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SGT Vincent Hancock, U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, won his second consecutive gold medal in skeet shooting at the 2012 Olympics in London, 31 July. SGT Hancock won his first gold medal in men's skeet at the Beijing Olympics in 2008 at the age of 19, and is the first shooter ever to win back-to-back gold medals in this event. (U.S. Army, Tim Hipps, IMCOM Public Affairs)

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The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30.

Raymond T. Odierno  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Official:

JOYCE E. MORROW  
Administrative Assistant to the  
Secretary of the Army  
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A black and white photograph showing a military scene. In the foreground, a tank is partially visible on the right. Several soldiers in full combat gear are moving through a street filled with thick smoke or dust. The soldiers are seen from behind, moving away from the camera. The background shows more soldiers and the smoke-filled environment.

# Just War Theory and Democratization by Force

## Two Incompatible Agendas

Cora Sol Goldstein, Ph.D.

Dr. Cora Sol Goldstein is an associate professor of political science at California State University, Long Beach. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Her book, *Capturing the German Eye: American Visual Propaganda in Occupied Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) focuses on the U.S. experience in postwar Germany. She has published in *Diplomatic History*, *German Politics and Society*, *Intelligence and National Security*, *Internationale Politik*, and *Military Review*.

PHOTO: Soldiers of the 55th Armored Infantry move through a smoke-filled street, Wernberg, Germany, 22 April 1945. (PVT Joseph Scrippens. 111-SC-205298, National Archives).

**T**HE AMERICAN MILITARY occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq have been neither military nor political successes. Both countries are still failed states that present potential risks to the United States. Afghanistan and Iraq have not become our allies, and are far from being stable liberal democracies. In short, the U.S. Army was unable to repeat the successes of its post-World War II military occupations of Germany and Japan. It is often argued that the Bush administration did not understand the political realities in the Middle East and Central Asia. According to this view, democratization by force cannot succeed in such underdeveloped societies fractured by deep ethnic and religious rifts, and without endogenous experiences in modern democracy and democratic constitutionalism.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the Bush administration is blamed for its lack of forethought and preparedness. Improvisation and ignorance allegedly led to erroneous conclusions about the economic, political, and cultural structures of societies without a history of democratic institutions and without powerful state bureaucratic structures.<sup>2</sup>

My contention is that the military occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq failed not because of the two countries' lack of democratic development prior to military occupation, but rather due to the type of wars that preceded them. World War II was a total war that ended with the total defeat of the Axis, and this allowed the Allies to carry out transformative military occupations. In a transformative military occupation, the political aim of the military government is not only radical regime change, but also the introduction of new ideological and normative paradigms.<sup>3</sup>

The American experiences in democratization by force in Germany and Japan (1945) suggest that it is necessary to first win the war in such a way that the enemy population is dissuaded from resistance. Total victory implies not only the total defeat of the enemy army, but also the destruction of the will to fight and resist of the civilian population. Only in this context can a military occupation be transformative, and the occupiers can implement radical institutional, political, and cultural reforms. In this paper I argue that—

- The principles of *jus in bello* are incompatible with total victory and, therefore, with democratization by force.

- It is impossible to fight and democratize simultaneously. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were limited wars, which were not aimed at total victory. If my hypotheses are correct, the United States should not have attempted grandiose projects of nationbuilding and democratization by force after conflicts that did not create a context in which social engineering projects had a chance of success.

## World War II

In World War II, none of the belligerents, including the United States, respected the principles of *jus in bello*. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration did not enter World War II with the aim of democratizing Germany and Japan, but rather of destroying their capacity to wage war. The Allies viewed the German and the Japanese civilian populations as enemy populations and did not hesitate in treating them as such. The most glaring Western violations of the principle of civilian immunity were the Anglo-American strategic bombing campaign against Germany and the American air war on Japan. In both cases, the aim was to terrorize noncombatants, to lower their morale, and to abolish their will to fight. The planners of the Allied bombing campaigns tried to maximize, not minimize, the killing of civilians. In 1943, the U.S. government built exact duplicates of German and Japanese houses in the Dugway Proving Ground in the desert of Utah to test the efficiency of incendiary bombs.

The number of civilians killed in Germany by the American and British strategic bombing campaign is somewhere between 300,000 and 600,000. In just three days (13 to 15 February 1945), 770 British Lancasters and 330 American B-17 Flying Fortresses dropped more than 3,100 tons of explosive and incendiary bombs on Dresden, causing the death of up to 40,000 people.

The treatment of Japanese civilians was as destructive. The fire-bombing of Tokyo and the atomic urbanicides of Hiroshima and Nagasaki show a similar disregard for the life of the enemy. On 10 March 1945, 334 American B-29 bombers dropped incendiaries on Tokyo, destroying 267,000 buildings and killing more than 100,000 civilians. This aerial attack, which razed nearly half of the city, was the most destructive bombing raid in history. On 6 August 1945, an American atomic bomb killed 140,000 civilians in Hiroshima, and on 9 August, another atomic bomb killed 70,000 in Nagasaki. World War II was maximally destructive and brutal, and violence was often indiscriminate.



(Library of Congress, cph.3a17434)

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing the declaration of war against Germany, marking U.S. entry into World War II in Europe. Senator Tom Connally stands by holding a watch to fix the exact time of the declaration, 11 December 1941.



Twentieth Air Force B-29s dropping incendiary bombs over Japan, 1945. (U.S. Air Force)

In spite of these massacres, the U.S. government was able to create the image of a “clean” war for the home front. This required an unprecedented effort in psychological warfare that included censorship. The media did not show photographs that were deemed potentially upsetting to the American public, such as images of civilian victims. The coverage of the urbanicides carried out by the American and British strategic bombing campaigns was minimal, and the propaganda effort concentrated on the gallantry of American pilots, the technological achievements of American science, and the resolve of the American Army and Navy. *The New York Times* coverage of the Dresden bombing, titled “20,000 Reported Killed,” dated 16 February 1945, is 10 lines long. It reads: “The Swedish radio, quoted by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said today that between 20,000 to 35,000 people had been killed in Dresden during the first twenty-four hours of the Allied air assaults against that city. It added that 200,000 residents had fled in panic.”<sup>4</sup> Such a brief statement illustrates the degree of indifference towards enemy civilian casualties that characterized the American coverage of war news during World War II.

Soon after the occupation of Germany and Japan, the victors insisted that they had not fought the war to punish the civilian populations but rather to defeat the criminal regimes of the Axis powers. In 1943 the U.S. government started to make plans for the democratization and demilitarization of Germany and Japan.<sup>5</sup> The War Department organized military government schools at the University of Virginia and at Yale University to instruct future military occupation officers on issues related to the democratization of societies previously subjected to authoritarian regimes. Although the American military occupations were not vindictive and the emphasis was on material, political, and cultural reconstruction, they were nonetheless firm and often bordering on despotic. The Germans and the Japanese were dazed by the catastrophic dimension of their plight, and in this context the American military occupation authorities were able to establish almost absolute control in the American zone of Germany and the American sector of Berlin, and in Japan. In both Germany and Japan, the civilian population accepted the realities of defeat and occupation passively, and posed no resistance to the occupiers.

The lack of resistance allowed the Office of Military Government, United States, in Germany (OMGUS) and Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan to achieve the monopoly of violence, information, and propaganda, and this in turn allowed them to carry out their radical political, economic, and cultural reforms and to begin the process of reeducation and democratization. It is hard to overestimate the difficulty of these endeavors. In the German case, for instance, the magnitude of the problem posed by denazification was startling. In spite of the catastrophic defeat of the Third Reich, American polls showed that many Germans harbored anti-democratic feelings.

One year after the end of the war, only three in ten Germans in the American zone and sector were deemed to be consistently pro-democratic.<sup>6</sup> In September 1946, 55 percent of respondents in the American zone and 44 percent in the American sector of Berlin still believed that National Socialism “was a good idea badly carried out.”<sup>7</sup> In December 1946, OMGUS intelligence analyses found “an increase in antisemitic feelings among the German people.”<sup>8</sup> These numbers remained



consistent during the occupation. In fact, OMGUS intelligence analysts reported increased feelings of hostility against the American presence in Germany, increased nationalism, increased political apathy, increased contempt towards Germans working for the U.S. military, and increased antisemitism and racialism. OMGUS had to engage in a cyclopean effort to reform German society and to suppress the allegiance to Nazism, militarism, antisemitism, and ultra-nationalism. American control, not simply German conviction, blocked the immediate reemergence of public expressions of Nazism and antisemitism in occupied Germany.

In July 1945, 80,000 Nazi leaders were arrested, and 70,000 Nazi activists were fired from the civil service. By 1 June 1946, more than 1,650,000 Germans—approximately one out of every ten persons in the U.S. zone—had been investigated, and 373,762 (nearly one-fourth) removed from their positions.<sup>9</sup> Eighty to 85 percent of teachers were dismissed for political reasons.<sup>10</sup> Universities were also purged—one-third of the faculty of the University of Frankfurt was dismissed, and in

the University of Heidelberg, more than half of the faculty lost their positions.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the 1946 American amnesty program pardoned 2,590,000 Germans.<sup>12</sup> The American occupation of Germany and Japan made the occupied populations conform to the new norms and regulations imposed upon them. Urbanicide did not guarantee the success of the process of reeducation and democratization, but it made the civilian populations malleable and obedient.

## The Vietnam War

The Vietnam war was a limited war, in which the United States did not deploy all of its military might. Yet American strategists did not pay much attention to collateral damage (and to its prevention). The American armed forces and the CIA intentionally killed thousands of civilians, destroyed villages, kidnapped and assassinated political opponents, carried out a defoliation campaign, and bombed Hanoi. Unlike in World War II, the U.S. government did not succeed in managing the propaganda efforts on the home front. The American public was able



(LC-USZ62-134159, Library of Congress)

Secretary of State Dean Rusk testifies on the Vietnam War before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 13 March 1968.

to see, read, and hear about what the U.S. armed forces were doing in Vietnam. Television images and photographs published in newspapers and magazines had enormous political repercussion at home and abroad. Awareness of the victimization of Vietnamese civilians, lack of military success and mounting numbers of American casualties led to a growing and widespread rejection of the war. For many of the domestic critics of the war, the Vietnamese civilian population was the innocent victim of an unjustified aggression.

The anti-war movement of the 1970s and the revival of the medieval concept of the Just War were the direct consequence of the American intervention in Vietnam. Michael Walzer's seminal *Just and Unjust Wars* was inspired by "the systematic exposure of Vietnamese civilians to the violence of American war-making."<sup>13</sup> Walzer argued that the Vietnam war was not justified because the United States was not responding to aggression or involved in a humanitarian intervention. Therefore, the American intervention did not respect *jus ad bellum* and flagrantly violated the principles of *jus in bello*. After Vietnam, the precepts of *jus in bello* developed into a complete legal doctrine, lawfare that imposes a strict commitment to human rights even in times of war. The indiscriminate killing of civilians is seen as a violation of the rules of war, and therefore it is inconceivable to carry out military operations that target civilians or that will necessarily cause extensive collateral damage.

## The Evolution of the American Military Doctrine

Just War theory has shaped the way in which the United States fights its wars. Since public pressure, international opinion, and lawfare demand that wars be fought following the exacting precepts of *jus in bello*, the United States has taken significant steps to minimize its own casualties and to reduce the chance of collateral damage. However, this change in military doctrine was not accompanied with a redefinition of the political objectives targeted in limited wars. The wars in Afghanistan (2001 to the present) and Iraq (2003 to 2011) illustrate this lack of internal coherence. In both cases, the United States attempted to adhere to the principles of *jus in bello* by minimizing collateral damage and avoid-

ing the indiscriminate punishment of the civilian population. At the same time, the United States became involved in exercises of regime change and democratization by force, in spite of the fact that neither Afghanistan nor Iraq had experienced total defeat.

"Operation Enduring Freedom" and "Operation Iraqi Freedom," were intended to transform Afghanistan and Iraq into democracies. Yet neither the Bush nor the Obama administrations planned for total victory in Afghanistan and Iraq. President George W. Bush and his advisors considered that it was possible to occupy Afghanistan and Iraq, defeat Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and Saddam Hussein, and at the same time introduce drastic political reforms to transform failed nations with strong autocratic traditions into liberal democracies allied with the United States.

Eleven years later, it is obvious that the Bush administration was overly optimistic. The United States is not winning the war in Afghanistan. The Kabul government is inefficient, corrupt, and illiberal, and doesn't have control over most of the country. The Afghan army, the Afghan police, and the Afghan security services are weak and heavily infiltrated by the Taliban. Security is illusory, and unrelenting terrorist attacks underline the vulnerability of the Afghan society. Afghanistan is the world's main producer of opium poppy, and the Taliban, warlords, and drug lords control the countryside. Iraq has been transformed into a pseudo democracy with strong ties to Iran. Al-Qaeda still operates in the country, and is participating in operations against the Bashar Assad regime in Syria. An extremely anti-American Shi'ite fundamentalist movement influences the country's political agenda, and religious, ethnic, and sectarian violence persists.

These failures reflect the impossibility of carrying out grandiose plans of social engineering while at the same time fighting a strong insurgency. "Post-conflict" reconstruction was not successful because armed conflict and insecurity continued. Paul Bremmer, III, failed not because he did not understand the mechanism of denazification on which he modeled deBa'athification; his mistake was not realizing that denazification had worked because the capacity of German resistance had been eliminated by catastrophic defeat.



In 2003, the Iraqi regime had been decapitated, but Iraqi society was intact and Iraqis were able and willing to resist the impositions of a foreign military government. In the case of Afghanistan, the only possibility of success would imply the military and political neutralization of the Pashtun population in Pakistan and Afghanistan itself, an objective unattainable with a minimal expeditionary force and a policy characterized by restraint.

The United States exerted restraint in fighting the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to minimize collateral damage. Both the Bush and the Obama administrations adhered to the modern standards of lawfare. While the U.S. Air Force used 5,000-pound, laser-guided bomb units (GBU-28) to target cave and tunnel complexes in southern Afghanistan, the Bush administration refrained from using tactical nuclear weapons against Al-Qaeda. The nuclear version of the GBU-28, the B61-11, was not used.<sup>14</sup> Similarly the Obama administration rejected the proposal of an airstrike by B-2 Spirit bombers to destroy bin Laden's residential compound, because launching 32 2,000-pound smart bombs would have destroyed the entire city of Abbottabad. In order to minimize civilian casualties, both Bush and Obama embraced the use of small units of special operations forces as well as smart weapons to launch precision strikes against military targets.

Drones, the *primus inter pares* among smart tactical weapons, have become the symbol of the new American technological approach to war, and they figure prominently in the Obama administration's strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In theory, drones allow the targeted ("surgical") killings of the enemy and the decapitation of its leadership

while sparing civilians.<sup>15</sup> Yet drones reduce but do not eliminate collateral damage, and this is enough to fuel anti-American critics. The London-based non-profit Bureau of Investigative Journalism recently released a report, widely reproduced in the American and European press, claiming that the CIA drone program in Pakistan is responsible for civilian deaths. According to the report, the 291 strikes credited to the drone program since 2004 have killed 2,000 militants but also caused 385 civilian deaths, including that of 168 children.<sup>16</sup> The fact that 385 civilian deaths in seven years of war (an average of 55 casualties per year) are considered excessive shows how far the limits of tolerance have evolved since World War II. The electronic battlefield is challenged by a political/cultural weapon, the depiction of the war zone population as innocent bystanders. This allows for the characterization of the United States as an all-powerful nation-state that does not value human life. Much like in the Cold War, the United States is often chastised as an imperial monster driven by greed and indifferent towards the suffering of other peoples. The current American wars are often represented as a struggle between the rich and the mighty, and the poor, marginalized, and defenseless. Decapitation operations through drones may be useful to convince the American public of the success of the war against terror, but it is not clear if the tactical successes of smart weapons offset their potential for exploitation by anti-American propaganda.

## The End of Transformative Military Occupations

The precepts of Just War theory demand that we fight wars according to the exacting standards of modern lawfare, even if our enemies do not share these values. Therefore, it is imperative to rethink the types of wars the United States can fight. Since radical programs of social engineering cannot be realized without the total defeat of the enemy, the United States should not engage in attempts at democratization by force if it is not ready to achieve total victory. In the absence of an existential challenge that overrides all moral constraints, the military and political objectives of limited wars must be strictly circumscribed to the elimination of specific elements (resources, leaders, etc.) that are

***The fact that 385 civilian deaths in seven years of war (an average of 55 casualties per year) are considered excessive shows how far the limits of tolerance have evolved since World War II.***

considered a danger to the United States, knowing beforehand that the institutional, political, and cultural structures of the enemy are likely to survive.

The Afghanistan and Iraq experiences show that limited wars fought under the new American military doctrine of minimizing collateral damage are not compatible with a political program of democratization by force. The fact that limited wars are fought with restraint and deliberately avoid exceptional violence means that attempts at transformative military occupations will fail because the enemy population will resist the imposition of new institutions and ideologies. It is evident that an

occupying army cannot succeed in instrumenting drastic, substantive, and perdurable political reform while confronting indigenous military, political, and ideological resistance. From this, I conclude that a military occupation with dual targets, both punitive and transformative, cannot achieve the second objective (transformative change) unless the enemy population accepts the fact that it has experienced total defeat. Since the contemporary military doctrine of the United States precludes the achievement of total victory in limited wars, this class of conflicts should never include democratization by force among its final objectives. **MR**

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## NOTES

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4. "20,000 Reported Killed," *The New York Times*, 16 February 1945.

5. See Michaela Hoenicke Moore, *Know your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

6. Anna J. Merritt and Richard L. Merritt, *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970). "Basic Attitudes" Report No. 19, 19 August 1946, 99. In October 1945, the Intelligence Branch of the Office of the Director of Information Control set up its Opinion Survey Section. This agency conducted 72 major surveys during the next four years, and the reports of the surveys were distributed to the highest OMGUS authorities.

7. Merritt and Merritt, *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany*, "A Study of Attitudes Toward the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Germany" Report No. 22, 25 September 1946, 105.

8. Landesarchiv, RG 407, Box 119, Folder title: "Public Opinion U.S. Zone," Report 49, "Prejudice and Antisemitism," December 1946.

9. Elmer Pliske, "Denazification in Germany: A Policy Analysis, in Robert Wolfe, ed., *Americans as Proconsuls: United States Military Government in Germany and Japan, 1944-1952* (Carbondale: Illinois, 1984), 214-215.

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11. Bernd Weisbrod, "The Moratorium of the Mandarins and the Self-Denazification of German Academe: A View from Göttingen," *Contemporary European History*, 2(1): 47-69, February 2003, 52.

12. Pliske, 216. Also see John Gimbel, "American Denazification and German Local Politics, 1945-1949: A Case Study in Marburg," *The American Political Science Review*, 54, No. 1 March 1960, 83-105.

13. Michael Walzer, "The Triumph of Just War Theory—and the Dangers of Success," *Social Research* (Winter 2002): 2.

14. Michel Chossudovsky, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons against Afghanistan?" Centre for Research on Globalization, 5 December 2001.

15. Kenneth Anderson, "Imagining a Fully Realized Regime of Targeted Killing Through Drone Warfare and its Moral Expression in Necessity, Distinction, Discrimination, and Proportionality," in "The Enduring Legacy of Just and Unjust Wars—35 Years Later" Conference, The Tikvah Center for Law & Jewish Civilization, 3 November 2010.

16. Scott Shan, "CIA Is Disputed on Civilian Toll in Drone Strike," *The New York Times*, 12 August 2011, 1.



# In Search of the Good War

## Just War and Realpolitik in Our Time

Colonel Thomas W. McShane, J.D., U.S. Army, Retired

*But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy . . . for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right . . . as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world at last free.*

— President Woodrow Wilson, Speech to Congress, 2 April 1917

**I**N THE TWO decades since the Cold War ended, idealism has dominated international relations.<sup>1</sup> International organizations such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and liberal democratic states have aggressively promoted democratic values, human rights, and global stability. International law has been the instrument of choice to advance this liberal agenda.

Toward this end, three clear lines of effort stand out:

- A series of multilateral treaties to restrict various means of warfare, i.e., land mines and cluster munitions.
- International efforts under the auspices of the United Nations to promote stability and keep the peace, including coalition military campaigns with tacit or explicit UN support, e.g., the Gulf War, Bosnia, East Timor, and Kosovo.
- A network of international courts designed to bring international wrongdoers to justice when their states would not or could not do so, e.g., international tribunals for Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Cambodia, and Sierra Leone. In 2002 the International Criminal Court was established to eventually replace these ad hoc tribunals.

While these efforts have achieved some significant successes, even liberals will concede that the results are dwarfed by the costs and unanticipated consequences of their agenda.

At the same time, other events, notably the U.S.-led War on Terrorism, demonstrated that powerful individual states can pursue their national self-interests without international or UN approval. The United States sought international legitimacy for its efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq and welcomed coalition support but did not hesitate to act alone when necessary. Sovereignty remains a resilient, powerful force in international relations. Other strong-willed states

Colonel Thomas W. McShane is a supervisory associate professor with the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He holds a B.A. from Wabash College, a J.D. from Pepperdine University, and an M.S.S. from the U.S. Army War College. He served in Operation Desert Storm, the Kosovo campaign, on the Army Staff, and on the faculties of the Judge Advocate General's School and the U.S. Army War College.

PHOTO: Berliners tear down the Berlin Wall under the gaze of East German "Vopo" (police). On the night of 9 November 1989, the border separating East and West Germany was officially opened, thus symbolising the end of the Cold War. West Berlin, West Germany, 11 November 1989. (Sipa via AP Images)



such as Venezuela, Iran, North Korea, and China have advanced their national agendas despite significant opposition. These countries need not comply with international law or support international efforts. They steer their own course and appear to contravene the rules with only minor consequences, at least in the short term.

Given an apparent lack of consensus as to what international order ought to look like, what rules apply, and the virtual absence of international armed conflict, it seems clear that other dynamics are at work. Persistent threats such as famine, genocide, tyranny, terrorism, and piracy will require attention in the future, but they appear unlikely to cause interstate conflict. For all its disorder, the world remains a remarkably peaceful place.

The above factors have led many to conclude that a period of relative peace is at hand, an era in which most conflicts will be local and states and international organizations like the European Union (if it survives) will pursue their own interests but avoid confrontation wherever possible. Shoring up the global economy has become the primary focus of major economic powers. War is an expensive, destructive luxury few can afford. Global order may well depend on a new balance of power much like the ones that existed for centuries before World War II. In this environment, Just War theory assumes greater relevance. In relative terms, international law is an exhausted force, and traditional models of legitimacy like Just War will fill the void, although neither will stop states from asserting sovereignty when their interests dictate. Realpolitik has replaced the idealism ascendant for the past two decades.<sup>2</sup>

## Just War and Law

A Western philosophical tradition dating back some 1,600 years, Just War theory outlines a moral and military theory for warfare containing two parts: *jus ad bellum*, or justice toward war, the moral and legal basis for using military force; and *jus in bello*, or *justice in war*, the means and methods used to wage war.

*Jus ad bellum* grants moral legitimacy to waging war in certain circumstances, referred to as the Just War Criteria. These include a just cause, just intent, last resort, legitimate authority, public declaration, proportionality, and a reasonable hope of success.



**Triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas, Benozzo Gozzoli, 1468-1484, Tempera on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris.**

*Jus in bello* dictates that combatants show respect for morality and discriminate between combatants and noncombatants when they wage war, and use force with proportionality, i.e., inflict no greater damage than that necessary to achieve legitimate ends.

Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas are considered the major architects of Just War theory, which also draws from Greek and Roman moral philosophy, natural law, and principles of chivalry. Many associate Just War theory with Western Christian thought, but parallels to it exist in most religious traditions, including the Confucian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic. In general, *jus ad bellum* exists in the realm of the politician, and *jus in bello* in the realm of the soldier. However, decisions made in one realm can and do affect the other. This article examines *jus ad bellum* as it relates to justification for modern conflict.<sup>3</sup>

## Jus ad Bellum

Over time, starting with Hugo Grotius in the 17th century, Just War theory provided a moral framework for international law and a basis for international

agreements. Nonetheless, before World War I in 1914, few formal treaties governed armed conflict. Early efforts included the American Lieber Code in 1863, the first Geneva Convention of 1864, and the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, which codified existing practices involving the means and methods of warfare as well as humanitarian concerns for the wounded and noncombatants. Apart from Just War theory, nothing prevented a state from going to war. States fought wars for trivial and important reasons, and no entity and no rules regulated the beginning or end of war aside from international public opinion. (An exception was the Catholic Church in Europe before the Protestant Reformation, and even then, the Church's "control" was minimal.) Borrowing from Just War theory, The Hague Convention of 1899 required that parties to the treaty officially and publicly declare war on one another. Nations entering into conflict followed this procedure in 1914 and again in 1939 and 1941, but not since then. United Nations Security Council Resolutions appear to be the modern versions of declarations of war. Increasingly, states and coalitions of states seek approval to use military force to advance humanitarian values. Such "humanitarian interventions" have no firmly established basis in customary or international law, and are typically advocated in Just War terms.

At Versailles in 1919, the world's major nations tried to create an international organization to maintain peace and prevent war. Just War theory's moral principles did not prevent World War I. All parties to that conflict claimed moral superiority and believed that God was on their side. However, representatives at Versailles hoped to use international law to enforce Just War principles.<sup>4</sup> The League of Nations was designed to prevent war or at least to keep nations from revisiting war on the scale of World War I. Through an international assembly, a court of justice, and mutual security arrangements, the League was supposed to apply the rule of law to create and maintain international order. In practice, the League used its status

and collective might to deter or defeat aggressors and maintain the peace when deterrence failed.

It was a good idea, but one whose time had not yet come. The victorious European powers, France, England, and Italy, were too drained to fully embrace a League of Nations and faced pressing problems at home. Russia was involved in revolution and civil war. Japan had its own agenda. Central Europe was still reorganizing itself after the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and the United States refused to join the League, even though President Wilson was one of its architects.

The League operated in relative obscurity as states pursued normalcy and prosperity in the 1920s, fought a global depression in the 1930s, and then began rearming for World War II. The harsh reparations imposed on Germany at Versailles caused hardship and resentment that assisted Hitler's rise to power. The League failed to stop German, Italian, or Japanese aggression during the 1930s, or prevent a Second World War in 1939.

The world had a second chance at law and order in 1945. World War II's carnage dwarfed that of World War I and ended with the creation and use of atomic weapons. War became an even greater danger in the atomic age. The creation of the United Nations in 1945 enjoyed almost universal support, and the UN Security Council was given broad powers to keep and enforce the peace. Members renounced the aggressive use of force and agreed to peaceful resolution of disputes, while retaining the right to self-defense and collective action through the UN Security Council or regional organizations such as NATO. The UN Charter became the central legal element of the postwar world. In 1949, the Geneva Conventions improved the protections afforded to combatants and noncombatants and added an element of international humanitarian law to the mix. Over the ensuing decades, states negotiated aggressive arms control treaties that limited or outlawed the use of certain weapons. These developments, along with Cold War tensions, contributed to making interstate war a rare phenomenon. The trials at Nuremberg and Tokyo following the war established the precedent that war crimes carried consequences. Nuremberg seemed an ideal marriage of law and morality, and later treaties banned genocide and created the International Criminal Court; these served to create a comprehensive legal structure.

***Increasingly, states and coalitions of states seek approval to use military force to advance humanitarian values.***



Men and equipment from the 1st U.S. Army pour across the Remagen Bridge, Germany, 11 March 1945.

## Keeping Order in a Disorderly World

The world after 1945 remained a contentious and violent place. Despite the relative stability of the Cold War between the United States and the USSR, conflicts such as Korea and Vietnam threatened the peace. Ultimately, fear of escalation and nuclear brinkmanship tended to localize conflicts, which were often fought by proxy states representing the two principal powers. Since the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, most conflicts have been localized and intrastate in nature. Examples include the Balkan Wars surrounding the breakup of Yugoslavia, the failure of states such as Somalia, the Congo, and Haiti, and civil wars in Rwanda and Indonesia (East Timor). (The Gulf War of 1990-1991 is a notable exception.) Military intervention has typically been motivated by humanitarian concerns such as ending the suffering of those caught up in the conflict, terminating the conflict, restoring peace, or keeping a fragile peace already

in place. For a time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States enjoyed almost complete political and military dominance; American leadership or support was the critical factor in almost all international “adventures.” Some referred to the United States as a “hyperpower.” This era slowly unraveled after 11 September 2001.

The invasion, occupation, and rebuilding of Iraq and Afghanistan will soon appear in our rear-view mirrors as isolated events representing an earlier period. At the time they were considered necessary responses to a series of coordinated terrorist attacks directed against the United States. However, it is unlikely that the United States or any other power will act in this fashion again for many years to come. Terrorist organizations, particularly Al Qaeda, have been significantly weakened and driven into hiding. Moreover, the financial and political cost of these interventions exceeded all estimates while the outcomes fell short of expectations.



Current international tensions revolve around rogue states that flaunt the established order with alarming frequency. North Korea, Iran, and Venezuela are typical of these. Potential for serious interstate conflict exists on the Korean Peninsula, in the Middle East, in the South China Sea, and between India and Pakistan. The United States and China are trading partners, but also competitors whose national security interests clash in several areas. Things may get worse before they get better. Despite these trends, the likelihood of interstate war remains low, at least for now.<sup>5</sup>

The biggest challenges facing the global community involve sustaining conditions for international trade, commerce, and political growth, while deterring or suppressing major threats to the peace. Some state or group of states must ensure the security of the global commons—the air and sea routes that make the world's economy prosper. Failed states, rogue states, terrorists, and pirates threaten international or regional stability. The UN and other international organizations have helped to build a framework of treaties to facilitate stability, and the UN Security Council has been active in efforts to maintain the peace, but all have proven disappointing in enforcing international law.

Enforcement remains the domain of powerful sovereign states that choose their fights and cannot be compelled to act against their national interests. The UN Security Council, for example, has imposed a series of sanctions on Iran for violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, including embargoes on Iranian oil and other efforts aimed at crippling their economy. China did not exercise its veto to stop these resolutions in the Security Council, but refuses to curtail its purchases of Iranian oil, because the Chinese need it to sustain their economy. No one can force China to support the embargo. Similarly, China has voiced a concern shared by many states in Asia and Africa that international law as currently constructed is a legacy of Western colonial powers and supports

only Western interests. Further, the Chinese have indicated that they are not legally or morally bound by these rules. This position weakens international law as a foundation of order, particularly if it becomes widespread. Russia likewise pursues an independent course and only selectively abides by international norms. All this leaves sovereignty principles and balance of power politics as alternative foundations for international order. They have worked before but, as we discussed earlier, events of the 20th century illustrate what happens when a precarious balance of power fails.

