This rigid structure is typical for stable, unchanging environments.

On the opposite end of the organizational spectrum are organic structures. Organic structures promote flexibility to respond to rapidly changing environments. They decentralize and relax decision-making roles and authority, encouraging the development of new kinds of job skills that can respond to continuously changing tasks. Rules are relaxed which promotes and rewards the flow of new and creative ideas throughout the organizations. The organic organizational climate encourages employees from different career fields, branches, and backgrounds to work together at solving problems by exchanging information and promoting teamwork and creativity within the organization. Over time, specific norms and values develop, emphasizing personal competence, expertise, and the ability to act in innovative ways. Typical of organic structure

Tough empathy means giving people what they need, not what they want.

is trust, empowerment, knowledge management, and open communications via networks.¹⁰

Businesses in highly competitive and constantly changing environments, such as the technological and prescription drug industries, reflect many organic characteristics. The constantly changing and complex nature of counterinsurgency and full spectrum operations has forced the U.S. Army to transform toward a more organic structure.

Tough Empathy

Robert Goffee and Gareth R. Jones provide a simple, yet profound suggestion in their article, "Why Should Anyone Be Led By You?" Their answer to the title's question is that those who inspire us should lead us by—

- (1) selectively showing their weakness (revealing humility and vulnerability),
- (2) relying on intuition (interpreting emerging data),
- (3) managing with tough empathy (caring intensely about employees and about the work they do), and
- (4) revealing their differences (showing what is unique about themselves).¹¹

The concept of "tough empathy" is gaining in popularity among business leaders and behavioral scientists. Its intent is to separate real, applicable empathy from the vague academic applications found in earlier interpersonal relations theory. Chris Sattlerwaite, CEO of Bell Pottinger Communications, adheres to the concept of "tough empathy" by rejecting the soft kind of definition defined in much management literature. He adeptly handles the challenges of managing creative people while making tough decisions. "If I have to, I can be ruthless," he says. "But while they're with me, I promise that my people will learn something."¹²

Tough empathy means giving people what they need, not what they want. One must accomplish this by balancing respect for the individual and concern for the tasks, not easy to do in a highly competitive, ever-changing environment. The central characteristic of tough empathy is the devotion of a leader to his followers and the desire to assist them professionally and personally. In contrast to lax, easy leaders, those that practice tough empathy require firm, direct, and value-driven action that does not sacrifice standards but remains sensitive to ensuring followers grow and develop during the process.

Tough empathy demonstrates a thorough understanding of the follower's views or predicaments. As Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee point out, it means expressing emotions, not stifling them.¹³ A leadership climate fostering tough empathy enhances individual relationships and trust, and thus strengthens the organization.

There are few better examples of "tough" empathy than those demonstrated by the leaders of Sergeant Alvin C. York. When drafted, York, a devoted Christian, informed his commanders, Captain E.C.B. Danforth, commander, G Company, 328th Infantry, 82d Division, and Major George E. Buxton, commander, 328th Infantry Battalion, 82d Division, that he did not believe in killing. The examples of Major Buxton and Captain Danforth speak to us today. Recognizing a potential leader and a natural Soldier, these men gave hours of their precious time to help Private York work through his spiritual conflicts. They even placed him on leave for two weeks to ponder his decision. Because of their patience and understanding, they were able to place themselves clearly in York's position and understand this dilemma. York, in turn, was able to fully commit himself to his duties, and he ultimately saved his regiment from defeat.¹⁴

Whatever drives young people to the recruiting offices today, they typically share three common needs with their civilian counterparts: the need of affiliation, the need of achievement, and the need for power.¹⁵ Attuned empathetic leaders will not only understand these three desires, but also create a strong sense of unit cohesion and teamwork. In low-trust environments, the single most important factor in determining trust and credibility is perceived caring, empathy, and commitment. Vincent T. Covello, director of the Center for Risk Communication and a leading expert in crisis communications, maintains that people often



DOD, MCST Chad J. McNeeley

LTC James A. Swords, commander, Warrior Transition Unit, 10th Mountain Division, visits his Soldiers and their families assigned to Ft. Drum, NY, 9 February 2009.

decide if the communicator is caring, empathic, and committed within the first two minutes of a communication, and often in as little as nine to thirty seconds. The judgment, once made, is often highly resistant to change.¹⁶ Growing evidence suggests that individuals respond to leaders if their displays of empathy make them feel understood and valued. The empathic behavior of the strong leader encourages followers, instilling a high level for affiliation. The follower then perceives a strong collective identity and shows organizational citizenship behavior directed toward the leader and the co-workers. Emergent relationships stemming from empathy tend to

enhance perceptions of the leader's integrity and credibility and tend to engender cooperation and trust.

The knowledge and understanding gained from this sense of empathy enables leaders to influence followers' emotions and attitudes, including feelings of excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism in support of the corporate goals and objectives.¹⁷ Groups will thus be highly cohesive. If leaders are meeting the need for affiliation, high levels of achievement are likely to follow as professional development increases and trust grows.

Professional and personal counseling is a fundamental organizational development tool for military officers. Performance counseling is a relatively new organizational development concept deriving from Dr. Carl Rogers' 1940s research in psychoanalysis. What Dr. Rogers coined as "person centre therapy" featured a move away from directed solutions, to individual problems and to more personal relationships with his patients. This therapy helped them realize that they can help themselves. He did this by pushing the person toward growth and emphasizing immediate and future performance versus the past. By moving the responsibility for growth

and development away from the counselor and on to the patient, a greater sense of self-worth and confidence developed.¹⁸

The Army's counseling methods are ostensibly no different. Army regulations require leaders at all levels to conduct periodic performance counseling, yet the majority of my students report that professional performance counseling is sporadic at best. Ironically, performance counseling is the primary method to meet the followers' need for affiliation and there is no better tool to promote an empathic climate. When properly conducted, counseling requires humility and openness. The leader facilitates a dialog with the Soldier as they discuss individual performance and create development plans. The leader must be patient, focus clearly on the Soldier, and listen to his responses. The leader has to demonstrate his ability not only to influence the Soldier but also to be influenced by the Soldier, who can speak freely on issues he or she feels are important not only to the Soldier, but also to the organization.

An observant leader closely watches the Soldier's body language and listens for the emotion. This allows the Soldier to express personal views, provide insight, and feel like a valued member of the team. The leader's empathic behavior results in valuable insights into the wants, needs, and perceptions within the organization. According to Stephen Covey's classic, *Principle Centered Leadership*:

Counseling is an overt demonstration of caring and is likely to contribute to the development of an active bond and identification with the leader. Sincerely listening to their views and concerns, and assisting them in their professional development in the solution of a personal problem, clearly illustrates the value the leader places in the Soldier . . . An attitude of empathy is enormously attractive because it keeps the leader open and others feel that the leader is learning and is influencable . . . Empathy means being open to new learning and change. The key to the leaders influencing them is their perceiving that they have influence with the leader.¹⁹

**When properly conducted,
counseling requires
humility and openness.**

Trust between the leader and the led often begins with counseling. As Soldiers become more skilled and more professional, the opportunities increase through competition and

promotion. Once a leader trusts a subordinate, he gives the subordinate greater responsibility and power.

Counseling ideally represents the merger of humility and empathy; without humility, true empathy will not occur. Empathic analysis of an employee or organization may determine the type of leadership style applied. As author Stephen Covey explained, "The human dynamic is just another variable in a complex organizational environment and a leadership style is adapted to harness the full potential of each employee."²⁰

Borrowing portions from a case study authored by Matt Broaddus, a leadership professor at the Army's Command and General Staff College, titled "If I Could Do It All Over Again . . .," here is an illustration of empathic counseling:

Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell had been in command for year. The battalion deployed to Afghanistan in May just one month after he assumed command. It was the six-month point of the deployment, and the days had become an indistinguishable frantic blur of moving from one potential disaster to the next. The mission was exceptionally demanding, the battalion was stretched thin, and the personnel were performing tasks for which they were not trained to accomplish. Conditions on the newly established forward operations base (FOB) were tough; the weather had changed from very hot to extremely cold with persistent wind and sudden dust storms making breathing difficult and staying clean impossible. Meals (T-Rations and MREs) were monotonous; sleep tents were over crowded and hot showers were infrequent. Over the past month, Captain Pete Smith, the Alpha Company Commander, once a strong, motivated, and highly competent combat leader, had changed. He had become withdrawn and only communicated when required. He continually had a pained look

on his face and Mitchell felt that he was avoiding him. Additionally, Alpha Company's performance was slipping. As LTC Mitchell pondered the method of counseling CPT Smith, he first considered a direct, one sided, performance counseling. The old "wire-brush method" he employed as a young company commander. This one sided approach was easy and would put Smith "on notice"; clearly outlining the corrective actions he must take to keep his job. However, as he assessed Smith's past performance and behavior, he realized that something was amiss. Performance does not just drop without a reason. He made a few notes, grabbed his helmet, and proceeded to find CPT Smith. He found him at his vehicle assisting the driver performing maintenance. As he approached, Smith came to attention but showed no emotion. After receiving a quick update, LTC Mitchell asked Smith to take a walk with him. They walked to the vehicle and after excusing the crew, climbed into the rear of the truck. LTC Mitchell removed his helmet and invited Smith to do the same. He explained the circumstances of their meeting and then asked a few, carefully selected questions concerning the unit's performance. LTC Mitchell carefully listened and observed CPT Smith's reactions. He did not interrupt, only listened and watched. LTC Mitchell respectfully affirmed his answers, and followed with more detailed, leading questions concerning CPT Smith's personal life and events at home. LTC Mitchell observed from CPT Smith's haggard appearance, evasive answers and unsettled disposition that there was more to the story. This was one of his best, most respected company commanders, whose performance in combat had been remarkable. Mitchell was patient, understanding and empathic toward Smith. Finally, after several minutes, CPT Smith admitted that his only son, five year old Jake, had recently been diagnosed with lymphoma and would begin chemotherapy in a few days. His prognosis was uncertain. While his wife was strong, she was

beginning to break under the pressure and anxiety. CPT Smith felt trapped. He was torn between his loyalty to his family and to his men. The guilt and stress were seriously impacting him. Mitchell empathized with Smith's position, having experienced cancer in his own family. CPT Smith was too distracted to effectively lead his company. While LTC Mitchell did not want to "temporarily lose" one of his best commanders, it was best for both Smith and the company to allow him to return to care for his extremely ill child and emotionally drained wife. It made good business sense, shaped CPT Smith as a future leader, and created a positive impact on the entire battalion.²¹

The results of Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell's counseling will have lasting positive effects on the entire organization. As the leader nurtures an empathic climate, the organization becomes more cohesive and caring. The followers desire to emulate their leader, and an empathic climate permeates throughout the organization. It manifests itself through better unit performance, fewer disciplinary actions, fewer stress related issues and incidents, and greater loyalty toward the organization.

Techniques for Developing Empathy

Martinuzzi notes that "Empathy is the emotional muscle that gets stronger as you use it."²² Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee also endorse this idea:

Empathic people are superb at recognizing and meeting the needs of clients, customers, and subordinates. They seem approachable, wanting to hear what people have to say. They listen carefully, noticing what people are truly concerned about and they respond on the mark. Tuned out, despondent leaders are one of the main reasons talented people leave organizations and take the companies' knowledge with them.²³

Can leaders become more empathic? Like many areas of leadership theory, the elevation of empathy to a fundamental attribute raises some debate. The central questions appear to be:

- Can leaders be successful without developing empathy?
- Is empathy a developed leadership attribute?

Empathy and success. Walt Disney producer Manly Kaplan says, “I’ve known leaders who have none of it [empathy] and nevertheless were leaders, but those that have it have moved and inspired me more.”²⁴ Many of the best leaders are empathic leaders. They are able to gauge the organization’s mood by taking its emotional pulse. On this subject, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee remarked—

By being attuned to how others feel at [any] given moment, a leader can say and do what is appropriate whether it means calming fears, assuaging anger, or joining in good spirits... The key is making intelligent decisions that work those feelings into positive actions that achieve the organizational goals and objectives.²⁵

Army leaders today operating in remote, dangerous, ambiguous environments, can surely identify with the empathy demonstrated by Lieutenant Rick Rescorla, a platoon leader in Bravo Company, 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry, fighting in Vietnam during November 1965. In General Moore’s account of the Battle of Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang River Valley, Lieutenant Rescorla, a seasoned veteran of the British Army and its operations in Cyprus and Rhodesia, exhibited a truly memorable act of empathy while leading his platoon in combat. After surveying the ground from the enemy’s point of view, Rescorla repositioned his lines in anticipation of the North Vietnamese attack. During the long first night on Landing Zone X-Ray, sensing the tension and fear permeating throughout the platoon, he encouraged talk between the foxholes to ease the tension. “When all else failed,” he sang “Wild Colonial Boy” and a Cornish favorite, “Going Up Camborne Hill,” slow and steady tunes, which were answered with shouts of “Hard Core!” and “Garry Owen!,” which told him his men were standing firm.²⁶

Thirty-five years later, Rick Rescorla again resorted to song to soothe the fears of those in his

***Many of the best leaders...
are able to gauge the
organization’s mood by
taking its emotional pulse.***

charge as vice president of security for Morgan Stanley, the brokerage firm which occupied 22 floors of the south tower of the World Trade Center. As thousands of Morgan Stanley employees evacuated the tower, Rescorla sang to the frightened evacuees just as he had sung to his Soldiers that long night in Vietnam. “He sang ‘God Bless America.’ He sang the songs of the British Army in the Zulu Wars. He sang the old Welsh miner songs.”²⁷

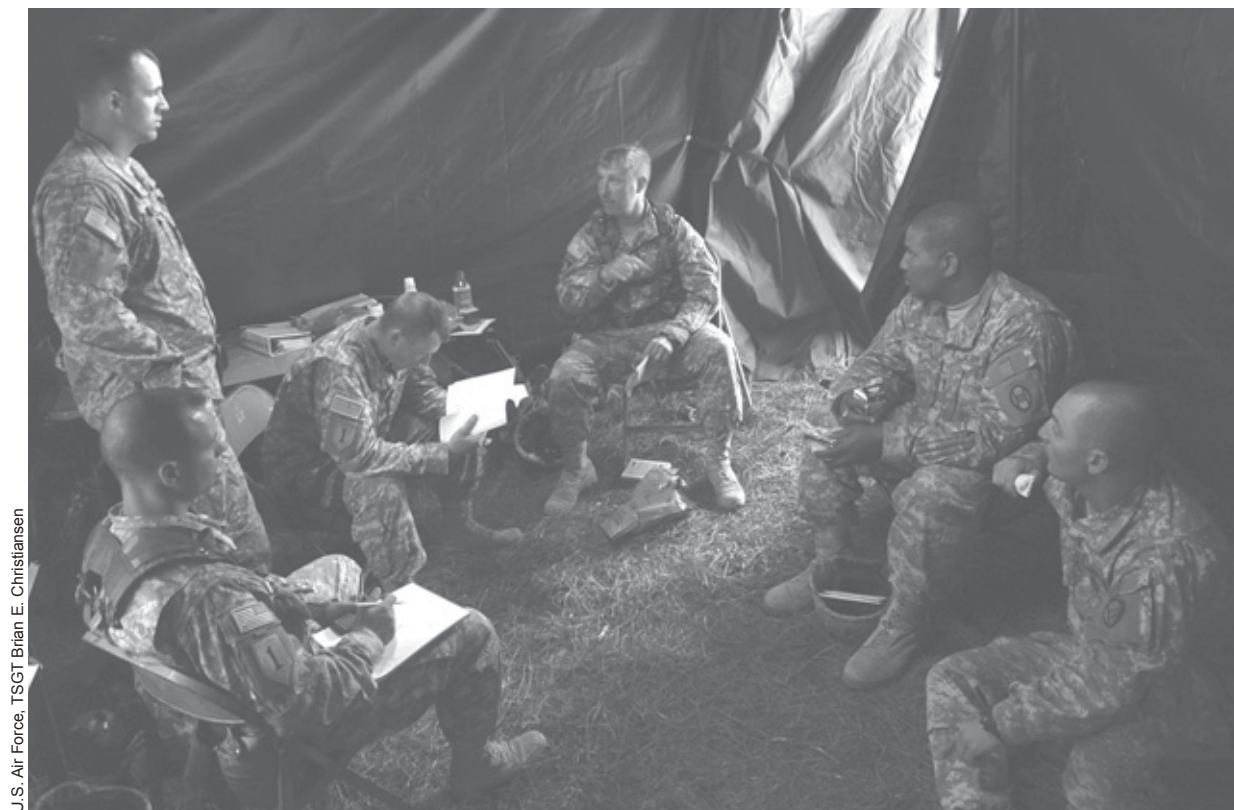
All the Morgan Stanley employees escaped the collapse and this brave, determined, yet empathic old Soldier was last seen alive heading up the stairs with New York firefighters. Rick Rescorla is only one example of many successful empathic leaders. Leadership icons such as Washington, Grant, Lee, Bradley, and Powell exhibited levels of empathy. So while most leaders have some degree of empathy, the great leaders have mastered empathy.

A developed leadership attribute. Like most leadership skills, once the leader is personally aware of the deficiency, methods exist to improve it. According to K.M. Lewis of K.M Lewis Leadership Consulting—

It first begins with the sincere desire to modify your behavior; an acceptance that empathy is not only an important leadership skill but also critical life skill, applicable to every personal relationship. There is little disagreement that those who can read another’s emotions are more effective at interpersonal relationships.²⁸

However, can leaders overcome their empathy deficit? Unquestionably, the process starts with a self-assessment. There are numerous leader assessment tools available, but no matter the tool utilized, an improvement plan must follow. Empathy is not a natural trait or skill for many people. The complexity of empathy lies in the fact that it requires a mastery of empathic listening. Of all the leadership attributes and skills, listening may be the most important.²⁹

Empathic listening is often used synonymously with “active listening” or “reflective listening,” but empathic listening differs by its focus on control. In effect, active and reflective listening rarely digest the full, physical or emotional meaning transmitted from the communicator and never reach a full appreciation for the communicator’s “point of view.”³⁰ As Baldoni says, empathic listening



U.S. Air Force, TSGT Brian E. Christiansen

A U.S. Army lieutenant colonel listens during a commanders' meeting at Camp Shelby, MS, 19 April 2007.

“creates a powerful dynamic of human interaction permitting people to feel as though they have been heard, really heard. This is one of the best ways to build trust and lasting relationships with another human being.³¹ Empathic listening is thus a deeper level of listening—a discipline of extending yourself for others by really working to “see it as they see it and feel it as they feel it.”

Martinuzzi provides several other essential actions leaders can take to improve their empathy:

- Don't interrupt. Do not dismiss, do not rush, do not challenge.
- Increase your ability to understand other's nonverbal communications because often people do not openly communicate what they feel.
- Practice the 93 percent Rule. Words account for 7 percent of the total message communicated. The other 93 percent communicated is in body language. Frowning, yawning, or looking at one's watch, demonstrate a lack of interest and understanding.
- Be fully present. Do not do other things while communicating. Do not email, take calls, work on paperwork. This is disrespectful and demonstrates you have other priorities.

- Smile. Demonstrate a good attitude—an attitude that you want to be there.

- Encourage people, particularly the quiet ones. Affirm what they said and ask lead-in questions to seek clarity.

- Show people you care by taking an interest in them. Show genuine curiosity about their lives. Ask questions about hobbies, their challenges, their families, and their aspirations.

- When you visit a subordinate, don't stand while you talk. Sit down and get on the same level.

- Have a finger on the pulse of a department or organization. Learn to read the mood.

- Train your employees to be empathic.³²

While not exclusive, this list provides a good starting point for developing an empathic character.

Application

Unlike many definitions of leadership, the Army's characterization found in FM 6-22 *Army Leadership* squarely places an additional obligation on its leaders for “improving the organization.”³³ General Creighton Abrams eloquently summarized the Army organization: “Soldiers are not in the Army.

Soldiers are the Army.”³⁴ Empathy is not pity, compassion, or sympathy, but a developed skill that builds trust, improves communication, and fosters relationships within organizations and with others outside. Our Soldiers are smart, innovative, adaptable, and creative. They are technologically savvy and strongly desire to accomplish the mission. Empathic personal and professional development fosters a leadership climate that respects individuals

Empathy is not pity, compassion, or sympathy, but a developed skill that builds trust...

and establishes a foundation for individual and organizational learning.

Empathy, though a misunderstood word, is a leadership skill, one so significant that the Army raised it to one of its

twelve leadership attributes. Empathic leadership is a powerful interpersonal skill, one that—when cultivated and applied—will enhance human relationships and build a better, more successful organization. **MR**

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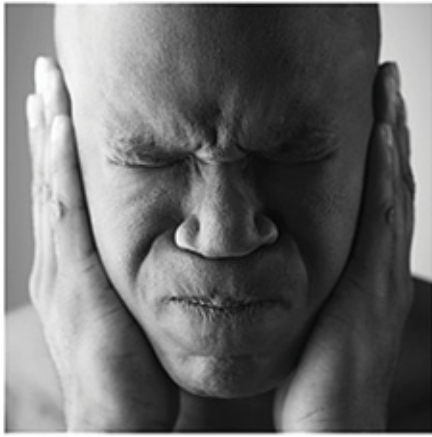
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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE and the Army Leadership Requirements Model

**Lieutenant Colonel
Gerald F. Sewell,
U.S. Army, Retired**

Emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships.

—Daniel Goleman in *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, 1995

Broadly speaking, emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal, social and survival dimensions of intelligence, which are often more important for daily functioning than the more traditional cognitive aspects of intelligence. Emotional intelligence is concerned with understanding oneself and others, relating to people, and adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands.

—Reuven BarOn, Ph.D. in the *BarOn EQ-I Technical Manual*, 2004.

IS THERE A ROLE for emotional intelligence in United States Army leadership? Is military leadership incompatible with the concept of emotional intelligence? Is emotional intelligence too soft? Are Army leaders too hard? Is leadership in the Army too mechanical, developed as it is by instruction in leadership styles and management processes and studying the techniques of great military leaders? Is there a need for military leaders to have emotional intelligence? The answer to the last of these questions is a resounding yes! The most valuable element in building and maintaining successful relationships, individual or team, is emotional intelligence.

