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Cover photo: Arkansas Army National Guard soldiers with the 1036th Engineer Company from Jonesboro, Arkansas, detonate an M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge 16 August 2015 at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California. (Photo by Maj. W. Chris Clyne, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment; photo also appears on page 9)

Foreword

Since the Soviet Union's fall in 1989, the specter of large-scale ground combat against a peer adversary was remote. During the years following, the U.S. Army found itself increasingly called upon to lead multinational operations in the lower to middle tiers of the range of military operations and conflict continuum. The events of 11 September 2001 led to more than fifteen years of intense focus on counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. An entire generation of Army leaders and soldiers were culturally imprinted by this experience. We emerged as an Army more capable in limited contingency operations than at any time in our Nation's history, but the geopolitical landscape continues to shift, and the risk of great power conflict is no longer a remote possibility.

While our Army focused on limited contingency operations in the Middle East and southwest Asia, other regional and peer adversaries scrutinized U.S. military processes and methods and adapted their own accordingly. As technology has proliferated and become accessible in even the most remote corners of the world, the U.S. military's competitive advantage is being challenged across all of the warfighting domains. In the last decade, we have witnessed an emergent China, a revanchist and aggressive Russia, a menacing North Korea, and a cavalier Iranian regime. Each of these adversaries seek to change the world order in their favor and contest U.S. strategic interests abroad. The chance for war against a peer or regional near-peer adversary has increased, and we must rapidly shift our focus to successfully compete in all domains and across the full range of military operations.

Over the last three years, the U.S. Army has rapidly shifted the focus of its doctrine, training, education, and leader development to increase readiness and capabilities to prevail in large-scale ground combat operations against peer

and near-peer threats. Our new doctrine, Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, dictates that the Army provide the joint force four unique strategic roles: shaping the security environment, preventing conflict, prevailing in large-scale combat

operations, and consolidating gains to make temporary success permanent.¹

To enable this shift of focus, the Army is now changing a culture shaped by over fifteen years of persistent limited-contingency operations. Leaders must recognize that the hard-won wisdom of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars is important to retain but does not fully square with the exponential lethality, hyperactive chaos, and accelerated tempo of the multi-domain battlefield when facing a peer or near-peer adversary.

To emphasize the importance of the Army's continued preparation for large-scale combat operations, the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center has published the seven-volume Large-Scale Combat Operations Historical Case Study book

set. The intent is to expand the knowledge and understanding of the contemporary issues the U.S. Army faces by tapping our organizational memory to illuminate the future. The reader should reflect on these case studies to analyze each situation, identify the doctrines at play, evaluate leaders' actions, and determine what differentiated success from failure. Use them as a mechanism for discussion, debate, and intellectual examination of lessons of the past and their application to today's doctrine, organization, and training to best prepare the Army for large-scale combat. Relevant answers and tangible reminders of what makes us the world's greatest land power await in the stories of these volumes.

Prepared for War!

Note

1. Field Manual 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, October 2017), 2.



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