In practice, some accommodation between idealism and realpolitik should emerge, and everyone will have to cooperate. The international system that has evolved since 1945 is not going away. It provides essential structures and tools to maintain peace and prosperity on a global scale. Most states have accepted the established order and signed the treaties. However, if this hybrid system is to work, idealists will have to contend with stubborn sovereign states pursuing their own national interests. Political scientist John Mersheimer reminded us that great powers behave as their interests dictate.<sup>6</sup> Sovereignty is alive and well, after all; rumors of its death were greatly exaggerated.

As a practical matter, the United Nations and other international organizations such as NATO play important roles in maintaining peace and economic stability, but they struggle to make rogue regimes comply with their guidelines and wishes.

Treaties regulate nuclear and conventional weapons and have effectively eliminated chemical and biological weapons, but treaties alone cannot defeat terrorists, rebel groups, or even global warming.<sup>7</sup> The International Criminal Court (ICC) seeks to bring international war criminals, despots, and others to justice when their governments will not or cannot do so.<sup>8</sup> Ironically, however, the ICC lacks jurisdiction over terrorism and piracy, two major threats facing global society in the 21st century. Leading powers, including the United States,

***Sovereignty is alive and well, after all; rumors of its death were greatly exaggerated.***

Russia, and China, are not parties to the ICC and thereby weaken its authority and influence. Despite Security Council resolutions and international sanctions, Iran's nuclear program continues. North Korea developed nuclear weapons outside the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, as did Pakistan and India, and Iran may soon join them. That these states were able to thumb their noses at international institutions and treaties with relative impunity demonstrates the weakness of international law when confronted with stubborn, relatively well-armed sovereign states that refuse to play by the rules of globalization.<sup>9</sup> Even relatively weak states such as North Korea, Myanmar, and Sudan, not to mention Somalia, have managed to survive as international outlaws.

## Humanitarian Intervention and Just War Theory

Disregarding for a moment the relative merits of some international interventions, the legal basis for humanitarian intervention remains suspect after two decades of experimentation. International law recognizes the authority of the UN Security Council to address threats to peace and acts of aggression and to decide how to "maintain or restore international peace and security."<sup>10</sup> The United Nations recognizes the right of states individually and collectively to act in self-defense. However, the UN Charter does not provide a third option. One might ask why the United Nations has never suspended or expelled states that fail to live up to UN principles or comply with UN resolutions, but that subject is best left for another time and place.<sup>11</sup> The founding principles of the UN are set out in Article 2:

1. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members...4. All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state...7. Nothing...in the present charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present charter.<sup>12</sup>



An M-113A2 rolls out of a USAF C-141 Starlifter at the airport near Kampala, Uganda, for use in the peacekeeping efforts underway in neighboring Rwanda, 23 June 1994. (U.S. Air Force)

The United Nations is designed to keep the peace and resolve "international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace."<sup>13</sup> The Security Council in Chapter VII is charged with responsibility for assessing and dealing with threats to the peace. While the United Nations seeks "international cooperation in solving problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character," this is an aspirational goal only, not an enumerated power.<sup>14</sup> Chapter VII mandates are predicated on threats to international peace and security, not threats to the exercise of human rights within sovereign states. This last point is, as we have seen, contentious.

Humanitarian intervention may succeed in instances where the oppressor lacks serious capability to oppose the effort or to inflict broader damage. The Libyan intervention by NATO in 2011 was a recent case in point, although we have yet to see what kind of government replaces Khadafy's. Intervention is not an option in the case of North Korea, not because the regime hasn't oppressed or killed millions of its own citizens and threatened its neighbors, but because intervention would likely kill or injure millions more. More recently, Syria has used its Army to quell internal dissent, including firing artillery into cities and towns where opponents of the regime live. Despite condemnation

from many states and The Arab League, the UN has been unable to impose sanctions on Syria in the face of threatened vetoes by Russia and China. Given Syria's location and the risk of broader conflict possibly involving Lebanon, Israel, and Iran, no Western-led coalition is likely to attempt there what NATO did in Libya.

After the UN failed in 1992 and 1993, NATO intervened in Bosnia in 1995 and encountered little or no opposition from Serbia or ethnic Serbs.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, following a brief bombing campaign against Serbia, NATO forces and the UN peacefully entered Kosovo in 1999.<sup>16</sup> U.S.-led interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated the difficulty of establishing stability, much less democracy, in larger states where significant armed opposition exists.

Another consideration is that some interventions over the past two decades failed to create order, prosperity, or democracy, leaving instability in their wake. Somalia and Haiti immediately spring to mind. In Bosnia, the underlying socio-political conflict remains unresolved 17 years later, and Kosovo's final status is unclear 13 years after intervention.

Trying to define a norm governing humanitarian intervention is difficult. The UN Security Council acts when it can pass a resolution without veto; individual states and coalitions act when they consider the costs and risks affordable. In practice, only weaker states need worry. The moral of the story for dictators and heads of rogue regimes is clear: get strong fast, and nothing says strong like nuclear weapons. They are a great insurance policy. Is it any wonder Iran is so intent upon producing weapons-grade plutonium?

It is difficult to fit humanitarian intervention into a legal frame. Applying Just War theory is a better fit (disregarding for now the inherent violation of state sovereignty). According to Kofi Annan, former secretary general of the United Nations, state sovereignty means "states are now widely understood to be instruments at the service of their peoples, and not vice versa."<sup>17</sup> Kofi Annan is a practical politician, not a revolutionary; his language evokes Thomas Jefferson's in the Declaration of Independence: "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just power from the consent of the governed." Our founding



U.S. Army LTC Robin Swan, TF1-26 commander, and Chief Vosic, Chief of Police for Zvornik, Bosnia-Herzegovina, walk down a dirt road past Checkpoint Sierra, accompanied by other U.S. military personnel, Bosnia police officers, and Bosnia civilians, prior to resettlement of Bosnia Muslims into Mahala, Bosnia-Herzegovina, during Operation Joint Endeavor, 1 February 1997.



fathers believed that states exist to promote and protect individual freedoms and lose their legitimacy when they do not, although the founding fathers envisioned governments being changed from within by the people, not from without by humanitarian intervention. Intervention to save innocent civilians from unjustified maltreatment by their government can fulfill most criteria of *jus ad bellum*: just intent, last resort, public declaration, proportionality, and reasonable hope of success in most cases. When the UN Security Council directs action under the UN Charter, legitimate authority is satisfied, at least in the minds of most UN members. If NATO intervenes, as it did in the Balkans in 1995, a lesser, but still solid, argument for legitimacy exists. In fact, the UN Security Council established a UN mission in Sarajevo almost immediately after NATO troops entered Bosnia, thus in effect sanctioning their action. A similar sequence of events occurred after NATO intervened in Kosovo in 1999. The UN-supported intervention in Libya in 2011 also substantially satisfied Just War criteria. Paradoxically in some cases, intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states may be both humane and ethical, producing a greater good, yet illegal and a violation of international law.

Based on the above discussion, we can draw several broad conclusions about contemporary international relations.

First, international institutions, shared principles, and an interlocking network of international agreements remain important tools for solving today's problems. Global problems require global solutions; sovereign states cannot solve them, although they can address symptoms within their borders. Most, eventually, will require international cooperation. The challenge for leaders today is what action to take as part of an international community when states deliberately and systematically violate the human rights of their citizens.<sup>18</sup> It's easy to say that it's not our problem unless our citizens or interests are directly threatened, but it is more complicated than that. Given the limitations and constraints inherent in international law and a resurgence of state sovereignty, it is logical to expect Just War theory, particularly *jus ad bellum* or some variation thereon, to play a larger role in international discourse. This represents the enduring strength of moral and ethical values and moral philosophy in public affairs.

**...any assesment of Just War theory applied to contemporary events must take into account cultural differences.**

Second, it would take another article to discuss whether Just War theory can prove effective in shaping international events. Realists would say that idealism remains a utopian concept that ignores the timeless aspects of human nature. As Thucydides reminds us in his *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*, "It is impossible to prevent, and only great simplicity can hope to prevent, human nature doing what it has once set its mind upon, by force of law or by any other deterrent force whatsoever."<sup>19</sup> Men are governed by fear, self-interest, and honor, according to Thucydides, writing over 2,400 years ago. Human nature is substantially unchanged, and even more self-evident, in a time of instantaneous global communication. Can our contemporary institutions in conjunction with moral philosophy, religion, and ethics successfully overcome the worst aspects of our nature? My answer would be sometimes, not always, and I hope so. Intellectually, I believe it is a long shot.<sup>20</sup>

Third, any assessment of Just War theory applied to contemporary events must take into account cultural differences. While some model of moral legitimacy in war is a feature of non-Western societies, Just War as we tend to envision it represents western European, Greco-Roman, and Judeo-Christian influences. That excludes a large segment of humanity, including emerging political, economic, and military powers. Nation-states such as Iran, China, Egypt, and India have different cultural and historical traditions that influence how they view legitimacy in international conflicts.

Finally, other considerations must influence how we apply Just War theory in the 21st century. Sovereignty, a concept we associate with 17th century Europe and the Treaty of Westphalia, is firmly entrenched everywhere and remains the building block of international relations. The United Nations, the world's most influential international organization, is predicated on sovereign states

working together to resolve conflict. A violation of sovereignty still constitutes *casus belli*, or grounds for war. The fact that war remains a rare phenomenon may tell us more about our contemporary institutions than our sensibilities. It is unrealistic to expect consensus on actions such as forced regime change, intervention to prevent genocide, and even severe sanctions, all of which constitute violations of sovereignty. Americans view sovereignty with almost religious devotion and will call for revenge, even war, against any state or group that dares to violate American sovereignty. For evidence of this, we need look no further than the American response to the attacks of 11 September 2001.

Less apparent is the possibility that nationalism, the driving force of 19th century European politics, may underlie today's resurgence of sovereignty. Iran and China have long, distinctive histories, and national identities reaching back to antiquity. They frequently assert their sovereignty in nationalistic terms. India behaves similarly, and for many of the

same reasons. Americans would rank near the top on any nationalism scale; for proof, simply listen for chants of "U.S.A!" at any Olympic Games. Attempts to dictate or even influence domestic events in states with strong nationalist traditions are met with aggressive language and threats of potential violence. This too, is part of our Just War dialogue.

## Conclusion

International law, at least for the time being, is a spent force in shaping international events, particularly decisions involving war and peace. In a global security environment that increasingly resembles an earlier, multipolar world, we need to look at earlier approaches to guide us. These include balancing power and interests, and applying more traditional concepts of legitimacy when we consider resorting to military force. These concepts of legitimacy bring Just War theory and sovereignty into play. How these two concepts interact in practice will influence events for years to come. **MR**

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## NOTES

1. The term "idealism" is one of several used to describe differing theories of international relations. Idealism in modern usage encompasses two distinct theories: liberalism, based on classical liberal democratic thought, institutions, and free market capitalism; and constructivism, which emphasizes the centrality of values and principled activism in international relations. For simplicity, I have compared and contrasted idealism with "realism," or "realpolitik," which emphasizes the role of power and national interests in shaping events. See Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy* (November-December 2004).

2. Kissinger defines realpolitik as "foreign policy based on calculations of power and the national interest." Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 137, 804. Kissinger cautioned us almost 20 years ago that the United States went crusading to advance its moral values twice in the 20th century, in 1919 and again in 1945, with mixed results. He said that America appeared to be doing so again, and events since then appear to bear this out. His prediction then was that America would again fall short of shaping world order in its image. Readers can draw their own conclusions as to whether or not he was correct.

3. Martin J. Cook, "Ethical Issues in War, an Overview, chap. 14, *The U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy, vol. II, National Security Policy and Strategy*, edited by J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA (3rd Edition, 2008). I am indebted to Martin and to a JAG Corps mentor, Professor William Eckhardt, for helping me to understand the nexus between law and just war. If I have misstated anything, it is my fault, not theirs.

4. "At the end of the First World War, the age-old debate about the relative roles of morality and interest in international affairs seemed to have been resolved in favor of the dominance of law and ethics." Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, n. 1 at 247.

5. See Epilogue, "Does History Repeat Itself?" Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin, 2011), 514; Joshua S. Goldstein and Steven Pinker, "War Really is Going out of Style," *The New York Times*, 17 December 2011.

6. John J. Mersheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 2-3.

7. For example, the START and SALT strategic arms negotiations and Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaties with the USSR, and multilateral international agreements, including the Conventional Weapons Treaty, 1980; the Chemical Weapons Convention, 1993; and the Ottawa Treaty on Anti-Personnel Land Mines, 1997.

8. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998).

9. Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999). Friedman postulated that eventually everyone who wanted to participate in the benefits of globalization would be bound by its rules—the "golden straitjacket," as he called them.

10. Charter of the United Nations, Article 39.

11. Article 5 of the Charter of the United Nations provides for suspension; Article 6 for expulsion.

12. Charter of the United Nations, Article 2.

13. *Ibid.*, Article 1.

14. *Ibid.*

15. CIA—*The World Factbook*, accessed at <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>>, 23 December 2011, The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 21 November 1995, commonly called the Dayton Peace Accords, created two semi-autonomous entities, the Bosniak/Bosnian Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb-led Republika Sprska (RS).

16. *Ibid.* NATO intervened in Kosovo in 1999. Kosovo declared independence in 2008, and more than 70 states currently recognize it, but Serbian objections and Russian backing have kept Kosovo from gaining admission to the United Nations.

17. Kofi A. Annan, "Two Concepts of Sovereignty," *The Economist* (18 September 1999): 49.

18. See Thomas W. McShane, "Blame it on the Romans: Pax Americana and the Rule of Law," *Parameters* 32 (Summer 2002): 57.

19. Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. by Richard Crawley and revised by Donald Lateiner (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2006), book 3, para. 45. His most famous line, from the Melian Dialogue in Book 5, is "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."

20. See Robert D. Kaplan, *Warrior Politics* (New York: Vintage, 2002). Kaplan believes moral force is critical, but physical force, strength, determination, constant vigilance, and what he calls "a pagan ethic" are necessary if men want peace more than war.



# Harnessing Initiative and Innovation

## A Process for Mission Command

Lieutenant Colonel Chip Daniels,  
Major Mark Huhtanen, and  
Major John Poole, U.S. Army

*“Mission Command. The increasing complexity and uncertainty anticipated in the future environment demand that Joint Force 2020 employ mission command to unleash its full potential in a way that harnesses the initiative and innovation of all members of the team. Commanders exercise mission command by understanding the military problem, visualizing the end state and operation, and describing their vision. They direct actions throughout planning and execution and arm their subordinates with intent.*

*Today, much of the Joint Force is employed in environments involving ill-structured problems and against adaptable, thinking adversaries who exploit opportunities at every turn. These challenges call for leaders at the tactical level to exercise greater personal initiative vice relying on the decision making of echelons well above the point of action. Leaders must empower individual initiative by providing clear, concise, and complete mission orders in a climate of mutual trust and understanding. The future joint force will be one where junior leaders are empowered to exercise disciplined initiative based on clear guidance and intent. Institutionalizing mission command is imperative to prepare our next generation of leaders.”*

— Excerpt from *America's Military—A Profession of Arms*

Lieutenant Colonel Chip Daniels is the G-3 of the 1st Cavalry Division and the former commander of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment. He has served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) and as an assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy. He holds a B.S. from Virginia Tech and an M.B.A. from Duke University.

Major Mark E. Huhtanen is the operations officer for 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. He has deployed to OIF and OND and served in various infantry assignments. He has an M.A. from Webster University and an MMAS from the School of Advanced Military Studies.

Major John M. Poole is an observer/controller/trainer at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA. He was the executive officer and S-3 for the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, and has served in both OIF and OND. He holds a B.A. from California State University and an MMOS from the Air University.

PHOTO: 1-5 Cav Soldiers conduct an air assault during Operation New Dawn, COP Speicher, Iraq, July 2011. (CPT Matt Liebal).

**A**PPRECIATING THE NEED to institutionalize mission command in today's Army is easy given the future described by General Martin E. Dempsey above. As leaders, we spend a great deal of time discussing the significance of mission command. Current doctrine, as described in FM 6-0, *Mission Command*, is sufficient for a military organization to accomplish its mission. However, does it inform us as to how to institutionalize mission command and develop leaders who exercise disciplined initiative, as called for by General Dempsey?

Army doctrine mentions the need to develop leaders who are empowered to exercise initiative. It does not currently describe a way to do that. We believe that we have found a method for establishing a shared vision across a unit that is useful in all operational environments, integrates all necessary functions of the organization, and addresses the question of how we harness the skills of today's young tactical leaders—officers and NCOs—who came of age during this time of war. The shared vision offers a way to develop them as leaders for the future. We argue that commanders should not act alone to understand and visualize the mission. By allowing subordinates to be involved in this process, we achieved shared understanding and initiative far sooner, and more efficiently, than our doctrine describes.



We have tested this method during garrison training, major field exercises, and our recent deployment in Operation New Dawn in Iraq, which served as a final “proof of concept.” We found that our approach to mission command—

- Developed critical thinkers.
- Established “ownership” at all levels.
- Developed a proactive staff.
- Established a predictable environment.
- Clearly established priorities.
- Produced flexible and adaptive subordinate units.

We witnessed these improvements most clearly at the conclusion of the war in Iraq, when the battalion supported the largest withdrawal of U.S. forces and materiel from a country since the end of the World War II. We supported the tactical retrograde of three brigade combat teams with all their associated equipment (much of which had been stockpiling over the last eight years), while simultaneously

transitioning our own facilities to Iraqi or U.S. State Department control, supporting the end-of-mission of a U.S. division headquarters, and beginning our own retrograde to Kuwait. The battalion did all this while still in contact with enemy cells in Salah ah Din, Iraq.

Company grade officers and NCOs largely accomplished this monumental task. They “owned” the problem, analyzed it critically, took the initiative, and developed solutions that provided order amid chaos. They were ready for this complexity because they followed an approach to mission command that had prepared them for the challenges they would face.

Figure 1 shows the difference between an organization in which the commander acts alone to develop understanding and visualization and an organization where the commander does this with key leaders and staff. In Figure 1a, the commander develops his understanding and visualization and, through his intent, describes the operation to the unit, which is depicted by the cloud shape. The

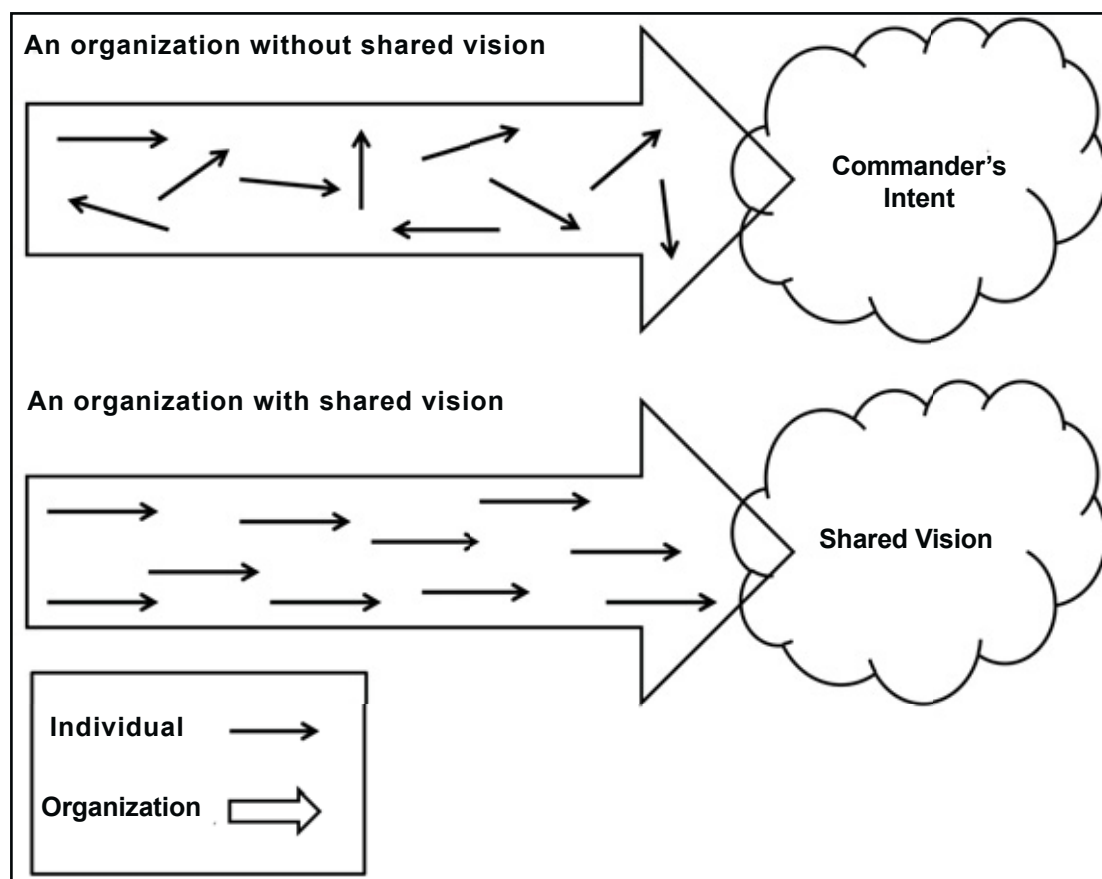


Figure 1

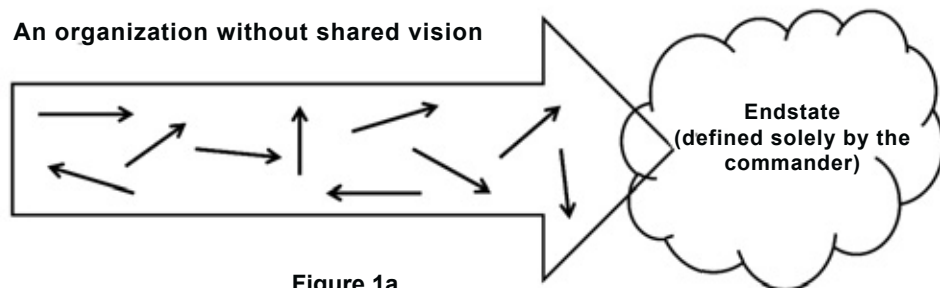


Figure 1a

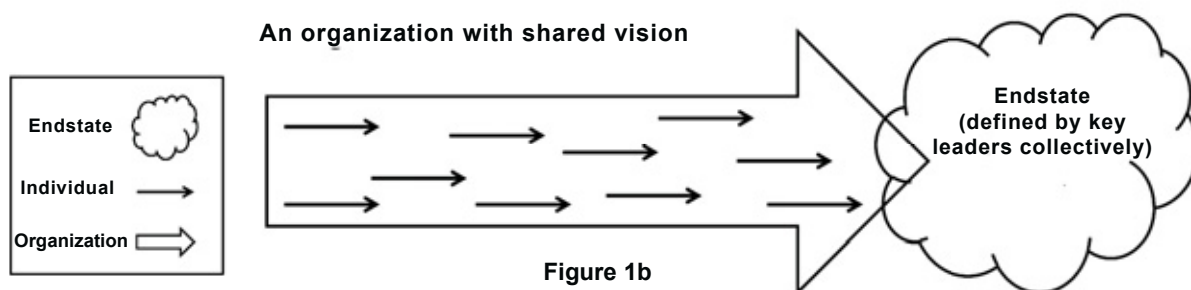


Figure 1b

large, block arrow depicts the larger organization, which the commander can direct to the end state in the cloud by aligning and using resources and systems. However, in this scenario, getting individuals in the unit to take ownership of the mission requires a great deal of time and energy. The small arrows depict those individuals, some of whom need regular guidance and direction to stay on course while others even openly resist the effort and consume a great deal of time and resources. This scenario does not foster initiative or empower leaders.

Figure 1b depicts a unit whose subordinates are empowered and exercise initiative. Here, the individuals have taken ownership of the mission and require little regular guidance and direction. They know what they must do because they helped define the problem in the first place.

So how does the Army develop this kind of organization? Before we can adequately address that question, we will review our current mission command doctrine.

## Doctrinal Review

Field Manual (FM) 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*, dated 2003, defines mission command in several ways. As a

philosophy, mission command is “the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of full spectrum operations. It is commander-led and blends the art of command and the science of control to integrate the warfighting functions to accomplish the mission.” FM 3-0, *Operations*, says that as a warfighting function, it develops and integrates those activities, enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control.

But what does all this mean? Simply put, it is the Army’s way of ensuring that cohesive teams (staffs, units, and command teams) can create an environment of shared understanding that allows the commander to understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess operations. He does this by driving the operations process, providing clear intent, and creating an environment where subordinates feel that they are part of the process.

The problem is that our doctrine offers few, if any, examples of how to do this. We often see commanders attempt to understand an operational environment in isolation, based solely on their experience. However, this does not foster a sense of ownership from the members of the unit. After

imparting his understanding by visualizing the mission, the commander must dedicate a great deal of time and effort to describing his intent and directing its execution. Many problems that face units today in the operational environment are new, complex, and beyond the commander's experience. In this situation, doctrine suggests that the staff use operational design methodology to gain a better understanding. However, should this come before or after the commander begins the mission command process on his own?

As mentioned earlier, we approached this situation differently by grounding ourselves in the aforementioned doctrine, but reordering it to allow the commander, key subordinates, and the staff to maximize a shared understanding. Consequently, we achieved buy-in very early in the process. How did we do this? Figure 2 depicts the process.

## A Process for Battalion-level Mission Command

Figure 2 illustrates how we linked operational design methodology, the military decision making process (MDMP), and finally the day-to-day operations and systems of the battalion.

The design process informs the commander's understanding, visualization, and description and, in our case, resulted in the creation of a campaign plan with associated lines of effort (LOEs). Developed together with other key leaders, it results in a shared vision for the unit. Operational design begins with *understanding* the environment in which the problem lies (the environmental frame). Frequently, the commander uses some framework or model to understand the environment and problem. He then *visualizes* how the unit can successfully solve the problem. Finally, he *describes* this to the organization through commander's intent.

The commander then *directs* action using the MDMP for specific events or objectives along the various LOEs. The commander injects his commander's guidance, often based on his personal experience. The result is initial planning guidance. The commander has now led and directed a deliberate methodology or process (campaign planning utilizing design) that has provided him enhanced visualization and understanding. In the end, the unit has used design to inform mission

command, which, in turn, drives the planning process, resulting in a product that is "ours" versus one dictated by the commander.

The final step in mission command is to *assess* how the unit is progressing along the campaign plan. We used conventional tools to conduct this important step. For example, while in garrison, we used our command and staff meetings to show the command team the status of our unit and personnel readiness. We used training meetings and resource synchronization meetings to ensure that we were properly preparing for, and conducting, the training events that would eventually result in achieving our desired end state for training. Command maintenance periods let us focus on the readiness LOE, and leader professional development classes focused on building skills in our leaders. Quarterly training briefs afforded us opportunities to assess how we were progressing along our campaign plan or to adjust the next quarter's plan. While deployed, we used battle update briefs, the targeting meeting, and other tools to track and assess our progress in a similar fashion.

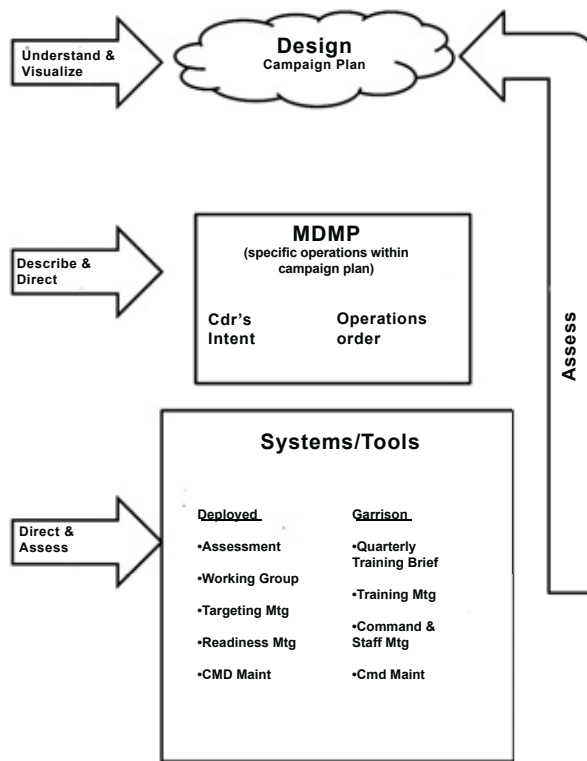


Figure 2



We have followed this process five times over the last two years—twice in a garrison environment to create extended training strategies during various stages of the Army Force Generation cycle; once in a time-constrained combat training center environment where the change in mission required a new, condensed, scenario-driven campaign plan; in preparation for an operational deployment in support of Operation New Dawn with the creation of an initial campaign plan; and during combat, when it became apparent that a change in operational and environmental factors warranted a change in the unit's purpose and direction, and thus, the campaign plan. Each time we employed the process, the variables dictating the need to execute the process were different, thus showing this method's versatility and utility.

We first employed the process in garrison to create an extended training strategy to determine predeployment training guidance (PDTG). We captured this in the form of a training campaign plan. Our first step was to host a mission essential task list conference for platoon sergeants and above at a facility on Fort Hood away from the battalion headquarters. This change in location facilitated open dialogue, a primary necessity for success. The commander served as the primary facilitator, asking such leading questions as, "What will we be expected to do in the next year?" and "At what tasks do we need to excel?" The group's answers

to these questions led to the bottom-up creation of platoon battle task lists. We agreed on those battle task lists and the staff later published those in a FRAGO (fragmentary order).

The task lists formed the initial thoughts behind the LOEs we developed at our subsequent campaign plan development session, which included first sergeants and above, with the commander again asking leading questions, as opposed to simply describing his vision for the next year. Of course, any good commander already has an initial vision; he just keeps it to himself at this early stage.

We then developed four LOEs—training, leader development, readiness, and resiliency. (Figure 3 depicts an example of a generic campaign plan.) Those efforts were critical if we were to be ready for our deployed mission of advising, training, and assisting Iraqi Security Forces.

Next, we collectively defined the end states for those LOEs. We defined end states for how we wanted the unit to be just prior to deployment. While this may seem time-consuming and unnecessary, it established goal alignment and ownership up front, greatly reducing the need for the commanders to persuade subordinates down the road. We formed into smaller groups, with a designated chief for each LOE, and the smaller groups defined the end state for the LOE. Each group then out-briefed the larger group, and together we refined the end states until we were satisfied. The commander served as the facilitator for this portion.

Once we had established the end states for each LOE, the operations officer led us through a process of defining effective sub-units such as teams, crews, squads, platoons, and companies. Again, we divided into smaller groups, led by a facilitator. The groups discussed what made an effective sub-unit in terms of training, leader development, readiness, and resiliency. Once finished, each work group out-briefed the larger group, and we collectively decided on common definitions.