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Army Leadership Defined

Army leadership is more than Xs and Os, or emotionless structured leader development programs, or leadership study and analysis, or coercive motivation. According to the Army's leadership doctrinal manual, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, Army leadership is "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization."¹ What is missing from the definition and the manual is a holistic emphasis on the emotional side of leadership, not in the sense of the hyper-excited leader banging on

the desk or screaming at new recruits, or the much tabooed “touchy-feely” leader, but leaders aware of their own emotions and how they affect those around them as they undertake the daily missions and tasks assigned them. According to psychologist and author Daniel Goleman, to be successful, a leader must exercise and be aware of his emotions and how his emotional competence influences the way he leads and impacts his followers.²

FM 6-22 outlines the attributes and competencies required of Army leaders. But who makes up the Army’s corps of leaders? FM 6-22 tells us an Army leader is anyone who, by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility, inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking, and shape decisions for the greater good of the organization.³ The general public’s idea of an Army leader is the crusty old NCO or the charismatic officer leading troops into battle or the well-decorated general giving the inspirational speech. However, based on the Army’s definition, its leaders are persons that satisfy the responsibilities within that definition; that is, Soldiers, civilians, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers, and commissioned officers; indeed, the full gamut of personnel in the Army system. The Army recognizes that every person has the ability and potential to be a leader. All of the Army’s leaders can benefit from a greater understanding of their emotions and the emotions of others.

Emotional Intelligence: A Brief History

Emotional intelligence is hardly a new field of study; it is based on a long history of research and theory in the fields of psychology, human intelligence, and the social sciences. In his 1983 book *Frames of Mind*, Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner indicates that the study of the emotional side of intelligence can be traced back to the early 1800s to the studies of Franz Joseph Gall and his associate, Johann Gaspar Spurzheim, who identified the presence of three affective faculties in the brain—reverence, self-esteem, and reflective powers.⁴ Dr. Reuven BarOn, author and developer of the Emotional Quotient Inventory, identifies David Wechsler and his studies on “the nonintellectual

aspects of general intelligence” conducted in 1940 as the foundation for the study of emotional intelligence.⁵ Some of the most notable groundbreaking work in the field was done by Gardner. In *Frames of Mind*, Gardner proposed that there was not just one type of intelligence quotient (IQ) that led to success in life, but a wide spectrum of intelligences and at least four varieties of interpersonal intelligence.⁶ Gardner writes of two types of *personal intelligence* that both deal with the emotions. He speaks of intrapersonal intelligence, which is the internal aspects of a person, and the interpersonal intelligence, which turns outward towards other individuals.⁷ Gardner’s groundbreaking work was further developed by Yale psychologist Peter Salovey, whose concept of emotional intelligence included appraising the emotions in self and others, regulating emotions in self and others, and using emotions in adaptive ways.⁸ These were identified and described in his 1990 study, conducted with an associate, Peter Mayer. The term emotional intelligence was also introduced in this study.⁹

Psychologist Daniel Goleman popularized emotional intelligence with his landmark book of that name, which became a “household” expression as well as a field of study worth consideration in the business, academic, and social-science communities. Goleman developed his theory about emotional intelligence through research in more than 200 organizations, explaining that without emotional intelligence, a person can have first class training, an incisive mind, and an endless supply of good ideas, but still not make a great leader.¹⁰ Supported by his research, Goleman maintained that despite their cognitive intelligence and business smarts, executives and managers could not have gained their levels of success if they had not possessed emotional intelligence.¹¹ In his initial research and theories, based on the findings of Salovey and Mayer, Goleman adopted a five-domain model, which he later modified to a four-domain model.¹²

...a person can have first class training, an incisive mind, and an endless supply of good ideas, but still not make a great leader.

Although recognized as one of the leading voices in the emotional intelligence community, Goleman's construct is not the only emotional intelligence model, nor is it the definitive thought on emotional intelligence. BarOn's model presents five realms of emotional intelligence with 15 scales. Both constructs align with the Army's Leadership Requirements Model.

Emotional Intelligence in U.S. Army Leadership Doctrine

The U.S. Army has long recognized that its success depends upon its people. The age-old Army maxim is "Mission first. People always." This is not just lip service. The Army spends an exceptional amount of time emphasizing the importance of leader-to-follower relationships, teamwork, *esprit de corps*, and organizational climate. Each of these issues requires the holistic inclusion of emotional-intelligence components in leader-training, doctrine, and leadership literature.

Field Manual 6-22 does not limit its discussion of the emotional aspects of leadership to the Leadership Requirements Model. Paragraph headings that sound like emotional intelligence competencies can be found throughout the manual; paragraphs address Soldier and leader self-awareness, the *emotional factors* [my emphasis] of leadership (self control, stability, and balance) as well as interpersonal tact, adaptability, and judgment.¹³

The Army's current leadership doctrine promotes self-aware, adaptive, flexible, and agile leaders. Each of these elements are competencies of emotional intelligence. The Army's leadership doctrine describes its leaders as self-aware and innovative and identifies the importance of self-awareness: "Self-awareness has the potential to help all leaders become better adjusted and more effective. Self-awareness is relevant for contemporary operations requiring cultural sensitivity and for a leader's adaptability to inevitable environmental change."¹⁴ Goleman identifies self-awareness as the foundation for emotional intelligence.¹⁵

What FM 6-22 doesn't do is threefold. It—

- Does not acknowledge attributes and competencies as emotional elements, thus implying that they are hard skills.
- Does not discuss the importance of understanding and applying the emotional aspects of leadership.

Self-awareness is relevant for contemporary operations requiring cultural sensitivity...

- Does not discuss how to develop the skills necessary to employ the many facets of emotions successfully.

Taking these steps will enhance the leadership manuals and provide valuable assistance to Army leaders in becoming emotionally intelligent and more effective.

In June 2008, the Army published its study on the *Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations, 2015-2024*. Despite its title, the manual does not discuss the emotional aspects of Soldiers and leaders in peace or in combat where the emotional skills advanced by emotional intelligence are particularly critical to understanding how Soldiers react and in how they develop resiliency. The pamphlet identifies the human dimension as the moral, cognitive, and physical components to raise, prepare, and employ the Army in full spectrum operations.¹⁶ However, the pamphlet addresses several aspects of emotional intelligence. It identifies the need for leader self-awareness and acknowledgment of this characteristic in others. The study also identifies the Soldier-to-leader and leader-to-Soldier socialization process, both elements of emotional intelligence and the individual need to develop a broad concept of social awareness.¹⁷ Identifying these elements as important to the human dimension is an important first step.¹⁸

The next step must provide a holistic application of these elements and others under the umbrella of emotional intelligence. The study continues the broad-brush approach of FM 6-22 in addressing the emotional aspects of Soldiers and leaders. The ten-chapter TRADOC pamphlet briefly touches upon self-awareness and empathy in chapter 9, which discusses the requirements and responsibilities of leadership. Unfortunately, the Army's discussion of the human dimension does not and is not intended to address the whole person; rather, it is based on a holistic view of how humans function in a system. These systems include environment, culture, community, politics, and society, among

others.¹⁹ The pamphlet defers to FM 6-22 for the impact of leadership on the human dimension, stating, “Leadership weaves throughout this concept both explicitly and implicitly. FM 6-22 describes leadership in detail and from many perspectives. Rather than restate this information, this chapter assumes that the essence of leadership is immutable, and that the characteristics the Army wishes to develop in leaders at all levels will not change significantly.”²⁰ Identified in FM 6-22 as attributes and competencies, the characteristics are the elements that hold the key to using emotional intelligence in the Army’s leadership doctrine.

Army Leadership Requirements Model

In FM 6-22, the Army defines, outlines, and describes its leadership doctrine. The foundation of this philosophy is highlighted in the Army Leadership Requirements Model, which identifies the attributes and competencies required for successful leaders. The attributes and competencies parallel the emotional intelligence constructs of Goleman and BarOn.

Revised and published in October 2006, FM 6-22 provides a new twist on the Army’s historical foun-

ation of leadership; the characteristics that describe what an Army leader needs to “Be, Know and Do.” Although the Army still defines its leaders implicitly in light of Be—the characteristics and attributes a leader must have, Know—the skills and knowledge they must possess and develop, and Do—how they in turn operate with those attributes and skills and knowledge, it no longer stresses those terms. In the 2006 rewrite, the Army determined that it was more important to place the doctrinal emphasis on leader intangibles, in the sense of leader attributes and in the leader skills in the competencies that a leader must have. Army leadership experts have developed a leadership requirements model designed around leadership attributes, the new combined “Be and Know,” and leadership competencies, the new “Do” (see Figure 1).

FM 6-22 notes the model’s basic components center on what a leader is and what a leader does. The leader’s character, presence, and intellect enable the leader to master the core leader competencies through dedicated lifelong learning. The balanced application of the critical leadership requirements empowers the Army leader to build high-performing and cohesive organizations able to effectively project and support land power.

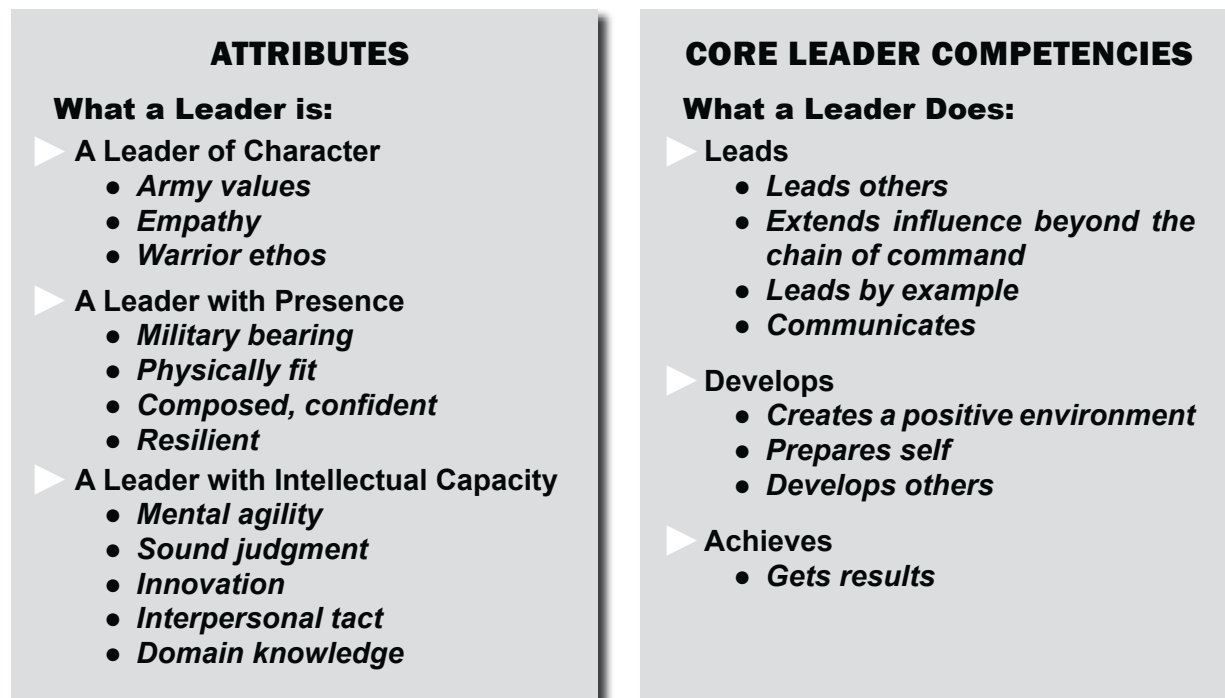


Figure 1. Leadership Requirements Model from FM 6-22.

It also creates positive organizational climates, allowing for individual and team learning, and empathy for all team members, Soldiers, civilians, and their families.²¹

Inherent in each of the attributes (what an Army leader is) and the competencies (what an Army leader does) are the elements of emotional intelligence. The attributes and competencies are compatible with the Goleman model and fit neatly into the domains of emotional intelligence.

The Model Crosswalk

The twelve Army leader attributes align within Goleman’s domains with crossover into both personal and social competence areas. Seven of the twelve attributes fit nicely into the personal competence area as they deal specifically with the personal characteristics of the individual leader and what a leader must be (see Figure 2). The eight leader competencies fit into both sides of the chart and each of the eight falls under the relationship management domain as they involve establishing relationships and dealing with others. The com-

parison demonstrates that the emotional aspects of leader attributes and competencies correlate with the emotional intelligence competencies of the Goleman model.

Emotional intelligence is about understanding your own emotions and those of others in order to be a more successful person. The leader attributes and competencies assist leaders in becoming better leaders by understanding themselves and others as well as their relationships to others as they lead people and organizations. The Army’s leader development programs will do a great service to its leaders by placing increased emphasis on the emotional intelligent aspects of leadership.

It’s not an Oxymoron

The Army in its current leadership framework does not holistically address the importance of the emotional side of leadership. Despite this, Army leader attributes and competencies demonstrate the importance of emotional intelligence to Army leaders. The relationship of the elements of emotional intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements

PERSONAL COMPETENCE		SOCIAL COMPETENCE	
Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional Self-Awareness - <u>Self-Awareness</u> - Self -Assessment - <u>Prepares Self</u> - Self- Confidence - Composed, Confident - Warrior Ethos - Domain Knowledge - Military Bearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional Self-Control - Transparency - Adaptability - Resilient - Mental Agility - Achievement - Initiative - Innovation - Optimism - <u>Creates a Positive Environment</u> - Physically Fit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational Awareness - Army Values - Service - Empathy - Empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspirational Leadership - <u>Leads by Example</u> - Influence - <u>Extends influence</u> - <u>Leads Others</u> - <u>Communicates</u> - Developing Others - <u>Develops Leaders</u> - Catalyst for Change - <u>Creates a Positive Environment</u> - Conflict Management - Interpersonal Tact - Sound Judgment - Teamwork-collaboration - <u>Gets Results</u>

Figure 2. Leadership Requirements Model and Goleman Model Crosswalk.

Model is clear: inherent in the attributes and competencies are emotional aspects that lead to effective leadership when understood and employed. The next step for the Army is to incorporate emotional

intelligence in its leader and Soldier development programs. If Army leaders study and apply emotional intelligence, they will be more effective and successful in building strong organizations and teams. **MR**

If Army leaders study and apply emotional intelligence, they will be more effective and successful in building strong organizations and teams.

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The MENTORSHIP DILEMMA CONTINUES

Major Edward Cox, U.S. Army



THE IDEA THAT MENTORSHIP is desirable and essential to professional leader development in the military has become axiomatic in recent years. An examination of the lives of Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower, George Patton, George Marshall, and others reveals that each had a mentor who helped mold him into the Army leader he became. They each continued this tradition by mentoring others in a cycle of intimate, one-on-one professional development. The Army's bureaucratic tendency to seek to replicate successful strategies has led it to create an "Army mentorship strategy."

However, this strategy is detrimental to Army values and results in decreased effectiveness. The Army organization should eliminate mentorship as a strategy for three reasons:

- Army doctrine is inconsistent with regard to mentorship.
- Mentorship is, by definition, exclusionary and therefore not in keeping with Army values. Attempts to change the definition to overcome this contradiction only serve to increase confusion within the Army regarding mentorship.
- Mentorship occurs naturally with or without an Army mentorship strategy. Indeed, it will occur better without the added confusion of such a strategy.

Mentorship versus Leader Development

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus entrusted his close friend, Mentor, with both his son, Telemachus, and his palace. Mentor provided Telemachus with wise counsel. Since Homer, this type of relationship between an older, experienced person and a protégé became known as mentorship. The practice of mentorship in armies predates our Army's mentorship strategy by centuries.

In a 1985 *Military Review* article, Lieutenant General Charles Bagnal, Earl Pence, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Meriwether recommended that the Army emphasize a mentorship style of leadership. This style of leadership is characterized by "open communication with subordinates, role modeling of appropriate values, the effective use of counseling for subordinate development, and sharing of the leader's frame of reference with subordinate leaders."¹ This style of leadership, which occurs within the chain of command and focuses on leader functions like coaching, counseling, and teaching, provides many of the benefits the Army seeks to gain in its mentorship strategy. Furthermore, it does so without creating the confusion about mentorship that the current strategy exacerbates. Bagnal and his coauthors even suggested that

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PHOTO: Telemachus and Mentor, by Pablo E. Fabisch, from *Les Aventures de Telemachus*, 1699.

the development of subordinates should be a factor for consideration in promotion boards.² They also contend that the “primary role of Army mentors is clearly that of a coach and not a sponsor.”³ The sponsorship aspect of mentorship, where a mentor seeks to influence the career path of his protégé to help the protégé obtain desirable assignments, seems to undermine Army values.

In a response to their article, Major General Kenneth Jolemore argues, “Because mentoring is a natural interpersonal human activity, it cannot be ordered away.”⁴ He points out that mentorship will inevitably result in sponsorship, and “if the Army were to order it not to be done, the decision would create a barrier to ethical behavior. Surely sponsoring will continue, and those practicing it will be inclined to deny their actions.”⁵ Jolemore recommends formalizing the mentorship process as some corporations have done. He concedes that “every leader should be a teacher and a coach,” but he argues that “not all leaders are qualified to be mentors in the traditional, historical sense.”⁶

The standard definition of mentoring when these articles appeared was Kathy Kram’s definition. In her book, *Mentoring at Work*, she defined a mentor as “someone who may provide a host of career development and psychosocial functions, which may include role modeling and sponsoring.”⁷ The Army sought to resolve the contradiction between Army values and mentorship by redefining mentorship itself. The Army definition of mentorship differed from Kram’s by asserting that “mentoring is an inclusive process (not an exclusive one) for everyone under a leader’s charge.”⁸ I agree with General Jolemore, however. Regulation cannot define away or end these aspects of mentoring. The refusal to acknowledge this fact has added to confusion within the Army about the differences between mentorship and leader development.

Today’s Army Mentorship Doctrine: Confusion Continues

In 2005, the Army launched a new Army mentorship strategy designed to “reemphasize and reinvigorate mentorship throughout the Army and to encourage Soldiers and DA civilians to leave a legacy through mentorship.”⁹ In an effort to give the appearance of presidential approval for this strategy, the Army mentorship strategy information paper

included a quotation from President George W. Bush’s 2003 State of the Union address. The quotation appears in brochures available on the Army’s mentorship website. This quotation is also taken out of context. It says, “It is the men and women of America who will fill the need. One mentor, one person, can change a life forever. And I urge you to be that one person.” The full quotation from the 2003 State of the Union address reads,

I propose a \$450-million initiative to bring mentors to more than a million disadvantaged junior high students and children of prisoners. Government will support the training and recruiting of mentors; yet it is the men and women of America who will fill the need. One mentor, one person can change a life forever. And I urge you to be that one person.”¹⁰

This example points to the ubiquity of “mentorship” as a buzzword in American society today, which increases confusion in the Army about the definition of the term.

The Army currently defines mentorship as a “voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect.”¹¹ According to Army Regulation 600-100, *Army Leadership*, the three ways leaders can develop those junior to them are mentoring, counseling, and coaching. The regulation echoes the definition of mentorship from the information paper and adds, “The focus of mentorship is voluntary mentoring that extends beyond the scope of chain of command relationships and occurs when a mentor provides the mentee advice and counsel over a period of time.”¹²

In 1999, the Army maintained that mentorship occurs within the chain of command. Today, the Army claims that mentors are experienced senior leaders whose mentorship occurs outside the chain of command. In both instances, the Army maintains

Today, the Army claims that mentors are experienced senior leaders whose mentorship occurs outside the chain of command.

that good mentorship involves wise advice and counsel but does not result in favoritism or sponsorship. There are two problems with this definition. First, even within the current Army mentorship literature, the Army does not consistently apply this definition. Second, as General Jolemore noted in 1986, the model of mentorship presented is historically inaccurate.

The Army's mentorship website has a wealth of resources for mentors and their protégés including tri-fold brochures about the benefits of mentorship for both parties. The mentor brochure claims "Anyone can be a mentor, regardless of rank, duty location, or career field."¹³ This contradicts statements elsewhere in Army mentorship literature that mentors should be at least two levels above their protégés and outside the chain of command. The protégé brochure reassures the reader that mentorship is for Soldiers on active duty, in the reserves, or in the National Guard as well as DA civilians, DA contractors, veterans, cadets, spouses, retirees, and family members.¹⁴ This list of possible protégés seems to imply that mentorship is for everyone connected with the Army in some way. In effect, it portrays mentorship as a life improvement program instead of a leader development strategy.

Mentorship is Exclusionary

The conflicting statements about mentors stem from the Army's desire to make mentorship seem inclusive and reflective of Army values. Mentorship by its nature, however, is exclusive and selective. In 2002, Lieutenant Colonel Bette Washington wrote at length about this "Army dilemma" and concluded that the Army should "eliminate mentoring and focus on leader development."¹⁵ That the Army's mentorship strategy is voluntary does not lessen the impression that the Army views mentorship as a hallmark of successful leaders.

The Army's definition of mentorship concedes that a mentor-protégé relationship can have origins in a senior-subordinate relationship. However, a mentor-protégé relationship should ideally occur outside the chain of command and not result in favoritism for the protégé. Historically, however, this is not the case. Mentorship relationships often occur within the chain of command and often result in favorable treatment for protégés at the expense of others.

Mentorship relationships often occur within the chain of command and do result in favorable treatment for protégés at the expense of others.

Major General Fox Conner was a model Army mentor. Conner served as a mentor to Eisenhower, Patton, and Marshall and did not hesitate to use his influence to further the careers of his protégés, which some in today's Army would see as favoritism. When Eisenhower found his career stalled because he had published an article that displeased the Chief of Infantry, Conner used his influence with the War Department to get then-Major Eisenhower assigned to the Command and General Staff School



The best known mentor-mentee relationship in the West was that of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony. Here Antony sycophantically offers Caesar the crown; though thrice refused by Caesar, merely offering the crown by this obsessively servile protégé led to the triumvir's assassination.

at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in spite of the branch chief's objections.¹⁶

Major General William Smith demoted Patton from G-3 of the Hawaiian Division to G-2. When Conner replaced Smith as division commander the following year, he helped to salvage Patton's career by writing in Patton's final efficiency report that "I know of no one whom I would prefer as a subordinate officer."¹⁷

During World War II, Conner even attempted to shield a former aide from further combat tours. Conner sent a telegram to Army Chief of Staff George Marshall stating, "J. Trimble Brown after two years combat duty was rotated and returned safely five weeks ago. He just received orders to return to combat duty tomorrow. He was my aide for 11 years, and I strongly recommend that orders be canceled and he be retained at Fort Benning."¹⁸ Marshall forwarded this telegram in a memo to his G-1 and asked for an explanation of Conner's claim regarding Brown, citing Conner's faithful service to the nation and his personal relationship with Marshall. The G-1 responded to Marshall that Brown would certainly stay at Benning and that he had never seriously considered plans to deploy him.

Conner was not the only senior officer who used his influence to advance his protégés. In many ways, personnel battles between the followers of John Pershing and Peyton March defined the Army's officer corps after World War I. In World War II, those who sought protection from MacArthur frequently clashed with protégés of Marshall.

