



MILITARY REVIEW just celebrated its 92nd birthday, so I would like to start this letter by thanking our many loyal readers, authors, and supporters. Your dedication and contributions to our journal, along with the expertise of the professional staff at *Military Review*, are the reasons the journal enjoys continued success.

I spoke to the newest students of the Command and General Staff Officer's Course on their second day of class. When I asked them how many read *Military Review* and who had submitted articles for publication, I was pleased to see many hands raised, but I was not surprised. I emphasized to

them the importance of writing about their experiences and sharing their ideas to improve the military and the Army Profession as the Army rebuilds after almost 14 years of persistent conflict.

Finding time to provide commentary on experiences and lessons learned is sometimes challenging, but writing is one of the most essential ways humanity records history. Writing is a critical part of how we express our thoughts and share ideas with one another. In addition, writing requires an author to collect and organize data to present a certain topic; authors must have facts to support their argument to earn or maintain credibility. In other words, writing enables us to be better at our profession.

With the drawdown of deployed troops and a return to an operational mindset, now is an ideal time for leaders to reflect upon their experiences and revive the enthusiasm for writing for professional publications like *Military Review* to ensure we maintain a historic perspective and pass along our best practices. There are many incentives to write, whether it be for personal reasons, historical documentation, or fulfilling a tasker or assignment. The important thing to remember is simply to write. *Military Review* just announced the topic for the General William E. DePuy writing competition. This is a great way to get those creative juices flowing and reawaken that love for writing.

This year's topic is "How can the Army maintain its adaptability and agility and find innovative solutions to face future threats during this time of work force reductions and budget cuts?" Submission information is on page 116 of the January/February issue, or you can find it on our website at <http://militaryreview.army.mil>.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the journal. The *Military Review* team is proud to bring you the March/April edition focused on leader development. We received so many articles on this topic that we felt it would be a perfect time to begin our transition to themed editions. You will find articles on strengths-based leadership theory, junior officer development, captains' education, and a General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition award-winning essay.

Don't forget to check out *Military Review Spotlight*, our newest addition to the website. It features articles relevant to the Army now from budding writers as well as seasoned authors.

"The desire to write grows with writing"

Disiderius Erasmus

United States Army Combined Arms Center
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Lessons from Advising in Afghanistan

1st Lt. Iain J. Cruickshank, U.S. Army

1st Lt. Iain Cruickshank is currently deployed to Afghanistan as an Advisor for 1-500th Infantry Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. He holds a B.S. from the United States Military Academy and an MSc in Operations Research from the University of Edinburgh, followed by a History Administrative Doctoral.

Since the first major combat operations in Afghanistan, the question of how and when the war will end has consumed the minds of conscientious Americans. Now, as the conflict begins its final stages, the moment has arrived: how will coalition forces transfer the security of Afghanistan to its own security forces as effectively as possible? A critical shift is occurring from responsibility for Afghan security being an International Security Assistance Force mission to a national Afghan mission. Security Force Advisors become a crucial component for the transition from partnered operations with Afghan defense forces to Afghans running their own operations. While U.S. forces generally understand, advising as a key part of the transition in Afghanistan, the implementation of advising in theater still has difficulties to overcome.

As an infantry first lieutenant currently serving as an intelligence advisor to an Afghan National Army (ANA) Infantry Battalion (battalion) in Regional Command-East, I had the opportunity to develop some observations on the current implementation of Security Force Advisor and Assist Teams (SFAATs) that I will share in this paper.

Prior to this deployment, I attended the SFAAT Academy at Fort Polk, working as an Operations Advisor for an Afghan Unimanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) district. Following the SFAAT Academy, I stayed at Fort Polk and did a rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center, and took charge of a team for an AUMC district. Based on these experiences and my observations while deployed to Afghanistan, I learned both general and specific lessons concerning the advising policy in Afghanistan. These insights, summarized in six broad areas, are: selecting qualified people; selecting amiable people; proper preparation; understanding context; while deployed, providing the right environment to improve; and keeping the big picture at the forefront.

MR Spotlight



Themes for Future Editions

2014

- July-Aug Training Management: Lost Art or Wave of the Future?
Sep-Oct Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer Development and Leadership.
Nov-Dec Budget Constraints and Maintaining Readiness.

2015

- Jan-Feb The Army and the Congress: Who Really Should Have Responsibility and Authority for Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault?
Mar-Apr Ready and Resilient Campaign: Challenges, Issues, Programs.

