

# Précis: *Unrestricted Warfare*

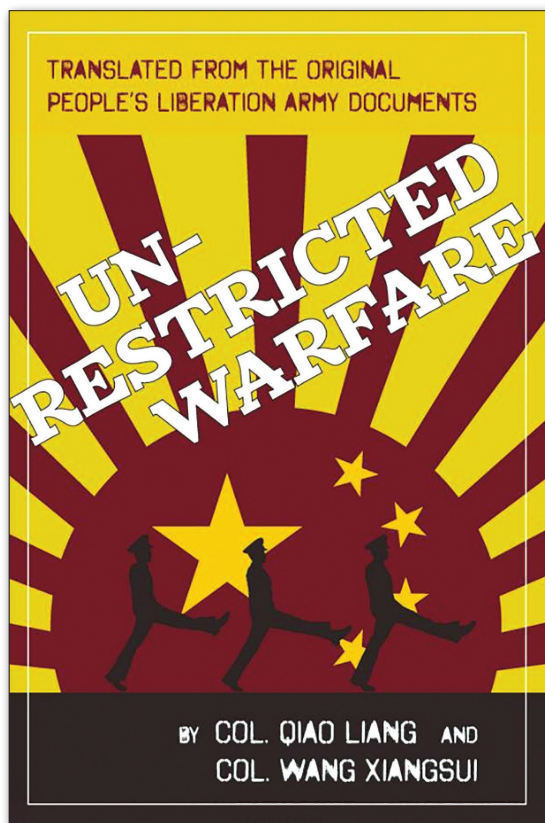
In 1999, Chinese People's Liberation Army Cols. Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui published what would prove to be a highly influential book titled *Unrestricted Warfare*. The authors argued that modern war at that time had evolved past using only armed forces "to compel the enemy to submit to one's will" into using all military and nonmilitary means to compel an enemy to capitulate to a state's political objectives. According to their analysis, in the modern, highly competitive, globalized world, the roles of soldiers and civilians had been fundamentally erased because the equivalent of war among states in the modern world would now be ongoing continuously and everywhere.

The authors go on to postulate tactics for developing countries to use against more technologically advanced nations in the event of an overt outbreak of hostilities, implying that such measures should be used to chart the course China had to take to compensate for its then military inferiority to the United States. They outline the synchronized employment of a multitude of means to be used concurrently with military force to prevail in a conflict including hacking into government websites underpinning an opponent's administration of government, disrupting financial institutions, exploiting the West's open me-

dia, promoting social discord, and conducting urban warfare. In a separate interview translated by the U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Qiao was quoted as stating that "the first rule of unre-

stricted warfare is that there are no rules, with nothing forbidden." The authors' contentions foreshadowed not only the direction of Chinese development across the spectrum of its elements of national power but may have been the origin of more recent similar assertions by modern Russian military theorists. As a result, any serious student of modern warfare would be well advised to become acquainted with this influential work. There are various commercial translations available of *Unrestricted Warfare*. However, *Military Review* recommends an abridged version derived from a translation by FBIS available at <https://www.c4i.org/unrestricted.pdf>. For those interested in more detail, the background and significance of *Unrestricted Warfare* on modern military thought, we invite

you to read "A New Generation of Unrestricted Warfare," by retired Lt. Gen. David W. Barno and Dr. Nora Bensahel, published in *War on the Rocks* on 19 April 2016. To view the article, please visit <https://warontherocks.com/2016/04/a-new-generation-of-unrestricted-warfare/>. ■



Several versions of *Unrestricted Warfare* have been published. The cover art shown here is from a version published by Echo Point Books & Media in 2015.