Mentorship Will Occur Without an Army Strategy

If mentorship is exclusive, selective, and can potentially result in unfair treatment, can it be good for the Army? I submit that it can. While we will never know the results of roads not taken, most people agree the examples I've cited turned out well for America. Mentors like Pershing inspired a generation of junior officers to stay in the Army through the difficult interwar period. Eisenhower was uniquely qualified to be the commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force because of his mentor. Patton became one of Eisenhower's best tactical field commanders, and Marshall became the Chief of Staff Roosevelt relied on throughout World War II. Each of these leaders, in turn, mentored others.

Even though mentorship is exclusive and selective, the Army cannot prevent it from happening.

Mentorship happens naturally between professionals who impart knowledge and those who seek it. Because of this, mentorship will happen without an Army strategy, as it has for centuries. Even though mentorship is exclusive and selective, the Army cannot prevent it from happening. Mentorship will not happen for everyone, however, and for that reason alone, it should not be part of an Army strategy. Mentorship requires a large commitment of time by both parties and typically lasts four to ten years.¹⁹ The *Army Mentorship Handbook* recommends that mentors have no more than three protégés at a time. Even if all leaders at all levels had three protégés, there would still be a shortage of mentors. The fact that not all leaders seek or welcome such developmental relationships compounds the problem. Protégés should seek out mentors who are highly successful, and mentors should look for junior leaders who are already intrinsically motivated towards self-improvement, a category that includes many, but not all, leaders in the Army.

Conclusion

Mentoring is relatively new as a watchword, but not at all new as a practice. Mentoring frequently begins within a senior-subordinate relationship, extends for many years, often includes a degree of sponsorship or favoritism, and will happen with or without the Army's help. An Army mentorship program only serves to perpetuate confusion about the nature of mentorship and distract from the Army's focus on developing subordinate leaders. The existence of an Army strategy, even a voluntary one, sends a signal to leaders that many will perceive them as failures if they do not participate in such relationships. The Army would be better off as an organization if it ignored mentoring and focused on chain-of-command leader development. The Army will continue to reap the benefits of mentorship, but it should not be in the position of trying to make a selective process seem egalitarian in order to match Army values. **MR**

NOTES

1. Charles Bagnal, Earl Pence, and Thomas Meriwether, "Leaders as Mentors," *Military Review* (July 1985): 15.
2. *Ibid.*, 18.
3. *Ibid.*, 16.
4. Kenneth Jolemore, "The Mentor: More than a Teacher; More than a Coach," *Military Review* (July 1986): 8.
5. *Ibid.*, 8.
6. *Ibid.*, 16-17.
7. Kathy Kram, *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1985), 25.
8. U.S. Army Field Manual 22-100, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 31 August 1999), 5-16.
9. U.S. Army Office of the G-1, "Army Mentorship Strategy Information Paper," 2 May 2006, <www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/mentorship/docs/Legacy.pdf> (14 January 2009).
10. George Bush, State of the Union, <www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html> (14 January 2009).
11. Army Mentorship Strategy Information paper.
12. *Army Leadership; Army Regulation 600-100* (Washington, DC: GPO, 8 March 2007), 5-6.
13. U.S. Army Office of the G-1, "Mentorship Brochure," <www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/mentorship/docs/Mentor%20brochure%203-27-07.pdf> (26 January 2009).
14. *Ibid.*
15. Bette Washington, "Mentorship: An Army Dilemma," U.S. Army War College (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2002), iii.
16. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 42.
17. Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: Harper-Perennial, 1995), 341.
18. Memo from Marshall to G-1, 16 November 1944. Source held in private collection at Ossining Historical Society, Ossining, NY.
19. Bagnal et al., 15.



CALL FOR PAPERS

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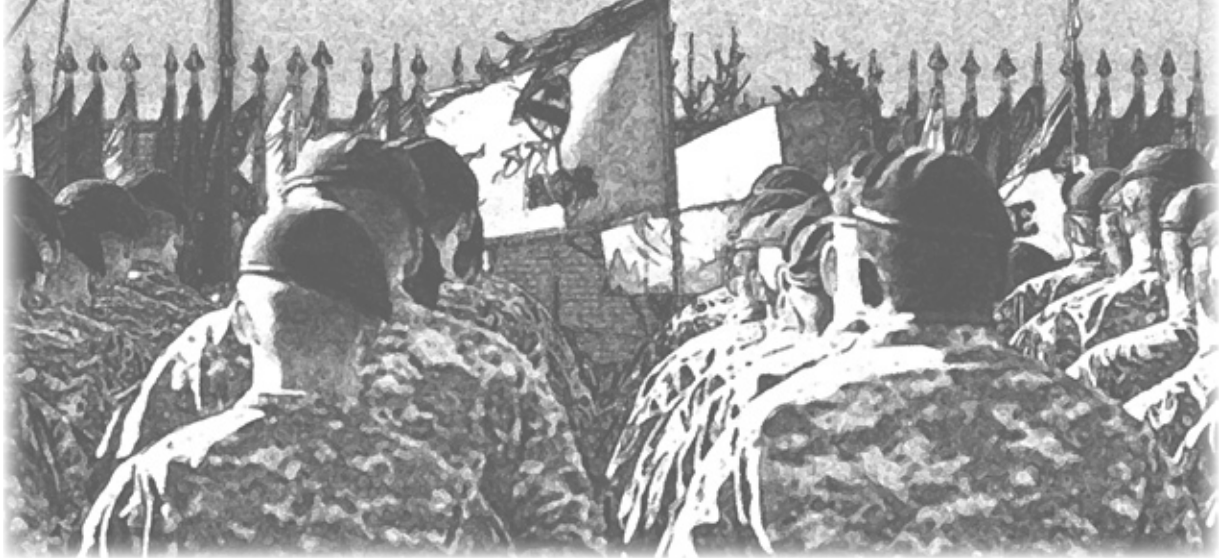
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Getting Off the Treadmill of Time

**Colonel Chris Robertson,
U.S. Army, and
Lieutenant Colonel
Sophie Gainey,
U.S. Army**

If the new norm is Army force generation and cyclical deployments, then it's time for our 70-year-old promotion system to adapt to support that new norm.

—General Martin Dempsey¹

IT WOULD BE easy today to imagine an officer uttering something like this: “I really want that assignment, but I won’t have time to do it and my key developmental job, too, without putting myself at risk for promotion.” Or, as a friend once put it, talking to his training officer about the newly enacted Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, “We’re gonna have to get passed over in order to have time to do all this.” How often have you heard similar words when it comes to officer careers and assignments?

Given the ubiquity of such observations, it may be time for the Army to stop working around the margins and seriously review, then revise, the officer promotion system, specifically, eligibility. Growing sentiment in the field suggests that officers desire to expand their horizons by taking jobs not specific to their branch, such as in training with industry; Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multi-national assignments; recruiting; army staff; or pursuing a graduate degree and teaching at West Point, because they recognize the value such developmental assignments provide. Many consciously seek such jobs fully aware of a possible negative impact on promotion potential. While serving in developmental positions will create the well-rounded leader the Army needs, how does the Army slow down the treadmill to allow these officers the time for these assignments? We must revisit how we promote our officers in order to guarantee that our system produces the type of leaders needed to succeed in the future operational environment.

The 2009 *Quadrennial Defense Review* specifically outlined the need for force flexibility in the face of 21st-century global threats. Traditionally, our Army culture values and rewards those junior leaders who have extensive amounts of time in the tactical arena. Such positions are key to the development of great tactical commanders. In this changing world, however, our senior leadership, both military and civilian, recognizes that education and broadening experiences are instrumental to developing imaginative operational and strategic leaders, those who will master the emerging complexities. So how do we get an army with over 200 years of culture and tradition to change? Answer: make it mandatory.

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PHOTO: (U.S. Army, SGT Travis Zielinski)

We must...become less subservient to this tyrant called time.

All officers step onto the “treadmill of time” upon initial entry. Under our current system, they must meet fixed promotion gates without consideration for true professional development. Progressive rank comes in those precious years between fixed promotions. Our officers must try to balance professional growth and broadening and key developmental assignments, while maintaining their families’ and personal sanity. Myriad factors that affect their career timeline are multiple deployments of varying durations, structural growth, technology, law, policy, and our own Army culture. We must infuse flexibility into our promotion system and become less subservient to the tyrant of time.

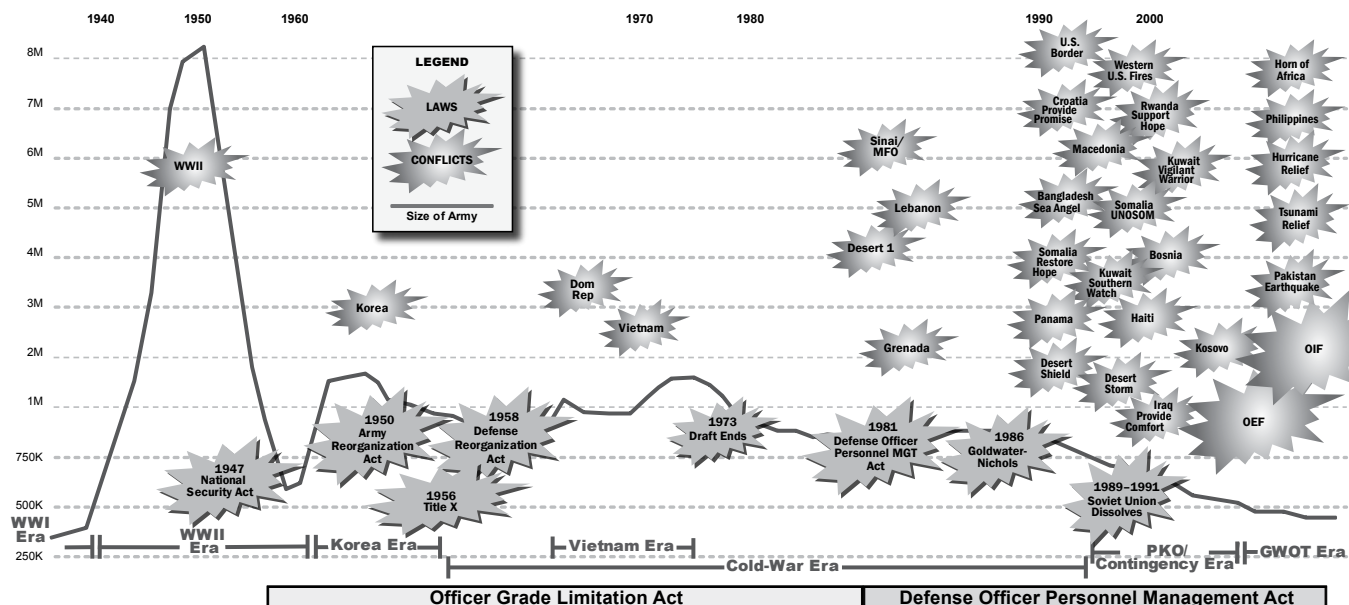
How Did We Get Here?

To really understand how we arrived at this juncture, we need a quick review of history. Title 10 of the United States Code contains the general and permanent laws for today’s military. Dating back as far as the Civil War, the laws that govern the management of officers have only been amended a handful of times. Title 10 codifies the few legal documents existing prior to 1956 that regulate the services, and the details pertaining to promotion have changed little since its enactment. An officer’s

career timeline is prescriptive; the gates to meet to receive a promotion have remained virtually unchanged for the last 60-plus years.

During the Civil War (1861–1865), officers obtained promotions only within their regiments, creating a top-heavy service. Approximately 80 years later, in 1947, the Officer Personnel Act attempted to correct these promotion practices by imposing what we now know as “up or out.” The term “up” established that the Army track officers by years of service, and officers competed for promotion to the next higher grade against members at the same set service years. Conversely, “out” applied to those passed over twice for promotion to the next grade and, after a certain number of years, depending upon their particular grade, separated and retired, if eligible. The Officer Grade Limitation Act of 1954 imposed statutory limitations on the number of regular and reserve officers who could serve in the grades of major and above. Title 10, U.S. Code, combined all laws then in existence that were permanent and of general applicability to the armed forces, thereby incorporating the Officer Personnel Act and the Officer Grade Limitation Act.

Jumping forward 30 years to 1980, the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act and the Reserve



Factors affecting Officer Professional Development System.

Officer Personnel Management Act addressed how the military should train, appoint, promote, and retire its officers. The act's core "up-or-out" promotion system directed that officers would move through the system in "cohorts/year groups," originally determined by the year of commissioning, and compete for promotion to the next higher grade against other members of their cohort. The processes prescribed were constrained to the limited computing power of the day. Inevitably, time and the need to meet specific gates for promotion became the driving factors in an officer's career timeline.

While the laws were sufficient during a time of peace with relatively fixed assignment patterns, their lack of flexibility hinders our current Army's ability to balance increasing professional developmental demands with maintaining a continuously deployed force.

The implementation of Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 was another watershed event (stemming from problems with inter-service cooperation and interoperability during Operation Urgent Fury in October 1983). The services were hesitant to embrace a joint military culture, so Congress forced the issue by holding them accountable to fill a specific number of "Joint" positions. This resulted in specific training in the service schools, establishing accountability through annual reports back to Congress, and certification boards and requirements for general officers, all intended to force interoperability. The services did it. Twenty years later, we are comfortable with Joint operations. But we only did it because Congress made it mandatory.

So Where Are We Now?

We're trying to jam too much into a 20-year career. Officers enter the Army with a year group tattooed permanently on their arm. The Army creates this artificial timeline; they have a shot clock ticking on them . . .

—Lieutenant General David P. Valcourt²

Our era of high operational tempo is producing a generation of exceptionally talented tactical leaders, but this has come at the expense of broadening assignments and education, resulting in officers who lack the skills and education required to be

more effective leaders in an increasingly complex strategic environment.

A retired senior leader recently referred to a picture of the Army mule as he spoke to a group of students at Fort Leavenworth. "See this donkey?" he said, echoing and paraphrasing Frederick the Great's famous remark about relying on experience alone: "He has been to every conflict, but he is still a jackass."³ The point was and is that there is no substitute for education. You cannot make up for the lack of such experience with deployments. The Army recognizes the importance of education and broadening assignments, but in our system, these opportunities are not mandatory. So, what is mandatory for promotion? Surprisingly little. Our officers only have to complete an officer basic course and obtain a bachelor's degree to become a captain. The next *legal* requirements are three years' time in grade for major or lieutenant colonel, Joint Professional Military Education Level 1 (JPME 1) to attend Senior Service College as a colonel, and JPME 2 to obtain the rank of general officer. Our Army culture dictates everything else.

We have been reluctant to codify any additional requirements to avoid disadvantaging anyone. Instead, we have relied upon the culture of the board process to communicate the importance of education and broadening experiences. In the past, when promotion rates were lower, this approach worked. Then deployments became more frequent and longer, and promotion rates increased to support structural growth. Well-meaning commanders in deploying brigade combat teams extended officers serving in key developmental positions through deployment and unit reset. In some cases, officers were held "hostage" in positions for multiple rotations with the same unit, delaying educational and other developmental opportunities. Because education and broadening experiences were not mandatory, they became unimportant. Our culture fulfilled the immediate requirements and rewarded those with the most deployment experience: now the Army may suffer for this.

The Department of Defense recognizes a need to fix the promotion system. In November 2008, in a report to Congress backed by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserve,

We're trying to jam too much into a 20-year career.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates directed service secretaries to determine the requirements to implement a more flexible promotion system based on the achievement of competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities).

Clearly, the Army values more deployment experience and places priority of fill to deploying units even at the expense of the generating force itself. For the first time, promotion boards are telling us we as an Army are promoting tactical colonels. We recognize that education and broadening experiences bring balance to the development of the officer and the institution as a whole, but this is not a priority. Our cultural mind-set continues to be “if it’s not mandatory, it’s not important.”

We cannot accomplish all that we need to do inside of our fixed promotion timelines. We have to create some space; otherwise, the institution itself is going to break. There is a way to incorporate all that we desire in our future leaders by adjusting the time treadmill.

Building a Better Treadmill

*The Army’s officer management system must be flexible, responsive, and focused on developing officers with functionally relevant competencies to meet the needs of the Army and Nation throughout the 21st Century.*⁴

—AR 600-3

There is no low-hanging fruit when it comes to adjusting the promotion system. This is hard work and will require the Army to utilize numerous levels of government simultaneously. We propose the following for consideration and as a point of departure:

Legislation. Deliver to Congress a set of proposed modifications that will add flexibility in the promotion timeline. We need to move away from a rigid to a flexible time-based promotion system that will allow the achievement of competencies while still maintaining the goodness in “up or out.”

We will always select officers for promotion based upon performance and potential. This won’t ever change. Thus, to achieve flexibility in timing, the focus must be on promotion *eligibility*, moving away from time-based eligibility to achievement-based eligibility.

We propose a system similar to obtaining a college degree. In order to obtain a degree, regardless

We have to create some space; otherwise, the institution itself is going to break.

of the field, there are always core courses and electives. What is important is obtaining the degree, not the time it took to complete it. For example, most people complete a bachelor’s degree in four years. Some high achievers can do it in three, while others, due to various circumstances, may take five to seven years. If it goes out to eight, dad or someone is probably going to cut off the money.

Let’s see how this same approach could apply to officer promotions. For example, to attain the rank of major, the “core” requirements could be completion of the captain’s career course, successful completion of a key developmental assignment in accordance with Department of Army (DA) Pamphlet 600-3, and, as an “elective,” a minimum of one year in an institutional assignment. Upon completion of these assignments, you can become eligible for promotion to major. It could take three years, or it could take seven, the flexibility is yours. For a lieutenant colonel, the “core” class could be completion of Intermediate-Level Education, 24 months of key developmental time in accordance with DA Pamphlet 600-3, and, as an “elective,” at least one joint, interagency, intergovernmental, or multi-national assignment. It will finally afford officers more time to achieve personal, education, and developmental goals. This effectively forces the Army to ensure that its officers do what it requires them to do to become effective leaders, while giving them the time to develop the competencies the Army desires in its most-senior leaders.

Army policy changes. The Army reacts to the results of promotion and selection boards. To create the desired change at senior level boards (colonel and colonel command selection), retired senior leaders recommend that an extra day be added to the boards. A day for briefings by nationally recognized futurists and strategists, about the world environment 10 to 15 years from now and the type of leader that can operate effectively in that environment. The intent is to inform the board members about

what type of officer is required for the future. This may require a legal hurdle, as it may be considered an undue influence on the board. We need to work through such potential legal issues to ensure that we are selecting the right leadership for the future.

Evaluation. The Army should leverage technology to better manage our talent and thus move away from the antiquated approach of year group management. Commissioning an independent research project to evaluate this proposed approach to statistically validate its feasibility and search for and assess any potential impact (e.g., longer careers) might influence its desirability one way or the other.

Career intermission. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 instituted a pilot program that stops or pauses an officer's career timeline; the Navy refers to this as an "off ramp." This provides an opportunity for a sabbatical. This one- or two-year time away with no impact on an officer's career allows for child bearing or caring for an immediate family member, in addition to taking advantage of other opportunities. The Canadian Army does this as well. We recommend that the U.S. Army immediately write and implement policy to support this program.

For Its Own Good

The Army should seek congressional support to move from a time-based promotion system and implement a system that ties eligibility to individual competency development. This effort will affect the institution on several levels and thus will not happen overnight. There is too much cultural

The Army should seek congressional support to move from a time-based promotion system...

baggage associated with maximizing troop time to overcome the inertia of the status quo.

In spite of its cultural tendencies, the Army, in time, can and will build a solid bench of officers with the requisite skills needed for the future. As the system moves away from time-based eligibility, it will finally afford officers more time to achieve personal, educational, and developmental goals.

Many officers fear taking a broadening assignment because they run the risk of the Army passing them over for promotion. They fear that, because they did not complete a key developmental assignment in a timely fashion, they will not be competitive. We can fix this problem by adjusting the speed on the treadmill of time. These adjustments will allow new generations of officers to have more say in their career development and management and further support an all-volunteer Army. **MR**

NOTES

1. General Martin E. Dempsey, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.
2. Lieutenant General David P. Valcourt, Deputy Commanding General and Chief of Staff, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command.
3. "A mule may have made ten campaigns under Prince Eugene and not be a better tactician for all that." *Frederick the Great on the Art of War*, ed. and trans. Jay Luvaas (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 47.
4. AR 600-3, Army Personnel Development System.

“BELOW-THE-ZONE” and Command Selection

Major Vylius M. Leskys, U.S. Army

DO YOU BELIEVE that this is a fair and equitable process, that you selected the best qualified officers, and that you gave adequate consideration to those officers with Joint duty experience and those with adverse information? All Active Component selection board members who filter through the Department of the Army (DA) Secretariat answer this formal question in the affirmative at the end of each and every selection process. Why are they so confident in the selection process while some in the field question its results? Why was “Miller” picked up from below the zone with his aide-de-camp experience, but “Jones” with the same experience was not? Why were some individuals selected for command, while other stellar officers were not even alternates on the list? This article attempts to provide answers to these concerns and to dispel some myths about the selection process.

As a board recorder at the DA Secretariat, I oversaw the spectrum of officer boards in promotion, command, and schooling for captains through generals. Officers and others have most frequently asked me about the below the zone and command selection processes. The files of selected officers I saw contained numerous references to exceptional duty performance as well as multiple and wide-ranging indicators of future promotion and command potential. I assure the reader that the selection process works as it is intended to work.

Members of each selection board are governed by three factors when deciding how to score a file:

- The guidance in their memorandum of instruction.
- Laws and policies, including Title 10 of the U.S. Code.
- The personal experiences of the voting board members.

The sum of these three factors combined creates the order of merit list.

Usually signed by the Secretary of the Army or the Army Chief of Staff, the board’s memorandum of instruction provides overarching guidance about the skills, experiences, and desired leader attributes (e.g., an officer’s “warrior ethos”) the future force needs. It also provides selected objectives based on a five-year plan, which is a model of projected requirements for promotion consistent with the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act umbrella.

The law (Title 10) and policy (DOD or chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instructions, and Army regulations) specify the board’s composition, personnel management act goals, and maximum below-the-zone selection capabilities and guide the services in executing officer selection boards.

In addition to the memorandum of instruction, Title 10, and DOD policies, each voting selection board member relies on his or her personal experience

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and knowledge to rate each file numerically from one to six based on the performance and potential of each officer.

In the end, the aggregate of board members' scores yields the final order of merit list. This selection process is inherently fair when one looks at the end state. If there are 20 board members voting (including the board president), each vote represents only 5 percent of the aggregate. No one voice is more powerful than the rest.

Below-the-Zone

Title 10 of the U.S. Code mandates the below-the-zone process and authorizes the Secretary of the Army to select up to 10 percent of the maximum selection capability from the below-the-zone population. The Secretary of Defense may authorize up to 15 percent if the Army's needs so dictate. In 2006, as an example, the maximum below-the-zone selection rate for promotion boards for all field grade officers was set at 7.5 percent. For 2007, all three boards were set at 10 percent.