We then used these definitions to derive the measures of effectiveness to assess if we were on track to achieving our end state. Finally, we divided into work groups once again and determined the key tasks or objectives required to achieve each LOE's end states. In our case, we created task lists for each quarter of the year that we had before



**Key leaders of 1-5 Cavalry collaborate to determine the unit's lines of effort, Fort Hood, TX, April 2012. (1LT Tony Forstner)**

## GENERIC CAMPAIGN PLAN

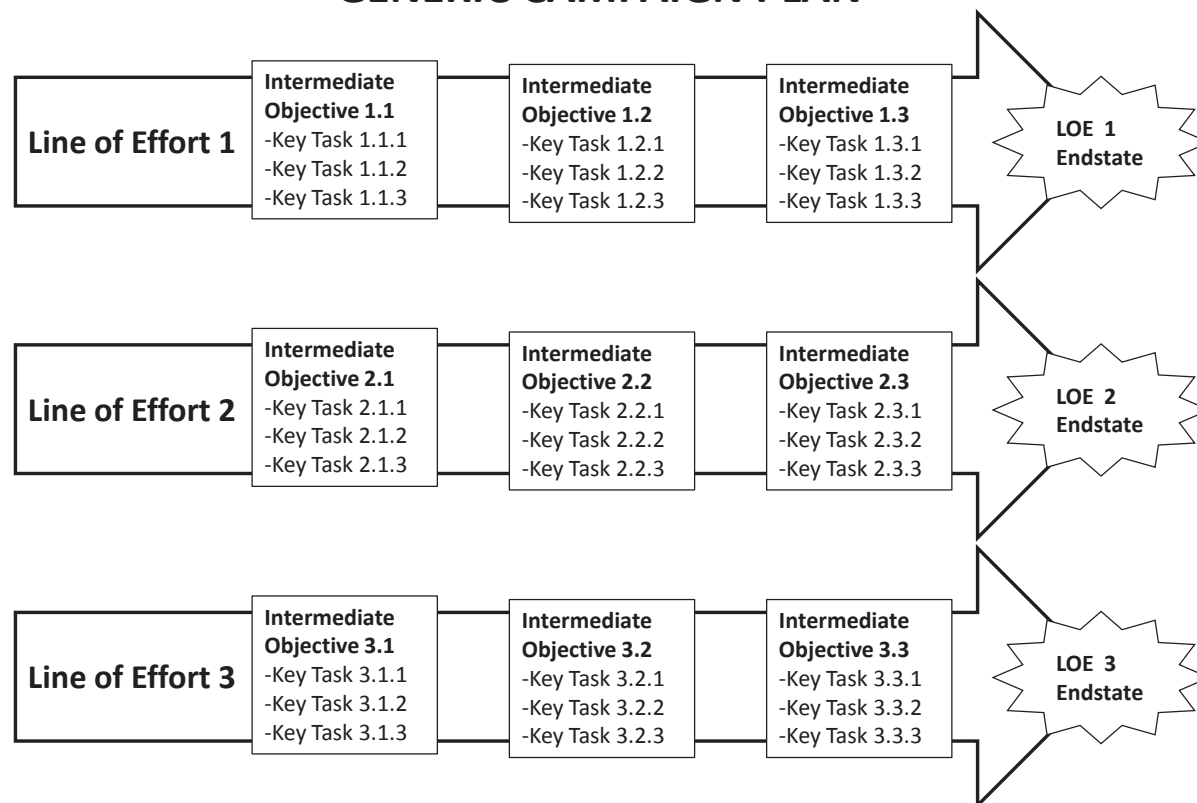


Figure 3

our deployment, and these became measures of performance to track progress. A unit facing a different training timeline should determine what amount of time makes the most sense for it to use.

Finally, the staff took all of the outputs and built a PDTG campaign plan that drove our efforts for the entire next year. We later published a written FRAGO detailing this campaign plan in lieu of annual training guidance. Subsequent quarterly training guidance was simply a narrative of the key tasks and objectives illustrated on the PDTG campaign plan. However, we assessed the campaign plan quarterly to determine if it was still valid or if we had to adjust course. We assessed the measures of performance from the last quarterly training guidance and measured them against the measures of effectiveness. Based on this assessment, we would add or adjust measures of performance to the next quarterly training guidance. We identified major overall azimuth shifts. Finally, the operations officer would draft quarterly training guidance within the lines of the PDTG campaign plan and

add tasks that needed re-doing or had not been accomplished to “standard” for each quarter. If key tasks now proved to be invalid, we deleted them.

The battalion’s PDTG campaign plan was the guiding document for all battalion events leading up to the final weeks prior to getting on the aircraft that would take the soldiers to their Operation New Dawn mission.

In January 2012, we found ourselves back at Fort Hood, six months earlier than anticipated, because the war in Iraq ended. We needed another campaign plan for the remainder of the fiscal year. Again, we assembled the leaders and staff and asked them to define LOEs, end states, and key tasks, with the end state no longer a deployment, but a training event—a battalion gunnery at the end of the fiscal year.

We decided to plan only through the end of the fiscal year for two primary reasons. First, we expected the eventual announcement of a future deployment mission that would require yet another design planning process, and we felt confident that

any announcement would not significantly affect the current fiscal year. Second, the unit would soon be going through a period of transition in leadership, including changing the entire battalion command group, so it made sense to plan through the end of the fiscal year and let the new commander and his team build the next PDTG and campaign plan.

The processes described above took a few weeks. However, when necessary, a unit can complete them more quickly. We faced such a situation during our Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) rotation in January 2011. The battalion was initially assigned an area of operations, with its unique set of environmental factors, within the JRTC scenario construct several weeks prior to its arrival to Fort Polk. We followed our process and developed our initial campaign plan while at the leader training program in November 2010. As we were getting ready to move into the “box” to begin seven days of force-on-force training scenarios, a sister battalion pulled out of the exercise early, so we abandoned our current planned area of operation and assumed the uncovered area. Because the environmental conditions had changed, we had to refine—or recreate—our campaign plan only 72 hours prior to execution. Having gone through the mission command process twice (creating the PDTG and leader training program) and several sessions of MDMP, the staff began to define the new area of operation, using a construct of design, and assigned company missions while it continued training for the force-on-force exercise.

Through several planning sessions and work groups over three days, the battalion staff was able to create an entirely new campaign plan based on the new area of operation, briefing the new mission requirements to the company commanders mere hours before we moved to our assigned area of operations for the force-on-force component of the exercise. This proved that the staff was able to think critically without the constant presence of the commander, executive officer, or operations officer.

We utilized our process twice more—just prior to and during our Operation New Dawn deployment. In preparation for our deployment, we set aside several working days to create a comprehensive campaign plan, using information brought back from predeployment site surveys, from discussions with the unit we would be replacing in Iraq, and

from planning products produced by our higher headquarters.

To develop the plan, we conducted another off-site with our key leaders, including newly arrived stability transition team members. Early in the process we discovered that any comprehensive plan had to include the rear detachment command team and family readiness group leaders. We formed into working groups to brainstorm specific rear detachment, family, and home station objectives and end states for soldiers and families remaining behind after the battalion deployed.

After we completed the initial lines-of-effort decision phase, the working groups went “classified” and defined key objectives for our area of operations in Iraq. Again, these breakout groups provided the measures of performance and measures of effectiveness that we used later during the targeting process to help validate whether our operations were still moving toward our desired end state. Because discussions were underway at higher levels of command about a pending U.S. departure in late 2011, there was ambiguity at our echelon regarding our mission, so we decided to develop the campaign plan only out to October 2011—a decision that proved fortuitous. We took this final campaign plan product forward to Iraq,



**1-5 Cavalry soldiers train for stability operations prior to deployment, Fort Hood, TX, March 2011. (Photo by SGT Harvey Hodnett)**



guiding our operational focus for the first five months we were there.

Our plan proved useful as we progressed for the first several months. We utilized our battle rhythm events to continually check to ensure we were on glide path within each of our LOEs using the predetermined measures of effectiveness and measures of performance, including a weekly conference call with our rear detachment team. As summer waned and early fall 2011 approached, our operational focus changed from a locally focused stability mission to a planned, total retrograde of U.S. forces from Iraq. We used our established targeting meetings to begin our mission command process to develop the “continuation” portion of our campaign plan and assess it. This allowed us to establish new LOEs and end states for our changed environment and mission. As the unit moved toward its transition out of Iraq, we developed new LOE objectives and end states for our retrograde to Kuwait to establish ourselves as a strategic reserve. Collectively over two separate events, the battalion leaders and staff defined and reaffirmed the unit’s combat operational plan. It proved its worth as the battalion executed combat operations in an area of operations greater in size than the state of Maryland and participated in, without error, the largest retrograde of U.S. forces since World War II.

## Requirements

There are several requirements for this approach to mission command to be successful. First, the commander must create an environment where collaboration and initiative can flourish. He can best do this by teaching, as opposed to simply directing. When possible, the commander should ask questions instead of making statements. This fosters critical thinking within the staff and other subordinates. Sometimes the commander may even want to ask questions to which he already knows the answer—just for the sake of creating dialogue and communicating that he values input.

Of course, for this to happen, the commander must be confident in his ability to be in charge without having to be the “smartest person in the room.” He must be comfortable not having to appear that he knows everything about everything.

In addition, an informed and integrated staff, no matter the rank or specialty, is necessary because

field grade officers must also act as teachers and coaches for staff and junior leaders. Regular staff training should be part of the battle rhythm. Field-grade officers, joined by the commander from time to time, can teach the staff campaign design and the military decision making process. This obviously requires a significant amount of time and is a challenge if the unit’s deployment timeline is tight. Often unit leaders decide that staff training requires too much time and comes at the expense of immediate needs, so they ignore it. Of course, as soon as the battalion meets one immediate need, another arises, and the staff never receives adequate training. Consequently, the staff is always reactive, not proactive. If properly trained, however, staff members become critical thinkers and innovators, and the unit is able to operate in a proactive fashion.

## Risks

As mentioned above, this method takes time. It does not work best when the unit is in a crisis, nor should units use it for short-term operations or planning; it is not mission-specific. It is intended to serve as a general framework for long-term mission command in order to develop a particular culture.

There are two risks in following this method of mission command. The first risk is the need to accept short-term suboptimal performance from new staff officers in order to drive long-term learning. (The adage that we learn from our mistakes applies here.) Every staff officer and leader is important in making this process work. Personal initiative and quality control are critical. Sending a subpar product back to be redone in order to drive learning is preferable in the long-term to simply handing it off to a more capable officer. The goal is to improve everyone’s capabilities.

Another primary risk to this process is that the outcome may be somewhat different than the commander envisioned. We collaborated to determine the desired end states or goals and jointly developed the key tasks or objectives that had to be accomplished to reach the end states. However, different people develop different paths to achieve the same goal. They often prioritize key tasks differently and put them in different chronological order. It is tempting for the commander to jump in and put them in the order that he dictates, but this is not wise. Usually, a plan the group develops, even

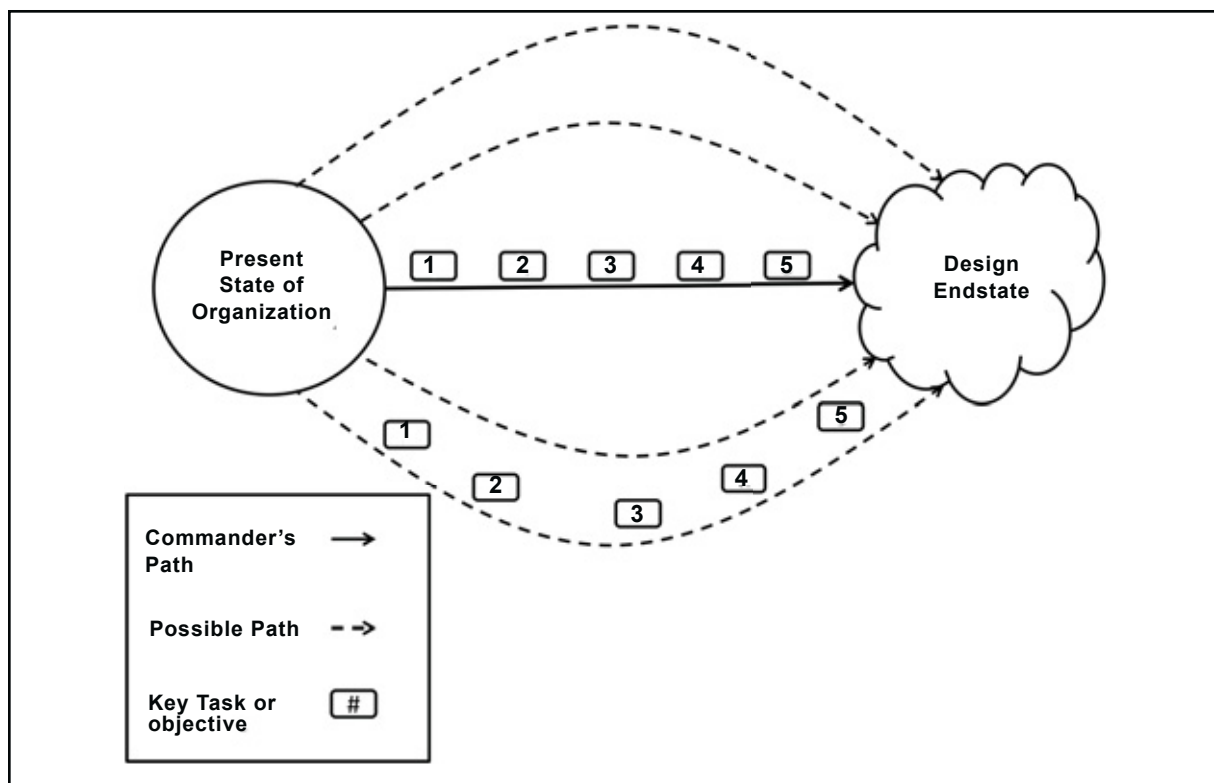


Figure 4

if it matches only 80 percent of the commander's plan, is superior to a plan developed solely by the commander. This is because when the group develops the plan, the members of the group have already bought in to the mission. They do not need convincing. If the commander develops the plan alone, he must work to sell it to the group. This often requires a great deal of time and energy. It also inhibits initiative and synergy. Our mission command method involves the input of many and results in synergy where  $1+1=3$ . The commander must be willing to accept that it is not his plan.

Figure 4 depicts this concept. The figure shows the desired end state, but shows many possible "paths" to arrive at that end state. The commander will most likely visualize his own path, including the key tasks or objectives needed to accomplish the end state. Of course, several other possible paths exist, as the dashed lines in the figure indicate. When subordinates develop alternate paths, they usually develop similar or even the same key tasks or objectives. However, they frequently place them in different chronological order or assign different priorities to them than the

commander does. The commander can facilitate their understanding or accept the path developed by the group instead of his own.

## Conclusion

Mission command need not always be commander-centric. Our method of establishing a shared vision by incorporating subordinates early in the process during the *understand* and *visualize* phases can serve as a "unifying theory" for leadership that results in a more effective organization. It clearly communicates how to integrate all lines of effort in the organization to achieve a commonly defined end state. It establishes ownership, aligns goals early, empowers subordinates, and improves long-term efficiency. After all, a group-developed goal that is "good enough" is better than a "perfect" answer the commander develops by himself.

While the process we have described requires time and patience in the short-term, it results in a climate that does indeed foster initiative. It empowers junior leaders to think critically and address challenges that are likely to arise in the future. **MR**

# Customary Law and Its Challenges to Afghan Statehood

Kathleen Reedy, Ph.D.

*“Where do you go when you have a problem like a land dispute or if two neighbors get in a fistfight?”*

*“We go to our village elders (mashraan) first. If they can’t fix it, then we go to the district center.”*

I HAD THE CONVERSATION above with numerous Afghans in the primarily Pashtun provinces of Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost.<sup>1</sup> They use the government as an alternative for justice, but it is not their preferred source for it, and this says a great deal about how effective the central government has been in extending itself into the everyday lives of the people. This kind of arrangement should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Afghanistan or other societies where customary forms of justice are prevalent. However, in a country where government legitimacy is constantly in question, being in second place as a provider of governance has serious implications for state stability.

Establishing the rule of law, based on an unbiased, trustworthy, and readily available judicial system, is essential for proving to people that their government is legitimate and worth supporting. Dispute resolution, especially when a dispute involves violence or death, provides a fault line to examine to what extent a government has developed influence central to its credibility and power. A lack of government services and the resulting absence of popular support are prerequisites for an insurgency, so developing the formal judicial system and extending it across the entire country is a necessity for stability.<sup>2</sup> Rather than spending resources formalizing a power-sharing agreement between state and customary authority, as some have recommended, coalition partners should focus on developing the government’s judicial capabilities and improving the system’s transparency so that Afghans begin to see their government as competent, a source of justice, and a valid authority.

Dr. Kathleen Reedy is a socio-cultural advisor for American military and civilian interests. She holds a Ph.D. in social anthropology and served for 15 months in Afghanistan with the Human Terrain System. She previously worked in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt.

PHOTO: An Afghan elder discusses a recent weapons cache find with U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Thomas Grace during a shura in the Garmsir District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 30 May 2011. (U.S. Marine Corps, CPL Colby Brown)



## Building State Authority

A state, or at least the Weberian model of a state, is a democratic entity that derives its authority from a monopoly on legitimate violence, resting on a clear and universal application of the rule of law.<sup>3</sup>

One challenge facing the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) is that most Weberian and European-style states spent many years in internal conflict until they reached a balance of power and rights acceptable to rulers and ruled. However, the reach of the central government of Afghanistan has rarely penetrated to the rural and peripheral areas of the country, providing little to and asking little of the population.<sup>4</sup> There has been no long-term progression of centralized authority, and the attempt to impose it quickly now is difficult in terms of providing services effectively and developing legitimacy. The rapid turnover of governments has not helped, as the people see a central government as a temporary condition that they need only wait out. In the country's nonurban areas, long-standing customary law and local forms

of authority reign supreme because local leaders have had time to prove themselves and the compromises of power and support have long since been accepted. The GIROA fights an uphill battle for recognition.

However, the most significant complication stems from the GIROA itself. Today, the Afghan government is centralized in terms of where power (especially financial power) resides. Although the lower house of the National Assembly (*Wolesi Jirga*) is an elected body, people living outside of Kabul rarely see their representatives. Lower-level officials such as provincial or district governors are appointed rather than elected and more accountable to the central government than to the people living under their jurisdiction. There is legislation, though, to correct some of this lack of local accountability: elected provincial councils already exist (although they rarely have much influence) and district councils are built into the governmental system. That the latter have not been implemented yet is mostly due to complications with funding and the election process.



(photograph courtesy of author)

A district center with no governor or tashkil, Musa Khel, Khost, 23 April 2011.

In the interim, the central government and its international advisors have pushed to create temporary, appointed *shuras* (semi-formal councils run by the Afghan Social Outreach Program) at the district level to help advise district governors, who cooperate with them based on individual relationships. These are usually inconsistent across time and space, changing every time a new district governor or shura member is appointed. To further complicate matters, a shura that relies on local elders runs the risk of having insurgents co-opt it through intimidation or infiltration, both of which have happened more than once.

However, the district government has the best chance to extend governance into the everyday lives of people. The district governors and shuras share responsibility for distributing development funding and handling disputes. One-third of the 35-man shura deals with disputes that come to the district center and the district governor works with them. There is also a member of the *tashkil* (civil servant roster) called the *huqooq* whose job it is to consider a dispute and decide whether district officials should handle it, pass it on to the provincial courts, or hand it back to the village elders. When they do take on cases, especially those that concern land rights, the shura and district governor act as mediators, bringing in the aggrieved parties and elders to look for solutions and then ratifying the results. In theory, judges and attorneys should participate in the process and codify relationships and responsibilities. However, reality is a messy business.

Many district centers have empty slots on their *tashkil*, and many have not yet been able to set up the shuras. The executive branch effectively co-opts the judicial role when the district governor arbitrates disputes. And, of course, district officials and shura members exhibit many human failings. (Popular accusations of corruption and favoritism run rampant.)<sup>5</sup> Some district governors do not show up to work for weeks at a time and some arrive to districts so dangerous that they do not feel safe living there, and their influence does not extend far beyond the walls of the district centers.

Even when people turn to the district governor or shura for help, officials are not always able to convince them to participate in court or to abide by court decisions.<sup>6</sup> Local police units are understaffed or so busy conducting counterinsurgency operations

***...the police tend to be woefully ignorant of the very laws they are meant to be upholding.***

that they do not have time for community police work. However, this is not necessarily all bad, because the police tend to be woefully ignorant of the very laws they are meant to be upholding.

Some people adamantly do not want district officials involved in their lives. In many remote areas, the GIRoA has little or no presence, and that is how people prefer it. On visiting a village in Nader Shah Kot, Khost, I saw a large group of men getting ready to take some animals to another village. When I asked why, one explained that there had been a car accident where several people had died and they were going to make amends to deter any further violence. I asked if they had informed the local district governor and the man replied that they had not and then asked me not to do so. He and his friends did not want the GIRoA meddling in their affairs, even in a case where multiple deaths had occurred. If support of the people is the basis for legitimacy, the villagers' desire to not involve government officials makes it clear they have no love for the government and do not consider it a true authority figure.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, an age-old problem exists as well: Afghans are famous for turning to a variety of sources to resolve their problems. If they do not like the decision one source makes, they will readily turn to another for an alternative.<sup>8</sup> In districts in more remote provinces, people usually do not even consider the government option, largely because there has never been much of a regular government presence in these areas. Large portions of Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost Provinces in the east fit this bill. The very absence of government services results in a lack of state allegiance. Pashtuns in the region have no reason to support a state and have been the instigators of numerous uprisings and insurgencies over the years.<sup>9</sup> In the absence of any higher or even hierarchical authority, people's first (and often only)

source for practical governance is the local village leaders.<sup>10</sup> The government is not the source of the most effective and pervasive rule of law in rural Afghanistan. Informal systems (such as the Pashtunwali code, *sharia* law, or other traditional codes) produce legalistic effects and thereby essentially do governance without a government.

This system is effective and practical, even if it is inherently in competition with a fledgling government trying to establish itself as the source of authority. Most of the time, people rely on local leaders and respected figures to help them solve their problems, and given their understaffed tashkils, most district officials are content with that solution. They see themselves as back-up justice providers. Elders who are more accessible provide villagers with local, trusted men they can turn to, rather than the highly corrupt judges and lawyers that they believe pervade what judicial system there is. When I asked Afghans if they would consider taking their problems to a court, most just laughed, telling me that the GIROA “only serves justice to those who can pay for it.”

## A Dual System as the Way Forward?

Some experts contend that informal and customary systems can be successfully integrated with formal ones in power-sharing agreements that help legitimize the state while relying on traditional methods and leaders to reach into remote areas.<sup>11</sup> Others suggest that such an arrangement is a good option to establish a rule of law acceptable and accessible to all Afghans.<sup>12</sup> They admit that local forms of justice are sometimes co-opted by warlords, often fail to recognize human rights and sometimes even violate them, but they argue that they are the most pragmatic solution available for the time being.<sup>13</sup> However, we should not forget that success stories in other countries may not be relevant in Afghanistan, because many of the countries initiated non-traditional councils and state-like apparatuses to fill the gap left by the state and were able to create a new government system from scratch. In Afghanistan, we must work with the existing political structures. No new or regional governance structures have appeared spontaneously. Afghans live at the village level and see no gap to fill.

Moreover, proposals to create a hybrid system in Afghanistan do not account for the precedent they would set. Even if the human rights issues could be resolved, alternative rulings challenge state authority. It is fine for a state to devolve power. It still acts as a state in doing so, and other authorities ultimately derive their power from it. However, the current set-up of resolving problems in the absence a legal system merely highlights that the state has once again failed to provide an essential service to its people. As a result, Afghans continue to regard their informal, customary power structure as being the first and final authority.

Systemizing the current informal arrangements is therefore detrimental to the long-term stability of GIROA as a state. While doing so may be practical in the short-term and even appear to benefit the state by filling a gap that the GIROA cannot currently fill, creating a system with multiple locations of authority ultimately undermines national governance. Ordinary Afghans already expect their new national government to fail as all the others have and are content to wait for this to happen. Government longevity and authority based on popular consent require the development of a judiciary that is effective, independent, accessible, and unquestioned.



**Afghan government and International Security Assistance Force officials take part in a shura, or meeting, with elders in Safidar Village, Zabul Province, Afghanistan, 1 February 2011. (DOD SSgt Brian Ferguson, U.S. Air Force)**



The importance of developing the state becomes even more urgent when we examine flaws in the customary law structure. We should not easily dismiss concerns about human rights and equity before the law. While it often took a while for them to admit it, ordinary Afghans were suspicious of more than just official courts. They knew their elders were not above corruption and could be just as biased as government judges. I heard numerous stories about aggrieved parties being afraid to turn to elders for help.

In Mandozai District, Khost, I met a man at the district center who had gone there every day for years. Some time ago, his wife had taken their children to her parents' house, where the children had mysteriously died. His wife's family refused to let her return to him and eventually insisted that they had never been married, much less had children. He had gone to his village elders, but was shocked when they refused to help him. According to him, they dismissed him because his wife's family was far wealthier than he was. They were able to secure their own ends with bribes to the elders. He turned to the GIRoA, as some injured parties do, and though they actually had a legal team in Mandozai, they had no way to enforce subpoenas and could not get the defendants or witnesses to come to the district center.

This flouting of the formal system reveals that many people do not consider the government to be a true authority, but only an option for the marginalized who have no other recourse. In this case, the elders were corrupt and GIRoA was ineffective, so the man got no justice at all.

Although most Afghans initially turn to their elders for help, it is dangerous to assume that traditional methods for dispute resolution are preferable to state solutions. Implementing such a process can create a wealth of follow-on injustices: *badal* or blood vengeance can create new victims or, force the family of a murderer to give a bride to the victim's family as recompense for a life taken, thus compelling an innocent woman to pay for a relative's crime. While such solutions might be preferable for dominant males, the society's marginalized prefer a decision that would better protect them. However, when they try to access that justice, the results are often competing decisions (official and customary) that leave local politicians in a quandary. Should they enforce a decision that might go against the customary one?

If they contest a local elder's decision, they may delegitimize themselves by exposing their inability to force anyone to accept their rulings. Doing so is a risk some choose not to take, and in deciding not to take it, they fail in a vital aspect of governance: protecting the population.

Having spent 15 months working in rural Afghanistan, I realize that most Afghans prefer to solve their own problems in their own ways working with people they know and trust. Some—especially those whom customary law victimizes or leaves behind—actively seek the help of government, but the government is unable to provide it. If the GIRoA wants to be a state, it must act like one, and that means becoming the most popularly accepted source of justice and rule of law around.

## Slipping through the Cracks

Unfortunately, the many complications involved leave local government figures, their international partners, and everyday people in a bit of a mess when it comes to dispute resolution and extending the role of GIRoA into daily life. In cases where tension or competition exists between the systems, cases can go unresolved with people getting no justice from either side. However, if the government remains uninvolved, by default the community must try to solve its own problems at the risk of allowing marginal people to be victimized and delegitimizing the government's tenuous authority. Clearly, the role of the government and its future success are ambiguous (at best) under current and proposed power-sharing understandings.

I was visiting the district center in Khayr Kot, Paktika for the first time, when the district governor invited a couple of us to come in and have tea. After we had seated ourselves on the floor and exchanged pleasantries, I asked him what kinds of things he did, day to day. He became agitated and said that he was actually dealing with a case at that very moment and that he did not know what to do about it.

Some 15 years ago, a man from Khayr Kot had murdered a Kuchi man.<sup>14</sup> The elders had stepped in to prevent further bloodshed and provide restitution to the injured party by promising that one of the killer's sisters would marry into the dead Kuchi's family when she was of age. Customary law restored peace, and everyone was happy except the designated girl. She had just reached marrying

age and was terrified and furious at the thought of having to take up the nomadic Kuchi lifestyle because of something her brother had done. Her pleas to her elders to change the deal fell on deaf ears, so on her own initiative, she went to see the district governor and ask him to intercede. “You are from the West,” the district governor said. “What would you do in your country?”

Knowing the social dynamics were far more complicated here, I nevertheless answered honestly, “In America, we punish individuals for their own crimes. We don’t punish their family members.”

“Exactly!” said the governor as he slapped his leg and pointed at me for emphasis. “And that is the Afghan law, too! But that is not the culture here, so what can I do? I want to help her, but if I do, they will not listen to me, or if they do, they will just nod and then find a way to go behind my back. Or she will be shunned by her family and village and no one will ever marry her, which is very bad in Afghan culture. But if I do nothing, I am letting them break the law and she is being hurt for something that is not her fault. What can I do?”

“I don’t know. What will you do?” I asked.

His eyes were heavy and his face grave.

“I don’t know.”

He had not made a decision by the time I left, and I never heard what it was. This was a lose-lose situation for him and the GIRoA, and he was fully aware of the implications for his authority and government legitimacy. The governor genuinely wanted to enforce the law and protect the girl, but was worried that doing so would destroy whatever credibility he had and reveal the government’s powerlessness. Because politicians in Afghanistan are often cynical and only out for their own gain, it was disheartening to see someone who actually believed in the rule of law caught in such a bind.

## The Way Forward

Searching for a way to blend the state and customary legal practices in Afghanistan is certainly the most pragmatic short-term solution available for the future. It covers areas where the GIRoA lacks manpower and provides a process that is familiar to people. However, if the coalition intends to create a stable, long-lasting government, such power sharing will undermine those goals, even in the short-term. In Afghanistan, a large number



**A rare district attorney, with very few files and very few visitors, Nader Shah Kot District, Khost Province, Afghanistan 28 May 2011. (photograph courtesy of author)**

of people have lived for a long time without any government involvement in their lives; customary law and local leaders are the primary authorities in their lives. They see any government as transient and likely to fail, and they see representatives as inherently corrupt. The government is at most an annoyance to be out-waited. A dual system will make it look like the government does not believe in its own capabilities and will reaffirm the widespread belief that its officials should only be a secondary source of justice. In other words, compromise favors the status quo—where the GIRoA is in second place—and will never help the state develop the legitimacy it needs to thrive. Instead, it will likely lead to yet another instance of an Afghan state only existing in and for urban populations and leaving rural areas in the same condition that set the stage for the current insurgency.

Providing justice and establishing the rule of law are central parts of governance, it is beholden

on the GIRoA to become the primary authority in these realms. Maintaining the status quo for practicality's sake will not help to develop stability. Most people handle minor problems on their own—this is true anywhere—but the overwhelming majority of Afghans must eventually acknowledge that the government is and should be the sole authority that can resolve major conflicts or concerns the people cannot themselves handle. Therefore, instead of focusing time and resources on building some sort of dual system in slow trial stages as a “band-aid” solution, the GIRoA and its coalition force supporters should devote themselves to making rapid and aggressive improvements to the Afghan judicial system. A plan to do so should include the following points:

- **Capacity.** To fill the gap, the GIRoA needs to quickly develop and train a strong corps of judges and lawyers, or legal-advisers-in-training knowledgeable about the formal law.

- **Presence.** The legal professionals need to be in every district, especially rural ones that do not have access to provincial courts. They must work full-time, be available to all, actively seek out situations where they can become involved, and not cross boundaries separating the judicial role from the executive one.

- **Degree of involvement.** Every situation, accidental or intentional, involving death should be the government's responsibility to investigate.