Army Regulation 600-8-29, *Officer Promotions*, page 19, paragraph 1-34b states: "The below-the-zone promotions are intended to provide officers of exceptional ability an opportunity to advance quickly to more responsible positions, help retain high quality officers, and give officers an incentive to perform at their highest level." However, what officers find most significant about the process is the fact that, as DOD Memorandum 600-2 states, "those selected from below the zone replace those who otherwise would be promoted from in and above the zone; therefore, they must be clearly superior to those who would otherwise be promoted."

Board members take a cursory first look of the below-the-zone population using the "Yes/No/Show Cause" screening categories. If a below-the-zone officer falls into the "Yes" category, he merits further consideration for accelerated promotion and possesses potential for promotion ahead of his contemporaries; if he falls into the "No" category, the officer does not; if he falls into the "Show Cause" category, involuntary separation is recommended to the commanding general, Human Resources Command.

The board thus generates a preliminary order of merit list of potential below-the-zone candidates based on the aggregate total of individual "Yes"

votes. The board then decides how many "Yes" votes it takes to move an adequate number of candidates to the next level of scrutiny, which is the two-to-six numerical ranking. The board generates a second order of merit list that yields the "potential below-the-zone selects" based on the maximum below-the-zone selection capability provided in the memorandum of instruction.

The board then compares these "potential" below-the-zone selects against the candidates they would potentially replace. The board compares the lowest scoring below-the-zone selectee to the highest scoring in- and above-the-zone candidate. The files of the two officers are displayed on a screen so all the board members can see them. The board then discusses the candidates and votes. If the board deems the lowest below-the-zone candidate to be "clearly superior" to the highest in- and above-the-zone candidate, then it stands to reason that the remaining below-the-zone candidates, all of whom have higher rankings in the below-the-zone list, are superior to the remaining in- and above-the-zone counterparts, all of whom have lower rankings in the in- and above-the-zone list.

When this occurs, all of the below-the-zone files will be in the final order of merit list, and represent the maximum below-the-zone selection capability. If, however, the board does not deem the lowest scoring below-the-zone candidate to be clearly superior to the highest scoring in- and above-the-zone candidate, then it must compare the next two candidates (the next to lowest below-the-zone candidate and the next to highest in- and above-the-zone candidate) and so on until a clearly superior below-the-zone officer emerges or until all below-the-zone /in- and above-the-zone comparisons are exhausted.

Command Selection Boards

One of the biggest misunderstandings with regard to the command selection board process is the belief that command boards vote only once for each officer and then somehow deconflict afterwards. In fact, board members vote on individuals in every command category in which officers compete. As a result, a board member may cast 11 separate votes for one officer during a command selection board process. Individual votes reflect the varied assignment histories and experiences of officers competing for command. An officer with previous success in

recruiting, for example, might expect to fare better on the aggregate order of merit list for “recruiting and training” than an officer with comparable performance but no prior recruiting experience.

Command boards, like promotion boards, start with individual voting that creates order of merit lists. The word picture, however, is not based on the candidates’ position as a principal or alternate for promotion, but focuses on each officer’s performance and potential.

Three courses of action are available to the board. One course of action simply defaults to the command category in which the candidate gets the highest score as the principal category. Another course of action gives the board an open forum to decide the best category for each eligible officer to meet the needs of the Army. The last course of action combines the two, allowing the highest score to initially drive the board decisions, but then allowing board members to pick the best command for officers who score within a certain point spread on other order of merit lists (i.e., those for tactical, garrison, and key billet). For example, if the board

decides to pick a one-point spread as its guideline, then the board will look at the file of an officer who scored a 60 in the tactical command order of merit list and 59 on the garrison order of merit list, and decide the command for which he or she is best suited in light of the Army’s needs.

Board members are restricted to looking at only those officers who are at the top of the order of merit lists and could fill available principal command positions. Once the board fills all principal command billets, it assigns alternates from the highest-scoring remaining candidates on the order of merit list. Ultimately, the process selects principals based on the aggregate of their individual scores, significantly limiting the ability of any one board member’s opinion to influence an officer’s selection.

Before I began working at the DA Secretariat, I believed in myths: the undue influence of higher ranked officers, the ability of a single individual to sway a board to vote on a single candidate, and the requirement to have worked in a handful of “special” jobs in order to be picked up below the zone or put on the command list. I have found all these myths to be untrue.

In the end, the process is executed with integrity and facilitates the selection of the best officers to meet the Army’s future requirements. The quality of the officer’s file and his or her manner of performance—in the *collective* judgment of all board members—determines an officer’s standing on the final order of merit list. **MR**

Command boards, like promotion boards, start with individual voting that creates order of merit lists.



ARMY CHAPLAINS LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE

Chaplain (Colonel) F. Eric Wester, U.S. Army

Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.

—Madeleine Albright¹

We are building morale—not on supreme confidence in our ability to conquer and subdue other peoples; not in reliance on things of steel and the super-excellence of guns and planes and bomb sights . . . We are building it on belief, for it is what men believe that makes them invincible. We have sought for something finer and higher than optimism or self-confidence, something not merely of the intellect or the emotions but rather something in the spirit of the man, something encompassed only by the soul.

—General George C. Marshall²

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PHOTO: U.S. Army Chaplain (CPT) Jeff Roberson speaks to a female resident and her daughter while conducting a sensing patrol of the Iraqi Family Village, a neighborhood of displaced citizens in Baghdad, Iraq, on 11 September 2008. (U.S. Army, SPC Charles W. Gill)

IN HIS ESSAY “Leading Our Leaders” (*Military Review*, September-October 2009), Professor Tim Challans advances an argument that, during the last decade, senior military leaders set conditions for moral and legal failures in our junior enlisted ranks. I want to address four of his points here:

- He concludes that leaders are accountable to those above and below them for moral failures, and that improving ethics in the Army must start, not from the top or the bottom, but in the middle.
- Based on a narrow reading of the role of chaplains, the article asks if it is time to eliminate the Chaplain Corps.
- The article asserts (without documentation) that the Chaplain Corps “led the charge in ensuring that the concept of respect did not include any idea of respecting the enemy.”³
- The article presents “torture, murder, slavery, and general disrespect of persons” by Al-Qaeda as an example of religion’s negative influence on behavior.⁴

Serving in the Middle

Regarding the article’s main point, cultivating moral strength “in the middle” of military formations, this approach reinforces the historic role of chaplains. Chaplains today and in the past have worked “in the middle” of units where they live and serve among Soldiers. For 234 years, Army commanders have called upon chaplains in their formations to address ethical questions and foster a moral climate that would support developing

For 234 years, Army commanders have called upon chaplains in their formations to address ethical questions...

moral character. Chief of Staff of the Army General George C. Marshall, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, institutionalized the method of assigning chaplains to units in the Army.⁵

Chaplains across the force serve “in the middle” of units with Soldiers and are addressed as “chaplain,” not by rank—another example of Marshall’s influence that conveys the chaplain’s distinctive role. Chaplains encourage both faith among believers and ethical conduct among all Soldiers and family members. Chaplain support sometimes expands to prisoners of war, detained persons, and refugees. Their example in this regard models the ethical posture they seek to reinforce among Soldiers. Fostering moral strength “in the middle” of our military aligns with the institution’s expectations of the chaplaincy.

Eliminate the Chaplain Corps?

“Leading Our Leaders” also suggests that moral and leadership failures of the U.S. military are potentially the result of damaging influences by military chaplains and religion. The article decries chaplains who, from the author’s perspective, inappropriately engage in policy development, moral leadership development, and ethics education through contributions in preparing regulations and through counseling. The article asks if all other activities of chaplains beyond leading religious services are out of bounds and should be removed from public, government, and military life.

The article incorrectly attributes a 1986 court case, *Katcoff v. Marsh*, to the Supreme Court. However, the case was decided by the Federal Court of Appeals, 2d Circuit, New York City. The article accurately notes the court’s rationale for retaining the Army chaplaincy. The military chaplain’s “primary role” (not exclusive role) is to provide for the free exercise of religion, particularly of deployed military personnel.⁶ Though the article asks what leaders can do when policy undermines

morality, along the way it challenges the existence of the Chaplain Corps. The article asks, “Why [do] we even have a Chaplain Corps, particularly one engaged in the formulation of doctrine?”⁷

This question signals concern about an overly influential Chaplain Corps operating outside accepted limits. For example, Challans states the current Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, “contains language that opens the door and enables religious beliefs to be foundational in our institutional professional conception of ethics.”⁸ What the FM actually states about the “Foundations of Army Leadership . . .” is, “Although America’s history and cultural traditions derive from many parts of the civilized world, common values, goals, and beliefs are solidly established in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.”⁹ Citing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution hardly weds religious beliefs too closely to the professional military ethic.

Others directly involved in the conferences the author mentions can comment on the accuracy of the article’s statements regarding the old leadership manual’s staffing process (FM 22-100) in the late 1990s. However, doctrinal decisions about what is included in major military publications are not determined at a chaplain branch conference. Doctrine development is an iterative process involving scores of experts—a process unlikely to be overly influenced by chaplains.

Respecting the Enemy

The article also refers to prepublication staffing for the 1999 FM 22-100 and the 2006 FM 6-22 leadership manuals and asserts that “the Chaplain Corps was incensed” and argued against the foundational principle of the moral equality of enemy combatants and detained personnel.¹⁰

This charge is serious. It asserts that the Chaplain Corps—as an institution—does not respect enemy combatants or accept their moral equivalence in conflict. If such a charge has any purchase whatsoever, the Chaplain Corps would need to come to grips with all the implications of this accusation. Perhaps *individuals* have raised questions about moral equivalence of adversaries in the War on Terrorism, but the Army’s Chaplain Corps has not adopted a position repudiating the moral worth of enemy personnel.

Concerning respect for the enemy, consider two examples of chaplain conduct and current chaplain training in respect for all people, including enemy personnel. Chaplain Henry Gerecke was assigned at Nuremberg to provide chaplaincy services among enemy prisoners on trial for war crimes.¹¹ He was trusted both by the Nuremberg tribunal authorities and the prisoners as a confidant, pastor, and ethical advisor. Likewise, Chaplain LeRoy Ness in Vietnam resisted pressure from his battalion, brigade, and division commanders and stuck to ethical principles of respect and personal courage as well as to his faith by quietly offering public prayers of commendation for the enemy dead whose bodies were in the care and custody of U.S. forces. For Chaplain Ness, honoring the humanity of the enemy dead through respect was a moral and religious imperative.¹² Respect for the humanity of our enemies expresses both American and professional military values, and the Chaplain Corps upholds that respect.

The Army's Chaplain Center and School teaches Just War principles—using the same text Challans mentioned, *Just and Unjust Wars* by Michael Walzer. The respect for others embedded in the Just War tradition incorporates a centuries-long relationship to religious tradition. Although Just War tradition developed over centuries, religion was the

Respect for the humanity of our enemies expresses both American and professional military values, and the Chaplain Corps upholds that respect.

main vehicle for its development and continues to inform formal theory and the moral philosophy of war. As the tradition is taught in the chaplain school, its historic roots and wider moral values are central to applying both ethics and the law of land warfare.

Religion's Influence on Behavior

Challans' article suggests that religion, in general, is corrosive to moral behavior, that cruelty is historically consistent with "the religions of the world." It associates extremist religious dogma with bad effects on society, declaring that "one need look no further than Al-Qaeda."¹³ Of course we must look further than Al-Qaeda. Religious leaders have long influenced culture and society in the public square. At its worst, as in the case of Al-Qaeda, religion mixed with brutal force brings suffering.

However, in the balance, throughout history—world, national, and military—religious leaders have been "in the middle" of the most difficult



Chaplain Gerecke in his "chapel" at Nuremberg. The chair farthest right was always occupied by Hermann Goering, next to him sat Joachim von Ribbentrop, 1946. (H.H. Gerecke)



From left: Chaplain (CPT) Paul Lembke; Chaplain (CPT) John Magolee; Chaplain (CPT) LeRoy Ness; and Chaplain (CPT) Conrad N. Walker, at Fort Campbell, KY, November 1963. (U.S. Army photo, Courtesy of ELCA Archives)

moral and spiritual dilemmas in life. At their best, religious leaders convey vision including hope, solace, peace, and the alleviation of suffering by fostering moral strength and ethical behavior in the societies of the world. The Just War tradition itself and the call by religious leaders to pursue justice with humility are examples of contributions toward the good that religion brings to the world.

Though Challans complains that chaplains ought only to provide religious services, there is ample evidence that the vision and voices of chaplains in military service have helped foster moral strength and ethical clarity in decision-making. In contrast to the extreme example of Al-Qaeda cited in the article, one would do well to also remember Chaplains Gerecke and Ness and others like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Mother Theresa, and Desmond Tutu who had immense moral influence beyond simply leading religious services. Their activities were animated largely by their particular religious convictions, but in their diverse beliefs, they also were committed to righteous conduct and compassion for their fellow human beings. Chaplains “in the middle” of our

forces strive to serve the Soldiers for whose spiritual stewardship they have responsibility, and they daily aspire to emulate such exemplars. **MR**

Views expressed here are solely the author's.

NOTES

1. Madeleine Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 42.
2. George C. Marshall, “Morale in Modern War,” an address at Trinity College, Hartford, CT, 15 June 1941.
3. Tim Challans, “Leading Our Leaders,” *Military Review*, September–October 2009, 123.
4. Challans.
5. Forest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Organizer of Victory, Vol. III* (New York: Viking Press, 1999), 99.
6. Israel Drazin and Cecil B. Currey, *For God and Country: The History of a Constitutional Challenge to the Army Chaplaincy* (Hoboken, NJ: KATV Publishing House, 1995), 198.
7. Challans.
8. *Ibid.*
9. U.S. Army Field Manual 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 2006). See especially discussion in “Foundations for Army Leadership” as well as discussion about protecting free exercise and avoiding undue influence regarding religion in paragraph 4-60.
10. Challans.
11. See <<http://www.stjohnchester.com/Gerecke/Gerecke.html>>. This site has audio recordings of Chaplain Gerecke's experiences and ministry among the Nazi officials while they were on trial.
12. Personal interview conducted with Chaplain Leroy Ness by Chaplain (COL, Retired) Gordon Schweitzer in *Handbook for Chaplain Ministry in the 1990s*, March 1985, unpublished.
13. Challans.

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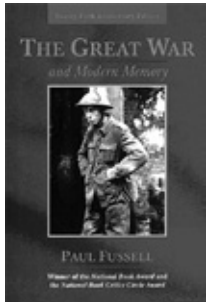
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MR Classics Revisited



THE GREAT WAR AND MODERN MEMORY, Paul Fussell, Oxford University Press, 1976.

Ask me to recommend a great piece of war writing and a crowd of works jockey for mention: Isaac Babel's *Red Cavalry* stories; Phil

Caputo's *Rumor of War*; the *Sword of Honor* trilogy by Evelyn Waugh; Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*; William Manchester's *Goodbye, Darkness*; *A Farewell to Arms*; *The Forgotten Soldier*; and so on. Only one great work of literary criticism, however, springs to mind: *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell's 1976 prize-winning study of the effects World War One worked on British (and by extension, American) culture. An infantry platoon leader during World War II before becoming a renowned Ivy League professor, Fussell produced a tour-de-force analysis of what war does to those who fight it and the culture that sponsors it. No other study comes close to its trenchancy.

As a title, *The Great War and Modern Memory* is something of a misnomer. The book is less about the war's effect on modern memory than about how it crushed a century's-worth of idealistic English assumptions. Working from what must have been hundreds if not thousands of texts from an array of media—poetry, memoirs, newspaper and magazine pieces, plays, private letters, etc.—Fussell builds a fascinating and thoroughly convincing picture of what happened to Victorian-Georgian optimism when it encountered the massed fires of the Western Front.

In 1914, British men welcomed war. Even poets looked to combat in France as an opportunity to give their lives meaning. For Fussell, Rupert Brooke captured the pre-

war zeitgeist in "Sonnet I: Peace" (1914): "Now God be thanked who has matched us with His Hour, / And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping." Lofty sentiment we might expect in any poetry, but *Modern Memory* cites example upon example of such ingenuous thinking. Brooke's optimism, for example, is corroborated by this personal ad, placed in *The Times* two days before England declared war: "PAULINE—Alas it cannot be. But I will dash into the great venture with all that pride and spirit an ancient race has given me." Fussell interprets this snippet as an amalgam of period ideas and ideals. Its diction is high and poetic ("Alas"), sportish ("venture," "dash"), and mythic ("ancient race").

Brooke and Pauline's lover had been reared in a culture that believed fervently in "Progress and Art." For these men, God still sat in heaven, sports and games mattered, and national myths were stories to live by. Theirs was a literate generation, too, as perhaps none had ever been before and certainly hasn't been since. Spurred on by egregious claims that German soldiers were bayoneting Belgian babies (similar yellow charges were made against Sadaam's troops in Kuwait), the idealistic English poured into training camps eager for a "fight" or a "scrap"—as if combat would be akin to a boxing match.

What they got is well known, and Fussell documents it exhaustively. Consider, for instance, that the British suffered 60,000 casualties (20,000 killed) during the *first day* of the Somme Offensive—and continued to attack for four more months. Much of *Modern Memory's* value lies in its author's detailed exposition of how the profligate bloodletting and squalid horror of trench warfare registered on the soldier. Anecdotes and images are piled high until they coalesce into

a lump-sum depiction of bewilderment, disillusionment, and disgust. For those who require the past to talk to their present condition, one good reason to read this book lies in its suggestion that naïve national beliefs can be altered, if not completely undone, by war.

This might not qualify as an epiphany for a post-Vietnam culture, but the genius of *Modern Memory* lies in Fussell's painstaking and often nuanced tracing of war's effects on ideology. For example, men inculcated with a particular view of the world will not, Fussell tells us, surrender that view without a struggle. Thus the Tommies of the Great War used their old emotional-intellectual vocabulary to make sense of and attenuate the horrors they encountered. Before the war, Nature (capital N) was widely worshipped, its flora and fauna often mused upon as intimations of Beauty (capital B). "A standard way of writing the Georgian poem," Fussell says, "was to get as many flowers into it as possible." Surrounded by death in the trenches, soldiers clung to their flowers, particularly the bright-red poppy, which bloomed all over Flanders. Now, however, flowers invoked a transubstantiation of the blood of dead soldiers into new and beautiful living things. By this move, death lost some of its sting.

Similar semantic gymnastics were used with stand-to, the morning and evening hours when men most feared attack. Pre-war, dawn and dusk figured as times of special significance, as interludes when insight might be gained into the Ineffable. At stand-to, dusk and dawn retained their significance; anticipation, albeit of a distinctly different kind, provided a sense of continuity that must have helped temper the terror of the moment. In a book packed with insights, these explications of intellectual rear-guard actions are among the most telling.

For some Great War soldiers, the old vocabulary somehow survived the slaughterhouse. For most, however, as each “Big Push” succeeded only in killing off men by the tens of thousands, the gap between poetic euphemism and industrialized warfare became unbridgeable. Fussell argues that the latter so explicitly undermined the former that irony became the dominant mode of approaching the world. Again copiously, he records the change from romantic effusions like Brooke’s and Pauline’s lover’s to admonitory proclamations and outright denunciations. Wilfred Owen’s description of a gassed soldier in “Dulce et Decorum Est” is one such well known jeremiad:

If you could hear, at every jolt,
the blood

Come gargling from the froth-
corrupted lungs,

And think how, once, his head
was like a bud,

Fresh as a country rose, and keen,
and young . . .

. . . you would not tell

The old lie: Dulce et Decorum est
Pro Patria Mori.

So went the evolution from idealism to cynicism. Man as a perfectible being and history as an unfolding narrative of Progress were abandoned to the hopelessly naïve.

In addition to bringing myriad sources to life in *Modern Memory*, Fussell analyzes in depth the works of five important Great War writers, among them Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, and Edmund Blunden, authors of the three best known (and perhaps best) Great War memoirs, respectively: The three-book *Memoirs of George Sherston*, *Goodbye to All That*, and *Undertones of War*. These are seminal texts whose attitudes and tenets continue

to influence the way we think about war. You won’t find a better, more illuminating introduction to them.

Broadly, Fussell reads each work as a consciously literary but no less “true” attempt to point out the ironies present everywhere in the war.

Sassoon’s is a work of “repeated ins and outs”—“binaries”—in which the ghastliness of the trenches contrasts with the comforts of home. Sassoon, who received two Military Crosses for gallantry (he was nominated for four) and was recommended for the Victoria Cross, grew so angry at the government’s apparent indifference to its soldiers’ suffering that he publicly threw his Military Cross ribbon into the Thames.

In an especially well informed reading, Fussell argues that for Graves the war was a colossal bad joke, fit only to be rendered in the slapstick conventions of farce. Accordingly, Graves packed *Goodbye to All That* with “fools and knaves” and leg-pulling anecdotes. Driven by a loathing for the war and the culture that sought it, the book is an early manifestation of black humor.

In tone and orientation, Edmund Blunden couldn’t have been much more different from Graves and Sassoon. Fussell’s “harmless young shepherd” was a nostalgic pastoral poet, celebrant of a rural England and way of life that had been in eclipse since the Industrial Revolution. In *Undertones of War*, Blunden registers everywhere the obliterating impact of industrialized war on the countryside and its innocent inhabitants. Though much subtler than Sassoon’s and Graves’s sardonic tales, Blunden’s undertones are no less ironic, and perhaps more poignant. In fact, Fussell, who is clearly sym-

pathetic with all three writers, seems to favor Blunden’s book.

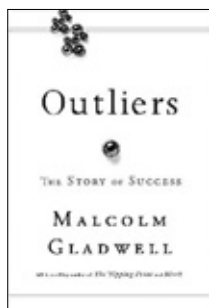
Analyses of homoeroticism in Wilfred Owen’s poetry and the mythic in David Jones’s rambling *In Parenthesis* complete the survey of five of the war’s greatest writers. My only disappointment amid all of Fussell’s astute analysis is the absence of Edwin Campion’s *Some Desperate Glory*. But Campion’s hair-raising account of Passchendaele wasn’t unearthed until 1981—five years after *Modern Memory* had won the National Book Award for criticism.

So what, ultimately, do we learn from *The Great War and Modern Memory*? Why read an aging study of a war almost a hundred years gone by? Because the book presents a high-definition picture of the dangers of unexamined cultural assumptions. Because it’s a terrific study of what happens when a nation enters into war blithely, and how war can change a nation’s core beliefs. Because it cautions against exceptionalism, the crusader mentality, and an overweening sense of national self-righteousness. The book is also stuffed with interesting details, all rendered in vigorous, accomplished prose that carries a reader swiftly from chapter to chapter—it’s a completely absorbing read. And finally, because it offers a fine example of what a soldier-intellectual might achieve, and the methods one might use to shine a bright light on war and those who profess it.

If you are a professional Soldier or just interested in war literature, you really should read Fussell.

**LTC Arthur Bilodeau, USA,
Retired, Louisville, Kentucky**

MR Book Reviews



OUTLIERS: The Story of Success, Malcolm Gladwell, Little, Brown and Company, New York, 2008, 299 pages, \$27.99.

Outliers, Malcolm Gladwell's third national bestseller, following *The Tipping Point* (2000) and

Blink (2005), is a series of "blinding flashes of the obvious" punctuated with logical fallacies and redeemed by interesting stories about dangerous culture. Gladwell's overall thesis is that extraordinarily motivated people (with only above average talent) can succeed in obtaining extraordinary wealth and influence given society's opportunities. Trying to convince the reader with fallacious causal stories about what makes people successful (e.g., natural brilliance and charismatic personality), Gladwell provides these blinding flashes of the obvious: "Successful people don't do it alone. Where they come from matters. They're products of particular places and environments." Okay, at this point in the book, I get it: history demonstrates that success seems largely a culturally contextualized happenstance when these commonalities combine. And yet, the author confuses me later in the book when he states, "Success is not a random act. It arises out of a predictable and powerful set of circumstances and opportunities." Huh? Well, maybe I don't get it.

Having previously read and digested Nicholas Rescher's philosophical treatise, *Luck: The Brilliant Randomness of Everyday Life* (Pittsburgh Press, 1995), the logical inconsistency of *Outliers* becomes clearer. Gladwell's teleological explanations about how past events unfolded is as flawed as a Monday-morning quarterback's causal asser-

tions about why the game was won or lost. Rescher, on the other hand, offers this more compelling and much less romantic view of history: "Our condition on the world's stage is the product of *fate* (what we are), of *fortune* (the conditions and circumstances in which we are placed), and of *luck* (what chances to happen to us)."

Gladwell would not have a national bestseller if he concluded that the successes of Bill Gates and The Beatles were fateful, fortunate, and due to luck. Even John Lennon, one of the less fortunate Beatles, says, "Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans" (from his song, "Beautiful Boy"). The one redeeming aspect of *Outliers* (which I gave up trying to connect to the book's thesis) is Chapter 7, "The Ethnic Theory of Plane Crashes," describing the sometimes disastrous aspects of organizational culture and drawing on findings from renowned researcher Geert Hofstede and from NASA's post-airline crash research reported by Ute Ficher and Judith Orasanu. This chapter has tremendous relevance to the military professional who is culturally prone to not challenge the actions and decisions of superiors even if lives are at stake (a function of what Hofstede calls the "Power-Distance" dimension).

My advice to military professionals, then, is to skip Gladwell's blinding flashes of the obvious and conflicting logic, and read only chapter 7 of *Outliers* while standing in the aisle of the bookstore. Then put it back on the shelf, go to the philosophy section and pick up a copy of Rescher's book, *Luck*. Purchase it, read it (while listening to John Lennon), and keep it as a reference.

Christopher R. Paparone,
Fort Lee, Virginia

NORMALIZING JAPAN: Politics, Identity and the Evolution of Security Practice, Andrew L. Oros, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 2009, 282 pages, \$60.00.

For decades, scholars and other Japan watchers have wondered if or when Japan would remove the straitjacket from its security policy. In *Normalizing Japan*, Andrew Oros answers with a resounding—well, as resounding as a political science argument gets—probably not anytime soon.

Oros acknowledges previous takes on Japan's security policy evolution, from realist, liberalist, and constructivist points of view, but finds those analyses lacking and offers his own constructivist theory, focused on Japan's security identity. He defines a state's identity, following the work of Jeffrey Legro, as "a lens through which citizens determine a framework for a state's appropriate response" to the international system. Security identity, a subset of national identity, shapes policy by providing a vocabulary for discourse and "a focal point for public opinion." Once identity institutionalizes into policymaking, the paradigmatic blinds it provides, as well as the aforementioned public opinion, help to ensure the identity's continuity.

The author defines Japan's security identity as domestic antimilitarism, not unqualified antimilitarism, or pacifism, which are labels others often use. Japan currently hosts the largest permanent overseas stationing of U.S. forces and has one of the largest military budgets in the world—hardly the attributes of a purely antimilitarist or pacifist state (though Oros acknowledges a minority of Japanese citizens hold these extreme views). Japan's



Featured Review

Featured Review

domestic antimilitarism strictly proscribes its own military's roles, but does not conceive that other nations should constrain their militaries in the same ways. Oros acknowledges Thomas Berger's descriptions of security norms in countries like Japan and Germany, but explains that his theory of security identity applies to the state as a whole while norms affect individual choices.

After establishing the theoretical framework, Oros explains how Japan's defeat in World War II discredited its previous security identity. Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, several versions of a new and appropriate security identity arose and were debated. Domestic antimilitarism was a political compromise with three central tenets: "No traditional armed forces involved in domestic policymaking . . . no use of forces by Japan to resolve international disputes, except in self-defense [and] . . . no Japanese participation in foreign wars." Oros acknowledges other factors, like foreign pressure, changes in the international environment and individual Japanese leaders, and analyzes how they affect the formation of policy, but he convincingly maintains that security identity sets the boundaries for discussion and implementation. He follows his description of the origin of domestic antimilitarism with well-argued case studies of policies concerning arms exports, military satellites, and missile defense. Ending with a look to the future, he says that barring extreme changes to Japan's domestic or international environment, the broad outlines of Japan's domestic antimilitarism security identity are likely to continue.

Most likely to be read by policymakers and Japan studies scholars, this book deserves a wider audience for its lucid, nuanced, and cogent explanation of Japan's role and likely future in the international security environment.

**COL David Hunter-Chester, USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

INSIDE HAMAS: The Untold Story of the Militant Islamic Movement, Zaki Chehab, Nation Books, New York, 2008, 250 pages, \$15.95.

Throughout his career, journalist Zaki Chehab, a Palestinian refugee from Lebanon, interviewed leaders from the many factions who competed for power among the Palestinians. From his experiences, Chehab writes about Hamas—the controversial, Islamic militant group that shocked the world when it won the 2006 national elections.

Although Chehab supports the Palestinian cause, he is frank in his presentation of the challenges to and failures of Hamas from infancy to the post-election period. Born of the rise of the Islamist movement in the 1960s and influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas was as a rival to the secular Fatah organization. Chehab relies on interviews with founding members to describe the group's initial organizational structure and strategy. He credits Israel's passive endorsement of the organization as a counter to Fatah for allowing Hamas to survive. He provides details of personalities and deeds of the group's founding members and subsequent leaders that only someone with his access could provide. He describes the humble beginnings of the Al Qassam Brigades, Hamas's military wing, and their growth from a few disparate cells into a force estimated at 18,000. Chehab views the conflict through the eyes of common Palestinians, as well as those of martyrs and their families. He describes how Hamas recruits and employs suicide attackers, how the Israel intelligence services and other organizations penetrated Hamas, and how killing informants led to a continuing cycle of violence. Although Hamas' structure has evolved, it refuses to recognize the state of Israel and seeks to reclaim Palestine.

Chehab argues that Hamas out-campaigned Fatah in the 2006 elections and executed a superior strategy that surprised the world by its success. He believes the election results were more of a rejection

of Fatah than an endorsement of Hamas. Fatah's inability to provide adequate social services, its reputation for corruption, and its inability to make progress with Israel are weaknesses Hamas exploited. He points out that Hamas opposed the Oslo Accords that created the Palestinian Authority, only to assume this role because of the election. He says one of the problems with Hamas is the need to balance governance responsibilities with its desire to resist Israel.

Chehab argues the U.S. should negotiate with Hamas and not exclude it from the peace process and suggests that continued attempts to undermine and discredit Hamas will only make it more popular. He believes Hamas's inability to deliver on promises has frustrated the Palestinian people and foresees a widening void that will enable Al-Qaeda and Iranian-backed groups to wield more influence. Because Chehab is unable to define Hamas without referring to the complex web of relationships between it and the other Palestinian factions (Israel and neighboring countries), the reader must have considerable understanding of the Palestinian conflict to fully appreciate Chehab's analysis. However, the author has written a compelling history of Hamas that provides a framework for understanding the unique position the group currently occupies in the Palestinian situation.

**MAJ Stephen J. Kolouch, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

ENGAGING THE MUSLIM WORLD, Juan Cole, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2009, 282 pages, \$26.95.

In *Engaging the Muslim World*, Juan Cole argues that the West's misplaced fear of Islam and its tendency to reach general conclusions about the Muslim world are responsible for past failures in U.S. foreign policy. No dispassionate observer, Cole, a history professor at the University of Michigan who reads and speaks several Middle Eastern languages, writes

“Informed Comment,” an Internet blog in which he sharply criticizes the Iraq War and Bush Administration’s foreign policy.

Cole cites Senator John McCain as saying that if the United States were to prematurely leave Iraq, the country would become a base for Al-Qaeda. He argues that U.S. politicians and pundits tend to simplify Islam as a monolithic religion. However, he says, the majority of Iraq is Shi’a and would not allow a Sunni terrorist organization like Al-Qaeda to control the country. Cole’s criticism is sound, although he does not satisfactorily explain how the Iraqi government would be able to keep Al-Qaeda’s influence out of the Sunni-dominated part of the country without coalition assistance.

Cole’s recommendation to the Obama administration is to use negotiation as a key. He suggests the United States should engage Iran to stop its nuclear program (he seems to take the Iranian assertion of a peaceful nuclear program at face value). To convince Iran to stop its program, he says the United States should *induce* Israel to give up its arsenal. He advocates an Israeli-Syrian peace treaty to end Hezbollah and Hamas’s threats to Israel. A bit more detail about how the U.S. might accomplish either one of these tasks would be helpful. Cole suggests that more Arabic and Western works of religion and literature should be translated in order to increase understanding on both sides.

Engaging the Muslim World’s extreme criticism of U.S. policy makes it a provocative read. However, the central theme, that we must avoid generalizing what is a very complicated region, is a valuable message to both policymakers and those carrying it out. Cole convincingly argues that misunderstanding and generalizing Islam and the Middle East has contributed to great losses of both blood and treasure in recent years.

LTC Robert E. Friedenber
Damascus, Syria

OPERATION SNAKE BITE: The Explosive True Story of an Afghan Desert Siege, Stephen Grey, Penguin Books, London, 2009, 367 pages, \$64.69.

Set-piece battles are rare in Afghanistan. One exception was a major fight in the Helmand Province from 2 to 11 December 2007. The place was Musa Qala, which is not far from the Maiwand battlefield where the British lost a brigade in 1880. Coalition forces included some 1,800 British, American, Afghan, Danish, and Dutch soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen. Some famous units included the Coldstream Guards, the Green Howards, the Household Cavalry, the King’s Royal Hussars, the Royal Gurkha Rifles, the Scots Guards, the Royal Marines, and the 82d Airborne Division. The Taliban were badly mauled, but some escaped. The siege of Musa Qala is the story of coalition combat, courage, and the political undertones that color a combatant’s every move. It is also a story of those who paid the ultimate price for their comrades, their units, and their countries.

Stephen Grey, an embedded reporter with B Company, 2d Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment (The Green Howards), joined the unit prior to the operation and developed close contacts and relationships with the soldiers of the unit. He conducted over 230 interviews with the Green Howards and other involved units. The book’s result is a detailed, well-wrought look at the battle. Operation Snake Bite was a combined arms fight involving armor, artillery, infantry, and aviation. It was fought with a critical political constraint—to not level the village of Musa Qala, even though the Taliban had entrenched in it.

Grey does excellent work in absorbing military culture and practices and uses his knowledge to produce a well-reasoned account of the battle. The book’s maps are detailed and useful; however, Grey does not include an index, which makes it difficult to use the book for research. The serious reader should create his own index of important

points as he reads the book. Further, Grey’s endnotes are minimal, and he has not linked individual interviews to events in the book, which makes it even more difficult to use the book for future reference.

Still this is a useful and significant book about contemporary combat in Afghanistan. Military professionals will want to read it. The book is not yet for sale in the United States, so one should look for it in international airport bookstores.

Lester W. Grau,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

UNFRIENDLY FIRE: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America, Nathaniel Frank, Thomas Dunne Books, 2009, \$25.95, 342 pages.

Nathaniel Frank’s timing of his most recent work, *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America*, is uncanny. The book’s release coincides with President Barack Obama’s promise to end discrimination of gays in the military.

Frank examines the 1993 law that bans open homosexual service in the U.S. military, commonly known as the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy and provides compelling evidence why the law should be repealed. Frank researched governmental documents, congressional hearings, military service policies, and debates and discussions that led to the law’s signing on 30 November 1993. His research included rarely discussed empirical data, interviews of senior government officials and military leaders (active and retired), visits to military bases, and interviews with former and present military members about their opinions on military service by homosexuals.

Frank believes the current policy has failed to accomplish its original intent. President Bill Clinton’s promise of ending the military’s ban on homosexuals was the genesis of the policy. It was intended to stop harassment, “witch hunts,” and unjustified discharges based on sexual orientation. Instead, the law created an increase in homosexual

discharges, animosity, distrust, and betrayal. In addition, proponents of the ban believe homosexuality in the military would destroy the unit cohesion necessary to military effectiveness. Based on its negative impact, he surmises that the policy was poorly designed and implemented. Frank concludes that it “bred massive confusion about how service members—gay and straight alike—were expected to behave, what their rights and constraints were, and what military commanders were allowed and expected to do to enforce the rules.” Indeed, unit cohesion is a critical component to mission accomplishment and trust is a key element in that cohesion. Frank provides numerous examples of how the policy damages the foundation of our armed forces by creating an atmosphere of distrust.

Unfriendly Fire is recommended reading, especially for those who proudly serve our Nation, because of its well-reasoned insights on how the current ban on homosexuals in the armed forces is currently undermining our military might.

**MAJ Trisha Luiken, USAF,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE ATOMIC BOMB AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR, Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2008, 201 pages, \$27.00.

The nearly two decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union have yielded a spate of new works on the Cold War, most of which exploit the publication of additional documents on the Soviet side to add texture and nuance to well-established scholarly interpretations. That Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko’s work falls within that category in no way disparages their careful argumentation or rethinking of familiar questions. What is distinctive about this history of Cold War origins is that it places the atomic bomb at the center of discussion about the widening rift among wartime allies that abruptly morphed into a Cold War after 1945. The authors’ essential argument

is that the existence of the atomic bomb itself so distorted foreign policy of both emerging superpowers as to make an amicable postwar accommodation substantially less likely. Moreover, they assert that atomic secrets and revelations of espionage further undermined trust and all but ensured there would be no *modus vivendi* leading to international controls of atomic weapons.

The book has much to recommend it. Its introduction contains a useful review of major secondary works as well as newly published collections of relevant primary source documents. Chapter One offers a concise exposition of the authors’ main points in the context of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s foreign policy and vision of the postwar world order. Chastened by the example of President Woodrow Wilson’s failure to reshape the global environment in the aftermath of World War I, Roosevelt gave careful thought to the means and methods for implementing his own plans to forge a worldwide free market.

However, like Wilson, Roosevelt faced the challenge of advancing a global agenda that was not fully compatible with those of fellow victorious allies. In Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, in particular, he confronted men as determined and politically astute as himself. While working with Churchill, whose worldview more closely aligned with Roosevelt’s own and whose country had steadily lost leverage during the exhausting world war, was one thing, dealing with Stalin was quite another.

Churchill placed a premium on defeating Germany at the lowest possible cost to the British Empire and thus favored peripheral offensives in North Africa and southern Europe. Early in the war, when partnership with Britain was indispensable, Roosevelt deferred to British judgment on the matter of the Second Front over the objections of many of his own military strategists. By 1943, as U.S. military might reached gargantuan proportions, the voice of caution resonated less loudly and nothing deterred the U.S.

from an invasion in northern France in 1944.

The Soviet leader, by virtue of personality, ideology, and experience, operated from a sharply different frame of reference. Moreover, his political advantage was as great as Roosevelt’s own—even greater in some respects. After all, the Red Army occupied most of Eastern and Central Europe by late 1944. Accordingly, Stalin would not budge from consolidating his sphere of influence into a series of East European buffer states molded in the Soviet image and under his direct control.

In this context, the authors note, Roosevelt held one clear ace, an edge in the development of atomic weapons. Most interesting is the book’s contention that Roosevelt sought to extract advantage from the bomb project to influence not merely Stalin, but Churchill as well. As events turned out, he had greater success with the latter than the former. Britain’s stake was to preserve its position as the junior partner in the bomb project, a matter over which the Americans had considerable control. With regard to Stalin, Roosevelt hoped mistakenly that compelling evidence of American technological power would moderate Soviet positions concerning the postwar order. In any event, the authors conclude, “By relying on atomic diplomacy, Roosevelt pushed these two allies into positions that made a grand atomic settlement after the war almost impossible to achieve.” This specific point of interpretation will probably foster future academic debate as scholars sift through the multitude of factors that shaped postwar interaction. Nevertheless, Craig and Radchenko are probably safe in asserting that, as so often happens in the arena of international politics, Roosevelt’s diplomatic approach generated unforeseen consequences. Moreover, the authors logically contend that any other leader in possession of such an advantage probably would have behaved similarly under the circumstances. The bomb was Roosevelt’s best source of leverage

in dealing with Joseph Stalin, whose management of the occupation of Poland in 1944 hardly inspired confidence in the benevolence of Soviet intentions.

Craig and Radchenko do justice to the often-revisited controversy over the American detonation of atomic bombs over Japan and the extent to which President Harry Truman might have been intending to intimidate Stalin in so doing. Following a brief conspectus of other studies, the authors contend there is no hard evidence to support the assertion that the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was primarily an act of psychological warfare against the Soviets, even though Truman may have perceived it as an opportunity to close out the war against Japan without the complications of Soviet involvement. Nevertheless, as the authors put it, in terms of effects, “we can regard Hiroshima as the final American strike of the Second World War, and Nagasaki as its first strike in the Cold War.”

Certainly, it seemed so to Stalin who maintained a show of bravado and indifference. Indeed, the authors assert that in response to foreign pressure, Stalin was more likely to prove defiant rather than conciliatory, as in the case of the abrupt American cessation of Lend-Lease aid. Stalin did not fear the United States would take aggressive military action. Consequently, never believing deeply in the possibility of postwar collaboration anyway, he did not substantially revise his own position toward his former allies in reaction to the atomic bomb. In the meantime, the Soviets had begun their own atomic bomb project in earnest in 1943, giving the effort an “unprecedented commitment of resources and exceptional coordination.” In respect to bomb development, he offers a pithy assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet scientific establishment and its interaction with Soviet intelligence. Bureaucratic interference and the ascension of Communist Party hacks to positions of influence diminished the returns on lavish Soviet investment in research.

Finally, with the American bomb a reality and the Soviet bomb on the way, one of the great postwar policy questions was whether the former allies could agree on a mechanism for the international control of these new weapons whose full importance was not yet clear. An examination of policy debate on both sides of the former alliance suggests the dynamics of the incipient Cold War rivalry soon foreclosed any attractive policy options that might have led to atomic cooperation. An atmosphere of mutual suspicion prevailed. On the American side, progressive revelations of Soviet espionage buttressed existing doubt about whether the United States should relinquish what everyone knew would be a short-term monopoly by sharing its technology within the framework of international agreement. Approaches to the problem were equally problematic on the Soviet side given that Stalin was unwilling to empower any representative to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission either to shape Soviet policy or to negotiate on his behalf. Expecting that little of value would come from the Commission, Stalin viewed the body mainly as a forum for Soviet propaganda.

Overall, the *Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* offers much in a relatively concise and readable text. The judgments are cautious and reasoned, reflecting solid research and a balanced analysis of the evidence. This work will serve as a useful primer on one of the most important sources of Cold War animosity. Moreover, it may suggest historical insight into the dynamics of foreign policy as the world struggles with nuclear proliferation today.

**Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE WHITE WAR: Life and Death on the Italian Front 1915-1919, Mark Thompson, Basic Books, New York, 2009, 454 pages, \$30.00.

The subtitle of this narrative history should have been “*déjà vu*

repeated 11 times.” In Flanders, the Allied armies were ordered to charge across a flat no-man’s-land into the face of German machine-gun fire. In the 11 offensives centered around the Isonzo River, Italian infantrymen were sent repeatedly up an exhaustingly sheer Alpine wall into the murderous fusillade. A million Soldiers died in northeastern Italy of wounds and disease or as prisoners in the monotonously ineffective Italian offensives. Until the final campaign, the ratio of bloodshed to territory gained was even worse than that of the Western Front.

This narrative of that frostbitten war draws from the work of generations of historians and writers (among them Ernest Hemingway) but gleans vignettes that display the passions of the time and the difficulty of changing a strategy mired in repeated failure. On one occasion, an Austrian officer cried out to his machine-gunners as a third wave of Italians clambered over the corpses of their comrades: “Cease fire! Let them be!” In the silence that ensued, he yelled to the enemy troops clotted in terrified groups: “Go back! We won’t shoot anymore! We don’t want to massacre you.”

Machiavellian politics aimed at the “lost” territories of the south Tyrol and eastern Adriatic set the stage for Italy’s military disaster, and secret treaties during the course of the war fed the political lust. However, it was left to a venerable artilleryman, General Luigi Cadorna, to enforce the blind commitment to a strategy of compact infantry charges, regardless of terrain or enemy firepower. Cadorna’s only published contribution to tactical thought, written a quarter century before World War I’s battles, offered this fallacious insight: “The offensive is profitable and almost always possible, even against mountainous positions that appear impregnable, thanks to [cover] that permits . . . advance [and] deployments toward the flanks or weak points, unseen by the enemy.”

On the other hand, the enormous Italian defeat at Caporetto—immortalized by Hemingway—was a blitzkrieg before the concept existed—a

tactic that “punched through a barrier, then unclenched to spread its fingers.” And an ambitious young German lieutenant by the name of Erwin Rommel, commanding a company of Wuerttemberg mountaineers, was there to witness the strategy and at the same time accept a tactical opportunity of leadership and initiative “that does not come twice in a lifetime.” At a crucial point in the battle, a Bavarian commander attempted to order a halt to Rommel’s troops. In Nelsonian fashion, Rommel turned a figurative “blind eye” to the signal and embarked on a flanking movement that bagged two fully equipped regiments of the Salerno Brigade.

They were demoralized victims of perhaps the first blitzkrieg, but the Italians found a counterweapon that has gained in stature, “strategic communication.” The strident voices of journalist Benito Mussolini and poet Gabriele Albertini D’Annunzio led Rome into the war (“Churchill at his most orotund was prosy beside D’Annunzio,” writes Thompson). Much later, Mussolini as a political leader was in a position to whitewash Caporetto. He advised Italian researchers to treat the era as “a time for myth, not history.”