- **Transparency and trust.** Accusations of corruption are hard to fight, but the best way to do so is to provide oversight to ensure rulings are fair and just. The government then must make judicial proceedings public, perhaps by having weekly radio broadcasts of current cases and impartial dispute resolutions. Such public announcements will help develop popular trust in the system and enforce accountability.

- **Enforcement.** The customary dispute resolution system generally works because people buy

into it. Creating a reliable and trustworthy formal judiciary process will help create the same buy-in, but the police must be ready to get involved, regardless of personality conflicts.

- **Community involvement.** Although this method places the GIRoA in the forefront, it does not lose the elements of community involvement in dispute resolution. Judges and lawyers can call in local elders to provide advice, with the understanding that they are there by invitation and that ultimately the judges' decisions are final, even if contrary to their recommendations or to traditional customs.

Developing state legitimacy and authority in regions where large numbers of people have long lived without any substantive external influence is a daunting task. This is especially true in the realm of justice where state laws may sometimes conflict with local traditions. Building schools and clinics seems easy work next to the challenges facing the GIRoA as it attempts to provide good governance and assert itself as the primary authority in legal matters. However, its doing so is essential to build long-term stability and popular support. Otherwise, the government may well find its foundation continually challenged by uprisings born of one of the prerequisites of insurgency: the lack of justice.

Rule of law must extend beyond the cities and into the most rural and remote areas of Afghanistan. It must do so in a consistent and transparent way and soon. Time is of the essence. The longer it takes to get the rule of law in place, the harder it will be to do so. The government must prove to the population that it is and should be the primary authority. Playing second fiddle to, or sharing power with, customary law, as pragmatic as doing so may seem at first, will only weaken the government's standing. Only by demonstrating that it, the government, is the primary source of judicial power can the GIRoA develop true and lasting legitimacy. **MR**

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#### NOTES

1. The views expressed in this paper are entirely the author's own. They do not represent the views of the U.S. Army, TRADOC, or the Human Terrain System. Data for this paper was collected via first-person interviews with Afghan civilians and officials while the author was deployed to Afghanistan (2010-2011). Many thanks to the men and women of TFs Rakkasan and Duke and the many civilians and Afghans who offered support and hospitality.

2. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 2006).

3. For analysis and critique, see Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Alexander Wendt and M. Barnett, "Dependent State Formation and Third World Militarization," *Review of International Studies* 19 (1993): 321-47; Joseph Hiatt, "State Formation and the Incorporation of Nomads: Local Change and Continuity among Jordanian Bedouin," in Peter Skalnik (ed.), *Outwitting the State* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers 1989): 65-80; Beverly Milton-Edwards, "Palestinian State-Building: Police and Citizens as Test of Democracy," *British*



*Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25,1 (1998): 95-119.

4. This is especially true for war functions, where the state requires manpower and support from its population and must be willing to grant people rights and protections as incentives for support. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 900-1992* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992).

5. For details on perceived corruption, see Integrity Watch Afghanistan, "Afghan Perceptions and Experiences of Corruption: A national survey 2010" (2010).

6. While the question of enforcement is beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that for customary law decisions, there is no enforcing mechanism aside from shunning. For GIRA, the police theoretically work in coordination with the local government, but the rules about what that should look like are vague and depend on whether the District Governor and Chief of Police get along.

7. See Ann Mason, "Constructing Authority Alternatives on the Periphery: Vignettes from Columbia," *International Political Science Review* 26, 1 (2005): 37-54.

8. For an overview of this theory, see David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 77-82.

9. Thomas Barfield, "Weapons of the Not So Weak in Afghanistan: Pashtun Agrarian Structure and Tribal Organization for Times of War & Peace" (Yale: Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series, 2007).

10. It is not uncommon for people to look to "tribal" authority, but aside from sharing

names, Pashtuns are highly egalitarian and prefer not to organize according to hierarchical models for real decision making.

11. Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State-Building and the Politics of Coping," *International Security* 31, 3 (2006): 74-106; Volker Boege, "Bougainville and the Discovery of Slowness: An Unhurried Approach to State-Building in the Pacific," ACPACS Occasional Paper No. 3 (Brisbane: Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, 2006).

12. See Thomas Barfield, Neamat Nojumi, and J. Alexander Their, *The Clash of Two Goods: State and Non-State Dispute Resolution in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006); Noah Coburn, John Dempsey, *Informal Dispute Resolution in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2010); Ali Wardak, "Building a Post-War Justice System in Afghanistan," *Crime, Law and Social Change* 41, 4 (2004): 319-41.

13. Though they are considered common, warlordism is not part of a traditional Pashtun social organization, which is based on strict egalitarianism.

14. Kuchis are a traditionally nomadic Pashtun group who travel across Afghanistan and Pakistan. They once were major merchants in the region and quite wealthy, but lost that source of income. Many remain nomadic, travelling by tractor and camel train with their herds, taking day jobs as they move, and living stark lives in tents.



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# What Comes Next?

## An Argument for Irregular War in National Defense

Major Phil W. Reynolds, U.S. Army

**A**RE WE WINNING the war on terrorism? Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld asked, “Is DOD changing fast enough to deal with the new 21st-century security environment?”<sup>1</sup> Most would agree that the war on terrorism, the so-called “Long War,” is generational in nature, and less a match-up of numbers than one of resources. Today, in these times of fiscal constraint, the question no longer is “Are we winning the war on terrorism?” but “What comes next?”

The answer: Murky, irregular conflicts will increase while state-versus-state wars decrease. Since World War II, there have been 44 interstate wars and 372 asymmetric conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Iraq, Afghanistan, and 9/11 are prima facie evidence that “strong actors [like the United States and NATO] have encountered a class of weak actors . . . who are increasingly apt to use indirect strategy to prevent others from coercing them.”<sup>3</sup> Already the Department of Defense has moved toward a framework that integrates this type of irregular war. The 2009 *Capstone Concept for Special Operations* noted, “The foreseeable future promises to be an era of persistent conflict—a period of protracted confrontation among states, non-state entities, and individual actors increasingly willing to use violence to achieve their political ends. This future is unlikely to unfold as steady-state peace punctuated by distinct surges of intense conflict.”<sup>4</sup>

Asymmetric conflicts against irrational actors engaging in activities ranging from catastrophic terrorism to intrastate, ethnic, and civil wars are the most likely threat to U.S. security and interests. Conventional forces cannot deter terrorists and insurgents without costly deployments. The new U.S. strategy must be politically palatable and cost-effective, and it must prevent our enemies from attacking and destabilizing our allies and hurting Americans at home. The most dangerous threats to the United States are the ones for which we cannot prepare conventional responses, so it is essential that the United States develop and use irregular warfare (IW) as a deterrent that creates strategic depth. It must engage threats to homeland security before they achieve critical mass and move beyond their own borders. Offensive IW conducted by U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), along with carefully coordinated “Phase 0” activities, can achieve this goal.

Major Phil W. Reynolds is a U.S. Army civil affairs officer. He holds a B.A. from Saint Bonaventure University and an M.A. from the University of Oklahoma. MAJ Reynolds served with 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment and the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne). He has served in Africa, Iraq, and extensively in Central Asia. He would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Mike Richardson and Lieutenant Colonel Eric Rotzoll for their insight when preparing this article.

PHOTO: Competitors conduct a static line jump from a C-130 aircraft during Fuerzas Comando 2012 at the Colombian National Training Center on Fort Tolimaida, Colombia, 13 June 2012.

## The Cost of Peace

Unfortunately, our irregular warfare adversaries (IWAs) range from criminal networks to revolutionary insurgents to sophisticated terrorist networks focused on mass destruction inside the United States. According to the capstone concept, advances in weapons “will render such irregular threats ever more lethal, capable of producing widespread chaos, and otherwise difficult to counter.”<sup>5</sup> The very dominance of U.S. conventional power pushes weaker opponents into asymmetric conflicts, breaking the relationship between economic and military power that had produced superiority on the battlefield. This underlying causality, the increasing lethality of weapons, and the longer duration of wars mean that a strategy of using conventional forces aiming for victory in quick, kinetic operations is no longer feasible.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, it is inconceivable that the United States would surrender its position of influence and responsibility in the world by choosing not to engage in asymmetric, irregular wars. The United States will increasingly conduct counterterrorism counterinsurgency (COIN), unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, and stability operations, the five operations of irregular warfare as defined by DOD’s 2010 Joint Operating Concept for Irregular War.<sup>7</sup> Since 9/11, USSOCOM manpower has nearly doubled, its budget nearly tripled, and overseas deployments have quadrupled. USSOCOM has the responsibility for synchronizing and conducting global operations against terrorist networks and synchronizing global training and assistance planning. This means USSOCOM “reviews, coordinates, and prioritizes all DOD plans that support the global campaign against terror, and then makes recommendations to the Joint Staff regarding force and resource allocations to meet global requirements.”<sup>8</sup>

**Resources drive strategy.** Emerging from a difficult decade and perhaps the hardest fight in its history, the Department of Defense will have

to create a new strategy with fewer resources. The U.S. military will have to walk a fine line, paying for a conventional force robust enough to deter unfriendly state actions, and yet maintaining a force that can deploy and resolve a myriad of problems posed by nonstate actors engaging in irregular warfare.

The COIN strategies used in Iraq and Afghanistan will not be replicated because the costs of deploying conventional forces will only increase. The final direct cost of U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan may reach two trillion dollars, and the money and political support simply is not there to repeat this resource-rich strategy. Moreover, as John Arquilla notes, “The evidence of the last ten years shows that massive applications of force have done little. Networked organizations like Al-Qaeda have proven how easily it is to dodge heavy punches and persist to land sharp counterblows.”<sup>9</sup>

If, in the coming years, government deficits force unwanted cuts in the defense budget, then DOD would do well to preserve USSOCOM funds at the expense of the services. Special operations forces have shown they can do more with less, demonstrating efficiency the services cannot match. Unsustainable costs further erode the efficacy of the military’s conventional forces as a deterrent to our IW adversaries. The Defense Department has announced that it will cut \$487 billion over the next 10 years.<sup>10</sup> However, the budget’s annual growth of 4 percent from FY 2000 to FY 2010 has been greater than historical gross domestic product growth.<sup>11</sup> This created a bubble in defense funding not entirely due to the costs of Iraq and Afghanistan. Secretary Panetta recently addressed the exploding personnel costs that have grown by nearly 90 percent since 2001.<sup>12</sup> Personnel costs now consume 45 percent of the defense budget, totaling \$250 billion in FY 2012. The Defense Health Program in particular grew at a real annual rate of 6.3 percent from FY 2001 to FY 2011, but the budget only requests a 1.2 percent increase, a

***...it is inconceivable that the United States would surrender its position of influence and responsibility in the world...***



case in which growth is greater than inflation, but which the budget request doesn't cover.<sup>13</sup> For FY13, the Defense Health Program drops from \$52 to \$48 billion, with those savings coming from higher fees, co-pays and deductibles for retirees.<sup>14</sup>

Policy makers could be forced to choose between expensive acquisition and Research and Development (R&D) for major wars and personnel and IW capabilities. Since FY 2001, overall active-duty end strength has remained relatively flat, hovering around 1.5 million, but the budget now supports a force with essentially the same size and force structure as in FY 2001 at a 35 percent higher cost.<sup>15</sup> The true danger is that the dollar squeeze between expensive conventional forces deterrence and deficits will ultimately limit options for the president in dealing with *both* threats, conventional and irregular. Recently, Secretary Panetta has indicated that "as it draws down forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and cuts security spending by hundreds of billions of dollars over the next decade, the Department... is planning to reduce capability for conventional military operations and counterinsurgency, shrink the size of the military,

maintain counterterrorism capability and invest more in countering high-end threats like long-range weapons being developed by China that could challenge U.S. power projection capabilities in the Western Pacific."<sup>16</sup> Reinvestment will go towards a new long-range bomber and carrier-based unmanned strike and surveillance aircraft. The FY13 R&D and procurement request is 32 percent of the whole, reflecting a growing reliance on technology as a way of reducing risk, and costs of personnel and is likely to grow.

As the out years stretch on, money will become tight. In the Army, the choice between traditional war and IW will become acute. The Army believes modular brigades and wide area security allow it to wage both kinds of war, but the success of that idea is dubious at best.<sup>17</sup> The comparative advantage the United States has enjoyed in technology will be difficult to maintain, as the land forces "reset" equipment, a program funded by overseas contingency funds. With political backing for operations in Afghanistan waning, congressional appetite for this discretionary funding may disappear, meaning those "reset" costs will have to



(U.S. Army, SGT Ben Watson)

**A U.S. Army intelligence sergeant with Special Operations Task Force-South climbs over an abandoned compound during a security patrol in Panjwaii District, Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, 20 February 2011.**

be absorbed by the services' base budget. Inevitably, dollars meant for IW requirements will shift to support the services' operations and maintenance requirements. Fewer dollars will be forced to do more. This is the hollowing out of the force.

The DOD has already taken steps to increase the size of special operations forces, a relatively inexpensive option for IW.<sup>18</sup> In the FY 13 budget, the president has asked for \$10.4 billion for USSOCOM, down from 10.5 in FY 12, with about \$2.6 billion funded with overseas contingency funds.<sup>19</sup> Still, in contrast with the services' \$315 billion in Operations & Maintenance and procurement costs, IW capabilities seem cheap by comparison.

## IWA Characteristics

The characteristics of our irregular warfare adversaries demand a response option more nimble and deployable than conventional forces. Confronting what Andrew Mack calls the "resolve" and "strategic commitment" of IWA requires using our own domestic irregular warfare capability, resident in USSOCOM.<sup>20</sup> The Long War against these loosely organized small groups, bound by difficult-to-define ideas, needs a long-term, low-cost strategy, as outlined above. The second requirement is a low-visibility, almost shadow employment of forces that takes place below the radar of the media and the U.S. population. The deployed footprint of conventional forces and their relative immobility vis-à-vis IWA is a poor choice at best. U.S. armed forces massed in World War II-style formations capable of delivering heavy firepower have had great trouble finding and fighting the enemy's small, dispersed, but coordinated bands, which have only grown stronger in the years since 9/11. This is a global struggle between tradition-bound nations and innovation-oriented networks.<sup>21</sup>

These decentralized organizations are more efficient in resource distribution and consumption, and highly effective at leveraging their information advantage. The chief failure of conventional forces as a deterrent or preemptive option is that our irregular warfare adversaries attack *where* a stronger opponent lacks power and resources; this is Mao's "strategic defensive" in the information age.

On the U.S. side, the "myth of the offensive" and U.S. success in World War II and the first Gulf War

have bred the belief that since the nation goes to war with limitless resource superiority, nothing less than *unconditional* defeat of the enemy is acceptable. The country has created a vast military-industrial complex to support this notion. Embodied most recently as the Powell doctrine, it is, however, a false notion, since most conflicts in our history have not ended with the enemy's unconditional defeat. This belief in American exceptionalism, particularly in armed conflict, provides a challenging obstacle to success in IW. Few of our adversaries can be identified clearly, much less defeated. In this murky perimeter, the United States must conduct deterrence and preemption against irrational and fanatic enemies in ungoverned areas of failed and failing states and be satisfied with enemy inaction as a viable objective.

Our irregular adversaries use their information advantage to combine political and criminal elements to influence the population. They use the low-level and persistent engagements of irregular warfare to gain an information advantage against their enemies. The Joint Operating Concept emphasizes this *political* element: "These threats are enmeshed in the population and increasingly . . . these conflicts are contests for influence and legitimacy over relevant populations."<sup>22</sup> The political element is dominant, and the population is the target during the initial phases of any IW activity. Then the act of deterrence becomes one of influencing the population to make the decision that is more favorable to U.S. goals. A population chooses between the competing alternatives provided by the IWA and the United States or host nation based on benefits and costs.<sup>23</sup> In areas of weak state control where the population is vulnerable to IWA activity, those preferences will be concealed, seamlessly blended within the rich contextual fabric of IW. Conventional military planners and units seek to dominate the environment and suffer from cognitive dissonance when confronted with adversaries who must be understood in context, as part of a networked whole. Attempts to restore resonance by simplifying the problem are filled with checklists, link programs, reams of data and slides, and burgeoning headquarters' staffs. In such a complicated environment, author Keith Payne writes that "in no case could the desired information be outlined" and attempts to do so were "frustrated by ambiguous and conflicting data."<sup>24</sup> The larger the force structure deployed to execute the activities to



(US Air Force, TSGT DeNoris Mickle)

U.S. Army soldiers from Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group, Fort Carson, CO, observe a CV-22 Osprey during Emerald Warrior 2011, Cannon AFB, NM, 1 March 2011.

defeat the IWA, the worse the cognitive dissonance becomes.

USSOCOM's small teams seek to be unobtrusive, becoming part of the cultural fabric, and over time develop a contextual understanding of the environment required in these *social* wars of the future. These small teams conceal their own resources and power projection capabilities, thus getting inside their adversaries' information advantage.

This a strategy the Army can sustain with less resources, relying on a perception of power and on client states to deter aggression, rather than on expensive, less mobile conventional forces stationed at the edges of the world. The relative immobility of conventional forces increases the information advantage that our adversaries enjoy. Their advantage relies on support of the population, among which they move with impunity, like Mao's famous "fish in the sea." Offensive irregular warfare conducted by the United States must involve an approach of counterinsurgency and stability operations and developing host nation capabilities, while conducting foreign international defense or security force assistance. This layered approach would generate

contextually integrated intelligence that blunts the IWA information advantage.

Finally, national-level counterterrorism forces engage the IWA when deterrence fails. This highly selective type of preemption will still be necessary because these new enemies of the 21st century seem intent on engaging in unlimited warfare. They routinely target soft civilian targets in order to send messages to the relevant populations. Abu Hajir Al Muqrin, a theorist of modern insurgent and revolutionary terrorism, wrote in his *Guerilla War* that civilians can be legitimate targets.<sup>25</sup> Against *these* enemies preemption will necessarily take precedence over deterrence.

## A Way Ahead

Irregular warfare as a method to achieve national strategic goals will be exceedingly complex to execute. It will require patience and close cooperation among all federal agencies and a specialized, highly trained, low visibility force. A new effort to protect the 1206 "global train and equip" funds should be made. Budget requests for these funds have fallen consistently in recent



years as greater efforts are made to find savings in the DOD budget. Congressional approval of this funding could give DOD the ability to respond quickly to emerging threats, and allow time for the slower, more politicized Foreign Military Financing to be put in place. To move beyond congressional concerns that such funds overlap with traditional Department of State activities, the Army could take the funds from the geographic COCOMs and give them to USSOCOM.

We need better cooperation between the geographic combatant commanders and USSOCOM to coordinate both commands' "Phase 0" activities. Typically, the geographic COCOMs and USSOCOM have different immediate and mid-range goals with partner countries, even if the long-term goal is the same. Giving USSOCOM its own theater security cooperation program would also be an important tool in tying together State and Defense during "Phase 0."

Closer coordination between federal agencies can save costs and generate better IW capabilities. As difficult to imagine as it was a decade ago, interdepartmental cooperation is gaining ground. In its 2012 budget request, the Department of State allocated \$56 million for its Global Security Contingency Fund.<sup>26</sup> This is a coordinating body that will integrate Department of State activities with DOD and has set aside an additional \$25 million for conflict stabilization operations.<sup>27</sup> This fund provided training and for deploying experts in the fields of policing and rule of law, transitional governance, and economic stabilization and development. The Global Security Contingency Fund and conflict stabilization operations give the United States the opportunity to create "mini-task forces" to deploy and work together *before* an emergency occurs. This deepens the well of IW experience and generates tremendous efficiencies; the next crisis averted could save a trillion dollars and thousands of lives.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, the services and USSOCOM should go beyond the requirements to synchronize emerging conventional forces capabilities with special operation forces-enabling requirements. The SOCOM commander could train and equip attached FORSCOM units to provide flex capability for particularly important joint and combined training exchanges. By training and deploying together, the

enablers located in the conventional force fulfill the intent of the law and increase the number of personnel familiar with SOCOM operations. Utilizing conventional force line companies and battalions as trainers enables a sustained presence, beyond the capability of individual operational detachment-Alpha. In executing this type of security force assistance with no change to their METL, conventional forces battalions gain crucial IW experience without creating a cumbersome security force assistance organization that takes away from DOD end-strength numbers. Using his newly funded authority, the SOCOM commander could use conventional force officers and NCOs to ensure familiarization with U.S. procedures and combined interoperability. The intelligence field, in particular, would benefit.

## Balance with Conventional Deterrence

In a period of fiscal constraint, the Department of Defense strategy against future enemies must balance conventional deterrence against near-peer competitors with defense against nonstate actors. USSOCOM is uniquely manned, trained, and equipped to conduct a broad set of activities that sit between diplomacy and major war. A robust strategy of irregular war would provide a low cost, alternative deterrent against asymmetric adversaries while preserving the services for major combat operations.

In the future of irregular war, USSOCOM will be the choice to execute an economy-of-force security strategy. Small, relatively cheap, and clandestine teams would deploy to partner nations in an effort to strengthen friendly governments and convince unfriendly regimes and IW adversaries that the cost of breaking the peace will be too high to bear. Engaged by persistent development, these partner nations will provide defense in depth for the American homeland. Most important, USSOCOM's broad campaign of IW becomes an additional layer of protection for the homeland, beyond static deterrence. As we have seen, the costs of conventional deterrence and major combat operations in dollars and in human capital require an alternative.

What comes next? The answer: An energized, muscular strategy of irregular war, waged below the level of public perception, buying time and space for a military stretched by a decade of war. **MR**

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# An Asset Out of You and Me

## Communicating What It Truly Means to be a Soldier

Colonel Lawrence J. Morris, J.D., U.S. Army, Retired

**T**HE ARMY MUST inform our political leaders and the national media what it means to be a member of the profession of arms. The Army is accountable to the American people who employ and finance it, and the people need to know about an institution and instrument of power with which few of them have direct experience.<sup>1</sup>

When communicating this message as an institution, the Army must decide how and through whom to communicate, and most of all what to communicate. Because the *institution* must accomplish the task does not necessarily mean that this communication takes place solely or even mainly through conventional institutional mechanisms such as public affairs offices and the military's traditional means of engaging the public, the media, and opinion leaders. Those tools might be efficient and effective in providing the public data such as Army demographics, engagements, and plans, but tired, obsolete, or marginally effective in transmitting "what it means to be a soldier."<sup>2</sup> Still, to accomplish this ongoing task, the Army must unleash all elements, capabilities, and attributes of the force. The organs through which to communicate a message that is both impressionistic ("what it means" is in part a philosophical matter) and specific (*this* Army in the second decade of *this* century) must deliver that message—meaning that the message must drive the tactics.

The entire institution must participate in the communication. The "strategic corporal" (whether Abu Ghraib guard or Medal of Honor winner) can be as consequential to the public's comprehension of the Army as the words and acts of generals and sergeants major.<sup>3</sup> The entire Army is on the hook, for better or worse, formally or otherwise, to accomplish this communication. Their charge is not to persuade or to convince but to *inform*—a liberating task, because it reduces the specter of salesmanship and focuses on portraying a reality that is hard to grasp for those who have not lived it.

Colonel Lawrence Morris is general counsel, Catholic University of America. He holds a J.D. from Marquette University Law School and an M.S. from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

PHOTO: U.S. Army SGT Robert Smith, right, with 2nd Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, talks to Afghans before a Cash for Work program outside Stronghold Dog, Afghanistan, 29 January 2011. (U.S. Air Force, SSgt Joseph Swafford)



## The Charge is to Inform

To inform *credibly* suggests persuading some politicians or journalists of the Army's virtues and strengths, and being confident that the real merits of the Army's story will be compelling. The institution ought to be confident while recognizing that American pluralism, freedom, and skepticism assure that not all will agree—regardless of the message's accuracy, credibility, and neutrality.

We should do the informing not because it might make the Army look good but because it is the least we expect of an Army in a democracy. All public institutions owe accountability to the people and none more so than the nation's primary instrument of war. The Army best reaches the people through the nation's leaders and media—and those organizations cannot learn what it truly means to be a soldier from any source more reliable than the Army itself. Still, it is one thing to embrace the requirement to inform society about the Army's composition, campaigns, and capabilities—and another to tell leaders what it means to be a professional soldier in this young, ambitious, rule-of-law-based democracy, in the 21st century, in an all-volunteer force deployed ceaselessly since crossing the Sava River at Christmas 1995.

We must do so as well because a meaningful bond with society's civilians is essential to reducing the risk that the Army will drift away from the society it defends—due to that society's comfort, ignorance, and complacent certitude in the Army's competence.

## The Audience

Political leaders and the national media often share that certitude or complacency. They are the Army's key audiences because they are a primary source of the public's information. In addition, the media are a major source of political leaders' information, and political leaders, particularly those who focus on the military, affect the media's perspective. The *national* media are especially influential because of their ubiquity, their efficiency in informing large numbers of people, and their increasing concentration.

The methods of informing these two institutions about the profession of arms may well vary—sensibly and defensibly—but the core depiction should not. The Army needs to prepare its message to

these two broad entities with an awareness of the capabilities, biases, and backgrounds of the press and political leaders.

At the threshold, the Army should build its message and strategy on the assumption that political leaders are even busier and more distracted than they were in 1974, when a frequently cited study showed that political leaders read the mainstream media and political journals, as opposed to specialized publications.<sup>4</sup> Feed them where they browse.

## National Media

Communicating effectively a message of such subtlety and sophistication requires appreciating the attributes of the media in general and of the national media in particular. With the continued decline of the daily newspaper and the explosion of alternative media, there are fewer authoritative voices on national defense or military affairs, yet also an uncoordinated multiplicity of direct media, including in-theater military bloggers (and even uniformed bloggers) that can confound, confuse, or mislead a news consumer—and enrich a careful reader with unconventional perspectives, insight, and perhaps pathos or propinquity that is difficult for the mainstream to produce.<sup>5</sup>

Because most political leaders consume leading dailies and mainstream news network outlet products, these should be the chief but not exclusive focus of the Army's communications effort. There is no *Earlybird* for members of Congress, though they read their equivalent "trade publications" such as *The Hill*, *Roll Call*, *CQ*, and *Politico*.<sup>6</sup> In reaching a national audience with this message, the Army would be wiser not to target particular media (the concept of "targeting" suggests a "campaign," which connotes an aspect of manipulation that might undermine confidence in the message) but to "flood the zone" with an approach that communicates the reality of the profession.

While media are more diverse than ever due to a decline of "legacy" media and an explosion of new media, only a few experts in soldiers or soldiering have emerged as the opinion leaders and shapers of politicians' and others' perspectives on wars and the military. Thomas E. Ricks, previously of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*, profiled Marine boot camp in *Making the Corps* in 1997 and skewered the civilian leadership nine years later in



U.S. Army medic PV2 Ryan O'Connor talks with Kyrgyzstan media during an interview at Transit Center, Manas, Kyrgyzstan, during media day, 23 July 2010. (U.S. Air Force, SSgt Nathan Bevier)

*Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, tracking the early stages of the Iraq war. Dexter Filkins and Michael R. Gordon have proved the “church-and-state” division between the news and editorial sides of a paper by their years’ worth of reporting on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars for a paper with little enthusiasm for either conflict, *The New York Times*.<sup>7,8,9</sup> Rick Atkinson, who profiled the West Point class of 1966 in *The Long Gray Line*, gained considerable acclaim for his reporting as an embedded reporter early in the Iraq War and since.<sup>10</sup>

While “national media” generally implies news organs, both books and films also communicate what it means to be a soldier—as seen in recent years by the popularity of *Band of Brothers* and *The Hurt Locker*, which portray soldiering in a straightforward manner evoking deeper understanding of soldiers’ challenges, sacrifices, and joys. *Fields of Fire*, unusual for its Vietnam-era sympathy for the ground soldier, might be the quintessential “what it means” book of the last generation.<sup>11</sup>

The Army must have a noncynical, clear-eyed view of the characteristics of most national media, and know that their practitioners are—

- **Truly interested in accuracy**, but unfamiliar with the military and thus are prone to mistakes and assumptions.

- **In search of a story**, and therefore drawn to conflict and controversy.

- **In search of a narrative**, and thus prefer telling stories through people rather than data.

- **Competitive**, and thus, always looking for a “new angle” that might receive greater play because it is new rather than newsworthy.

- **Reactive**, tempted to “herd journalism” because of their heightened consciousness of what the competition featured in last night’s broadcast or this morning’s paper.

As it performs its communications mission, the Army should avoid defensiveness or undue solicitude—the tension with the media in our free society is healthy and intractable—while informing with candor, confidence, and imagination.<sup>12</sup>

## Political Leaders

Competitive news outlets find ravenous customers in political leaders who have both a constitutional and operational impact on all facets of the profession of arms—from the size of the Army to its force structure, weapons systems, promotion policies, and disciplinary code. The American military is absolutely, unalterably subject to civilian control by the civilian commander in chief, the Defense and service secretaries, and the Congress that must approve all those nominees. This does not mean uniformed leaders unduly defer or capitulate when independent analysis and recommendations are called for, but it means recognizing that civilian leaders make the ultimate decisions.

The Army is communicating with a set of leaders whose declining military experience tracks that of their constituents. Only nine percent of them have served.<sup>13</sup> In the current 112th Congress, 20 percent of the House and about 25 percent of the Senate have military experience, the lowest percentage since before World War II, and a dramatic decline from the peak at 74 percent for the House (in 1969) and 78 percent for the Senate (in 1977).<sup>14</sup> This disparity does not necessarily translate to less appreciation for the military—in fact, sometimes the relative unfamiliarity elevates military service to an esteem born of incomprehension because it is so far outside their frames of reference. However, it obviously means that a shrinking minority of policy makers has a personal sense of what it means to be a member of the profession of arms and is more reliant on the media and other sources for that perspective.

Similarly, only two of the original 16 members of President Obama's cabinet had military experience.<sup>15</sup> There is also something of a geographical division among national leaders. About 47 percent of members of Congress from the southern states had military experience, compared to about nine percent from New England.<sup>16</sup>

Such disparities should be in the Army's mind when figuring out how best to communicate with these leaders—and such statistics might be less surprising when considering how far someone in New Hampshire or Vermont has to travel before encountering an Army installation of any size; by contrast, how far can you drive in Georgia or Florida without encountering an Army post, an air base, or a naval installation?

## A Compendium of Traits and an Indisputable Fact

A million soldiers might have a million different ways of expressing it, but there are some essential features of the profession of arms that most contemporary soldiers share, and which are essential to politicians' and media leaders' appreciation of the Army.