Yet in a twist that pulled a measure of victory from repeated defeats, having gained so little ground in battle, Italy emerged from the Armistice bloated with gift territory—some of which was later lost through Mussolini’s political miscalculations of World War II.

George Ridge, J.D.,
Tucson, Arizona

COMBATING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: The Future of International Nonproliferation Policy, edited by Nathan E. Busch and Daniel H. Joyner, The University of Georgia Press, Athens, 2009, 395 pages, \$24.95.

Nathan E. Busch and Daniel H. Joyner have produced a well-crafted anthology on combating weapons of mass destruction. The operative word here is *combating*, not *weapons of mass destruction*. The

anthology assumes a rudimentary acquaintance with chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological weapons and focuses on the questions, what is being done, what can be done, what should be done to respond to the weapons of mass destruction threat in the opening years of the 21st century? Busch and Joyner address the needs of two audiences: novices to the world of combating weapons of mass destruction in search of an answer to the anthology’s central questions, and initiates searching for a “one-stop shop” overview of the state of play in combating weapons of mass destruction.

The thoughtful reader should bear in mind that the answer to the anthology’s central question is in the eye of the beholder. Not everyone in the world views the problem of combating weapons of mass destruction through American eyes, or through eyes sympathetic to the American worldview. Indeed, the likes of North Korea, Iran, or Al-Qaeda are unlikely to place their imprimatur on this anthology; and yet, their world view needs most to be understood—although not necessarily embraced—in order to fully address the problem of the weapons. The reader who keeps this in mind can gain a good understanding of the American perspective on this global problem from Busch and Joyner’s compilation. This is particularly so since Busch and Joyner provide an outstanding overview of treaties and issues of international law.

The world of combating weapons of mass destruction is an acronym soup world, and in subsequent editions of this anthology both novices and initiates would undoubtedly appreciate a comprehensive glossary of all acronyms used in the collection. Nevertheless, one who braves the acronyms and willingly accepts that combating weapons of mass destruction is itself a sometimes-elusive subject matter will find time spent with Busch and Joyner’s collection to be time well spent.

COL John Mark Mattox,
Albuquerque, NM

THE GATES OF STALINGRAD: Soviet-German Combat Operations, April-August 1942, The Stalingrad Trilogy, David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2009, 655 pages, \$34.95.

The Gates of Stalingrad is for connoisseurs of operations on the Eastern Front during World War II. David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House’s level of detail from Red Army general staff journals, the Peoples Commissariat of Internal Affairs, German Sixth Army, and the Russian 62d Army official records is phenomenal.

After the setbacks in the winter of 1941, the Wehrmacht was on the march again, this time deep into southern Russia to capture the Caucasus oilfields and the Volga River. Hitler hoped this would mean that Russia would begin to experience fuel shortages and large-scale economic disruption and hasten the collapse of Russian military operations.

The Gates of Stalingrad addresses these points, but also delves into the details of the brutal fighting the Wehrmacht endured to push to the outskirts of Stalingrad. Stalin had ordered (under penalty of death) that all Soviet units would stand and fight—no more retreats. This order resulted in a tenacious and fanatical defense.

As Army Group B (Sixth Army) advanced into the great bend (land between the Don and Volga rivers) from mid-July to the end of August, it destroyed some 13 Russian armies. As astonishing as this is, the Russians were still able to dredge up fresh divisions and corps to attrit the Sixth Army. At this point, the Soviets had not learned how to conduct combined operations and would feed divisions and corps in piecemeal attacks. This allowed the Wehrmacht to mass tanks, artillery, and air power to defeat the Soviets in detail. This and the logistical problems the Wehrmacht had to contend with, plus the advance of Army Group A toward the oil fields, all led to the culmination of the Sixth Army on the outskirts of Stalingrad. Most current histories give only a

cursorily note to these battles. This study contributes over 80 maps and 20 tables to cover each facet of attack, counterattack, and advance by both the Soviets and the Germans in dizzying detail.

What sets the book apart is the detail the authors go into when they discuss both the Wehrmacht and Soviet actions (for example, how many men were in a unit on what day and how many functional tanks). This allows the reader to see how combat power was whittled away on a daily basis. The level of detail is critical to allow the reader to understand the campaign's magnitude.

The book's one shortcoming is that some of the maps either are not legible (due to faulty printing) or contain so much information that the unit locations are not clearly identifiable. Even so, *The Gates of Stalingrad* is a valuable addition to the study of the Soviet-German warfare.

**LTC Richard S. Vick Jr., USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**ENDURING THE GREAT WAR:
Combat, Morale and Collapse in
the German and British Armies,
1914-1918**, Alexander Watson,
Cambridge University Press, Cam-
bridge, UK, 2008, 288 pages, \$78.00.

A wise historian once remarked that the Western Front of World War I was "war distilled." By that, he meant that the conditions of combat between 1914 and 1918 were among the most physically and psychologically demanding ever faced by fighting men. In addition to the miserable day-to-day condition in the trenches, the long, awful history of warfare has rarely seen such sustained, bloody combat as that of Ypres, Verdun, Passchendaele, and the Argonne Forest. How did armies, units, and individuals sustain themselves in such horrific conditions? The question deserves the attention of both historians and military professionals.

Typically, in attempting an answer to the question, one refers either to famous literature of the war (*All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Good-bye to All That*, etc.) or useful but

dated surveys like John Ellis's *Eye-Deep in Hell* or Denis Winter's *Death's Men*. One is gratified, now, to see our understanding expanded through the publication of Alexander Watson's *Enduring the Great War*. Watson is a young research scholar at Cambridge University, and what makes his contribution so important is the original approach he takes to the problem and the extraordinary scope of the sources he uses to support his findings. His approach is a comparative one. Unlike Ellis and Winter, who focused only on the experience of British soldiers, Watson compares the coping strategies of soldiers in two armies, the British and the German. To make his comparisons, Watson draws on an impressive array of letters and memoirs, as well as contemporary surveys of battlefield behavior and soldier psychology.

The results of his remarkable research effort confirm some of our existing beliefs and undermine others. Not surprisingly, he finds that religion, family ties, and camaraderie helped men endure their ordeal at the front. However, far more than other historians, Watson emphasizes the role of junior officers in motivating men and holding units together. The author finds that, although British officers enjoyed better relations with their men than their German counterparts, the young officers of the Kaiser's army performed far better than many previous accounts reported. As a related point, Watson challenges the view offered by Wilhelm Deist that the German army on the Western Front was gripped by a "covert strike" at the time of the armistice. Instead, Watson argues that the collapse of the German army's fighting strength was a result of mass surrenders condoned and often led by officers.

This is an exceptional book. *Enduring the Great War* is well written, superbly researched, and original in its conclusions. It deserves a wider readership than its steep price is likely to allow.

**Scott Stephenson, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE LAST GREAT WAR: British Society and the First World War, Adrian Gregory, Cambridge University Press, New York, 354 pages, 2009, \$81.00.

With the approach of the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, a great many books have been published reevaluating the war. Much of this work has enhanced our understanding of the fighting, the experience of the Soldiers, and the literature of the war. Although there is a body of literature that has focused on attitudes towards the war looking back from the perspective of the 1920s and 1930s, there has been less of a focus on the attitude and response of society, as a whole, during the war itself. Adrian Gregory's new book brilliantly fills that gap and puts several common myths to bed along the way.

The main ideas are arranged thematically, which ties in well with the chronology of the war. The first theme is that of going to war. The British public often has been portrayed as overwhelmingly enthusiastic as well as uneducated about the violence of war. Using a well-researched mix of personal accounts, newspaper reports, and government records, Gregory clearly demonstrates that the reality was not so simple. For example, one of the reasons many people were out on the streets the day before Britain declared war (4 August 1914) was that it was a bank holiday, and there were many families and revelers in the parks in the center of London. Further, people were well aware of what going to war meant, having repeatedly heard about the horrors of war from their newspapers, politicians, and books. Thus, ignorant anti-Germanism and jingoism did not cause Britain to enter the war, although the possibility of war certainly increased those sentiments. Rather, they perceived that they simply had to deal with German militarism and barbarity.

The Last Great War examines the issue of propaganda and German atrocities. Although there was much criticism of British propaganda after the war, the fact is the Germans had

murdered 5,000 Belgian civilians during the invasion. Chapters on the transition from volunteering to conscription, the sacrifice of soldiers, and how this was portrayed through religion and language, explore these themes in a nuanced fashion rather than providing an oversimplified explanation of why things occurred as they did.

An examination of the issues of labor relations and quality of life on the home front largely gives lie to the idea that the war made ordinary working people worse off. The evidence presented makes it clear that full employment and a partial emancipation of women provided a dramatic increase in the living conditions of many on the home front. Gregory also examines the problems caused by the middle and upper classes dying at higher rates than the working classes.

Overall, this is an excellent examination of British society during the Great War, and it clearly debunks a number of persistent myths regarding the conflict. The book is highly recommended.

**Nicholas Murray,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

LINCOLN AND THE DECISION FOR WAR: The Northern Response to Secession, Russell McClintock, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2008, 400 pages, \$35.00.

Russell McClintock's book examines why Northerners opposed slavery's westward expansion so strongly that they risked disunion rather than compromise on it, and why almost all Northerners opposed disunion so strongly they went to war to prevent it. McClintock shows that a number of dynamics were in play between Lincoln's election and the firing on Fort Sumter. First, Lincoln, the de facto leader of the six-year old Republican party, had to make sure that his policy decisions did not destroy the fledgling party, just when it was about to assume power. Lincoln felt that any compromise on the expansion of slavery into the territories would likely tear

the new party apart. Second, politics at the state level, especially in Illinois, New York, and Massachusetts, influenced the actions of the leaders at the Federal level. Third, during the secession winter of 1860-1861, William Seward engaged in a careful and increasingly desperate political dance with the president-elect to control federal policy and to try to find a compromise solution. Seward believed a conciliatory policy would keep the Upper South in the Union and cause the Deep South to return to the fold. Seward was willing to compromise on slavery issues, but Lincoln was unwilling to do so for moral as well as partisan political reasons. Fourth, while the people of the United States had their say in selecting political leaders, the leaders ultimately made the decision on war, and Abraham Lincoln was the most important such leader.

Yet Lincoln operated under some debilitating misconceptions. Not having traveled in the South, he miscalculated southern opinion and overestimated the strength of southern unionists. When he realized that the southern unionist movement was dead or ineffectual, he decided to send a relief expedition to Fort Sumter, knowing it would precipitate a shooting war.

McClintock's narrative is engaging and detailed. Sometimes the tales of the byzantine nature of state politics seem tedious, but they are necessary to set the stage for the decisions the leaders made. McClintock updates Ken Stampp's work on the coming of the war. Intriguingly, McClintock also borrows from the work of Philip Foner and the economics of unionist policy. This is the story of how a nation made the decisions it did, knowing they could lead to war. It is worth a read.

**D. Jonathan White,
Northport, Alabama**

JOHN BROWN'S WAR AGAINST SLAVERY, Robert E. McGlone, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009, 451 pages, \$35.00.

Few figures in American history are as captivating as John Brown. Almost none have received as much scholarly psychoanalysis as the violent abolitionist and mastermind of the 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry. In *John Brown's War Against Slavery*, longtime Brown historian Robert E. McGlone delves deeper than any previous student into the social, spiritual, and psychological minutiae surrounding Brown's evolution from struggling businessman to antislavery zealot and martyr.

To McGlone, the greatest disservice done to the history of John Brown has been the willingness of scholars to attribute his actions to lunacy or "blind faith." McGlone's stated purpose is to dispel popular assumptions about Brown. Far from a raving lunatic, McGlone argues, Brown was methodical and calculating, driven by a bloody pragmatism. The author's argument is strongest in its painstaking scrutiny of Brown's decisions and behavior during the Pottawattamie Massacre in 1856 and aftermath of Harpers Ferry, two underexplored facets of the history. Also to his great credit, McGlone fearlessly takes on the always-stimulating argument about John Brown as a terrorist. In doing so, he provides the most complete examination of this issue to date.

What sets McGlone's work apart from previous studies of John Brown is his commitment to primary sources, and primarily, the writings of Brown himself. Eschewing typical reliance on "aphoristic stories," McGlone sticks to first-hand accounts and applies the appropriate amount of analysis to sift through the personal prejudice when necessary. While some might argue that this approach tends to offer leniency to Brown, McGlone maintains objectivity and keeps his assessment honest throughout.

McGlone's book is brilliantly researched and well written; its greatest flaws lie more in its organization and presentation than in its argument. The author's commendable approach of letting chapters address the various identities and

roles assumed by Brown in his personal war (terrorizer, propagandist, conspirator, etc.) adds an incoherent chronology to the analysis, which can confuse the reader. The book does not include a bibliography, and readers might also be disappointed with its abrupt ending without a standard conclusion; however, the relevance of McGlone's study is threaded throughout the text, making a detailed rehash somewhat unnecessary. In all, these few issues detract little from McGlone's effective pic-

torial of Brown as a figure driven as much by a cold, draconian rationale as by passion and hate.

John Brown's War Against Slavery is strictly analytical, and therefore, not for those readers looking for extensive narrative. For the serious student of "Bleeding Kansas," the abolitionist movement, or the causes of the Civil War, however, this study will prove indispensable. Perhaps the greatest potential impact for this book is in the emerging historiography on terrorism and

irregular warfare in America. This book supplants Stephen B. Oates' landmark biography *To Purge this Land with Blood* as the definitive work on Brown, and McGlone establishes himself as *the* historical authority on the ever-contentious firebrand of Harpers Ferry. For a compelling explanation of who John Brown was and why he did what he did, readers need look no further than this book.

**MAJ Clay Mountcastle, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

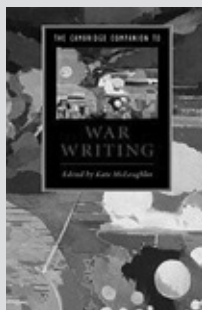
MR We Recommend...



THE LOST HEROES ART QUILT, Julie Feingold, ed. by Nancy Hecker, American Heroes Art Projects Foundation, Boca Raton, FL, 2009, 193 pages, \$34.95.

This is the companion book to the Lost Heroes Art Quilt project, describing in the mothers' own words the lives of 82 Servicemen and Servicewomen depicted on the actual quilt, which honors all those who died in the service of their country since 11 September 2001. The quilt itself was unveiled and dedicated at the Families United Gold Star dinner on 25 September 2009 in Washington, D.C., and began its traveling exhibition two days later at Arlington National Cemetery Visitors Center. The honored heroes are shown as children, dressed in G.I. Joe uniforms of their respective Services, an unusual and poignant technique that drives home the deep, personal losses felt by the family members of those killed in action.

This book also includes a fold-out photo of the Lost Heroes Art Quilt, the story behind its genesis, and letters of tribute from notable persons. After the cost of printing is covered, 100 percent of the proceeds from the sale of this book go to Snowball Express, a charitable organization that helps the children of deceased Service Members.—*From MR*



THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO WAR WRITING, ed. By Kate McLoughlin, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009, 263 pages, \$29.99.

"War writing is an ancient genre that continues to be of vital importance. Times of crisis push literature to its limits, requiring writers to exploit their expressive resources to the maximum in response to extreme events. This *Companion* focuses on British and American war writing, from *Beowulf* and Shakespeare to

bloggers on the 'war on terror.' The *Companion* also explores the latest theoretical thinking on war representation to give access to this developing area and to suggest new directions for research."

—*From the publisher*



THE VIETNAM WAR: A Graphic History, Dwight Jon Zimmerman and Wayne Vansant, Hill and Wang, New York, 2009, 143 pages, \$19.95.

"Through beautifully rendered artwork, *The Vietnam War: A Graphic History* depicts the course of the war, from its initial expansion in the early 1960s through the evacuation of Saigon in 1975, as well as what transpired at home, from the antiwar movement and the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., to the Watergate break-in and the resignation of a president."

—*From the publisher*

A Simple and Effective Way of Dealing with the Media

Don Middleton, *Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*—Since the Vietnam War-era military officers have had good reason to mistrust journalists. In the Vietnam conflict, the American military arguably never lost an important battle. But because Saigon fell to a traditional tank invasion from North Vietnam no more than two years after American combat forces exited the country, U.S. armed forces are still thought of as “losing” the war.

Looking back with all the awareness of the digital age, one could contend that what they lost was the information operations of the war. Which, to be fair, hardly anyone knew was being fought at the time. As the present Combined Arms Center commander, Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell IV, tells visitors when discussing contemporary operations, “When the Taliban plans a military operation, their information operations are an integral part of their planning. When we plan a military operation, we just plan a military operation. That puts us at a huge disadvantage.” In a democracy, relations with the press are an important part of information operations.

Several years ago, Dave Howie (then from the Public Affairs Office) and I were discussing a particular general officer. Howie said, “He [the general officer] has a way of dealing with the press that is very simple, yet incredibly effective. I’ve never seen another military officer do it, although many should.”

I observed this a few days later when I photographed an “office call” between the same general and a journalist from *Time Magazine*. Such meetings usually involve the principals and an aide or two taking

notes; in this case only the general and reporter were present. Since office calls are intended to be private meetings, I snapped a few pictures during the initial meeting and quietly slipped out before anything substantial was discussed. However, I heard and saw just enough to know exactly what Howie meant.

The journalist, who frequently appears on cable news programs as a commentator and the author of several best-selling books, started by assuring the general that he hadn’t come with any agenda, hidden or otherwise, and was not going to try to embarrass him or entrap him in any way. The general nodded and said, “No problem. You may record this or take notes or both. I hope you do. And no question is out-of-bounds. I might ask that a question be put off until the end, when I have had time to think about it, especially if I feel my initial answer might cause some operational problems. But you will not leave here without all your questions being answered. And there are absolutely no restrictions on what you may ask. However, everything I tell you is on background. If you want to quote me, just send me the quote, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred, I will approve it just as it is.”

“Okay,” the journalist said, looking a bit surprised, “who should I contact with these quotes—your executive officer, your aide-de-camp, or your secretary?” The general went around to his desk and returned with his business card. “No,” he said, “just email it to me directly.”

At that point I left the room. But I immediately understood what Howie meant. The journalist gets everything he can expect from the meeting: information, plus what a person in his profession wants the most, access. The more information he has (even if on “background”), the better story he can write, and in

the military’s view, the better chance to get more parts of the story correct.

This general has an agreement that anything that appears with his name attached, such as a quotation, must be sent to him. He can see it in print, mull it over, share it with confidants, and modify it if needed.

Military-Media

Jim Garamone, *American Forces Press Service*—I truly enjoyed the article “The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage” (*Military Review*, September-October 2009). The dialogue between Thom Shanker and General Mark Hertling actually gives me hope that the gap between the two institutions can be bridged. Both men understand the value of the other. This comes through loud and clear. At a time when the battlefield is full of blogs, tweets, facebook, and front pages of the world, this type of discussion is needed and welcomed. Hat’s off to *Military Review* for publishing such a great article.

Echo of Battle

Brian McAllister Linn, *College Station, TX*—Greg Fontenot’s review of my book, *The Echo of Battle* (*Military Review*, September-October 2009), asserts, “Linn tosses out a number of canards about Army efforts that lack context.” My dictionary defines a canard as a “false or baseless, usually derogatory story, report, or rumor.” Fontenot only specifies two “canards.” The first is that “Linn depicts the Bradley as a death trap.” *Echo*’s sole reference to the Bradley (p. 205) states, “The Bradley’s difficulties spawned congressional hearings, several books, and a farcical television special.” The second “canard” is that “contrary to what [Linn] suggests, REFORGER . . . was not merely a mobility exercise associated with

a forward deployed Army.” *Echo’s* only mention of Reforger’s mission (p. 216) quotes directly from the Reforger After Action reports of 1979 and 1974 which termed it “a ‘strategic mobility exercise’” . . . “to practice action required to reinforce Europe and fight as part of the NATO team using host nation support.” If Fontenot believes these statements are canards, he should take it up with the Army officers who wrote the reports, not the researcher who quoted them. I hope that the readers of *Military Review* will take the opportunity to compare Fontenot’s review with the book itself and decide for themselves who wrote the “canards.”

Tipping Sacred Cows

Fulton Wilcox, *Colts Neck, NJ*—Tim Challans’ article “Tipping Sacred Cows” (*Military Review*, September-October 2009) makes interesting points, but I would like to offer some criticisms. My concern is that the “official” embodiments of both effects-based operations” (EBO) and “design” (systemic operational design—SOD) pound the creativity out of their respective doctrines and engage in fratricide over what do not seem to be compelling differentiators in the value to their targeted customers—the planners. “Paint by numbers” ideologies and novel names for processes do little to address the significant need, which is to stimulate some spark of genius to the planning of a “campaign.”

The customer for such doctrine is some individual or group that has either figuratively or actually been locked in a room and told to emerge with an assessment and some strategic “plan,” one or more initial concepts of the operation. The customer presumably appreciates

having a “cookbook,” akin to Field Manual 3.0, and perhaps a facilitating set of records-keeping and communications software (e.g., project planning software) as a reminder as to what should be considered and how to keep the essential three ingredients synchronized (the “as is” situation, the mission-defined end state, and one or more concepts of the operation bridging the “as is” and the “desired to be”). The question is what, if anything, do EBO and SOD provide the customer beyond the cookbook?

Overall, the value proposition of EBO carries with it an implication of indirection and finesse through multiplier “effects” as opposed to brute force attrition effects. However, EBO is not always feasible. The obvious constraint on EBO is that suitable “cause and effect” opportunities are hard to come by, or at least we may not have the creativity to discern and shape such opportunities even if they do exist. Also, generating the “cause” of the desired “effects” may depend on the evolution of technology. Recent U.S. and NATO efforts to package EBO as an end-to-end planning doctrine stretch what was born as a doctrine of exceptionalism to apply to the drudgery of attrition.

Regarding SOD, Challans suggests that compared to EBO, SOD is different, somehow better, philosophically more sound and morally more kind. But it is not clear that in the end SOD is in practice different. The easiest criticism to dispose of is the matter of wartime morality. EBO’s proponents (and those we retroactively categorize as EBO practitioners) were almost universally looking for quicker, less bloody campaigns as alternatives to “straight up the middle” brute force solutions. SOD planners will struggle with the same tradeoffs.

Challans also offered criticism of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of EBO. From a practical perspective, any military planning process has to rely on what might be termed courtroom ontology and epistemology. If a gun is in evidence, the jury is going to accept that the gun is real and that pulling the trigger is going to cause a loaded gun to fire and a bullet to emerge. Cause and effect reigns. If the prosecutors have appropriate evidence, the jury is going to accept that the defendant understood that cause and effect and had the intention of killing someone unless he got his way. If the defendant’s victim saved his life by handing the defendant his wallet, the jury is not going to accept a defense that “most philosophers of social science do not see causation as operative in the realm of human activity” and is going to find that the “cause” of waving the gun in the victim’s face had the effect of making the victim pay. EBO is simply the application of courtroom ontology and epistemology to causes and effects on a larger scale.

Challans offers statements that are simply wrong, such as “Evolution has no laws, and laws are necessary for causal analysis.” “Evolution” is merely an umbrella term for the dependent variable “change” produced by the intersection of multiple causative laws, such as the law of gravity or of optics. One can predict evolution based on these laws. EBO is as entitled to defend its method with references to “evolution” as is SOD.

In preparing methodological doctrine, the danger is in getting too far abstracted from operative reality to support the customer. Stretching EBO across the entire campaign planning process probably was a mistake. It may be that SOD’s method is far better, but that advantage is not self-evident.

TITLE INDEX

A

- “Adult Education in Afghanistan: The Key to Political and Economic Transformation,” CPT Chad M. Pillai, USA (Jul-Aug): 21
- “Afghanistan’s Nangarhar Inc: A Model for Interagency Success,” MAJ David K. Spencer, USA (Jul-Aug): 34
- “Afternoon PT: Key for an Army Flextime Battle Rhythm,” CPT Mark Van Horn, USA (Sep-Oct): 72
- “All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence,” MAJ Ben Connable, USMC (Mar-Apr): 57
- “Amnesty, Reintegration, and Reconciliation: South Africa,” MAJ Timothy M. Bairstow, USMC (Mar-Apr): 89
- “Arming the Force: Future Class V Sustainment,” COL Alan D. Braithwaite, USAR (May-Jun): 89
- “Army Chaplains: Leading from the Middle,” CH (COL) F. Eric Wester, USA (Nov-Dec): 112
- “The Art of Design: A Design Methodology,” COL Stefan J. Banach, USA, and Alex Ryan, Ph.D. (Mar-Apr): 105
- “Awakening Beyond Iraq: Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders,” COL David W. Shin, USA (May-Jun): 33

B

- “The Battlefield Inside the Wire: Detention Operations Under Major General Douglas Stone,” LCDR Vasilios Tasikas, USCG (Sep-Oct): 64
- “‘Below-the-Zone’ and Command Selection,” MAJ Vylis M. Leskys, USA (Nov-Dec): 109
- “Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division’s Role,” BG Allen Batschelet, USA; LTC Mike Runey, USA; and LTC Gregory Meyer Jr., USA (Nov-Dec): 35

C

- “Competence vs. Character: It Must be Both!” LTC Joe Doty, U.S. Army, and MAJ Walt Sowden, USA (Nov-Dec): 69
- “Complex Operations in Africa: Operational Culture Training in the French Military,” COL Henri Boré, French Army, Retired (Mar-Apr): 65
- “Conscription, the Republic, and America’s Future,” Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D. (Nov-Dec): 15
- “Continuing Progress During the ‘Year of the NCO,’” CSM James W. Redmore, USA (May-Jun): 11
- “Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq,” Bing West (Mar-Apr): 2
- “Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District,” MAJ Thomas J. Sills, North Carolina ARNG (May-Jun): 97
- “Current U.S. Policy of Provoking Russia is Fundamentally Flawed,” MAJ John M. Qualls, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (Jan-Feb): 114

D

- “Design: Extending Military Relevance,” COL Christof Schaefer, German Army (Sep-Oct): 29
- “Detainee Healthcare as Part of Information Operations,” LTC Beverly D. Patton, USA (Jul-Aug): 52
- “Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency,” COL James B. Brown, USA; LTC Erik W. Goepner, USAF; and CPT James M. Clark, USAF (May-Jun): 40
- Developing Creative and Critical Thinkers,” COL Charles D. Allen, USA, Retired, and COL Stephen J. Gerras, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 77

- “Developing NCO Leaders for the 21st Century,” MSG John W. Proctor, USA (Sep-Oct): 102
- “Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom,” LTC Charles W. “Bill” Innocenti, USA, Retired; LTC Ted L. Martens, USA; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA (May-Jun): 48
- “Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!” LTC Carl Grunow, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (May-Jun): 115

E

- “Educating by Design: Preparing Leaders for a Complex World,” COL Stefan J. Banach, USA (Mar-Apr): 96
- “Educating the Strategic Corporal—A Paradigm Shift,” Kevin D. Stringer, Ph.D. (Sep-Oct): 87
- “Eight Imperatives for Success in Afghanistan,” GEN Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Jul-Aug): 136
- “The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*,” LTC Celestino Perez Jr., Ph.D., USA (May-Jun): 24
- “Emotional Intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements Model,” LTC Gerald F. Sewell, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 93
- “Empathy: A True Leader Skill,” LTC Harry C. Garner, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 84
- “Ethical Challenges in Stability Operations,” SGT Jared Tracy, USA (Jan-Feb): 86
- “Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan,” LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10

F

- “Field Hospital Support for Civilians in Counterinsurgency Operations,” COL Albert R. Bryan, USAR, Retired (Jul-Aug): 119
- “Fostering a Culture of Engagement,” LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; LTC Shawn Stroud, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning (Sep-Oct): 10
- “From Peddlers to Sheiks: A Contracting Case Study in Southern Baghdad,” Lisa A. Verdon (Mar-Apr): 50
- “The Future Combat System Program,” MAJ Luis Alvarado, USA (INSIGHTS) (Mar-Apr): 126
- “The Future of Information Operations,” MAJ Walter E. Richter, USA (Jan-Feb): 103
- “Future Strategic Environment in an Era of Persistent Conflict,” MAJ Paul S. Oh, USA (Jul-Aug): 68

G

- “Getting Off the Treadmill of Time,” COL Chris Robertson, USA, and LTC Sophie Gainey, USA (Nov-Dec): 104

H

- “How to End the Genocide in Darfur and Why it Won’t Happen,” Midshipman Brendon J. Mills, USNA (Jul-Aug): 80

I

- “The Inclination for War Crimes,” LTC Robert Rielly, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 17
- “Influencing a Soldier, Lessons Learned,” Steve McGregor (Review Essay) (Jul-Aug): 123
- “The Influential Leader,” MAJ Enrique Silvela, Spanish Army (May-Jun): 106
- “The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne,” SFC Jesse P. Pruett, USAR (Sep-Oct): 54

- “Iran and Venezuela: The ‘Axis of Annoyance,’” CDR Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, USN (May-Jun): 78
- “The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah,” Matt M. Matthews (Jul-Aug): 41
- “It Ain’t Over Till It’s Over: What to Do When Combat Ends,” LTC E. Paul Flowers, USA (May-Jun): 85

K

- “Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations,” BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 57

L

- “Leading our Leaders,” LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 122
- “Learning from Moderate Governments’ Approaches to Islamist Extremism,” MAJ Eric A. Claessen Jr., Belgium Armed Forces (Mar-Apr): 116
- “Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts,” LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning (May-Jun): 2
- “Leveraging Liminality in Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform,” MAJ Louis P. Melancon, USA (Jul-Aug): 93

M

- “The Making of a Leader: Dwight D. Eisenhower,” COL Robert C. Carroll, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 77
- “The Mentorship Dilemma Continues,” MAJ Edward Cox, USA (Nov-Dec): 99
- “The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage?” Thom Shanker and MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 2
- “Misguided Intentions: Resisting AFRICOM,” CPT Moussa Diop Mboup, Senegalese Army; Michael Mihalka, Ph.D.; and MAJ Douglas Lathrop, USA, Retired (Jul-Aug): 87
- “MiTT Advisor: A Year with the Best Division in the Iraqi Army,” COL Timothy Deady, USAR, Retired (Nov-Dec): 43

N

- “Narrowing the Gap: DOD and Stability Operations,” COL David W. Shin, USA (Mar-Apr): 23
- “The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar,” MAJ Kenneth R. Williams, USA (Sep-Oct): 110
- “Not My Job: Contracting and Professionalism in the U.S. Army,” LTC William C. Latham Jr., USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 40

O

- “Oil, Corruption, and Threats to Our National Interest: Will We Learn from Iraq?” Luis Carlos Montalván (Jan-Feb): 54

P

- “Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?” MAJ Lane V. Packwood, Idaho ARNG (May-Jun): 67

R

- “Reassessing Army Leadership in the 21st Century,” MAJ Jason M. Pape, USA (Jan-Feb): 95
- “Reconstruction and Post-Civil War Reconciliation,” MAJ John J. McDermott, USA (Jan-Feb): 67
- “Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template,” Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, (Nov-Dec): 2
- “Rethinking IED Strategies: From Iraq to Afghanistan,” CDR John

Moulton, USN (Jul-Aug): 26

- “Revisiting Priorities for the Army’s Future Force,” COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA (Sep-Oct): 40

“Revolutionary Management: The Role of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias* in the Cuban Economy,” Terry L. Maris, Ph.D. (Nov-Dec): 63

“The Role of Empathy in Irregular Warfare,” MAJ John Bauer, USA (INSIGHTS) (Jul-Aug): 99

“Russia’s Military Performance in Georgia,” Tor Bukkvoll, Ph.D., Norway (Nov-Dec): 57

S

“The School of Advanced Military Studies: An Accident of History,” BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jul-Aug): 102

“Sentinels of Afghan Democracy: The Afghan National Army,” Samuel Chan (Jan-Feb): 25

“Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions,” BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 2

T

“Tactical Combat Casualty Care: A Case Study of NCO Technical Professionalism,” LTC Richard Malish, M.D., USA (Sep-Oct): 96

“Tactical Leader Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: Operation Enduring Freedom VIII,” COL William B. Ostlund, USA (Jul-Aug): 2

“Tal Afar and Ar Ramadi: Grass Roots Reconstruction,” CPT Chad M. Pillai, USA (Mar-Apr): 33

“Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals,” Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

“Testing Galula in Ameriyah: The People are the Key,” LTC Dale Kuehl, USA (Mar-Apr): 72

“Thickening the Lines: Sons of Iraq, a Combat Multiplier,” MAJ Andrew W. Koloski, USA, and LTC John S. Kolasheski, USA (Jan-Feb): 41

“Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential Through Operational Art,” LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired (Sep-Oct): 19

“Transformation and the Irregular Gap,” MAJ Kenneth J. Burgess, USA (Nov-Dec): 25

“The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations,” Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

U

“Understanding Innovation,” COL Thomas M. Williams, USAR (Jul-Aug): 59

“Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations,” BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 13

“The U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement and the Changing Nature of U.S. Military Operations in Iraq,” LTC Mike Ryan, USA, and CPT Jason Coats, USA (Sep-Oct): 48

V

“A View from Inside the Surge,” LTC James R. Crider, USA (Mar-Apr): 81

W

“What Turned the Tide in Anbar?” COL Mark F. Cancian, USMCR, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 118

Y

“Year of the NCO: A Division Commander’s Perspective,” MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 80

A

AUTHOR INDEX

A

- Allen, COL Charles D., USA, Retired, and COL Stephen J. Gerras, Ph.D., USA, Retired “Developing Creative and Critical Thinkers” (Nov-Dec): 77
- Alvarado, MAJ Luis, USA, “The Future Combat System Program” (INSIGHTS) (Mar-Apr): 126

B

- Bairstow, MAJ Timothy M., USMC, “Amnesty, Reintegration, and Reconciliation: South Africa” (Mar-Apr): 89
- Banach, COL Stefan J., USA, and Alex Ryan, Ph.D., “The Art of Design: A Design Methodology” (Mar-Apr): 105
- _____, “Educating by Design: Preparing Leaders for a Complex World” (Mar-Apr): 96
- Batschelet, BG Allen, USA; LTC Mike Runey, USA; and LTC Gregory Meyer Jr., USA, “Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division’s Role” (Nov-Dec): 35
- Bauer, MAJ John, USA, “The Role of Empathy in Irregular Warfare” (INSIGHTS) (Jul-Aug): 99
- Boré, COL Henri, French Army, Retired, “Complex Operations in Africa: Operational Culture Training in the French Military” (Mar-Apr): 65
- Braithwaite, COL Alan D., USAR, “Arming the Force: Future Class V Sustainment” (May-Jun): 89
- Brouns, LTC Thomas, USA, “Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan” (Jul-Aug): 10
- Brown, COL James B., USA; LTC Erik W. Goepner, USAF; and CPT James M. Clark, USAF, “Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency” (May-Jun): 40
- Bryan, COL Albert R., USAR, Retired, “Field Hospital Support for Civilians in Counterinsurgency Operations” (Jul-Aug): 119
- Bukkvoll, Tor, Ph.D., Norway, “Russia’s Military Performance in Georgia” (Nov-Dec): 57
- Burgess, MAJ Kenneth J., USA, “Transformation and the Irregular Gap” (Nov-Dec): 25

C

- Caldwell, LTG William B. IV, USA; LTC Shawn Stroud, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning, “Fostering a Culture of Engagement” (Sep-Oct): 10
- _____, Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning, “Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts” (May-Jun): 2
- Cancian, COL Mark F., USMCR, Retired, “What Turned the Tide in Anbar?” INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 118
- Carroll, COL Robert C., USA, Retired, “The Making of a Leader: Dwight D. Eisenhower” (Jan-Feb): 77
- Challans, LTC Tim, Ph.D., USA, Retired, “Leading Our Leaders,” INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 122
- _____, “Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential Through Operational Art” (Sep-Oct): 19
- Chan, Samuel, “Sentinels of Afghan Democracy: The Afghan National Army” (Jan-Feb): 25
- Claessen, MAJ Eric A. Jr., Belgium Armed Forces, “Learning from Moderate Governments’ Approaches to Islamist Extremism” (Mar-Apr): 116
- Clark, CPT James M., USAF; COL James B. Brown, USA; and LTC Erik W. Goepner, USAF, “Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency” (May-Jun): 40
- Coats, CPT Jason, USA, and LTC Mike Ryan, USA, “The U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement and the Changing Nature of U.S. Military

Operations in Iraq” (Sep-Oct): 48

- Connable, MAJ Ben, USMC, “All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence” (Mar-Apr): 57
- Cox, MAJ Edward, USA, “The Mentorship Dilemma Continues” (Nov-Dec): 99
- Crider, LTC James R., USA, “A View from Inside the Surge” (Mar-Apr): 81

D

- Dauber, Cori E., “The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations” (Jan-Feb): 13
- Deady, COL Timothy, USAR, Retired, “MiTT Advisor: A Year with the Best Division in the Iraqi Army” (Nov-Dec): 43
- Doty, LTC Joe, USA, and MAJ Walt Sowden, USA, “Competence vs. Character: It Must be Both!” (Nov-Dec): 69

E

- Etzioni, Amitai, “Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals” (Jul-Aug): 108

F

- Flowers, LTC E. Paul, USA, “It Ain’t Over Till It’s Over: What to Do When Combat Ends” (May-Jun): 85

G

- Gainey, LTC Sophie, USA, and COL Chris Robertson, USA, “Getting Off the Treadmill of Time” (Nov-Dec): 104
- Garner, LTC Harry C., USA, Retired, “Empathy: A True Leader Skill” (Nov-Dec): 84
- Gerras, COL Stephen J., Ph.D., USA, Retired, and COL Charles D. Allen, USA, Retired, “Developing Creative and Critical Thinkers” (Nov-Dec): 77
- Goepner, LTC Erik W., USAF; COL James B. Brown, USA; and CPT James M. Clark, USAF, “Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency” (May-Jun): 40
- Grunow, LTC Carl, USA, Retired, “Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!” (INSIGHTS) (May-Jun): 115
- Gwinn, MAJ Jeremy, USA; COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, “Revisiting Priorities for the Army’s Future Force,” (Sep-Oct): 40

H

- Hakimzadeh, CDR Kavon “Hak,” USN, “Iran and Venezuela: The ‘Axis of Annoyance’” (May-Jun): 78
- Hertling, MG Mark, USA, “Year of the NCO: A Division Commander’s Perspective” (Sep-Oct): 80
- _____, and Thom Shanker, “The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage?” (Sep-Oct): 2

I

- Innocenti, LTC Charles W. “Bill,” USA, Retired; LTC Ted L. Martens, USA; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA, “Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom” (May-Jun): 48

J

- Johnson, Thomas H., and M. Chris Mason, “Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template” (Nov-Dec): 2

K

- Kewley, LTC Robert, USA; COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force" (Sep-Oct): 40
- Kolasheski, LTC John S., USA, and MAJ Andrew W. Koloski, USA, "Thickening the Lines: Sons of Iraq, a Combat Multiplier" (Jan-Feb): 41
- Koloski, MAJ Andrew W., USA, and LTC John S. Kolasheski, USA, "Thickening the Lines: Sons of Iraq, a Combat Multiplier" (Jan-Feb): 41
- Kuehl, LTC Dale, USA, "Testing Galula in Ameriyah: The People are the Key" (Mar-Apr): 72

L

- Latham, LTC William C. Jr., USA, Retired, "Not My Job: Contracting and Professionalism in the U.S. Army" (Mar-Apr): 40
- Lathrop, MAJ Douglas, USA, Retired; CPT Moussa Diop Mboup, Sengalese Army; and Michael Mihalka, Ph.D.; "Misguided Intentions: Resisting AFRICOM" (Jul-Aug): 87
- Leskys, MAJ Vyluis M., USA, "'Below-the-Zone' and Command Selection" (Nov-Dec): 109
- Lewis, Adrian R., Ph.D., "Conscription, the Republic, and America's Future" (Nov-Dec): 15

M

- Malish, LTC Richard, M.D., USA, "Tactical Combat Casualty Care: A Case Study of NCO Technical Professionalism" (Sep-Oct): 96
- Maris, Terry L., Ph.D., "Revolutionary Management: The Role of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias* in the Cuban Economy" (Nov-Dec): 63
- Martens, LTC Ted L., USA; LTC Charles W. "Bill" Innocenti, USA, Retired; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA, "Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom" (May-Jun): 48
- Mason, M. Chris, and Thomas H. Johnson, "Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template" (Nov-Dec): 2
- Mathews, Matt M., "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah" (Jul-Aug): 41
- Mboup, CPT Moussa Diop, Sengalese Army; Michael Mihalka, Ph.D.; and MAJ Douglas Lathrop, USA, Retired, "Misguided Intentions: Resisting AFRICOM" (Jul-Aug): 87
- McChrystal, GEN Stanley A., USA, "Eight Imperatives for Success in Afghanistan" (Jul-Aug): 136
- McDermott, MAJ John J., USA, "Reconstruction and Post-Civil War Reconciliation" (Jan-Feb): 67
- McGregor, Steve, "Influencing a Soldier, Lessons Learned" (Review Essay) (Jul-Aug): 123
- Melancon, MAJ Louis P., USA, "Leveraging Liminality in Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform" (Jul-Aug): 93
- Menning, Mr. Anton; LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; and LTC Shawn Stroud, USA, "Fostering a Culture of Engagement" (Sep-Oct): 10
- _____; LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; and Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; "Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts" (May-Jun): 2
- Merlo, LTC James, USA; COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force" (Sep-Oct): 40
- Meyer, LTC Gregory Jr., USA; BG Allen Batschelet, USA; and LTC Mike Runey, USA; "Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division's Role" (Nov-Dec): 35
- Mihalka, Michael, Ph.D.; CPT Moussa Diop Mboup, Sengalese Army; and MAJ Douglas Lathrop, USA, Retired, "Misguided Intentions: Resisting AFRICOM" (Jul-Aug): 87
- Mills, Midshipman Brendon J., USNA, "How to End the Genocide

- in Darfur and Why It Won't Happen" (Jul-Aug): 80
- Montalvañ, Luis Carlos, "Oil, Corruption, and Threats to Our National Interest: Will We Learn from Iraq?" (Jan-Feb): 54
- Moulton, CDR John, USN, "Rethinking IED Strategies: From Iraq to Afghanistan" (Jul-Aug): 26
- Murphy, Mr. Dennis M.; LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning, "Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts" (May-Jun): 2

O

- Oh, MAJ Paul S., USA, "Future Strategic Environment in an Era of Persistent Conflict" (Jul-Aug): 68
- Ostlund, COL William B., USA, "Tactical Leader Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: Operation Enduring Freedom VIII" (Jul-Aug): 2

P

- Packwood, MAJ Lane V., Idaho ARNG, "Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?" (May-Jun): 67
- Pape, MAJ Jason M., USA, "Reassessing Army Leadership in the 21st Century" (Jan-Feb): 95
- Patton, LTC Beverly D., USA, "Detainee Healthcare as Part of Information Operations" (Jul-Aug): 52
- Perez, LTC Celestino Jr., Ph.D., USA, "The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*" (May-Jun): 24
- Peterson, COL Jeffrey D., USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force" (Sep-Oct): 40
- Phillips, MAJ Buzz, USA; COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force" (Sep-Oct): 40
- Pillai, CPT Chad M., USA, "Adult Education in Afghanistan: The Key to Political and Economic Transformation" (Jul-Aug): 21
- _____, "Tal Afar and Ar Ramadi: Grass Roots Reconstruction" (Mar-Apr): 33
- Proctor, MSG John W., USA, "Developing NCO Leaders for the 21st Century" (Sep-Oct): 102
- Pruett, SFC Jesse P., USAR, "The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne" (Sep-Oct): 54

Q

- Qualls, MAJ John M., USA, Retired, "Current U.S. Policy of Provoking Russia is Fundamentally Flawed" (INSIGHTS) (Jan-Feb): 114

R

- Redmore, CSM James W., USA, "Continuing Progress During the 'Year of the NCO'" (May-Jun): 11
- Richter, MAJ Walter E., USA, "The Future of Information Operations" (Jan-Feb): 103
- Rielly, LTC Robert, USA, Retired, "The Inclination for War Crimes" (May-Jun): 17
- Robertson, COL Chris, USA, and LTC Sophie Gainey, USA, "Getting Off the Treadmill of Time" (Nov-Dec): 104
- Runey, LTC Mike, USA; BG Allen Batschelet, USA; and LTC Gregory Meyer Jr., USA, "Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division's Role" (Nov-Dec): 35
- Ryan, Alex, Ph.D., and COL Stefan J. Banach, USA, "The Art of Design: A Design Methodology" (Mar-Apr): 105
- Ryan, LTC Mike, USA, and CPT Jason Coats, USA, "The U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement and the Changing Nature of U.S. Military Operations in Iraq" (Sep-Oct): 48