At the threshold, bearing the risk of being killed in defense of one's country is as old as the profession of arms, and the indispensable military experience. *Volunteering* to bear that risk is unique to a free society, and building the world's most powerful and most expeditionary Army from volunteers is both America's strength and the source of a conundrum: so few know what it truly means to serve in the profession because so few do. An Army of volunteers is all the more remarkable in today's America, because the soldier is defending a document (the Constitution) not a leader. In fact, the soldier defends a way of life, a concept of liberty—and not infrequently restores the liberties of allies (World War II) or comes to the aid of people in need (in the Balkans, Vietnam, Somalia, Libya). Bearing that risk voluntarily in a dangerous world reveals a range of attributes, traits, and experiences that captivate and mystify non-soldiers. A



From left, U.S. Rep. John M. Mulvaney, U.S. Army LTC Mal Earles, COL Jerry O'Hara, and COL Tracy Banister stand in front of the new U.S. 3rd Army headquarters building under construction at Shaw Air Force Base, SC, 28 January 2011. (U.S. Air Force, A1C Daniel Phelps)



member of the profession of arms, then, has a mix of characteristics, nearly all of them present in one line of work or another (e.g., public safety, clergy, medicine). However, displaying them in combination while making the unique commitment to risk one's life for our nation is unique to members of the profession of arms.

Communicating what it means to be a member of the profession of arms, then, means portraying these features credibly to journalists and leaders:

- **Mission first.** Today, almost every enterprise from a university to a print shop publishes a mission statement. Every soldier has fidelity to the mission instilled into him from the moment he first hoists a duffel bag. He learns the mission is not just an aspiration but a specific statement of a goal and how to achieve it.

- **Always planning.** The Army has memorialized the step-by-step process of mission analysis, course of action production, and recommendation and given it its own acronym—MDMP, the military decision-making process.<sup>17</sup> While most any multitasking mother conducts her own MDMP without benefit of a staff, the MDMP process does reflect the rigor that the Army applies to out-preparing the enemy, as it analyzes everything from the weather to the soil to the personalities of opposing leaders.

- **No plan survives first contact with the enemy.** The desire to plan is coupled with a realistic understanding that you can't plan everything and that war is a distinctly human endeavor. Plan hard and be prepared to adapt, confident that the planning itself introduced a rigor from which the best improvisation can spring.

- **Loyalty: speak up, then salute.** Civilians, including some with authority over the military, can have trouble comprehending that soldiers are expected to speak up and that, for example, a division staff planning meeting can be a raucous debate over the relative merits of a course of action. Leaders advocate their positions because those relying on them for their advice must have the benefit of unvarnished analysis; the vehemence of the debates sometimes surprises nonsoldiers because they are more familiar with the loyal salutes that follow them. It is not surprising then that many in the business world find former soldiers attractive for reasons such as their loyalty,<sup>18</sup> work ethic, discipline, and teamwork.<sup>19</sup>

- **Power down.** The mission is too big to micro-manage. Leaders define, subordinates execute, and systems exist to check and monitor. A soldier may not have celebrated his 18th birthday yet, but may be told to stand guard and confront intruders—and be trusted to do so.

- **Learn lessons.** It is inaccurate to say the military always fights the last war; sometimes politicians, newspapers, and the public do. The military does analyze the last war and the last battle and yesterday's activities so that it can succeed. That rigor, reflected in the after action review process and institutions that gather, analyze, and publish "lessons learned," requires planning, standards, and thick skin; it is one of the great areas of post-Vietnam improvement—and it all cycles back to mission.

- **Diversity.** Is there a more meritocratic, color-blind institution in the world than the U.S. Army? Drop in on any mess hall in any war zone and, you will hear regional accents and a variety of sports team loyalties, but you will find that soldiers know little about each other's political views.

- **Sacrifice, self-denial, and discipline.** If mission drives everything, then it can't be all about you. The profession of arms does not countenance self-seeking behavior and motivations (nor can it be blind to human shortcomings and the ability to channel and harness healthy ambition). Every soldier makes sacrifices, bears hardship, and takes risk for the mission—and his fellow soldier. Discipline in the little things (haircuts, accurate logs, and clean weapons) yields discipline in the big things (getting to a designated location at a designated time with the right people and equipment).

- **Teamwork.** All for one. You do not have to like him. You do have to work with him.

- **Risk and danger.** Public safety personnel charge into buildings or dark alleys aware that they might have to give their lives so that others can enjoy the blessings of liberty. However, uniquely, we ask soldiers to go to inherently dangerous places and bear sustained risks. It is no accident that firemen and police officers share a special bond with soldiers, and that many Reserve units are packed with individuals whose day jobs are in those professions.

- **Discomfort.** More often than not, and much more often than he would like, a soldier is too hot

or too cold, and muddy or greasy. *Everybody* is. You deal with it.

- **Boredom and constricted freedom.** It takes no time before a soldier learns the cry of “hurry up and wait,” whether staging for a truck to move to a range or queuing up for a phone call from a battle zone.<sup>20</sup> Such laments, coupled with the curse of too much free time with too little freedom, gives license to what General Dwight David Eisenhower frequently called a “soldier’s right to grouse.”<sup>21</sup> Soldiers do this often—and usually with enough humor to remind each other of the solidarity that is born of shared annoyances.

- **The soldier is a weapons system.** Mission trumps comfort and personal preference, but a leader cares for his people from clean socks to family tranquility—and serves those whom he is entrusted to lead.

- **Worldly, apolitical.** A soldier might have had a cloistered view of the world before donning a uniform, but he can find himself drinking tea with an Afghan village elder, negotiating the Seoul, Korea, subway, or paying more attention to Middle Eastern affairs than he ever imagined he would. All this changes how he views that world and what he takes back to civilian life.

- **Battle-hardened—human and resilient.** As the Afghan war concludes its 11th year, we are in the longest period of sustained conflict in our history. Society has commendably paid attention to the casualties of war, including mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Soldiers appreciate it, but they also recognize that some civilians assume or expect a war veteran to be scarred by war. Every soldier who deploys confronts his own mortality, but the great majority do not carry mental scars that limit their utility to society. Undue solicitude regarding PTSD or MTBI can undermine a soldier’s reintegration into society and sometimes harm his employment prospects and social well-being. The “support the troops” slogan of the past decade is far preferable to blaming soldiers for the policies they execute—but it can also lead to an empty empathy that might reflect a detached citizen’s good faith ignorance. Some soldiers need special care from the society that sent them to war, and all merit society’s gratitude, which it can better express in an enriched GI Bill than a sentiment rooted in unreality.



GEN David Petraeus, commander of the International Security Assistance Force, speaks with Sen. John Kerry and U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry outside of the Afghan Presidential Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, 17 August 2010. (SSgt Bradley Lail, U.S. Air Force)

- **Ambitious, educated, and educable.** Soldiers are faithful to each other and to their country. Their nobility is not diminished by the enlightened self-interest that attracts many to the military, which offers the opportunity to learn skills and deepen character traits that the civilian world might not foster. Senator John Kerry drew much attention during the 2004 presidential campaign when he said, “Education, if you make the most of it, you study hard, you do your homework and you make an effort to be smart, you can do well. And if you don’t, you get stuck in Iraq.”<sup>22</sup> While Kerry later explained it as a “botched joke,” the Army—and certainly politicians and the press—would do well to confront such a perspective candidly and address whether there is a so-called “backdoor draft,” which critics say makes the military appealing to the less educated and means they bear a disproportionate share of the burdens of military service.<sup>23</sup> Few want to talk about redressing this phenomenon with measures such as the draft.

- **Good humor.** Another way to address Senator Kerry’s remark is with the inimitable humor of the troops, some of whom produced a hilarious banner in reply—“HALP US JON CARRY, WE R STUCK HEAR N IRAK”—thus, demonstrating that soldier humor sometimes is even printable.<sup>24</sup>

- **Imperfect.** Soldiers make mistakes, and sometimes engage in misconduct, not unlike others in the

society from which they came. When such conduct warrants exclusion from the profession of arms, the services accomplish this in the world's most durable system of military justice, a disciplinary system that soldiers consider essentially just.

● **Relentless.** Soldiers get up and go back to it the next day. To many current soldiers Lee Greenwood could just as well be Perry Como. Toby Keith, on the other hand, may have well channeled their reality, in his lines such as, "*Can't call in sick on Mondays/When the weekend's been too strong.*"<sup>25</sup> Few soldiers consider themselves heroes; they *do* give themselves and their reliable teammates credit for steadiness and persistence.

● **It's for real.** Soldiers love to be appreciated—but not mimicked. Recently a commercial outfit started a SEAL team experience for civilians, akin to the major league "fantasy camps" at which middle-aged men get to dress up, run the bases, and take batting practice.<sup>26</sup> The SEAL camp involves similar dress-up and gentlemanly rigor (219 of 223 candidates completed the camp). At its essence, military life produces exhilarating stress and the recognition that on any given day a soldier can be tapped on the shoulder, told to ruck up and move out, sometimes without so much as a phone call or good-bye kiss.

## A Million Vignettes

Most of all, members of the profession meet society's expectations. They exhibit what is most profound and edifying about the profession in activities any given moment on any given day in a force of more than a million active and Reserve soldiers:

A squad, still the most elemental military unit, is in mid-patrol on a steamy campaign season day in Afghan lowlands, steady pulls on the Camelback and steady grips on the ready, acutely attentive and confident in its equipment and leaders.

The soldiers pull garrison "motor stables" right after breakfast, setting the rhythm of a motor pool full of taxpayer-furnished trucks and tracks.

A Jewish chaplain holds the hand of a critically wounded Christian soldier, reciting Christian prayers in the soldier's ear, over the din of the MEDEVAC helicopter.

A drill sergeant crouches next to a trainee, as dusk threatens, trying again to get past that day's bolos to qualify on his weapon.

The new lieutenant rethinking everything from his handshake to his smile as he prepares to meet his cadre, senior in age and junior in rank.

The sixth grade teacher crawls out of bed in the dark to run five miles so that he can be ready to deploy in a few months.

## By All Means Available

The Army should not be so focused on the medium—the media—as to lose sight of the message it can transmit. It does not require a Pew study to state what almost any news consumer knows—we are reading fewer papers and getting more information from the Internet, YouTube, blogs, and the rest. The Army cannot live in a 20th-century cave surrounded by "old media," nor need it be the grandparent in bell bottoms, whose strained hipness distracts his audience from the important messages he wants to communicate.

Use all media. Work the conventional media because they are still read by the political leaders and because they set the agenda for the rest of the media. It is not just the circulation of the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or *Wall Street Journal*. These gentlemen *do* read each other's mail, and react to each other's agendas and scoops—and this drives the news cycle, story selection and placement, and ultimately some of what seeps into the public consciousness. Consider the Aberdeen Proving Ground sex scandals of the 1990s—outrageous conduct but not unique; they were amplified because of their proximity to Washington, D.C. A semi-local story became a national one.

The Army should fling open the doors, brief national security correspondents and bloggers, cooperate with the movie producer and not be riled by the imperfections he depicts, and, yes, grant unfettered access to a *Rolling Stone* reporter because a best-selling account of West Point's warts and limitations that causes an Old Grad (or a cadet's mom) to fume or blush will also display the essential goodness, patriotism, and near-naiveté of the supposedly jaded and comfortable Millennials.<sup>27</sup> The experience of embedded reporters shows not that they "go native" but that the unique charms and foibles—most of all the unvarnished honesty—of the rank and file is the best way to communicate what it truly means to be a member of the profession, a realization as old as Ernie Pyle



and Bill Mauldin but as fresh as Michael Yon.<sup>28</sup> And Bing West.<sup>29</sup> General Eric Shinseki, as Chief of Staff of the Army, used to begin his speeches saying, “My name is Shinseki and I am a soldier” (he changed Army rules to require the capitalization of the term *soldier* in all correspondence).<sup>30</sup> No one believes a too-good-to-be-true story, but the media *can* handle the truth and they can place the shortcomings of the

military in context—especially when the context is one of breathtaking risk, heartwarming teamwork, steely resolve, and an unglamorous, imperturbable commitment to mission and each other.

Failure to communicate, or communicating defensively and predictably, carries the risk of a dangerous complacency and a cleavage born of comfort and detachment. **MR**

## NOTES

1. Only about nine percent of the American people have military experience, see <<http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/showthread.php?t=126614>>, Accord, <[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What\\_percentage\\_of\\_US\\_population\\_has\\_served\\_in\\_the\\_military](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_percentage_of_US_population_has_served_in_the_military)> (29 June 2011).

2. For example, press releases, formal briefings, open houses, air shows, flyovers, and advertising during sporting events.

3. See the Medal of Honor citation for Specialist Salvatore A. Giunta for his heroism in Afghanistan in 2007, at <<http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/giunta/citation.html>> (28 June 2011).

4. Carol H. Weiss, “What America’s Leaders Read,” 38 *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1 (1974). Weiss writes that American political leaders consider the mass media to be essential sources of information on national issues. This study draws comparisons with an earlier *Quarterly* article finding that leading politicians read political journals such as *National Review* and *The New Republic*, as opposed to specialized magazines about science and such topics.

5. Newspaper circulation has been declining for decades, but has been more precipitous in this century and in recent years, attributable to a host of factors, not the least being the availability of the Internet and the growth of cable television, see <<http://www.thenewamerican.com/index.php/economy/sectors-mainmenu-46/3437-newspaper-circulation-continues-decline>> (29 June 2011).

6. A daily compilation of news articles and commentary, focusing mainly on defense and national security issues, available to most military members at <<http://ebird.osd.mil/index.html>>. Circulation figures of dead-tree newspapers are not the only or most accurate gauge of news consumption, however, as the Pew Center, among others, has noted in studying readership (which includes web views) as opposed to the number of papers bought and delivered. See Pew Center for People and the Press, showing a tempering if not a plateau in the decline in newspaper “readership” when it includes online reading, see <<http://people-press.org/2006/07/30/section-2-the-challenge-for-newspapers/>> (28 June 2011).

7. Filkins wrote for *The New York Times* for several years, winning a Pulitzer Prize in 2009 for his Iraq reporting (his second nomination), and moved to *The New Yorker* in 2010. His best selling, *The Forever War*, (2008), depicted the Iraq and Afghanistan wars in a compelling manner that was neither romanticized nor jaded.

8. Michael R. Gordon filed countless dispatches from theater and wrote with Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (2006), an account painstaking in its accuracy and dispassion.

9. This is the media’s common shorthand for the separation of news content and editors from those involved in producing opinion pages. “The editorial pages are under the direction of an editor outside the news division. Newspaper people call this ‘separation of church and state,’ meaning there is a line between news and opinion that must not be crossed.” Bob Wilson, *How Newspapers Work*, see <<http://people.howstuffworks.com/newspaper3.htm>> (30 June 2011).

10. The book came from a Pulitzer Prize-winning series of newspaper stories (Rick Atkinson has won three Pulitzers). Among many others, see Anne Garrels, *Naked in Baghdad: The Iraq War and the Aftermath as Seen by NPR’s Correspondent Anne Garrels* (2003), Sebastian Junger, *War* (2010); Kirsten Holmstedt, *Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq* (2008), *The Girls Come Marching Home* (2011), and Katherine M. Skiba, *Sister in the Band of Brothers* (2005). Among the much-praised soldier accounts is Craig Mullaney’s *The Unforgiving Minute* (2009).

11. Published in 1978, the best of several excellent books by James H. Webb, a Marine, former Navy Secretary and current Senator from Virginia.

12. A former head of public affairs for U.S. Special Operations Command makes this Constitutionally accurate point in observing that the “mutual enmity” between military and media “can create a trust and confidence between the two that results in fairer media coverage of the military.” COL Barry E. Willey, “The Military-Media Connection: For Better or For Worse,” *Military Review*, December 1998-February 1999 issue, as quoted in LTC Michael J. Burbach, *Public Affairs in the 21st Century* (unpublished, submitted to Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1999), 9. “[T]he Army accepts and fully endorses the healthy tension . . . between the normal desire of the media to inform the public . . . and the normal desire of commanders to control the information environment about those same operations . . .” FM 100-6, *Information Operations*, as quoted in *Burbach*, *ibid.*, at 16.

13. See endnote one.

14. See <[http://www.moaa.org/lac/lac\\_resources/lac\\_resources\\_tips/lac\\_resources\\_tips\\_decline.htm](http://www.moaa.org/lac/lac_resources/lac_resources_tips/lac_resources_tips_decline.htm)> (28 June 2011).

15. The two with military experience were Defense Secretary Gates and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki, see <<http://theautopsy.wordpress.com/2009/10/11/what-do-obamas-appointees-have-in-common/>> (28 June 2011). Four of the administration’s original 32 policy “czars” had military experience. *Ibid.*

16. See <[http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cspg/smartpolitics/2010/05/us\\_military\\_service\\_in\\_the\\_us.php](http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cspg/smartpolitics/2010/05/us_military_service_in_the_us.php)> (28 June 2011).

17. MDMP, reflected in numerous regulations and guides, now also appears in popular literature. See, e.g., Karl Anders Ericsson, *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance* (2007).

18. Wal-Mart and other major corporations seek ex-military, including those with combat experience, putting particular value on their teaching and leadership.

19. “From the Battlefield to B-School,” *SimonBusiness* Fall 2008, March 14, 2008 (Fall 2008 issue, a publication of the University of Rochester Simon Graduate School of Business). The article quotes a professor as saying former soldiers make excellent students because of their “high level of maturity and experience, a natural take-charge approach and a get-it-done attitude that positively affects everyone around them.” *Id.* at 35.

20. Of course recited with winking jocularity, see <[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Where\\_does\\_the\\_line\\_Every\\_day's\\_a\\_holiday\\_and\\_every\\_meals\\_a\\_feast\\_come\\_from](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Where_does_the_line_Every_day's_a_holiday_and_every_meals_a_feast_come_from)> (28 June 2011).

21. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President* (vol. 1), 240, 270 (1990).

22. See <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/31/AR2006103100649.html>>. See the video of Senator Kerry’s remarks at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRjUubkxmv4>>.

23. The term took on several meanings, of which the two main ones were (1) the “stop loss” policy that extended some soldiers’ enlistments was a form of a draft in that the extensions were involuntary, and (2) the military was an employer of last resort for certain sectors of society, making it similar to a draft in that some who enlisted did so because they had no other options.

24. The banner read (misspellings and capital letters in original; the K in “stuck” faced backwards), “HALP US JON CARRY – WE R STUCK HEAR N IRAK” See <<http://www.hoax-slayer.com/soldiers-answer-kerry-comment.shtml>> (28 June 2011).

25. See the full lyrics to Keith’s “American Soldier” at <<http://www.elyrics.net/read/t/toy-keith-lyrics/american-soldier-lyrics.html>> (28 June 2011).

26. See <[http://www.nbcwashington.com/on-air/as-seen-on/SEAL\\_Training\\_for\\_Civilians\\_Washington\\_DC-122478584.html](http://www.nbcwashington.com/on-air/as-seen-on/SEAL_Training_for_Civilians_Washington_DC-122478584.html)> and <[http://www.cleveland.com/nation/index.ssf/2011/05/civilians\\_test\\_their\\_limits\\_in.html](http://www.cleveland.com/nation/index.ssf/2011/05/civilians_test_their_limits_in.html)> (the latter story notes that 219 or the 223 students “graduated”). Among many examples, see the web page for the Chicago Cubs’ fantasy camp at <<http://www.cubsfantasycamp.com/>> (28 June 2011).

27. David Lipsky, *Absolutely American: Four Years at West Point* (2003). Another book, coincidentally about West Point, that reflects a “pure civilian’s” growing regard for the Army was written by a professor who came to West Point to teach literature and had no military background of any kind. Elizabeth D. Samet, *Soldier’s Heart: Reading Literature through Peace and War at West Point* (2008).

28. An especially intrepid and indefatigable blogger in Iraq and Afghanistan, see <<http://www.michaelyon-online.com/>> (28 June 2011). This has also become Army policy, which counsels that “To broaden public awareness of the Army, Army personnel are encouraged to speak with the media factually, candidly, and fully about unclassified matters on which they have personal knowledge and expertise.” AR 360-1 (15 September 2000), para. 5-12. Accord, COL William M. Darley, Why Public Affairs Is Not Information Operations, Army 9 (January 2005). The Army should promote “public exposure of the greatest asset the Army has – the American soldier.” *Id.* at 10.

29. Francis J. “Bing” West has written several award-winning books about the Marine Corps, and has continued to travel into combat theaters, filing stories that combine views of strategic with a sympathetic, clear-eyed portrayal of service members’ challenges and determination. He operates a website, <<http://www.bingwest.com/>> (29 June 2011), but also writes books and files for conventional media such as *National Review*.

30. Including in his retirement speech, see <<http://www.army.mil/features/ShinsekiFarewell/farewellremarks.htm>> (29 June 2011).



# Nothing is Simple in Afghanistan

## The Principles of Sustainment and Logistics in Alexander's Shadow

Captain Andrew P. Betson, U.S. Army

Captain Andrew P. Betson is an instructor in the Defense and Strategic Studies Program at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He holds a B.S. from West Point and an M.A. from the Patterson School of Diplomacy. His assignments include two deployments to Iraq with the 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.

PHOTO: Soldiers of C/3-66 Armor, attached to Task Force 2-28, recover airdropped supplies, Paktika Province, Afghanistan, July 2011. (U.S. Army, CPT Bradley Vance)

**I**N 329 B.C., Alexander the Great led his Macedonian army east from Persia, along the Helmand River, through Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul before crossing the Hindu Kush mountain range with approximately 100,000 troops and followers.<sup>1</sup> After more than 2,300 years, the most modern militaries on earth struggle to sustain their forces in the same lands. Alexander's execution of his Bactrian Campaign in what is now Afghanistan exemplifies why modern military historians consider the Macedonian king both a great tactician and a genius in military logistics.<sup>2</sup>

This article examines why supply distribution in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan is so difficult. U.S. Army Field Manual 4-0, *Sustainment*, contains the U.S. Army's sustainment principles for "maintaining combat power, enabling strategic and operational reach, and providing Army forces with endurance."<sup>3</sup> The principles are *integration*, *anticipation*, *responsiveness*, *simplicity*, *economy*, *survivability*, *continuity*, and *improvisation*. This article will consider the logistics distribution challenges posed to the International Security and Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan through the lens of these principles. It will be beneficial to first consider how a distribution framework should look in a frictionless theater. The U.S. Army's doctrine for sustainment and its sustainment brigade will best serve this task.

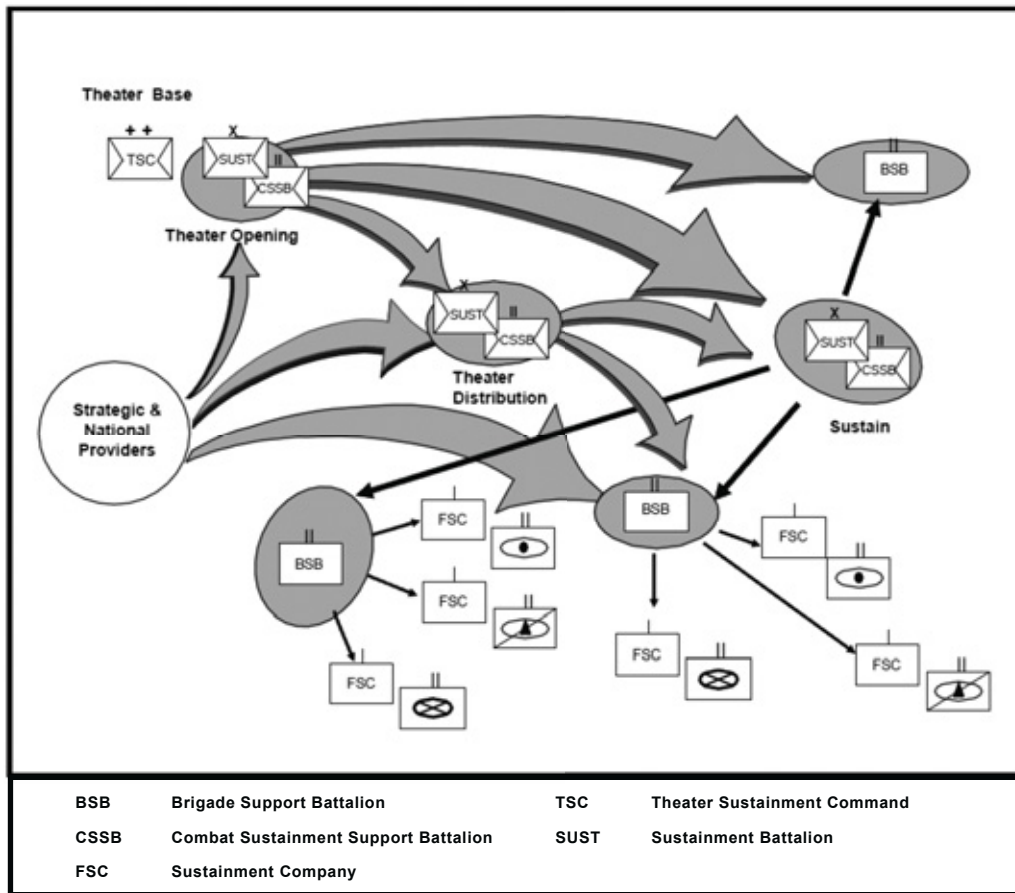


Figure 1

Since the Army's reorganization for modularity in the early 2000s, the brigade serves as the base unit for both combat and sustainment. Sustainment brigades are modular units "built" with a variety of multifunctional and functional battalions based on the mission, enemy, terrain, troops, time available, and civil considerations. While other unit types factor into the overall sustainment framework, this article deals only with those related to distribution.

In a typical theater, one brigade serves as the theater opening brigade, responsible for operating rail, air, and seaports of debarkation. Theater opening tasks are critical for the efficient reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of materiel and personnel. The theater distribution brigade synchronizes joint distribution and manages the distribution network. Each division or task force retains a sustain brigade responsible for providing services and support through the operational to the tactical level (Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> The theater sustainment command, the

senior Army sustainment headquarters in a theater (commanded by a general officer), synchronizes the efforts of these brigades and other subordinate units in support of theater and combatant commanders.<sup>5</sup>

## Simplicity

Field Manual 4-0 defines the principle of simplicity as "clarity of tasks, standardized and interoperable procedures, and clearly defined command relationships."<sup>6</sup> Afghanistan's territorial borders, weather, and terrain prevent the simplicity sought through the Army's modular concept, and the nature of joint and multinational operations hinder logisticians as they attempt to employ standardized procedures (Figure 2).<sup>7</sup>

The nearest deep-water port is 573 road miles from Kandahar, 1,257 road miles from Kabul, and across one international boundary, on the Arabian Sea in Karachi, Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> These distances approximate the distances from New York City to



Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, respectively. Furthermore, Afghanistan shares boundaries with countries such as Iran that are not on the best diplomatic terms with the West. The extent to which these problems affect distribution will be discussed below.

Within its borders, Afghanistan experiences extremes in climate, weather, and terrain. The country's central highlands and mountainous northeast stand in dramatic contrast with its desert climate in the southwest. While the dry southwest may experience just two inches of precipitation annually, the northeast mountains average 39.06 inches, of which much of that is snowfall.<sup>9</sup> The Hindu Kush and its subsidiary mountain ranges render the majority of land unsuitable for cross-country movement, and its poor roads are characterized by restrictive alignments, steep grades, sharp curves, and switch-backs.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, while most of the country lies between 2,000 and 10,000 feet in elevation, the

highest regions can reach 24,000 feet in elevation.<sup>11</sup>

The combination of the climate and the terrain in Afghanistan compels a reliance on air assets for movement and delivery of some material. However, the altitudes in the country stretch the capabilities of rotary wing assets. (The UH-60 Blackhawk and CH-47 Chinook have published service ceilings of 6,500 feet and 20,000 feet, respectively.)<sup>12</sup> Thus, ground forces must rely on U.S. Air Force fixed-wing assets on many occasions, even though, as the commander of the U.S. Transportation Command testified to Congress in 2010, it costs ten times as much per pound to transport something by air than by land or sea.<sup>13</sup>

Just as the terrain and weather force joint cooperation in less than ideal situations, the nature of the coalition demands multinational cooperation. Although each nation in an international coalition assumes responsibility for its supplies and distribution, multinational operations often force

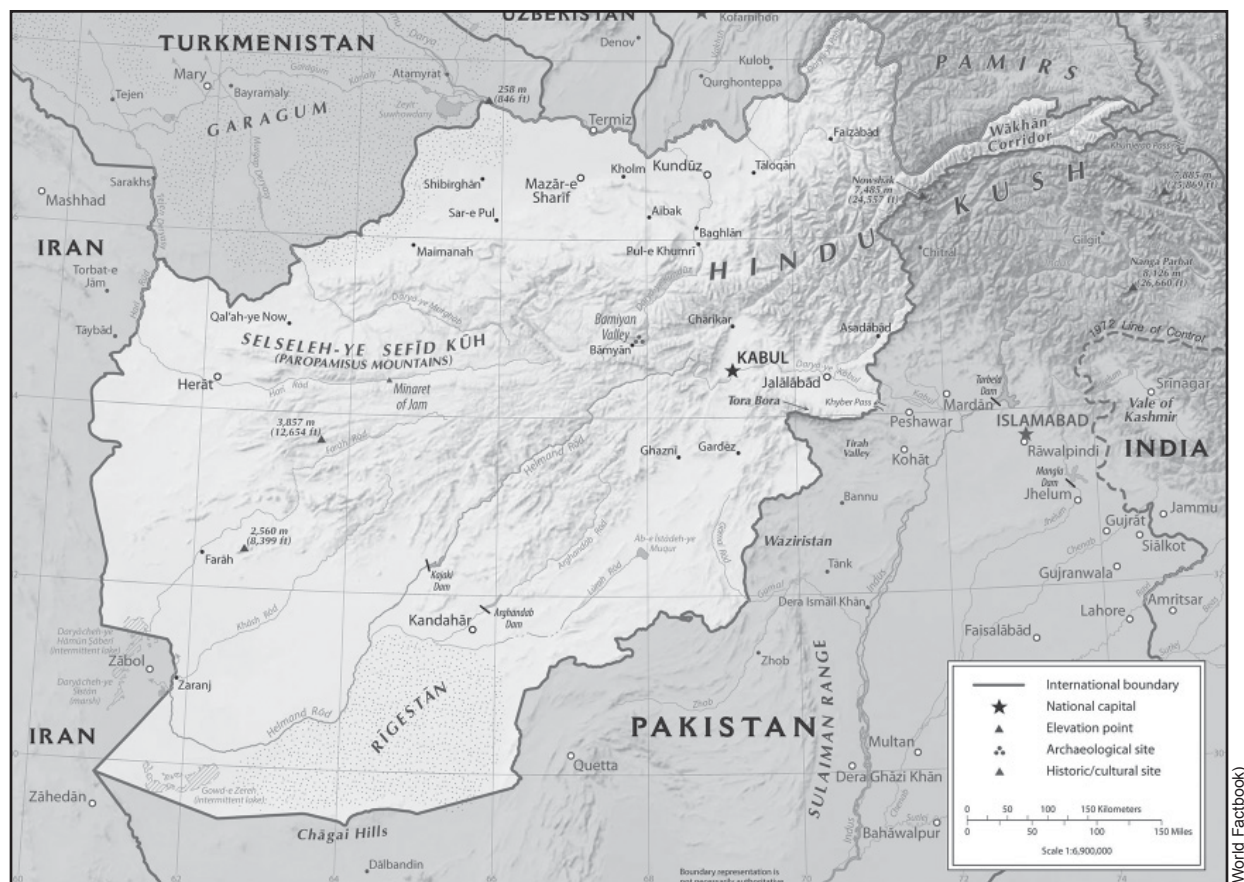


Figure 2

international logistics cooperation. As of December 2011, 48 countries contributed to NATO's mission in Afghanistan, and four—Italy, Germany, Turkey, and the United States—served as lead countries in six regional commands. The variety of platforms and the types of fuel the platforms consume complicate receiving, transporting, and distributing petroleum. While the U.S. and British militaries rely almost exclusively on JP-8, other nations in ISAF require mostly diesel fuel, and the Afghan National Army uses both diesel and unleaded gasoline.<sup>14</sup> As these nations work toward a common objective, the progressive levels of the conflict present increasingly complex challenges to logisticians.