S

- Schaefer, COL Christof, German Army, "Design: Extending Military Relevance" (Sep-Oct): 29
- Sewell, LTC Gerald F., USA, Retired, "Emotional Intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements Model" (Nov-Dec): 93
- Shanker, Thom and MG Mark Hertling, USA, "The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage?" (Sep-Oct): 2
- Shin, COL David W., USA, "'Awakening' Beyond Iraq: Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders" (May-Jun): 33
- _____, "Narrowing the Gap: DOD and Stability Operations" (Mar-Apr): 23
- Sills, MAJ Thomas J., North Carolina ARNG, "Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District" (May-Jun): 97
- Silvela, MAJ Enrique, Spanish Army "The Influential Leader" (May-Jun): 106
- Soller, LTC Daniel E., USA; LTC Charles W. "Bill" Innocenti, USA, Retired; and LTC Ted L. Martens, USA, "Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom" (May-Jun): 48
- Sowden, MAJ Walt, USA, and LTC Joe Doty, USA, "Competence vs. Character: It Must be Both!" (Nov-Dec): 69
- Spencer, MAJ David K., USA, "Afghanistan's Nangarhar Inc: A Model for Interagency Success" (Jul-Aug): 34
- Stringer, Kevin D. Ph.D., "Educating the Strategic Corporal—A Paradigm Shift" (Sep-Oct): 87
- Stroud, LTC Shawn USA; LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning, "Fostering a Culture of Engagement" (Sep-Oct): 10

T

- Tasikas, LCDR Vasilios, U.S. Coast Guard, "The Battlefield inside the Wire: Detention Operations Under Major General Douglas Stone" (Sep-Oct): 64

- Tracy, SGT Jared, USA, "Ethical Challenges in Stability Operations" (Jan-Feb): 86

V

- Van Horn, CPT Mark, USA, "Afternoon PT: Key for an Army Flextime Battle Rhythm" (Sep-Oct): 72
- Verdon, Lisa A., "From Peddlers to Sheiks: A Contracting Case Study in Southern Baghdad" (Mar-Apr): 50

W

- Wass de Czege, BG Huba, USA, Retired, "Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations" (May-Jun): 57
- _____, "The School of Advanced Military Studies: An Accident of History" (Jul-Aug): 102
- _____, "Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions" (Jan-Feb): 2
- _____, "Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations" (Mar-Apr): 13
- Werkheiser, MAJ Ed, USA; COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force," (Sep-Oct): 40
- West, Bing, "Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq," (Mar-Apr): 2
- Wester, CH (COL) F. Eric, USA, "Army Chaplains: Leading from the Middle" (Nov-Dec): 112
- Williams, COL Thomas M., USAR, "Understanding Innovation" (Jul-Aug): 59
- Williams, MAJ Kenneth R., USA, "The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar" (Sep-Oct): 110
- Wylie, MAJ Ryan, USA, COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; and MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA, "Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force" (Sep-Oct): 40

SUBJECT INDEX**A****Afghanistan**

- "Adult Education in Afghanistan: The Key to Political and Economic Transformation," CPT Chad M. Pillai, USA (Jul-Aug): 21
- "Afghanistan's Nangarhar Inc: A Model for Interagency Success," MAJ David K. Spencer, USA (Jul-Aug): 34
- "Eight Imperatives for Success in Afghanistan," GEN Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Jul-Aug): 136
- "Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan," LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10
- "Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template," Thomas H. Johnson, and M. Chris Mason, (Nov-Dec): 2
- "Sentinels of Afghan Democracy: The Afghan National Army," Samuel Chan (Jan-Feb): 25
- "Tactical Leader Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: Operation Enduring Freedom VIII," COL William B. Ostlund, USA (Jul-Aug): 2
- "Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals," Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

Africa

- "Complex Operations in Africa: Operational Culture Training in the French Military," COL Henri Boré, French Army, Retired (Mar-Apr): 65
- "How to End the Genocide in Darfur and Why it Won't Happen,"

- Midshipman Brendon J. Mills, USNA (Jul-Aug): 80

- "Misguided Intentions: Resisting AFRICOM," CPT Moussa Diop Mboup, Senegalese Army; Michael Mihalka, Ph.D.; and MAJ Douglas Lathrop, USA, Retired (Jul-Aug): 87

Amnesty, Reintegration, and Reconciliation

- "Amnesty, Reintegration, and Reconciliation: South Africa," MAJ Timothy M. Bairstow, USMC (Mar-Apr): 89
- "Leveraging Liminality in Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform," MAJ Louis P. Melancon, USA (Jul-Aug): 93
- "Reconstruction and Post-Civil War Reconciliation," MAJ John J. McDermott, USA (Jan-Feb): 67

C**Contractors**

- "From Peddlers to Sheiks: A Contracting Case Study in Southern Baghdad," Lisa A. Verdon (Mar-Apr): 50
- "Not My Job: Contracting and Professionalism in the U.S. Army," LTC William C. Latham Jr., USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 40

Counterinsurgency (COIN)

- "Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq," Bing West (Mar-Apr): 2
- "Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District," MAJ Thomas J. Sills, North Carolina ARNG (May-Jun): 97

"Eight Imperatives for Success in Afghanistan," GEN Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Jul-Aug): 136

"The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*," LTC Celestino Perez Jr., Ph.D., USA (May-Jun): 24

"Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan," LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10

"Field Hospital Support for Civilians in Counterinsurgency Operations," COL Albert R. Bryan, USAR, Retired (Jul-Aug): 119

"The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne," SFC Jesse P. Pruett, USAR (Sep-Oct): 54

"Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?" MAJ Lane V. Packwood, Idaho ARNG (May-Jun): 67

"Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template," Thomas H. Johnson, and M. Chris Mason, (Nov-Dec): 2

"Rethinking IED Strategies: From Iraq to Afghanistan," CDR John Moulton, USN (Jul-Aug): 26

"Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals," Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

"A View from Inside the Surge," LTC James R. Crider, USA (Mar-Apr): 81

Cultural Education/Knowledge

"All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence," MAJ Ben Connable, USMC (Mar-Apr): 57

"Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom," LTC Charles W. "Bill" Innocenti, USA, Retired; LTC Ted L. Martens, USA; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA (May-Jun): 48

D

Design

"The Art of Design: A Design Methodology," COL Stefan J. Banach, USA, and Alex Ryan, Ph.D. (Mar-Apr): 105

"Design: Extending Military Relevance," COL Christof Schaefer, German Army (Sep-Oct): 29

"Educating by Design: Preparing Leaders for a Complex World," COL Stefan J. Banach, USA (Mar-Apr): 96

"Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 2

"Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential Through Operational Art," LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired (Sep-Oct): 19

Detention Operations

"The Battlefield Inside the Wire: Detention Operations Under Major General Douglas Stone," LCDR Vasilios Tasikas, USCG (Sep-Oct): 64

"Detainee Healthcare as Part of Information Operations," LTC Beverly D. Patton, USA (Jul-Aug): 52

"Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency," COL James B. Brown, USA; LTC Erik W. Goepner, USAF; and CPT James M. Clark, USAF (May-Jun): 40

E

Education/Training

"Adult Education in Afghanistan: The Key to Political and Economic Transformation," CPT Chad M. Pillai, USA (Jul-Aug): 21

"Afternoon PT: Key for an Army Flexitime Battle Rhythm," CPT Mark Van Horn, USA (Sep-Oct): 72

"Influencing a Soldier, Lessons Learned," Steve McGregor (Review Essay) (Jul-Aug): 123

"It Ain't Over Till It's Over: What to Do When Combat Ends," LTC E. Paul Flowers, USA (May-Jun): 85

"The School of Advanced Military Studies: An Accident of History," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jul-Aug): 102

Ethics

"Army Chaplains: Leading from the Middle," CH (COL) F. Eric Wester, USA (Nov-Dec): 112

"Conscription, the Republic, and America's Future," Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D. (Nov-Dec): 15

"Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!" LTC Carl Grunow, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (May-Jun): 115

"Ethical Challenges in Stability Operations," SGT Jared Tracy, USA (Jan-Feb): 86

"The Inclination for War Crimes," LTC Robert Rielly, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 17

"Leading our Leaders," LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 122

"Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals," Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

"Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential Through Operational Art," LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired (Sep-Oct): 19

F

Future Warfighting

"Arming the Force: Future Class V Sustainment," COL Alan D. Braithwaite, USAR (May-Jun): 89

"Breaking Tactical Fixation: The Division's Role," BG Allen Batschelet, USA; LTC Mike Runey, USA; and LTC Gregory Meyer Jr., USA (Nov-Dec): 35

"The Future Combat System Program," MAJ Luis Alvarado, USA (INSIGHTS) (Mar-Apr): 126

"Revisiting Priorities for the Army's Future Force," COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA (Sep-Oct): 40

H

Human Rights

"The Battlefield Inside the Wire: Detention Operations Under Major General Douglas Stone," LCDR Vasilios Tasikas, USCG (Sep-Oct): 64

"How to End the Genocide in Darfur and Why it Won't Happen," Midshipman Brendon J. Mills, USNA (Jul-Aug): 80

Human Terrain System

"All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence," MAJ Ben Connable, USMC (Mar-Apr): 57

I

IEDs

"Rethinking IED Strategies: From Iraq to Afghanistan," CDR John Moulton, USN (Jul-Aug): 26

Information Operations

"The Future of Information Operations," MAJ Walter E. Richter, USA (Jan-Feb): 103

"Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 57

"Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts," LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning (May-Jun): 2

"Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 2

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

"Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 13

Intelligence

“Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom,” LTC Charles W. “Bill” Innocenti, USA, Retired; LTC Ted L. Martens, USA; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA (May-Jun): 48

Interagency

“Afghanistan’s Nangarhar Inc: A Model for Interagency Success,” MAJ David K. Spencer, USA (Jul-Aug): 34

“Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!” LTC Carl Grunow, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (May-Jun): 115

“The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne,” SFC Jesse P. Pruett, USAR (Sep-Oct): 54

“Narrowing the Gap: DOD and Stability Operations,” COL David W. Shin, USA (Mar-Apr): 23

Iran

“Iran and Venezuela: The ‘Axis of Annoyance,’” CDR Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, USN (May-Jun): 78

Iraq

“Awakening’ Beyond Iraq: Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders,” COL David W. Shin, USA (May-Jun): 33

“Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom,” LTC Charles W. “Bill” Innocenti, USA, Retired; LTC Ted L. Martens, USA; and LTC Daniel E. Soller, USA (May-Jun): 48

“From Peddlers to Sheiks: A Contracting Case Study in Southern Baghdad,” Lisa A. Verdon (Mar-Apr): 50

“MiTT Advisor: A Year with the Best Division in the Iraqi Army,” COL Timothy Deady, USAR, Retired (Nov-Dec): 43

“Oil, Corruption, and Threats to Our National Interest: Will We Learn from Iraq?” Luis Carlos Montalván (Jan-Feb): 54

“Tal Afar and Ar Ramadi: Grass Roots Reconstruction,” CPT Chad M. Pillai, USA (Mar-Apr): 33

“Testing Galula in Ameriyah: The People are the Key,” LTC Dale Kuehl, USA (Mar-Apr): 72

“Thickening the Lines: Sons of Iraq, a Combat Multiplier,” MAJ Andrew W. Koloski, USA, and LTC John S. Kolasheski, USA (Jan-Feb): 41

“The U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement and the Changing Nature of U.S. Military Operations in Iraq,” LTC Mike Ryan, USA, and CPT Jason Coats, USA (Sep-Oct): 48

“What Turned the Tide in Anbar?” COL Mark F. Cancian, USMCR, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 118

Irregular Warfare

“Revolutionary Management: The Role of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias* in the Cuban Economy,” Terry L. Maris, Ph.D. (Nov-Dec): 63

“The Role of Empathy in Irregular Warfare,” MAJ John Bauer, USA (INSIGHTS) (Jul-Aug): 99

“Transformation and the Irregular Gap,” Major Kenneth J. Burgess, USA (Nov-Dec): 25

Islam

“Learning from Moderate Governments’ Approaches to Islamist Extremism,” MAJ Eric A. Claessen Jr., Belgium Armed Forces (Mar-Apr): 116

Israel

“The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah,” Matt M. Matthews (Jul-Aug): 41

L**Latin America/U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)**

“Iran and Venezuela: The ‘Axis of Annoyance,’” CDR Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, USN (May-Jun): 78

Leadership

“Army Chaplains: Leading from the Middle,” CH (COL) F. Eric Wester, USA (Nov-Dec): 112

“Competence vs. Character: It Must be Both!” LTC Joe Doty, USA, and MAJ Walt Sowden, USA (Nov-Dec): 69

Developing Creative and Critical Thinkers,” Charles D. Allen, Ph.D., and COL Stephen J. Gerras, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 77

“Educating by Design: Preparing Leaders for a Complex World,” COL Stefan J. Banach, USA (Mar-Apr): 96

“Emotional Intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements Model,” LTC Gerald F. Sewell, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 93

“Empathy: A True Leader Skill,” LTC Harry C. Garner, USA, Retired (Nov-Dec): 84

“The Influential Leader,” MAJ Enrique Silvela, Spanish Army (May-Jun): 106

“Leading our Leaders,” LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 122

“The Making of a Leader: Dwight D. Eisenhower,” COL Robert C. Carroll, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 77

“The Mentorship Dilemma Continues,” MAJ Edward Cox, USA (Nov-Dec): 99

“Reassessing Army Leadership in the 21st Century,” MAJ Jason M. Pape, USA (Jan-Feb): 95

“Year of the NCO: A Division Commander’s Perspective,” MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 80

Legal/Ethical/Moral

“Awakening’ Beyond Iraq: Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders,” COL David W. Shin, USA (May-Jun): 33

“The Battlefield Inside the Wire: Detention Operations Under Major General Douglas Stone,” LCDR Vasilios Tasikas, USCG (Sep-Oct): 64

“Developing NCO Leaders for the 21st Century,” MSG John W. Proctor, USA (Sep-Oct): 102

“The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*,” LTC Celestino Perez Jr., Ph.D., USA, (May-Jun): 24

“Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan,” LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10

“It Ain’t Over Till It’s Over: What to Do When Combat Ends,” LTC E. Paul Flowers, USA (May-Jun): 85

“Leading our Leaders,” LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired, INSIGHTS (Sep-Oct): 122

“The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar,” MAJ Kenneth R. Williams, USA (Sep-Oct): 110

“Oil, Corruption, and Threats to Our National Interest: Will We Learn from Iraq?” Luis Carlos Montalván (Jan-Feb): 54

“Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?” MAJ Lane V. Packwood, Idaho ARNG (May-Jun): 67

“The Role of Empathy in Irregular Warfare,” MAJ John Bauer, USA (INSIGHTS) (Jul-Aug): 99

“Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential Through Operational Art,” LTC Tim Challans, Ph.D., USA, Retired (Sep-Oct): 19

“The U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement and the Changing Nature of U.S. Military Operations in Iraq,” LTC Mike Ryan, USA, and CPT Jason Coats, USA (Sep-Oct): 48

Logistics

“Arming the Force: Future Class V Sustainment,” COL Alan D. Braithwaite, USAR (May-Jun): 89

“Revisiting Priorities for the Army’s Future Force,” COL Jeffrey D. Peterson, USA; LTC Robert Kewley, USA; LTC James Merlo, USA; MAJ Buzz Phillips, USA; MAJ Ed Werkheiser, USA; MAJ Jeremy Gwinn, USA; and MAJ Ryan Wylie, USA (Sep-Oct): 40

M**Media**

“Fostering a Culture of Engagement,” LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; LTC Shawn Stroud, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning (Sep-Oct): 10

"Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 57

"Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts," LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning (May-Jun): 2

"The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage?" Thom Shanker and MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 2

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

Medical

"Detainee Healthcare as Part of Information Operations," LTC Beverly D. Patton, USA (Jul-Aug): 52

"Field Hospital Support for Civilians in Counterinsurgency Operations," COL Albert R. Bryan, USAR, Retired (Jul-Aug): 119

"Tactical Combat Casualty Care: A Case Study of NCO Technical Professionalism," LTC Richard Malish, M.D., USA (Sep-Oct): 96

Miscellaneous

"'Below-the-Zone' and Command Selection," MAJ Vyluis M. Leskys, USA (Nov-Dec): 109

"Getting Off the Treadmill of Time," COL Chris Robertson, USA, and LTC Sophie Gainey, USA (Nov-Dec): 104

"Understanding Innovation," COL Thomas M. Williams, USAR (Jul-Aug): 59

O

Operations/Strategy

"Conscription, the Republic, and America's Future," Adrian R. Lewis, Ph.D. (Nov-Dec): 15

"Current U.S. Policy of Provoking Russia is Fundamentally Flawed," MAJ John M. Qualls, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (Jan-Feb): 114

"Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!" LTC Carl Grunow, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (May-Jun): 115

"Future Strategic Environment in an Era of Persistent Conflict," MAJ Paul S. Oh, USA (Jul-Aug): 68

"Learning from Moderate Governments' Approaches to Islamist Extremism," MAJ Eric A. Claessen Jr., Belgium Armed Forces (Mar-Apr): 116

"Narrowing the Gap: DOD and Stability Operations," COL David W. Shin, USA (Mar-Apr): 23

"Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template," Thomas H. Johnson, and M. Chris Mason, (Nov-Dec): 2

"Tactical Leader Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: Operation Enduring Freedom VIII," COL William B. Ostlund, USA (Jul-Aug): 2

"Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 13

P

Public Affairs

"Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 57

"Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts," LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning (May-Jun): 2

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

R

Russia

"Current U.S. Policy of Provoking Russia is Fundamentally Flawed," MAJ John M. Qualls, USA, Retired (INSIGHTS) (Jan-Feb): 114

"Russia's Military Performance in Georgia," Tor Bukkvoll, Ph.D., Norway (Nov-Dec): 57

S

Security Sector Reform

"Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan," LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10

"Leveraging Liminality in Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform," MAJ Louis P. Melancon, USA (Jul-Aug): 93

"Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals," Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

Stability Operations

"Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq," Bing West (Mar-Apr): 2

"Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District," MAJ Thomas J. Sills, North Carolina ARNG (May-Jun): 97

"Eight Imperatives for Success in Afghanistan," GEN Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Jul-Aug): 136

"The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*," LTC Celestino Perez Jr., Ph.D., USA (May-Jun): 24

"Exploiting Insurgent Violence in Afghanistan," LTC Thomas Brouns, USA (Jul-Aug): 10

"Field Hospital Support for Civilians in Counterinsurgency Operations," COL Albert R. Bryan, USAR, Retired (Jul-Aug): 119

"The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne," SFC Jesse P. Pruett, USAR (Sep-Oct): 54

"Narrowing the Gap: DOD and Stability Operations," COL David W. Shin, USA (Mar-Apr): 23

"Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?" MAJ Lane V. Packwood, Idaho ARNG (May-Jun): 67

"Refighting the Last War: Afghanistan and the Vietnam Template," Thomas H. Johnson, and M. Chris Mason, (Nov-Dec): 2

"Rethinking IED Strategies: From Iraq to Afghanistan," CDR John Moulton, USN (Jul-Aug): 26

"Terrorists: Neither Soldiers nor Criminals," Amitai Etzioni (Jul-Aug): 108

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

"A View from Inside the Surge," LTC James R. Crider, USA (Mar-Apr): 81

Strategic Communications/Media Relations

"Fostering a Culture of Engagement," LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; LTC Shawn Stroud, USA; and Mr. Anton Menning (Sep-Oct): 10

"The Future of Information Operations," MAJ Walter E. Richter, USA (Jan-Feb): 103

"Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (May-Jun): 57

"Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts," LTG William B. Caldwell IV, USA; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning (May-Jun): 2

"The Military-Media Relationship: A Dysfunctional Marriage?" Thom Shanker and MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 2

"Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Jan-Feb): 2

"The Truth is Out There: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," Cori E. Dauber (Jan-Feb): 13

"Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations," BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired (Mar-Apr): 13

V

Venezuela

“Iran and Venezuela: The ‘Axis of Annoyance,’” CDR Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, USN (May-Jun): 78

Y

Year of the NCO

“Continuing Progress During the ‘Year of the NCO,’” CSM James W. Redmore, USA (May-Jun): 11

“Developing NCO Leaders for the 21st Century,” MSG John W. Proctor, USA (Sep-Oct): 102

“Educating the Strategic Corporal—A Paradigm Shift,” Kevin D. Stringer, Ph.D. (Sep-Oct): 87

“The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar,” MAJ Kenneth R. Williams, USA (Sep-Oct): 110

“Tactical Combat Casualty Care: A Case Study of NCO Technical Professionalism,” LTC Richard Malish, M.D., USA (Sep-Oct): 96

“Year of the NCO: A Division Commander’s Perspective,” MG Mark Hertling, USA (Sep-Oct): 80





First Snow in Alsace

The snow came down last night like moths
Burned on the moon; it fell till dawn,
Covered the town with simple cloths.

Absolute snow lies rumped on
What shellbursts scattered and deranged,
Entangled railings, crevassed lawn.

As if it did not know they'd changed,
Snow smoothly clasps the roofs of homes
Fear-gutted, trustless and estranged.

The ration stacks are milky domes;
Across the ammunition pile
The snow has climbed in sparkling combs.

You think: beyond the town a mile
Or two, this snowfall fills the eyes
Of soldiers dead a little while.

Persons and persons in disguise,
Walking the new air white and fine,
Trade glances quick with shared surprise.

At children's windows, heaped, benign,
As always, winter shines the most,
And frost makes marvelous designs.

The night guard coming from his post,
Ten first-snows back in thought, walks slow
And warms him with a boyish boast:

He was the first to see the snow.

—Richard Wilbur
(used with permission by the author)



Winter Warfare

—Edgell Rickword
(1898–1982)

Colonel Cold strode up the Line
(tabs of rime and spurs of ice);
stiffened all that met his glare:
horses, men and lice.

Visited a forward post,
left them burning, ear to foot;
fingers stuck to biting steel,
toes to frozen boot.

Stalked on into No Man's Land,
turned the wire to fleecy wool,
iron stakes to sugar sticks
snapping at a pull.

Those who watched with hoary eyes
saw two figures gleaming there;
Hauptmann Kälte, Colonel Cold,
gaunt in the grey air.

Stiffly, tinkling spurs they moved,
glassy-eyed, with glinting heel
stabbing those who lingered there
torn by screaming steel.

The NCO Creed

No one is more professional than I.

I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword.

My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind – accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine.

I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike.

I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders.

I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage.

I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!



SSG Solis is an INSCOM Warrior currently assigned to HHC INSCOM as the G3 Directorate Platoon Sergeant. She also serves as an MND-B & Afghanistan Analyst on threat topics related to real world contingencies by collaborating with national and tactical-level intelligence community organizations and service elements.

This INSCOM G3 Soldier has deployed twice to Iraq and is scheduled for her third deployment to Afghanistan. She is currently pursuing a Bachelors Degree and has served as a Division Intelligence Operations NCOIC, Team Leader and Intelligence Analyst.

I am the NCO!



Army NCO | No One is More Professional than I



IN FLANDERS FIELDS

by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD, Canadian Army (1872-1918)

**In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.**