## Survivability and Responsiveness

The challenges of achieving survivability and responsiveness demonstrate why tactical distribution is so difficult in the region. The principles can be mutually defeating in this environment.

The term survivability refers to the ability to protect personnel, information, infrastructure, and assets from destruction or degradation. Unlike pre-Cold War conflicts, for the last six decades warfare has been typified by the lack of a safe rear area for receiving, staging, and distributing supplies and equipment. Almost every stretch of road and block of airspace in Afghanistan is vulnerable to enemy attack. The few narrow roads cut out of the sides of the cliffs of the Hindu Kush canalize distribution elements and enable the enemy to use improvised explosive devices (IEDs) effectively. The mujahedeen perfected their targeted ambushes on Soviet convoys over many years in the 1980s by setting mines or IEDs on or beside roads throughout the country. Due to the unforgiving terrain, they could trap forces by destroying multiple vehicles throughout the column and inflict significant damage on them before the benefits of superior technology could take effect.<sup>15</sup> Today, the Taliban and Al-Qaeda continue to employ these tactics even as the endurance of the ISAF has surpassed that of the Soviet forces.

To increase ISAF distribution element survivability, the coalition has turned largely to air resupply. The conflict has seen airdrop design innovations such as the refined use of the Joint Precision Airdrop System, which steers cargo as it descends by parachute.

***Almost every stretch of road and block of airspace in Afghanistan is vulnerable to enemy attack.***

Seeking to achieve survivability, however, translates to limited responsiveness. An Army company commander on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border stated that his two biggest support challenges are unpredictable weather conditions that prevent flights of resupply aircraft, and having to fly to many small, remote outposts, which reduces the availability of delivery assets.<sup>16</sup> These problems are also seasonal. The requirement for aerial resupply in the region doubles in the winter months because of road closures, and the spring thaw commonly washes out bridges and roads.<sup>17</sup>

The examples above portray how survivability and responsiveness can be mutually negating because of the tactical logistics in Afghanistan. Logisticians work tirelessly to fulfill requirements so combat elements can translate their tactical successes to operational victories. However, more challenges exist in the bigger picture of operations.

## Economy and Anticipation

Factors associated with the economy and anticipation sustainment principles help explain why distribution is so difficult for operations in Afghanistan. The lack of a deepwater port, the enemy's strategy of asymmetric warfare, and the changing level of U.S. commitment to the campaign embody these problems.

Field Manual 4-0 defines the principle of economy as "providing sustainment resources in an efficient manner to enable the commander to employ all assets to generate the greatest effect possible." It further emphasizes, "Staffs also achieve economy by contracting for support or using HN [host nation] resources that reduce or eliminate the use of limited military resources." Sustainment commanders embrace this principle by using host nation contractors to drive cargo trucks into and within Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup>

However, using contractors for the majority of ground support presents problems with accountability and situational awareness, critical in effective distribution. The modern DOD distribution system relies on the ability to track the identity, status, and location of vehicles, containers, and equipment in the distribution pipeline and on the battlefield. This concept is called in-transit visibility.<sup>19</sup> The 101st Sustainment Brigade observed that the lack of in-transit visibility of host nation convoys “jeopardized mission accomplishment for the [sustainment brigade].”<sup>20</sup> Without such visibility, supply personnel, sometimes at the behest of their commanders, may well duplicate orders for classes of supply, further clogging the logistics pipeline. Excesses in either the pipeline or at logistics support activities can quickly evolve into accountability nightmares.

Moreover, the limited visibility and lack of accountability of cargo transported by host nation contractors contributes to pilferage. For instance, during Operation Mountain Thrust, up to half of the fuel meant for British forces was stolen en route.<sup>21</sup> Theft of supplies, particularly fuel, has been the topic of multiple investigations by numerous organizations, including the Office of Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office.<sup>22</sup> These issues illustrate how measures to achieve the principle of economy can actually generate problems for operational commanders, and even policy makers.

The way the campaign has developed has produced well-known challenges for the logistics community. The reemergence of a significant threat in the Helmand Province in 2006 demanded inter-service and international coordination to shift supplies to help react to this threat.

After 2002, the initial successes of Operation Enduring Freedom drove the Taliban into hiding or across the border into Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Area. From 2002 until 2006, ISAF units in support of OEF faced countrywide asymmetric threats, but the epicenter of major combat remained on the border with Pakistan. During these years, a reorganized Taliban infiltrated in large numbers and gained significant influence in several regions throughout the country, including Helmand Province. The beginning of 2006 marked a transition to the offensive phase of the Taliban’s strategy, much like Maoist insurgency theory. In response, ISAF

launched a major counteroffensive in the Helmand Province.<sup>23</sup>

The shift in the geographical focus beleaguered the existing distribution framework, which was based on the standard that logistical support is a national responsibility. The unanticipated reemergence of the threat in Helmand Province demanded ad hoc organizations that could coordinate among coalition nations to build a concept of support in new, unknown terrain. The Combined Joint Distribution Cell in Regional Command-South, for instance, had to coordinate among the Afghan National Army and National Police; the Combined/Joint Special Operations Task Force; the Canadian, British, and Dutch Armies and Air Forces; the U.S. and Australian Army aviation units; and the U.S. Air Force Air Terminal Operations Center and Air Expeditionary Group.<sup>24</sup>

A new national commitment to OEF further affected operational logistics. After the apparent success of the 2007 surge into Iraq, President Barack Obama’s new administration placed more attention to the Afghan theater in the War on Terrorism. The resulting surge in Afghanistan included reorganizing regional commands, changing command relationships, and responding to increased operational distribution demands.

The 45th Sustainment Brigade, the headquarters for the Combined Joint Operations Area in 2009-2010, faced the challenges of this influx of materiel and personnel. To address the increased demand, the brigade grew by 1,900 personnel, including the addition of two combat sustainment support battalions.<sup>25</sup> The dynamics at the tactical and operational levels also led to additional problem sets at the geopolitical level.

## **Continuity and Improvisation— Geopolitics and International Relations**

The lack of a deepwater port in Afghanistan puts ISAF at the mercy of neighboring countries to transport supplies. This geopolitical situation jeopardizes continuity in the distribution of cargo when countries decide to halt supply convoys or close services to ISAF contractors. Furthermore, when issues like these play out on an international scale, attempts at improvisation are inevitably massive.



The limitations of the Pakistan ground line of communication (PAKGLOC) and the scale of the improvised response with the “northern distribution network” complete the description of why distribution in Afghanistan is so difficult.

Sustainment doctrine defines the principle of continuity as “the uninterrupted provision of sustainment across all levels of war,” and emphasizes its role in allowing combat commanders freedom of action, operational reach, and endurance. The PAKGLOC has been the primary source of ground supplies moving into Afghanistan since the onset of operations in 2001. It takes approximately two months for an item to travel by ocean transport via the PAKGLOC distribution pipeline.<sup>26</sup> Cargo arrives at the Port of Karachi and must be driven across the country to one of two passageways into Afghanistan—Chaman, nearest Kandahar, and Torkham, nearest Kabul (Figure 3).<sup>27</sup>

In November 2011, a firefight on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan resulted in what NATO Secretary General Anders Rasmussen called a

“tragic unintended accident” when an air-strike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers in a pair of remote outposts in Pakistan.<sup>28</sup> A tit-for-tat diplomatic exchange followed, beginning with the Pakistan government announcing that all supply convoys en route to Afghanistan were halted. After the United States responded that it would curtail some of the significant amount of aid money it gives to Pakistan, Pakistan announced it would impose a tax on any supplies traveling through the country if the routes reopened. The diplomatic exchange continued until July 2012 when Pakistan reopened the PAKGLOC without an additional tax after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued a carefully worded apology for the border incident.

Efforts to improvise methods of distribution did not begin in 2011. Pakistan reacted in much the same way in September 2010 when it shut down the route for 11 days after two Pakistani soldiers were killed in a similar event. In mid-2008, though, the vulnerability of the PAKGLOC and a forecasted increase of supplies necessary to support surging

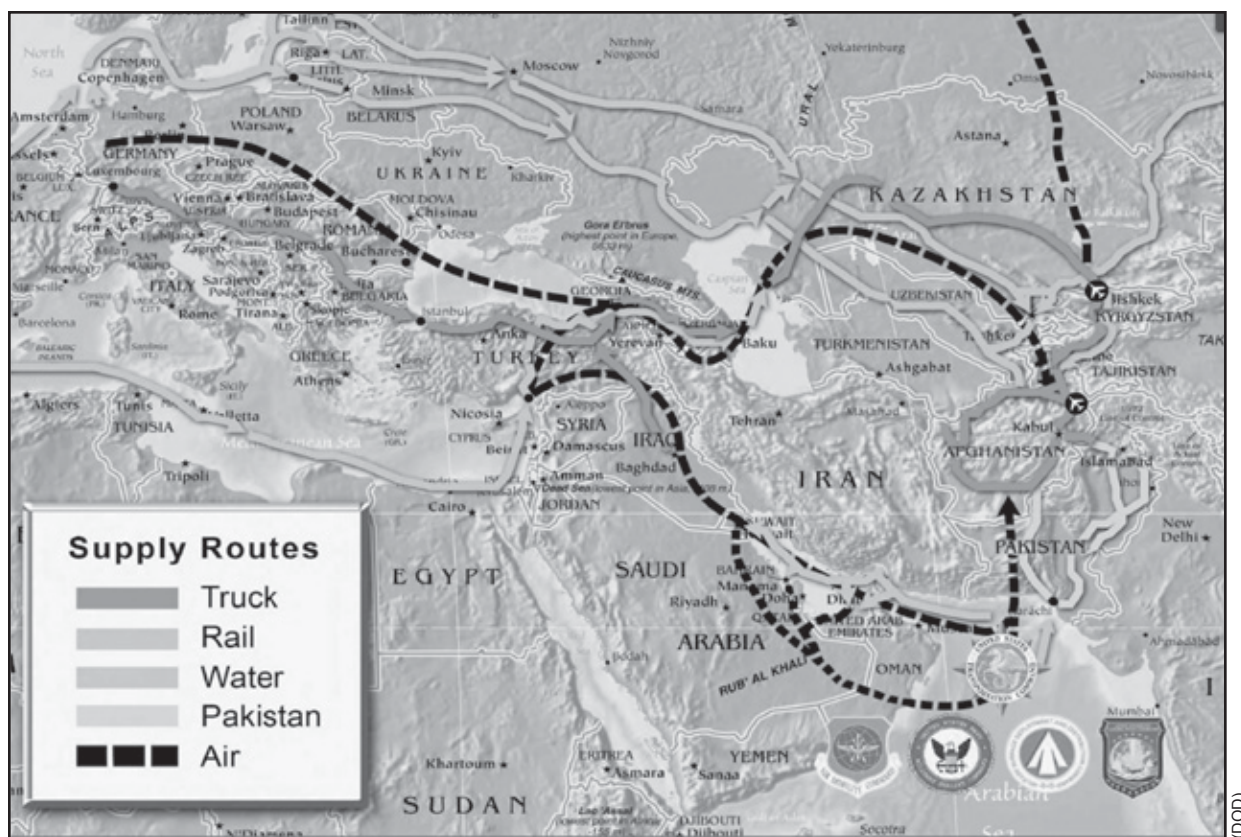


Figure 3

troop levels in 2009 led planners to develop the northern distribution network as an alternate distribution pipeline into Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> After almost two years of negotiation and development, in March 2010, the commander of U.S. Transportation Command reported to Congress that while the PAKGLOC remained the primary route (50 percent), 30 percent of supplies transported into theater were traveling the northern distribution network, with the remaining 20 percent arriving by air.<sup>30</sup>

The magnitude of the improvisation required explains why distribution is so difficult in Afghanistan. The northern distribution network is a sizable shift of the distribution pipeline to an entirely new geopolitical sphere of influence. It offers a variety of transportation options, including air, sea, road, and rail, to transport nonlethal supplies. The three basic routes consist of passage through Latvia, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan (Figure 3).<sup>31</sup> They cross into Afghanistan from Tajikistan, or at the “friendship bridge” in Termez, Uzbekistan.<sup>32</sup> No branches of the distribution network or flight paths may pass through Turkmenistan except for humanitarian purposes.

The western spur of the network demonstrates how this improvisation still does not avoid geopolitical circumstances affecting distribution in theater. It begins at the port in Poti, Georgia, where supplies can move by truck or rail to Baku, Azerbaijan. The supplies are then ferried across the Caspian Sea and reloaded on trucks at the Aqtau port in Kazakhstan. The route then links into the standard network through Uzbekistan. This route provides the critical option to bypass Russian territory.<sup>33</sup>

While trying to escape one geopolitical game, the northern distribution network fans the embers of an older, greater game. Since the beginning of the War on Terrorism, Russia has been uncomfortable with the large NATO force deployed in its backyard.<sup>34</sup> While Russia has extended measures of cooperation, such as the agreement for the distribution network to traverse its territory, relations have cooled in light of other global events. Suspicions of geopolitical maneuvering increased in 2005 when the Uzbek government unexpectedly demanded that the U.S. Air Force abandon the Karshi-Khanabad air base (also known as K2). After the United States responded negatively to the government’s handling of a civilian uprising in the country, the Uzbek

government rescinded its invitation to use the base. After the United States closed the base, Russia and Uzbekistan signed an alliance treaty and hailed the closure as a Russian diplomatic victory.<sup>35</sup> Russia’s continued influence in the Commonwealth of Independent States remains a major vulnerability in this improvised solution to the PAKGLOC problem. The United States and NATO must continue to consider how geopolitics will contribute to the difficulties in Afghanistan until the campaign ends.

## A Hopeful Conclusion

The discussion above has only scratched the surface of the challenges that logisticians face in distributing classes of supply in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. However, the toils of the last decade may bear fruits that we could not have expected at the beginning of the campaign in terms of lessons learned and the way forward for Afghan military forces and the nation.

While Operation Enduring Freedom has mainly consisted of wide-area security operations, the challenges discussed above have contributed to reforming logistics systems within the military over the last decade. The U.S. Army should find beneficial lessons regarding the structure and procedures for lower-echelon support battalions, as brigades consider that their sustainers lack sufficient protection or firepower to negotiate some battlefields. In addition, the interruptions in the principles of continuity and anticipation may challenge the tenets of distribution-based logistics in uncertain environments.

While the lessons of the campaign will benefit U.S. and NATO forces, the immediate effect will contribute to the establishment of the Afghan military’s logistics architecture. Building a logistics framework from scratch is no small task, especially as the trainees are sometimes illiterate and the task is subordinate to fielding and training combat units.<sup>36</sup> Any value added will be critical for units that will distribute military supplies after the ISAF are gone.

Finally, the heart of the challenges facing ISAF logisticians may prove to be a major asset for the future of Afghanistan, the country. The northern distribution network, an improvised solution to the PAKGLOC, is a potential Afghanistan national asset and could help Afghanistan develop with a

role in the Eurasian transit and trading network once the NATO mission ends.

Integration, the most critical principle of sustainment, assures unity of purpose and effort. The challenges faced at the tactical, operational, and geopolitical levels of Operation Enduring Freedom explain why logistics distribution is flat-out hard in Afghanistan. The scope of the logistics problem reaches from the company commander

who hopes that the weather does not interdict his supply drop to the president of the United States and secretary general of NATO, who wonder how an accident on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan will jeopardize transcontinental supply routes and international relations. With luck, the labors of logisticians will lead to a brighter, integrated Afghanistan, not a shameful retreat back to Babylon. **MR**

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# Transnational Criminal Organizations



## Mexico's Commercial Insurgency

Major Christopher Martinez, U.S. Army

**I**N THE PAST several years, U.S. government officials and journalists have compared the violence of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) within Mexico to the terrorist tactics used by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and suggested that the TCOs are conducting an “insurgency.”

For example, in September 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, “We face an increasing threat from a well-organized network, a drug-trafficking threat that is, in some cases, morphing into or making common cause with what we would consider an insurgency, in Mexico and in Central America.”<sup>1</sup> She later added, “It’s looking more and more like Colombia did 20 years ago.”<sup>2</sup>

Yet, during the same month, *Los Angeles Times* writer Ken Ellingwood evaluated Mexican TCOs and the FARC against a subjective set of criteria and deduced that the TCOs were not conducting insurgencies, because they did not mirror the FARC within a defined set of criteria.<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly, both the politician and the journalist are quite knowledgeable in their area of expertise, yet they reached two different conclusions. That said, this article argues that when one evaluates Mexican TCOs using criteria that are commonly accepted in discerning an insurgency, the organizations emerge as commercial insurgent groups.

Although properly evaluating and defining a threat may not always be diplomatically popular, it is a crucial requirement. It enables countries and coalitions to align limited resources and elements of national power in an efficient manner to achieve predefined measures of effectiveness and ultimately defeat their adversaries. As the great military theorist Carl Von Clausewitz wrote,

Major Christopher Martinez is the senior military intelligence planner for the U.S. Southwest Regional Support team at Joint Task Force North, Fort Bliss, TX. In his current position, Major Martinez serves as an advisor and partner to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Arizona and California. He holds a B.A. from the University of Delaware and an M.B.A. from Syracuse University. Previous assignments include deployments to Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

PHOTO: Alliance ‘Urabeños’ and FARC, 28 January 2012. (GDA via AP Images)

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.<sup>4</sup>

This maxim's utility endures. It is as critical today for a country or coalition to properly evaluate and define its adversary prior to developing a strategy to defeat it as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries. Failure to do so can lead to a flawed strategy and inefficient allocation of diplomatic, military, and economic power.

Latency on the part of government officials and military strategists further complicates matters. When evaluating a potential adversary, governments often respond too late to be effective in crises. For example, in 1994, 800,000 Rwandan

Tutsis were murdered by fellow Rwandans of the Hutu ethnic group. Eleven years later, Senator John McCain wrote, "The U.S. government, our allies, and the United Nations went to extraordinary and ridiculous lengths to avoid using the term genocide, aware that once genocide was acknowledged, they would have to act. The U.S. and its allies finally, after most of the killing was done, decided to intervene."<sup>5</sup>

Although insurgencies are the most widespread form of warfare today, the term "insurgency" is often avoided, or the true nature of the insurgency is not adequately evaluated or defined.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, in using just the term "insurgency," without any further qualifications, politicians, military strategists, and members of the media often fail to describe the conflict in its full context. The term "insurgency" is defined as an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.<sup>7</sup> However,



MSGT Jerry Morrison, U.S. Air Force)

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, left, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Navy ADM Mike Mullen during a Merida Initiative plenary meeting in Mexico City, 23 March 2010. The Merida Initiative is a security cooperation between the United States, Mexico, and countries of Central America that is aimed at combating drug-trafficking cartels and other security and criminal threats.

identifying the type of insurgency is as important as acknowledging that it exists.

Anarchist, egalitarian, traditionalist, and pluralist insurgencies are four different types of insurgencies that seek to supplant existing political systems, but their desired end states have subtly different nuances. Anarchists seek total disorder and deem any political authority illegitimate. Egalitarians desire a centrally controlled political system to ensure equitable distribution of resources and a drastically transformed social structure. For their part, traditionalists wish for a return to a golden age or a religious-based value system that crosses international boundaries. Finally, pluralists embrace Western values and aim to establish liberal democracies.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, secessionist, reformist, preservationist, and commercialist insurgencies do not seek total political power within their countries.<sup>9</sup> Secessionists seek to withdraw from their nation state to pursue an independent destiny or join a different state. Reformists aim to use violence to make changes within their current government to create a more equitable distribution of political and economic power. Preservationists use violence against anyone trying to make changes or institute reforms. Commercialists conduct acts of violence against their government for economic gain, unlike TCOs who prefer to circumvent the state to achieve a competitive advantage.<sup>10</sup>

A transnational criminal organization is defined as three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert, with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offenses in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.<sup>11</sup> Unlike insurgencies, modern TCOs prefer to bypass and avoid national and international law enforcement barriers in their respective industries. They favor gaining a competitive advantage without either negotiating with or conducting acts of violence against the state.<sup>12</sup> Acts of violence are normally internal, turf-based, and directed against rival TCOs to gain market share, prestige, or profits.<sup>13</sup>

Secretary Clinton and journalist Ellingwood used two different methods to evaluate the nature of the TCO threat. Neither technique was comprehensive. Clinton used the term “insurgency” but did not identify the type. Ellingwood failed to

understand that no two insurgencies are identical.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, he also did not see that a movement can still be an insurgency even if all the elements of an insurgency are not present.<sup>15</sup> Today’s most commonly accepted criteria that define an insurgency, as listed in Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, are the approach used to advance the insurgency, the means and cause used to mobilize followers, and a set of elements or attributes common in insurgencies.<sup>16</sup>

**Approaches.** Insurgencies can use several types of approaches—conspiratorial, military-focused, urban, protracted popular war, and identified-focus. Initially, the FARC favored a military-focused approach by applying military force against the government. However, Mexican TCOs have favored an urban approach by using terrorist tactics such as intimidating and killing government, judicial, and law enforcement officials in urban areas to dissuade government security forces from interfering with their illicit trafficking in narcotics, weapons, bulk cash, or humans.<sup>17</sup> Traditionally, conventional TCOs are more passive in nature and try to evade law enforcement and judicial bodies. However, the provocative approach used by Mexican TCOs is analogous with that of an insurgency.

**Means and causes.** The FARC’s initial cause was egalitarianism. The organization sought to impose a centrally controlled political system to ensure a fair distribution of resources and a transformed social structure.<sup>18</sup> The FARC leveraged the public’s reaction to government abuses or mistakes as a means to mobilize the rural masses. However, as the FARC matured, its cause became acquiring money to sustain its narcotics trade.<sup>19</sup> Contrary to the FARC, since their inception, the primary cause of Mexican TCOs was monetary. However, Mexican TCOs do not aim to mobilize the general population because they are not seeking political control.

***...the provocative approach used by Mexican TCOs is analogous with that of an insurgency.***





(AP Photo/Alejandro Cossio)

A vendor sells the weekly Zeta magazine in the streets of Tijuana, Mexico. Zeta magazine has set a standard for aggressive coverage of Mexican drug traffickers and complicit government officials, 1 April 2011.

Instead, they seek to influence the four primary elements of national power—the economy, politics, the military, and the information media—to form an environment that enables an illicit trafficking industry to thrive and operate with impunity. They either bribe politicians to allow them to operate free of impediments, or use intimidation, assassination, and abduction against federal, state, and municipal security forces and obstructionist political figures.<sup>20</sup> Mexican TCOs intimidate or even murder members of the news industry as well as outspoken users of social media in an effort to shape and dictate headlines and stories. Such assertive measures directed toward a nation state are indicative of an insurgency, not of a conventional TCO.

**Elements of insurgency.** Insurgencies have the common elements of movement leaders, combatants, auxiliaries, a mass base, and a political cadre, although not all these elements need to be present.<sup>21</sup> All were at one time or another present within the FARC, but enumerating all the elements within Mexican TCOs is more challenging.

The movement leaders are the cartel heads that

provide the strategic direction. The combatants are affiliated gangs and enforcement arms that conduct targeted attacks against rival Mexican TCOs, government security forces, and political and judicial figures. Insurgent auxiliaries are active sympathizers who provide critical services or safe havens. In the case of Mexican TCOs, auxiliaries are the security force members and political and judicial figures that the TCOs pay to facilitate their illicit businesses. Within an insurgency, the mass base consists of the followers of the movement, the supporting populations recruited by the political cadre. However, Mexican TCOs are not organized to mobilize a population, they seek only to satisfy the demand of a mass base in the sense that they produce and supply a product the populace desires. Hence, the mass bases for Mexican TCOs are the drug users, i.e., the national and predominantly international consumers of the product. The recruiting tool to mobilize the base is intrinsic to the product, the illegal drug's addictive attributes. Hence, the need for a political cadre to recruit a mass base is marginal. Usually, political cadres provide guidance

and procedures for movement leaders to mobilize the population. They heed the grievances of the masses and provide solutions. However, with narcotics serving as the recruiting and mobilizing tool at the national and international level, Mexican TCOs do not need to have a large political cadre to recruit a mass base. Here we see, as previously noted, that the absence of an element, in this case political cadre, does not rule out identifying a Mexican TCO as conducting an insurgency.

Mexican TCOs are in fact commercial insurgencies designed to influence the elements of national power to seek economic gain from illicit drug trafficking, as opposed to circumventing the elements of national power or gaining political control of the nation.<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the FARC actually began as an egalitarian insurgency but later transitioned into a commercial insurgency when its end state shifted from a political to a monetary one.<sup>23</sup>

Describing potential insurgencies using the criteria presented in U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 is a sound methodology, but some argue the criteria are subjective in nature and only define certain elements of the insurgency, not the insurgents' desired end state. Others insist that insurgency models based strictly on functional criteria are quite applicable when assessing and defining an insurgency. One such expert, Joel Midgal, argues that for a movement to be considered an insurgency, the insurgent organization must perform the following four functions—penetrate a society, regulate social relationships, extract resources, and apply those resources to identified group ends.<sup>24</sup>

When one applies Midgal's functional model, Mexican TCOs clearly form a commercial insurgency with the end state of influencing elements of national power to ensure that governments do not interfere with their illicit activities. Furthermore, even when evaluating Mexican TCOs against a structural model such as David Kilcullen's, the organizations are still global commercial insurgencies.<sup>25</sup> One weakness in defining Mexican TCOs as a commercial insurgency is that doing so casts too broad of a net. The Sinaloa, Gulf, Zeta, and Vicente Carrillo Fuentes cartels have different ways and means to influence Mexico's elements of national power, even though their overall goals and objectives align with one another.

As history has shown, counterinsurgencies become long wars when nations fail to recognize the onset of an insurgency or apply conventional tactics in fighting it.<sup>26</sup> They can avoid this trap if they develop a strategic plan that acknowledges TCOs for what they are, commercial insurgencies.

If the United States and Mexico do not acknowledge their adversaries as commercial insurgencies, strategic plans like "Plan Colombia" or the "Merida Initiative" risk failing due to inaptly designed campaign plans and poorly predefined measures of effectiveness to evaluate their execution. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was the first political leader to describe the TCO threat in Mexico as an insurgency. Her evaluation was the closest to the truth among politicians and members of the media and should serve as a foundation for designing a bilateral and strategic plan to counter the adversary. **MR**

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# CGSC

## Developing Leaders to Adapt and Dominate for the Army of Today and Tomorrow

**Brigadier General (P) Gordon B. “Skip” Davis, Jr., U.S. Army, and Lieutenant Colonel James B. Martin, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D.**

Brigadier General (P) Gordon B. Davis, Jr., is the deputy commanding general of the Combined Arms Center for Leader Development and Education, and the deputy commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He holds a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, two masters degrees from Université de Montpellier (France): an M.A. in international relations and business and an M.A. in national defense studies and military history. He also holds an MSST in strategy from the Army War College.

Lieutenant Colonel James B. Martin is the associate dean of academics and quality assurance, CGSC. He received a B.A. from the University of Kentucky, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Third War: Irregular Warfare on the Western Border 1861-1865* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2012).

PHOTO: A view of the front of the Lewis and Clark Center, June 2012, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

**I**N AUGUST 2007, the historic U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) moved into the 440,000 square foot Lewis and Clark Center to continue its 131-year tradition of educating Army officers for service to the nation. For alumni who experienced the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) in Bell Hall, this new facility is the most visible sign of the transformation of CGSC. Designed to meet the future needs of the Army in education, this facility is as versatile as the officers it must educate. Housing the best field grade students the Army has to offer, taught by a world-class faculty, the new CGSC is a major reason the Combined Arms Center is referred to as the “Intellectual Center of the Army.” While the building is an incredible story, the real importance lies in what is going on inside the building, in the classrooms, and in the courses taught. This is not the Command and General Staff College of years past, but an institution that leads by example, recognizes the evolution of the world, and changes constantly to support the Army through the accomplishment of its mission:

CGSC educates and develops leaders to adapt and dominate in unified land operations...and advances the art and science of the profession of arms in support of Army operational requirements.

Change in the College comes in how we accomplish our educational mission, as well as within the content of our courses. This change is an active, evolutionary educational process that drives the institution to reexamine itself on a frequent basis. The operational environment is dramatically different than in previous times. Additionally, there has been a tremendous growth in understanding of adult learning and professional education, and CGSC is leveraging this new science. We are educating a different generation of emerging leaders who bring incredible experience to the classroom to share. Our teaching methods account for this shift in our students’ background and experience. The most obvious difference over the previous 30





**LTG David G. Perkins, commander of the Combined Arms Center and commandant of the Command and General Staff College, speaks at the International Military Student Badge Ceremony for CGSOC Class 12-01, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 7 June 2012.**

years is that more than 90 percent of our Army students have recent combat experience and nearly 70 percent have multiple combat tours. Based on this background, and the ever-changing operating environment that is our world, it is easy to see that change remains a constant in the process of leader development and education for the Army.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff released the *Joint Education White Paper* on 16 July 2012, providing guidance to Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) schools like CGSC. “The purpose of Professional Military Education (PME),” according to the White Paper, “is to develop leaders by conveying a broad body of knowledge and developing the habits of mind essential to our profession.” The document goes further to counsel that “beyond providing critical thinking skills, our education programs must also ensure leaders have—

- The ability to understand the security environment and the contributions of all elements of national power.
- The ability to deal with surprise and uncertainty.

- The ability to anticipate and recognize change and deal with transitions.

- The ability to operate on intent through trust, empowerment, and understanding.”<sup>1</sup>

This article will depict CGSC’s journey toward meeting these goals—where we are and where we must continue to evolve. CGSC has always achieved its important mission of preparing leaders for our Army, the Department of Defense, and the nation. This is an opportunity to explain the great things going on today at CGSC and how we continue to adapt to be the premier educational institution the Army needs.

Those who have spent much time around Fort Leavenworth have seen historical quotes by Marshall and Eisenhower concerning the importance of the Command and Staff College to our nation’s success in World War II. In his excellent book on the history of CGSC, Dr. Peter Schifferle points out that General John J. Pershing saw the critical importance of a Leavenworth education even earlier. As few officers were available with a CGSC preparation, the American Expeditionary Force commander in

World War I issued a standing order that all CGSC graduates be sent to his headquarters upon their arrival in France.<sup>2</sup> The historical legacy of preparing leaders to win our nation's wars since 1881 is part of what drives the leadership and faculty of the College today. This enduring tradition and responsibility is now ours to maintain and grow.

In 2006, Brigadier General Volney Warner and Dr. Jim Willbanks published an article in this journal, which focused on what the College was doing in educating field grade officers and the movement to Universal Intermediate Level Education.<sup>3</sup> While much of their description remains accurate today, the College has changed in many ways, as would be expected based on the changing operating environment around us and ongoing implementation of the Army Learning Model.<sup>4</sup> As the United States reaches the end of two wars and the redeployment of most of the Army out of combat zones, new challenges face CGSC, which will drive continuing change over the next several years.

## **Quality of the Learning Environment**

One of the major changes since 2006 and the newest piece of Leavenworth history is the Lewis and Clark Center. Constructed just south of its predecessor, Bell Hall, this impressive brick structure provides the new home for the College and an instructional facility second to none in the Department of Defense. These classrooms are outfitted with educational and mission command technology that allows students to learn with the digital command and control systems that they use in brigade and division operations centers. Each classroom is a video teleconference suite, and all the lecture halls and conference rooms in the building are also outfitted to allow the students and faculty to communicate anywhere in the world to enhance the educational experience. This facility has allowed the College to move rapidly to embrace emerging technology when appropriate for its instructional model and provide students an appropriate digital application experience embedded in the courses. In addition the School of Advanced Military Studies, in Flint and Muir Halls, has been renovated to provide the same quality in educational technology and environment for the students who attend this second year of advanced education.

## **Interagency and Multinational Contribution to the Student Body**

A key aspect of the Army Learning Model is the quality and diversity of peers in the classroom environment. Not only have technical aspects of the classroom experience improved, but the demographic makeup of the student body has changed to better prepare Army leaders for the joint, interagency, multinational world of operations. The past five years have seen a growth in the number of international military students studying at Fort Leavenworth. With a total student population of 1,391 in academic year 2012, 115 were international students from 93 different countries. In addition to this growth in international military students, in the past five years CGSC has seen the introduction of civilian students from different federal government agencies. The most recent classes have included civilian participants from 15 agencies throughout the U.S. Government, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Border Patrol, Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, various intelligence agencies, and others. As part of the aggressive program to attract these students, the Army has sent officers to serve in the agencies on an exchange basis to mitigate the absence of our civilian students. This effort, referred to as the Interagency Fellowship Program, is paying great dividends in creating a much better understanding between our field grade officers and their interagency partners.

## **Increased Capacity at CGSC and Satellite Campuses**

The Lewis and Clark Center has an expanded capacity, with 96 identical classrooms capable of educating 1,536 students at one time. Students also have the opportunity to enroll in CGSOC away from Fort Leavenworth at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) at Fort Benning, Georgia, a satellite campus, Total Army School System (TASS) site, or via the distance-learning program. The satellite campuses opened between 2005 and 2010, with teaching teams at Fort Belvoir, Fort Lee, Fort Gordon, and Redstone Arsenal that provide resident education to nearly 1,000 officers per year. While originally created to meet the Common Core Intermediate-



**General Lloyd J. Austin, III, vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army, presents the Marshall Award to the outstanding U.S. graduate of CGSOC Class 12-01, MAJ Brendan R. Gallagher, 8 June 2012, Fort Leavenworth, KS.**

Level Education (ILE) requirements of functional area officers, these educational sites also include basic branch officers, thus adding to the number of officers who can benefit from a blended resident experience. These sites mirror the home campus in every way, utilizing the same curriculum, teaching methodology, and educational technology. The value of this additional educational venue in the development of mid-career leaders for the Army cannot be overstated. Another pertinent change is that Fort Leavenworth now executes two course starts each year for CGSOC and the School of Advanced Military Studies, one in the summer and one in the winter. This addition of a winter start has met the needs of Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) by providing officers to the force more often than the traditional once-a-year influx after a June graduation.

## **Improved Quality of Nonresident PME**

One of the most dramatic changes seen in the educational program is within the nonresident and distance-learning programs. Gone is the course we

fondly referred to as “the box of books,” replaced by the state-of-the-art in educational science for online distance-learning courses. Students who take the CGSOC Common Core via TASS or a satellite campus can utilize a blended experience of virtual classroom adult learning and computer-based instruction for the advanced operations component of the CGSOC curriculum. Students can also take the entire CGSOC via distance-learning. While few Active Component officers have done so in the near past, it was commonplace before the policy of universal ILE and is so once again to ensure all officers have an opportunity to complete CGSOC in their years as a major. The TASS system provides National Guard and Reserve officers access to the CGSOC Common Core in periods that closely align with their monthly and annual training periods so that they can complete their ILE education. Finally, while the distance-learning curriculum used to lag over a year behind its residential counterpart, the new curriculum process has brought us to the point where the distance and resident courses are in the same curriculum year. Regardless of the learning environment, the Army



and the Joint Staff have fully accredited all of the resident and nonresident methods of taking CGSOC.

## Increased Frequency of Curriculum Revision

Just as the operational environment in Afghanistan and Iraq created a need for increased emphasis on counterinsurgency operations in 2006, today's rapidly changing environment and doctrine help to define what should be taught in CGSOC. While we have not cast counterinsurgency aside, we have made room for new topics whose importance is becoming visible with the Army's mission changes. Discussion of major combat operations now occurs alongside counterinsurgency as well as defense support of civil authorities. CGSC has also reintroduced the training management skills that were once the staple of field grade officers to a generation of officers who have only known an Army at war and ARFORGEN. Leavenworth is preparing new generations of officers who are adaptive, agile, and can think critically, but we can only do so by practicing these same skills in the management of the curriculum. We have begun to examine what the future will hold in a postwar world. One good example is the Department of Military History, which has dedicated significant time to the Middle East in the past 10 years. CGSOC Class 13-01, which started in August, will find a curriculum that has turned along with the strategic focus of the nation and now will spend more time looking at the Asian-Pacific region. CGSOC is currently formally reevaluating the curriculum with a focus on identifying the best mixture of content and delivery methods beginning in 2014. We know that the coming changes will include revised Army doctrine being released in October 2012, joint lessons learned during the decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, changes to joint education based on a review underway, and revised strategic guidance coming from the U.S. presidential administration in 2013. We have already incorporated important Army doctrine changes (e.g., Army Doctrine Publications 3-0, 5-0, 6-0, 6-22, and 7-0) and concepts such as Mission Command, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, and the Army Profession. All these changes have been fully integrated into the curriculum at CGSC schools. The greater challenge is to identify what important concepts or challenges just now

emerging will be critical in the next few years. One thing that we know for certain, the importance of teaching critical-thinking and communication skills will continue to be the single most important factor in educating field grade officers. Every senior leader who talks to the students and faculty at CGSC stresses this point. The Joint Education White Paper referred to earlier is very specific on this point, when it expressly directs "that joint education...prepare the leaders of Joint Force 2020 to be adaptive, innovative, critical-thinking leaders capable of operating in complex and unstructured environments."<sup>5</sup> The Army Learning Model is based on creating a career-long learning continuum designed to prepare officers with the knowledge and habits of mind to meet the Joint Education White Paper's charge. Whether we are teaching tactics, logistics, history, leadership, or joint operations, the ability of our officers to think through ambiguous problems and determine quality solutions is the intended outcome.

## Increased Focus on Rigor and Inspiring Excellence

A highly qualified faculty of active duty military officers and civilian educators teaches, coaches, and mentors students attending CGSOC. An important aspect of the CGSC learning model is establishing and keeping graduate level standards. If students do not meet the standards, they are dismissed. This is not intended to be draconian, but the fact is that quality graduate schools do not graduate students with multiple grades of C. Neither does CGSC. While the number of students affected by this standard is relatively small, the systems are in place for the faculty to hold the line with students who are underperformers, and faculty members are supported when they make these difficult assessments. In the same way, as with all educational institutions, we occasionally have students who cross an ethical line in their academic studies and are guilty of plagiarism. This is dealt with from a professional ethics standpoint, and a number of students each year depart from all the resident and nonresident versions of CGSOC without finishing the course for either academic failure or misconduct. The real importance of the academic standards in place at CGSC is the challenge that they present for students. Gone are the "school solutions" of the 1990s, which bred the idea of a single answer to complex

problems. Instruction on various critical-thinking models is part of the core curriculum and the ideas discussed in these classes are revisited throughout the yearlong curriculum. The military decision making process is one of the models introduced, but the British Seven Questions is also examined when the British counterpart institution brings its student body over for the joint exercise Eagle Owl each year. Students are able to compare different ways to approach problems and draw on what they think makes the most sense as they approach complex or chaotic problems. While our involvement with the British Intermediate Command and Staff College (Land) is the largest exchange opportunity, we annually exchange students and instructors with the Brazilian *Escola Superior de Guerra*, German *Führungs Akademie*, French *Ecole de Guerre*, and the Australian Command and Staff College as well.

One of the recent additions to the educational program of CGSOC, coined the Scholars Program, is a specialized group of alternative studies programs that offer select students the opportunity to make a dive into an important aspect of the operational art.

Students must volunteer for the Scholars Program and the faculty must support them. The program places the students in small cohort groups where they participate in focused educational programs or research projects. This effort is both a broadening experience and an opportunity for scholarly research on important topics for the Army. Some programs are consistently offered, such as the Warrior Logistician Program, which results in a Master's of Business in Supply Chain Management from the University of Kansas, while others are proposed by CGSC faculty members, such as the Local Dynamics of War Seminar, and run as long as there is student interest. This particular seminar exposes students to cutting-edge scholarship on strategy, war, politics, governance, economics, culture, and ethics; this exposure imparts a rich appreciation for how military and nonmilitary factors combine to create tough planning challenges for commanders and staffs throughout the range of military operations and at all levels of war. The most enduring research group is the Art of War Seminar, where a small group of students has the equivalent of a



**David Pierson, a CGSOC instructor from the Department of Distance Education, conducts a Defense Connection Online session with online students in the Advanced Operations Course.**

civilian semester to research and write on a specific operational art topic under the guidance of a senior faculty member or members. The intended outcome for this particular group is publishable research that adds to the body of professional military knowledge and warrants the awarding of a Masters of Military Art and Science degree. The overall quality of the theses produced by the Art of War Scholars over the past two years has led to the Combat Studies Institute (CSI) developing the peer-reviewed *Art of War Papers*. These papers, four of which have been published and are available on the CSI website, and another that is in the final editing with a forecast publication date of August 2012, have received excellent reviews from some of the leading civilian scholars in their fields. The most important aspect of the Scholars Program is not the writing and publications, but the development of the students and what the students will be able to contribute as emerging Army leaders for the rest of their careers.

Another important and challenging program at CGSC is the Master of Military Art and Science (MMAS) graduate degree program. Though not new (it was first accredited in 1976), this degree program has grown significantly in the number of students participating over the past five years.<sup>6</sup> The graduate degree program at CGSC is different from those in many PME institutions, in that, while it is available to all students, it is not awarded for simply completing the standard curriculum.<sup>7</sup> This research-based program has always been voluntary and requires a commitment beyond the curriculum to four research electives, a comprehensive oral examination of the year's curriculum, and the completion of a thesis-length research project. This program has always attracted talented students from both the U.S. and international student populations, and in the last few years, the fertile research ground created by Iraq and Afghanistan has led to some excellent scholarly work. One such student product was Douglas Pryer's "The Fight for the High Ground," a thesis on U.S. Army interrogation during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The leadership at CGSC thought it to be of such quality that the CGSC Foundation published it as a book. It was not only our leadership who were impressed with this piece of student research, for as Peter Mansoor from The Ohio State University wrote, "Pryer's warning should be a wake-up call to the Army leadership. I highly recommend that

every officer read this book for the lessons and warnings it offers. At the very minimum, *The Fight for the High Ground* should be part of professional military education curriculum. The alternative to better education—to bump merrily along hoping that the Army values instruction will prevent future abuse—is unacceptable."<sup>8</sup> While not every thesis produced by the MMAS program is of this quality, about 15 percent of every CGSOC class that comes through Fort Leavenworth accepts the challenge of producing a detailed research paper. In the fall of 2011, CGSC was able to extend its masters degree program to Spanish-speaking CGSOC students at WHINSEC. In June 2012, CGSC awarded an MMAS to three U.S. and three international students from the WHINSEC CGSOC course. The discipline and critical-thinking skills required to complete an MMAS serve to improve these students and move them closer to the Joint Education White Paper's charge to JPME.

The institution is thriving intellectually, but that does not mean it has forgotten that it is a professional military school. A previous commandant, then Lieutenant General David Petraeus, created a program in 2005 designed to encourage physical fitness and reward those students who achieve the highest standards during the course. Named the Iron Major Award, it goes to the top male, female, and international student in each class who meet the Iron Major criteria. While many students may qualify as Iron Majors, only the top student in each category receives this award at graduation. Since June 2006, the Iron Major award has gone to 13 male U.S. students, 5 female U.S. students, and 7 international military students.

## Improved Faculty Credentials

The most critical component for success of any educational institution is its faculty. The College has seen its faculty change significantly in the past 10 years as demonstrated by its current demographics, educational background, teaching experience, and intellectual achievement. Historically, the faculty at Fort Leavenworth has been overwhelmingly military, with officers serving two- or three-year tours as an instructor before returning to an operational unit. As identified by Warner and Willbanks, a shift occurred from 2000 to 2006 that moved the "civilian to military ratio of 10:90 to a ratio of 60:40 (moving





**Central Intelligence Agency director David Petraeus hands out coins to the Iron Majors of CGSOC class 12-01, Eisenhower Hall, Lewis and Clark Center, May 2012, Fort Leavenworth, KS.**

to 70:30).<sup>9</sup> This ratio remains roughly the same today, although the College is currently undergoing an influx of officers into teaching positions that will again move the ratio to the original target of 60:40. There are a number of benefits to this shift and some possible challenges. One obvious change to the faculty, based on this shift in demographics, is the number of faculty members who have earned a doctoral degree. In the late 1990s, the number of faculty who had the highest academic credential hovered around 14, but as of July 2012, the College has 88 faculty members who have earned doctoral degrees. Such intellectual growth strengthens an institution that teaches graduate programs and confers graduate degrees upon some of its students. This increase in academic credentials opens doors to new educational and research possibilities and other degree programs in support of the Army's learning needs. An example of the value of this academic strength is that numerous universities accept CGSC course work, both resident and distance learning, for credit toward completion of their graduate degrees.

This growth in intellectual depth and breadth is also accompanied by more military experience at senior levels. One critic wrote of the “insidious creep of the civilian contractor” into PME institutions, but the civilian faculty members are Department of the Army civilians, many of whom are continuing their life of service to the nation.<sup>10</sup> While in the 1990s very few members of the CGSOC faculty had commanded at the battalion or brigade level, the current civilian faculty includes 58 former battalion commanders and 13 former brigade commanders. These numbers represent a military experience level on the faculty not seen since 1925. In addition, the current military faculty includes 8 former battalion commanders and 13 officers currently on a centrally selected board (9 primary and 4 alternate). As we modify the ratio between civilian and military faculty we have also taken steps to create minimum requirements for military faculty to be assigned to CGSOC. There has never been a positive educational requirement for a graduate degree for military officers in order to teach at the College, an issue because the standard

curriculum is the basis for the graduate degree program. The College has now formally requested that these positions all be recoded to require a graduate degree, one more step to ensuring that we have the most qualified military faculty possible teaching at CGSC. Currently, we have one military member of the faculty with a doctorate and a number of others in doctoral programs. The College, partly due to its increased educational technology, has been able to partner with a number of local universities to offer doctoral programs in the Lewis and Clark Center in support of the educational needs of its faculty members, both military and civilian.

The growth in academic credentials among the faculty has a number of positive outcomes for the College and the Army. Professional military educational institutions have always had a requirement to participate in the maintenance and growth of a professional body of knowledge. The scholarship of the profession has to be renewed regularly, often tied to the changes in its operating environment. This is difficult for a largely transient military faculty to achieve because they are at the school for such a short time and spend much of that time

learning the CGSC advanced teaching methods that CGSC uses. While military members of the CGSC faculty do write for publication, the civilian faculty carries the heaviest load in scholarship and publication at the College. Members of the faculty publish numerous books and journal articles on various aspects of the military profession each year, and a writing awards program started in 2003 provides additional incentives for such work. In addition to their own work in enhancing military scholarship, the current faculty is far more qualified to supervise student research as part of the MMAS or Scholar's Program than at any time in CGSC's long history. From 1975 to 2005, the MMAS program had to import National Guard and Reserve officers with doctoral degrees to meet our accreditation requirements. Today the faculty at CGSC is fully qualified and this external assistance is no longer required. Of note is the recent addition of faculty members from other government agencies, such as the Department of State, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and Central Intelligence Agency. These skilled faculty members bring the College a greater interagency



A panel of CGSOC majors fields questions from attendees of the National Education Conference, October 2010, Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

perspective and provide additional experience not easily available within the Army.

The second most critical component in developing a superb educational institution is a faculty development program that prepares subject matter experts to teach and develop curriculum that applies the best learning sciences in adult education. This is particularly critical in PME schools where a significant part of the faculty are active military who are subject matter experts and leaders, but generally do not have teaching experience. The CGSC Faculty and Staff Development office, working in support of its partner organization at the Army Training Support Center, is helping to improve faculty development throughout the Army. Based on the Faculty Development Program, a four-phase series of classes that produces facilitators and curriculum developers who can support these techniques, the Faculty and Staff Development office is providing expertise and experience on facilitated teaching. This facilitated methodology has been in use for many years at CGSC and its faculty's use of it predates the Army Learning Model by a decade or more. Facilitating a classroom, rather than controlling one, takes significantly more skill and practice. The mix of civilian and military faculty provides a strong combination to enhance the facilitation in the classrooms, while also ensuring current operational experience on the instructional team.

An additional benefit of a more stable faculty is CGSC's charge to develop critical-thinking in our students and graduates. While talented shorter-term faculty can certainly teach critical thinking well, it is a teaching challenge that requires practice and experience. Those faculty members who have had multiple years to develop their teaching craft, particularly those who have honed their own critical-thinking skills through doctoral dissertations or masters theses, tend to be more adept at shaping discussions to create the ambiguity and uncertainty with which our students need to be challenged. While it is relatively easy to teach clear, concrete content that is well suited to PowerPoint slides, when we move away from this teaching of specificity and aim to challenge the students with questions which are more open, there is little substitute for experience in the classroom.

At least one critic of PME institutions has complained that such institutions do not create a career

path for its faculty, largely because its leadership does not understand what this requires.<sup>11</sup> Nearly six years ago, CGSC created a faculty promotion process, which includes both civilian and military faculty, through which they could achieve academic promotion and gain academic rank. This process, which focuses the faculty on the four domains of teaching, service, scholarship, and faculty development, provides the road map for faculty to advance through their time at the College and grow as teachers and scholars. It was closely modeled after the successful program at West Point and has helped to develop a more intellectually active faculty who are moving forward in all domains of their profession. In support of this program and the MMAS research program, the College continues to adhere to the American Association of University Professors' statement on academic freedom. While this may seem counterintuitive for a military institution, the best scholarship and critical, creative thinking will only come from an environment where students and faculty are free to speak and write openly.

## Optimizing ILE

In order to maximize the Army's return on investment from military education, The Army Training and Doctrine Command and the Combined Arms Center initiated changes to optimize ILE and provide the right education at the right time for the right officer. As part of these changes, the Army will conduct a merit-based selection process for resident attendance at Fort Leavenworth and its satellite campuses beginning with Year Group 2014. In conjunction with the projected announcement of the Army Competitive Category majors' promotion board selection in spring 2013, officers will be selected and slated for CGSOC

***...the Army will conduct a merit-based selection process for resident attendance at Fort Leavenworth and its satellite campuses beginning with Year Group 2014.***



attendance beginning in February 2014. This change is intended to align officers' attendance at CGSOC along their career learning continuum to provide the necessary field grade educational opportunity prior to performing in their key and developmental positions. The process will maximize the attendance at resident educational opportunities (at Fort Leavenworth, WHINSEC, an equivalent sister service or foreign school, or fellowship program and satellite campuses) and provide distance learning opportunities for all those not selected for a resident opportunity. Because of the importance of CGSOC in officer professional development, filling the billets will reduce the attendance backlog, optimize the mix of officers at resident courses, and achieve 100 percent attendance to better meet the needs of the Army.

## **Continual Assessment to Implement the Army Learning Model**

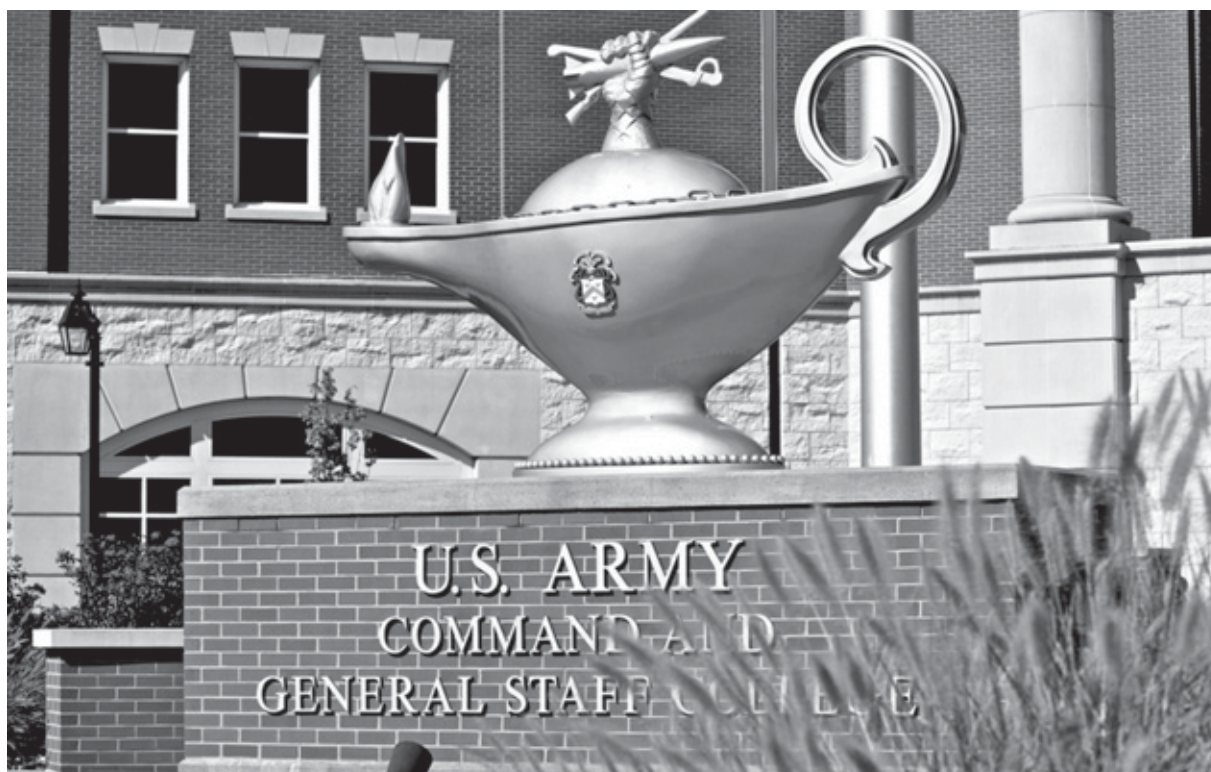
The consistent theme throughout this article has been change. One of the key issues at the Staff College is how to manage change of the curriculum during times of great flux and volatility throughout the Army. CGSC operates under guidelines that require a regular review of the curriculum and of the performance of the students after each iteration of the major courses, so that we can make appropriate adjustments and examine what should be added or taken out. This process requires gathering and analyzing the appropriate data on the assessment of student learning and providing these results to the senior leadership. This may sound commonplace, but with the increased focus on outcomes-based learning in the Army Learning Model, such assessment will become critical throughout Army schools. Without quality assessment of student learning, how will we ever know if they are meeting the intended outcomes? Beyond that, how can the Army extend that assessment into the field environment where it really needs graduates to display evidence of their mastery of the outcomes? CGSC uses direct measures of learning such as papers or examinations to measure demonstrated learning in the classrooms, and it uses indirect measures such as graduate surveys or

supervisor surveys to demonstrate the transference of learning to the field environment. The process provides each level of leadership from the school director, dean of academics, deputy commandant, and eventually the commandant with a forum to examine and analyze the College's performance and seek to improve it. This process allows CGSC to answer the two most critical questions in successfully managing its curriculum. First, did it achieve its established educational goals for the course of study? With that question answered, we can address the second and harder question—what is it we need to teach to prepare our officers for the future that we are not teaching now?

Another point of change at CGSC is in our senior leadership. The commandant and deputy commandant provide visionary leadership and current experience from the operational force. This experience is one of the strong factors in ensuring that the curriculum at the College remains relevant to the needs of the Army and does not become out of synch with the reality of the field. The College's most senior military leaders are supported by a civilian dean of academics (a more stable position to provide continuity) and senior colonels leading the schools and departments. This team is charged with the long-term health of the curriculum and works closely with the College faculty to implement a curriculum that is adaptive to necessary change without being chaotic. The strong senior military leadership provides a vision for what the College should be teaching, while the stable team of civilian educators can develop educational solutions for how to achieve the vision of the commandant.

## **In Summary**

Much has happened at CGSC since the article by Warner and Willbanks, and change remains the one constant. Facilities have greatly improved, technology use has grown tremendously to keep up the changes in the operational force, student demographics have changed to include more international officers and government civilians, and the faculty has matured into an intellectual asset for the Army. The institution has moved forward to increase the rigor of the courseware in all schools to provide students with the necessary challenges to prepare them for the uncertainty of the future. For about 80 percent of CGSC students, this is the last organized educational



The Lamp of Learning stands near the entrance of the Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

experience they receive as an Army officer. Six years ago, the Warner and Wilbanks article closed with a wonderful quote from Charles Darwin, who said, “It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but rather the most responsive to change.”<sup>12</sup> That statement was true when CGSC’s history began in 1881, and it is still true. With the close of the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army enters a new era that portends significant ambiguity and

undoubtedly many changes. The Staff College stands ready to meet the challenge of preparing graduates to lead America’s Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines in these uncertain times, just as it did when General John J. Pershing called upon CGSC graduates to lead in World War I. An award-winning historian of CGSC referred to Fort Leavenworth as “America’s School for War,” and today, in an ever-changing world, we proudly still aspire to this title.<sup>13</sup> **MR**

## NOTES

1. General Martin E. Dempsey, “Joint Education White Paper,” (CJSC, 16 July 2012): 4.

2. Peter J. Schifferle, *America’s School for War: Fort Leavenworth, Officer Education, and Victory in World War II* (Lawrence: KS: University of Kansas Press, 2010), 11.

3. BG Volney J. Warner and Dr. James H. Willbanks, “Preparing Field Grade Leaders for Today and Tomorrow,” *Military Review* (January-February 2006).

4. The Army Learning Model is the implementation phase of The Army Learning Concept for 2015, TRADOC PAM 525-8-2, 20 January 2011.

5. Dempsey, 5.

6. Joan Johnson-Freese incorrectly maintains that the Naval War College was the first professional military education (PME) school to be accredited in 1984, but the Higher Learning Commission accredited CGSC in 1976 and the college has been accredited since that date. While Johnson-Freese may have been correct that the Naval War College was the first war college accredited, it was not the first PME institution. Joan Johnson-Freese, “Reform of Military Education: Twenty Five Years Later,” *Orbis* (Winter 2011): 141.

7. During her talk at the Future of Profession Military Education session held at

the ROA Headquarters in Washington, DC., on 19 April 2012, Dr. Johnson-Freese indicated that all PME institutions give their graduate degrees for merely completing the curriculum. CGSC is at least one exception to this contention, in that our graduate degree program is voluntary and there is significant additional work beyond the standard curriculum required to award the degree.

8. Peter R. Mansoor, Review of Douglas Pryer, *The Fight for High Ground*, in *Military Review* (July-August 2010): 97, 98.

9. Warner, 110.

10. Major General Robert H. Scales, “Too Busy to Learn,” *Proceedings* (February 2010): 30–35.

11. Johnson-Freese maintains that PME institutions do not provide a career path that is “transparent and merit-based,” but she again generalizes to PME what she has experienced at war colleges. The system at CGSC is both of these and, in fact, is faculty driven at the senior faculty positions of associate and full professor. Johnson-Freese, *Orbis*, 145.

12. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (Westminster, MD: Bantam Classics, 1999).

13. Schifferle.



# Developing an Effective Command Philosophy

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

*The underlying philosophy of leaders has a significant impact on the way they relate to others, attempt to influence others, judge the actions of others, and make decisions affecting others. Most leadership theories, however, neglect this factor.*

— Steven J. Mayer, Ph.D., “Leadership Philosophy”

*Special thanks go to Mark R. Hurley and J. Scott Peterson for their contributions to this article.*

Lieutenant Colonel Harry C. Garner is an assistant professor, Department of Command and Leadership, U.S. Army Command and General Staff School ILE Campus, Fort Belvoir, VA. He holds a masters degree in public administration from James Madison University. He has served in a variety of command and staff positions in the continental United States, Germany, and Bosnia.

PHOTO: U.S. Army CPT Evan Davies, right, Apache troop commander, 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, Iraq, talks with a federal police officer during a humanitarian aid delivery in Hadar, Iraq, 17 February 2010. (U.S. Army, SPC Landon Stephenson)

**I**N THE FIELD of military leadership, few concepts provoke as much confusion and misinterpretation as a leadership philosophy. The ritual of every incoming military leader providing his organization some type of “philosophy” document even before the completion of his change of command ceremony endures in Army culture as a symbol of organizational ownership. Who can forget those nights before assuming command, when we anxious young captains fumbled through a file of command philosophies attempting to extract our “philosophy” of leading? In many cases, our efforts were little more than exercises in futility and attempts to fulfill some fictitious expectation. Given the recent high-profile reliefs of command and reported cases of toxic leadership within the Army and Navy, I suspect the level of deep thought and self-analysis many senior leaders give to the preparation of their leadership philosophies is comparable to that of young captains. Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, is strangely silent on the concept of a personal leadership philosophy, leaving the reader to wonder what one, in fact, is. Research reveals a variety of articles on the subject, but rarely do any two agree on its purpose, content, or meaning. In most cases, leadership philosophy denotes an organizational philosophy or what the military refers to as “command philosophy.” However, an effective command philosophy is contingent on first developing a personal leadership philosophy.

The U.S. Army Command and General Staff College requires each student to write a personal philosophy of leadership. The learning objective of this exercise is to encourage our mid-level Army leaders to codify their



thoughts, beliefs, and values about leadership as they prepare for their next leadership challenge. I routinely receive used copies of company-level command philosophies with their focus on unit vision, goals, and objectives. It is obvious to me that most mid-level Army leaders have little time to think about leadership or reflect on those critical life events that shaped their personal values, beliefs, and ethics and how these events impacted their leadership behaviors. I believe the primary reason for this is the failure of the military educational system to clearly define the vague and ambiguous term commonly referred to as “leadership philosophy.” A well thought out leadership philosophy is a critical foundational tool to use to develop influential leaders and create positive organizational climates.

This article examines the power of a properly written leadership philosophy for mid-career leaders. By reflecting on one’s past experience, values, and beliefs, leaders can determine “what they believe” concerning leadership. This discovery and subsequent codification of leadership values and beliefs creates a map that

guides the leader as he attempts to shape a positive organizational climate. Through the application of a personal leadership philosophy as manifested in the organizational command philosophy, the leader imparts his values throughout the organization and affects its moral and operational compass.

All military officers are what John Maxwell refers to as “360-degree leaders” and thus require a viable leadership philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Developing a personal leadership philosophy is essential because, although most military officers are in positions of command for just a brief period, they are in leadership positions for their entire professional careers.

## Defining “Leadership Philosophy”

Professor of philosophy Walter Sinnott-Armstrong argues that—

Some people say philosophy is too abstract and even controversial. Philosophers themselves can’t agree on an answer. Sure, the name “philosophy” means “love of wisdom,” but what’s that? There has been



(U.S. Army, Gopinathan Pillai)

The 335th Signal Command’s guidon is passed from BG James T. Walton to 1LT Toby Crandall at an assumption of command ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, 27 February 2010.

a long and glorious history of people called philosophers, but they talk about all kinds of topics in all kinds of ways.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, a universal definition of philosophy is elusive. One provided by Florida State University's School of Philosophy is revealing. "In a broad sense, philosophy is an activity people undertake when they seek to understand fundamental truths about themselves, the world in which they live, and their relationships to the world and to each other."<sup>3</sup> This definition suggests a philosophy is a very personal self-assessment process during which individuals examine their fundamental beliefs and how they shape their relationships with the world around them.

Philip Pecorino writes in *Just What is Philosophy, Anyway?* that philosophy is "a form of thinking meant to guide action or to prescribe a way of life. The philosophic way of life, if there is one, is displayed in a life in which action is held to be best directed when philosophical reflection has provided direction."<sup>4</sup> Determining one's personal philosophy is a continuous mental practice, a process of constant self-evaluation and the questioning of personal assumptions, beliefs and values, all of which ultimately will result in how we manage individuals and situations we encounter.

Everyone possesses a different philosophy. We possess philosophies concerning religion, art, music, raising kids, investing money, politics, and countless other personal and professional concerns. These philosophies create a collage of how and what we believe concerning various matters based on the values and beliefs we learned, developed, and nurtured through physical, emotional, and physiological growth. These values and beliefs ultimately govern our behaviors with those we lead.

Following this analysis, I endorse George Ambler's definition that a leadership philosophy is—

A set of beliefs, values, and principles that strongly influences how we interpret reality and guide our understanding of influencing humans. It's our philosophy, our understanding, and interpretation of leadership, that affects how we react to people, events, and situations around us.<sup>5</sup>

The way we see ourselves as leaders guides our actions, our behaviors, and our thoughts. It provides the foundation of how we influence others.

In many cases, leaders develop their philosophy through reflection on life's most significant events. Todd Conkright shares this revelation:

I believe I'm a better leader today because my leadership journey has not been easy. It makes me a better listener, increases my sensitivity to those around me, and solidifies my values [and] character. In my experience, the key is intentionally reflecting on those difficult leadership situations so that we actually learn and improve.<sup>6</sup>

Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas call these "significant events" that shape leaders' "crucibles," after the vessels medieval alchemist used in their attempts to turn metals into gold.

The crucible experience was a trial and a test, a point of deep self-reflection that forced them to question who they were and what mattered to them. It required them to examine their values, question their assumptions, hone their judgment. And, invariably, they emerged from the crucible stronger and more sure of themselves and their purpose—changed in some fundamental way.<sup>7</sup>

Crucibles are transformational events. Through crucibles, an individual gains a new or altered sense of identity. These life-altering events might include combat, life-threatening disease, the death of a spouse or child, or a professional or financial crisis such as job loss or bankruptcy. They may also include positive events such as marriage, the birth of a child, or a promotion. Maybe simply growing up on a farm in central Iowa engrained the values of hard work, dedication, and faith into your consciousness. Whatever the crucibles, creating your leadership philosophy means that you must explore and reflect upon your own personal values, assumptions, and beliefs about leadership. Drafting a leadership philosophy codifies the changes in values and beliefs that result from crucibles.

The importance of the self-reflection process is echoed by noted Harvard professor and leadership theorist, Bill George:

Reflection on your life story and your experiences can help you understand them at a deeper level—and so you can reframe your life story in a more coherent way as

your future direction becomes congruent with the knowledge of which you are and the kind of person you want to become.<sup>8</sup>

In an earlier work, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets of Creating Lasting Value*, George observed:

Leaders are defined by their values and their character. The values of authentic leaders are shaped by personal beliefs, developed through study introspection and consultation with others, and a life time of experiences. These values define the leader's moral compass.<sup>9</sup>

Achieving the level of personal reflection and discovery encouraged by Bennis, Thomas, and George requires a commitment of time and effort. It will not happen quickly. One must turn back the hands of time to search, reminisce, and capture the valuable nuggets of life's rich experiences. The final product of this arduous process—a personal leadership philosophy and the direction it provides—will significantly affect your relationship with those you lead.

## The Value of a Leadership Philosophy

Occasionally, an inquisitive student challenges me with the obvious question, “Why do I need a leadership philosophy? I am in a specialized career-field where my technical expertise and prowess is rewarded. I will rarely, if ever, lead a group of people and if I do, they will be my peers. I’m not a boss; I’m a colleague, and colleagues collaborate.” While this might be wishful thinking on the part of my “specialized” student, the reality is that everyone leads someone. We are not always in charge, but we nonetheless influence the behaviors of those around us by our actions and attitudes. Because every military officer is a leader, but not necessarily a commander, a personal leadership philosophy is a valuable tool to guide actions and attitudes.

John Maxwell's superb book on organizational leadership, *The 360 Degree Leader*, clearly explains the position in which most middle-level military officers find themselves. “The reality,” he writes, “is that 99 percent of all leadership occurs not from the top but from the middle of the organization. Usually, an organization has only one person who is *the leader*.<sup>10</sup>

The 360 degree leader leads up, leads across, and leads down within the organization.

Most officers serve as commanders for only a brief portion of their military career. However, almost all will be leaders when they serve as program managers, project managers, division chiefs and the like, located squarely in the middle of the vast organization known as the U.S. military. A carefully crafted leadership philosophy is equally applicable to the maintenance manager, hospital administrator, finance section chief, or quality control supervisor as it is to the commander. It is an enduring document. You can apply it to any organization you lead now or in the future. It is your foundation and moral guide. Through applying various leadership styles and influencing techniques to different workplace environments and situations, everyone influences or leads someone, whether it is his boss, his peers, or his subordinates.

Equally influential is the office recluse who avoids responsibility and accountability and refuses to commit or buy-in to organizational goals. These contrarian behaviors, whether conscious or unintended, have a negative impact on the organizational climate. This is true for all organizations, not just the military.

## Imparting Your Leadership Philosophy

Given that a military officer is a leader operating in the center of a vast, bureaucratic organization, how does he impart his leadership philosophy to the organization in his charge? A leader's input and

***Because every military officer is a leader...a personal leadership philosophy is a valuable tool to guide actions and attitudes.***





(U.S. Army, SGT Edwin M. Bridges)

**CPT Lillian Woodington, company commander, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, passes out awards to soldiers at Forward Operating Base War Eagle, Baghdad, Iraq, 22 January 2009.**

guidance in a shared organizational (command) philosophy either reinforces or alters the existing organizational values and sets the organizational compass. All organizations have a specific purpose, and most empower their leaders with specific rules and regulations to effectively manage and control the systems that drive the organization. A military command is nothing more than an organization designed to achieve a specific purpose, to fight and win wars. Commanders, the leaders and managers of these war-fighting organizations, are similarly empowered by federal law and regulation with certain powers to execute this unique and dangerous purpose. A failed military operation is potentially devastating in the terms of the loss of human life; so too is an airplane crash or a catastrophic accident deep within a coalmine. Each represents an organizational failure.

While all organizations exist for a unique purpose, humans are the common factor in all

organizations. Leadership, or the ability to influence others, transcends all organizations no matter their purpose. The command philosophy is an organizational philosophy applicable to a military organization. Although there is no prescribed recipe for an organizational philosophy, most agree that it includes the leader's vision for the organization, goals and objectives, and measures of performance.

Some theorists maintain that the quickest way for a newly assigned leader to establish ownership and control of an organization is to immediately distribute an organizational philosophy. A brief examination exposes a fatal flaw to this premise. Barring an extreme crisis jeopardizing the organization's immediate existence and requiring decisive action, the new leader is best advised to exercise patience. In most cases, the new leader is the outsider entering an organization's existing environment and culture and possessing only power conferred through his position or rank. He does not

yet have the personal credibility or institutional knowledge of the organization to direct changes to its goals and objectives. Invoking immediate, broad, and sweeping organizational change only alienates the existing workforce and creates animosity and mistrust of the leader's intentions.

Conducting a detailed assessment of the organization by studying existing reports, after action reviews, inspection results, and other indicators of organizational health is a more appropriate approach. The assessment must include input from superiors, peers, and subordinate leaders within the organization. Subordinate leaders are those who will actually execute recommended adjustments. Inviting the views and opinions of these "change agents" early in the organizational assessment and soliciting their input into organizational improvements help the leader build trust and confidence. The leader begins to impart his personal philosophy of leadership during these private or cooperative gatherings with subordinates.

Imparting values and beliefs can take several forms. First, the leader might provide the group a few "facts" about himself, his beliefs, and values based on his experiences and drawn directly from his personal leadership philosophy. During initial counseling, the leader might give his immediate subordinates a written document outlining his values and beliefs concerning leadership from his personal leadership philosophy. While there is no single doctrinal method to this process, it is wise to provide those trusted with executing the organization's mission a glimpse into your psyche. Transparency goes a long way in building trust and preventing confusion in the future. Harry Christiansen described the results when company commanders fail to have an organizational philosophy:

Have you ever been in a unit where soldiers were unsure of the company commander's expectations and his method of operation? The result is trial and error, second-guessing, and misdirected effort. In short, the organizational leaders spend most of their energy discovering the commander's interest, which distracts from the effectiveness of the unit.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever method of distribution the leader chooses, from the moment the words leave

his mouth or the paper leaves his hand, his subordinates will evaluate and measure his actions against his stated values. In effect, the leader establishes a values-based contract with those he leads.

Once the assessment is completed, organizational leaders begin the shared process of creating a philosophy that is the moral blueprint for the organization. The philosophy includes the organization's vision and the priorities, goals, and objectives to achieve the vision, as well as metrics of performance to assess and track the organization's performance. It is a detailed document representing the array of operating systems and functions found within the organization, all primed and focused on achieving the organization's purpose. It communicates the leader's expectations of others and what they can expect from him. The leader establishes the ethical and moral values of the organization. They come directly from his personal leadership philosophy. As expressed in an article by Joseph Doty and Joe Gelineau, "Leaders also set the command climate by articulating what the core values of the unit are. Core values are those non-negotiable tenets that permeate the unit and guide everything a unit does or fails to do."<sup>12</sup>

In its final form, the organizational philosophy is the foundation for change communicated to all. Those who developed the organizational philosophy, the subordinate leaders, are the chief communicators transmitting the message down to the lowest levels. Subordinate units take ownership of the organizational philosophy and begin positive movement toward the vision.

Through the leader's behaviors and actions, the organization's climate develops and, over time, the unit develops its own unique personality mirroring the values and behaviors of its leader. Good leaders will lead through this transformational, shared philosophy process throughout their careers as different leadership opportunities emerge. Remember, you will be leading someone or some group your entire professional career.

## A Life-long Process

Leadership is a life-long process of self-assessment, learning, application, and reassessment. Developing a personal leadership philosophy requires courage and humility as one attempts to

discover what one truly believes about leadership. Self-reflection is an arduous task, but required to achieve an individual's full leadership potential. This personal written assessment is applicable throughout one's career and is an enduring compass, changing only when life's crucibles force a reassessment of personal values and beliefs. In the field of organizational development, it is a foundational

document. The leader imparts his personal values and beliefs into the organization through a shared organizational and command philosophy. I challenge every officer to draft a personal leadership philosophy. The benefits that you and your organization receive will manifest themselves in efficient, values-based actions as the organization strives toward mission accomplishment. **MR**

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# The Next Time We Reinvent Someone Else's Country ...

Major General Michael W. Symanski, U.S. Army Reserve, Retired

**T**HE PAIN OF our recent experiences in nation building will eventually wear off, and we probably will again plunge or mission-creep into reinventing someone else's country to suit ourselves. After all, the political and economic stresses in Southwest Asia remain unchanged.

We should try a new approach: to learn from our past unhappy experiences. Historically, anything that has happened before could happen again, but anything that has never happened before is highly unlikely in the future. Very rarely, if ever, has one country successfully reinvented another country's government without resorting to total war; so, a successful American makeover project will defeat long odds.

In order to improve our prospects, we should review some realities about Afghanistan that illustrate what we must do and understand, and ask questions that would help to either turn our assumptions into facts or dismiss them. If we start with the wrong operating model or campaign plan, nature will teach us very expensive lessons.

## What Are We Getting Into?

We must analyze the conditions of the campaign before defining its objectives because the combat phase will change conditions. We must identify which conditions we want to change and forecast how change will affect the outcome. Good strategy is often indirect and drives change instead of merely reacting to conditions. Accurate assessment requires insight, not self-delusion, particularly the naive notion that the American way can or should be applied everywhere.

When we failed in our specified mission to capture Osama bin-Laden, we denied all historical precedent and concentrated on transforming Afghanistan. We had a strategy of indirect approach to render Al-Qaeda harmless by starving it; that is, we deprived the Taliban of their ability to disburse Afghan national assets to Al-Qaeda. By thus inserting ourselves into the conditions of Afghanistan, we promoted the Taliban from a tribal pro-Pashtun gang

Major General Michael W. Symanski was the senior advisor in Logistics and Strategy and Policy to the Afghan Minister of Defense and General Staff. He holds a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Illinois. He won the Military Review Writing Contest in 1988.

PHOTO: U.S. Army SGT Anthony Stewart, left, and SPC Jared Sweet, both with 3rd Battalion, 19th Indiana National Guard Agribusiness Development Team, pull security at the Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land services, Khowst Province, Afghanistan, 5 May 2011. (U.S. Army, PFC Donald Watkins)

to an anti-crusader and anti-American movement with international backers with religious or political interests.

Did we correctly identify the source and dimensions of political strife in Afghanistan? What other contingent or complementary conflicts influence the one that affects the United States, ones we might quickly resolve or mitigate? We must be prepared to take sides in an internal conflict, or else be the target for all sides' enmity.

Who are the popular and effective local leaders? We should not expect a local candidate who promises to deliver our version of good governance to be automatically popular in this Third World country.

The sources of social and political hostility may be too diverse, and the rebels fighting the government too incoherent to permit practical diplomatic dialog. In addition, the ranks of the insurgents often include criminals and those who aid and abet them. We must distinguish between police targets and military ones.

How much infrastructure, facilities, and forces can the local economy and demographics sustain? High volume coalition aid is not necessarily better help, and too much structure will collapse without perpetual subsidy or become a Potemkin village for show, becoming, finally, a bonanza for looters.

The economy of Afghanistan traditionally survived on extortion from caravans passing through, on foreign assistance funds, and on patronage. Who will pay for Afghanistan's political stability after we leave? The Chinese, who do not have a military role in Afghanistan and are not angering Afghans with collateral damage, are building mines and industrial enterprises for Afghanistan's post-NATO future. Still, Afghanistan's tax base will remain weak.

How do the people and their leaders exercise political power in Afghanistan? Who levies taxes and allocates resources? Is there a functioning national government? *Warlordism* is the current Afghan party politics. The tribe is the fundamental political bloc, and the warlord leads a tribe or region. In

the absence of an effective central government, the Afghans submit to those leaders who have enough brute power to impose order. Even in America, desperate and harried people find refuge in gangs. The dynamic is universal.

Without a functioning judicial system to ensure accountability, a government army is just a pirate band held together by their boss's largesse. Why should the people support a regime that is just another tax collector and does nothing to provide security or prosperity?

Why would a government official be more loyal to a gang leader than to national institutions, aside from simple greed? Without a viable pension system, government employees have little confidence they will have a financially secure retirement at the end of public service. An uncertain future compels people to make the most of the present. When there are no enablers of selfless public service, officials will inevitably resort to monetizing their power.

We expect the U.S. military to defeat any tactical or operational opponent, but we need powerful national logistics to make distant strategic engagements successful. Where are our lines of logistical communication? Will dodgy logistics force us to pay tribute to certain counterproductive neighbors? In this part of the world, the U.S. Navy owns the ocean—except for the pirates—and the U.S. Air Force owns the skies—except for the airspace, and neither owns the foreign bases. Thus, American freedom to maneuver is limited. When we abandon the moral high ground for pragmatic reasons, we are copying our enemies' behavior and allowing them to own the strategic initiative and push us into a quagmire.

## What Do We Want?

If we have no clearly announced attainable objective, how do we know if we are winning or losing the fight? If we do not know that we are winning,

***When we abandon the moral high ground for pragmatic reasons, we are copying our enemies' behavior and allowing them to own the strategic initiative and push us into a quagmire.***

then we probably are not. Are the odds of success favorable, or should we cut our losses and bail out? We may think we are heroes resolved on victory when our allies think we are foolishly bullheaded.

What reason do we give for our actions? Will this reason win Afghan hearts and minds? Informed Afghans understood our desire to catch Bin-Laden and the Northern Alliance welcomed American help, but after we failed to catch him, we stayed to transform Afghanistan, which the Afghans suspect is an excuse to destroy their society. We are not the first Westerners who came to “help” them.

History shows that alien armies eventually leave Afghanistan—and the faster the better, for everyone concerned. However, our declaring an exit date does not change the enemy’s strategy because he already knows that we will leave his home one day. Moreover, we want the temporary condition of our presence to have a lasting effect.

Overall, our sustained counterinsurgency (COIN) tenacity costs us much more than it costs the enemy. Cost avoidance will eventually pull the plug on COIN. It is too costly to maintain the new government at a time when we cannot fund our own government and social requirements at home.

If we do not acknowledge that we will leave, we imply that we may stay forever, which is not possible. If we struggle to remain indefinitely, our resilient enemy will see us leave in the end, and our good deeds will disappear.

Speed is imperative. The longer we stay, the more the natives resent us. Each tragic error in combat wipes out many, many of our good works and much of our progress, and time presents evermore opportunities for such tragic incidents.

The United States invaded Afghanistan during a time when Americans were in a state of irrational exuberance over the imaginary value of their real estate and other financial assets. Now, the global economy has collapsed, and we feel we can no longer afford as much military power. We fully funded the campaign in Afghanistan with budget supplements, but now have to change our national military strategy to fit our straitened circumstances. Our coalition allies, too, have higher priorities for their discretionary spending than paying for military expeditions. The war in Afghanistan is not even protecting coalition trade. As for the Chinese, they have found ways to monetize the military investment made by the United States. They sleep comfortably in their



(U.S. Air Force, CPT Peter Shinn)

**U.S. Army 1LT Scott Shirk hands out training materials to high school students from the Shegal District as their orchard training begins at the Bar Chage Demonstration Farm north of Asadabad, Afghanistan, 23 April 2011.**



beds because we rough Americans are willing to do violence on their behalf.

## What Do The Natives Want?

The coalition and the Afghan government are fighting two different wars. We are fighting against international terrorism, but the Afghan government is fighting an invasion from Pakistan. We may offer the natives what they need, but they have emotionally invested themselves in what they want. What are their aspirations and what do they fear?

What is the economic and political landscape? Undereducated people living in desolation feel insecure for good reason, and they cannot sustain or be enthusiastic about democratic government. Economics drives politics, and the politics that promotes prosperity is the most popular. Prosperity produces the security and stability to grow altruism and a vision for the future. The 2011 UN Report of Human Development Indices ranks Afghanistan as the 172nd worst country out of 187. People who receive no benefit from the central government have no stake in its survival. People who are desperate for safety and food are not always idealists or loyal citizens. Afghans have their own vision of what must change, if anything.

Culture is a huge part of Afghan politics. Indeed, Afghanistan calls itself the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. People defend their culture more fervently than their government and are suspicious of aliens. Islam does not encourage compromise. Afghans may see our effort to promote republicanism as the nose of the Christian camel entering the tent. We should be able to understand this fear of outside invasion to a certain extent. After all, even in secular, democratic America, the issue of illegal immigration is not strictly an economic one.

Why do the Afghan people or any people submit to warlords? Is there a Stockholm syndrome at work in which the people accept their lot? If they feel secure and understand their place in the social order, can they live with it even if they are debased? When only a few serfs rebel, should we then dismiss the remainder as hopelessly submissive?

Most Afghans who live in the provinces where the heaviest fighting has taken place have never heard of the 9/11 attacks, and they have absolutely no idea why NATO forces are in their country. In November 2010, Reuters reported that a poll of residents of Hel-



U.S. Army LTC James Geracci, left, Combined Joint Task Force-1, talks with Afghan Border Police (ABP) COL Niamat, right, the ABP Zone 1 surgeon, through an interpreter, center, about the contents of a medical items box that was delivered to the area's ABP headquarters in Kunar Province, Afghanistan, 4 June 2011. (U.S. Army, SGT Kim Browne)

mand and Kandahar Provinces found that 92 percent of the 1,000 men sampled did not know about the Al-Qaeda hijackings. The think tank that commissioned the poll concluded: "The lack of awareness of why we are there contributes to the high levels of negativity toward the NATO military operations and made the job of the Taliban easier. We need to explain to the Afghan people why we are here." We could hardly be more alien to the Afghans, and our operations are inflicting a lot of collateral damage in the name of their self-interest. In H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, what would be the Martians' "winning hearts and minds" strategic communication message to Earthlings? Are we asking the natives to suspend disbelief?

Afghan officials have an Afghan vision of government institutions that amounts to government by the elite, for the elite. The Afghan official feels he must display status symbols for people to take him seriously, and he wants to be near the flagpole where the power is distributed, instead of in the foxhole and marginalized.

Our democratization of Afghanistan produced the unpopular Karzai regime. As long as the

United States will not replace Karzai with someone respected by the Afghans, we will not have friends in Afghanistan, just accomplices. Lately, the U.S. government has made moves to negotiate directly with the Taliban, bypassing the elected Afghan government. We are discrediting Afghan sovereignty and independence by doing so, and this was the cause of the Third Anglo-Afghan War.

Gratitude is not a bankable, long-term asset. We have exhibited more than a little hubris in working with the Afghans. The natives will remain long after we depart. Any Afghan memorials to heroes will be to the local boys who fought the foreigners. After all, how many statues are there in America to the valiant redcoats who gave their lives for King and Country?

## Who Are the Stakeholders?

Who has an economic or political interest in ending this war? Who would benefit from stability and stopping the cash flow?

The cash flow touches the coalition military and contractors in the U.S. military-industrial-academic complex. (National defense is a lucrative market for deep thinking.) The short-term cash flow is high, but the military establishment must eventually pay the peace dividend Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has announced. However, this time we declared the peace dividend before victory was at hand. Clearly, if the enemy's strategy was to draw us into squandering our power and regional relevance, he can argue that he is winning.

The Afghan elite directly and indirectly benefit from bundles of coalition cash. There is even a growing but precarious Afghan middle-class of security guards and salaried soldiers.

The Taliban commit violence against individuals, and the coalition drops bombs. Not only do Afghans naturally object to American bombs killing their people, they prefer that *kafirs* (infidels) from outside the tribe die instead of Muslims. They would rather let the Muslim Taliban escape than that the *kafirs* bomb the village. The village is worth all the *kafirs* in the world. In evidence of how alien we are to Afghanistan, even President Karzai admitted that in a Pakistan versus NATO conflict, he would have to support his neighbor.

What other regional powers or neighbors have a dog in the fight? Do the neighboring "-Stans" share our political priorities?

What do our allies expect to gain and how committed are they? In today's global economy, our allies have many alternate investments to a faraway war, such as supporting a growing population of people too old to work, and promoting the creation of true economic value through mining or agriculture or local manufacturing. Instead of bearing the crushing expense of a security system against a stateless terrorist operating from a distant mud hut, many of our allies are willing to accept a prudent risk of casualties to protect their true national strength, which is their civilian economy. Does the U.S. taxpayer feel that his enormously expensive travel security follows common sense, or feel more confident since the public buildings of the "Home of the Brave" became concrete bunkers?

I see disturbing parallels to the ancient Delian League in which Athens used its allies' cash for self-serving strategic moonshine like Sicily. Today's strategic American "expeditionary capability" looks like adventurism to many NATO bill-payers. We would do well to remember that the misjudgments of the Athenian leaders of the League sucked the credibility out of the alliance and in the end, their allies turned against them.

## How Do the Natives Do Things?

We should let them do things their way, because it is faster, cheaper, and more effective than converting them to our way. Afghans know what right looks like, and know that they did it themselves. Afghanistan had its most prosperous and stable period in its modern history under Zahir Shah, when Afghans were independent and hired any necessary foreign technical expertise.

Compared to us, the Afghans have a fundamentally different view of authority and a very different military tradition, so they approach organizational decision making in a much different way. The Afghan social structure and Army has always been leader-centric without the delegation of authority that is essential to our management principles. Afghan organizations are flat with only one decision maker. We advise them to build a noncommissioned officer corps, but they point out that they defeated the Soviets without sergeants or other subordinate leaders.

In a Western management hierarchy, each ascending rank or authority requires additional



(U.S. Army, SGT Breanne Pye)

**U.S. Army CPT Chris Strelluf, right, assigned to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Raider, interacts with a local soccer player during a ribbon cutting ceremony signifying the official opening of a new soccer field in Subdistrict One of Kandahar City in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, 8 June 2011.**

individual qualifications. Afghanistan does not have enough educated and experienced people to lead or staff an army as large as we are imposing on them. In their flat organizations, rank means only a larger paycheck.

The Afghan foxhole exists to serve the Kabul flagpole. In the traditional Afghan way of war, the government in Kabul gives arms to a growing mass of tribesmen that marches toward the enemy. Their command structure is tribal. There is not much difference between the historic Afghan operational field force and an angry mob. After combat, the surviving tribesmen keep the equipment and the government keeps its power. The rulers conduct war as a one-way trip for the disposable common soldier. They see no need for an enduring, expensive military institution bigger than a palace guard and central arsenal.

The Afghans also know that their own method of warfare defeated many enemies, including the British and the Soviets, and that the barely literate Taliban use that same method to keep coalition

forces huddled in Hesco castles and mine-resistant, ambush-protected military vehicles (except for nighttime snatch-and-flee raids). To Afghans, the Western way of war replaces emotional commitment, audacity, and charismatic leadership with inhuman machines, dilatory overstudy, and an intricate organization that obscures individual valor and glory. The contrast in styles recalls the legendary meeting of King Richard I and Saladin in which the European broad sword chops the chain, but not the silk kerchief that the *shamshir* slices elegantly in mid-air. Worth pointing out is, at that time, castles were offensive weapons that projected power into hostile territory, and our huge, castle-like embassies and bases present this same image of aggressive foreign intrusion.

Political power is exercised through the allocation of resources, and to control resources is to control government. The central government of Afghanistan can control its outlying commanders by prioritizing and metering resources distributed through its logistics system. The absence of



delegated authority seriously hinders converting Afghan logistics to a NATO-style “pull” system. No Afghan materiel manager will issue from his intermediate stock if he can pass the requirement up the supply chain. Afghans have a much different concept of accountability for government property and stewardship. Accountability is not delegated. No intermediate Afghan official will even take the responsibility to dispose of unneeded property. In Afghanistan, possession means ownership, so the soldier considers his issued equipment to be his personal property, which he can keep or trade up.

What really matters to us should be how he uses it. In combat, the coalition hands out equipment needed to win. Later, because of the importance of oversight to Western-style stewardship, our resource managers arrive and try to establish property accountability. Some issued weapons may later be sold in the local bazaar, but the vast majority of them are properly used for the intended purpose of fighting the enemy.

The total compensation of an Afghan official traditionally includes the power to dispense patronage, so a high official has many clients on his personal staff and receives petitioning tribal members as part of his normal working day. To us, patronage is corruption, but it is essential to personal authority in Afghan society. Kinship is as valid a quality for membership and leadership in an Afghan institution as education or any other measure of merit.

Without a functioning judicial system, there can be no rule of law backed up by due process to penalty. Westerners who train Afghans to our familiar sophisticated system of transparent regulation will always be frustrated when they do not take it seriously. Lack of enforced oversight is probably the biggest obstacle to transforming the Afghan government and building its army.

In the face of these conditions, we are trying to create a NATO-compliant Afghan government and army. We seem to have forgotten our experience in Vietnam. Building a national army is as much political science and social science as military science. American advisors and trainers of the Afghan soldiers, bureaucrats, and leaders very often do much good. Many people with outstanding academic credentials visit Afghanistan to assess and advise, but some of their recommendations are afflicted with rigorous scholarship. Too much deep thought can

lead to overengineering. Academics are primarily analysts who are not audacious executors of policy. Visiting academics are usually mission-complete when they have written, graphed, and briefed. The operators, of course, are free to exercise judgment and ignore that advice if it is not already overcome by events (especially if it is in a thick and arcane book). Many recommendations work on paper, but crash against the foibles, biases, and vanities of people with power.

Intricate process is a hallmark of the American style of defense management and rarely takes a speedy route to the objective. Increasingly complex processes force growth in headquarters staffs and information management hardware. The Afghans do not have the assets to support that style of management and do not value it. The Afghans observe that their enemy seems to be doing quite well without policy wonks or much professional education of any sort.

The Afghans are very smart and wonder why we give them so much political science when they need military science to survive. We are teaching them a complex five-year strategic and programming process while the Taliban is rocketing the Ministry of Defense compound. Furthermore, they know that the U.S. government does not faithfully implement the policies it teaches. American officials often ignore mandated processes and schedules, treating them merely as unenforceable confections.

Our own military culture has a built-in hesitation to act. Commanders are so intent on situation analysis and weighing courses of action to avoid error that they often delay decisive action until their impatient political masters demand it. The civilian force and resource provider eventually has to light a fire under the commander to get him to accomplish what he said was undoable. Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s comment about having “to fight with the army you have” meant

***American officials often ignore mandated processes and schedules, treating them merely as unenforceable confections.***

that preparation cannot go on indefinitely. Combat power is relative, and an important evaluation of readiness for combat is to ask, “Would I trade my capabilities and position for those of the enemy?” On the strategic level, we do not have the national military strategy that we need; we have the strategy that we are willing to pay for.

America is currently trading expensive mass for cheaper hardware with the hope that distance weapons and special operators can force the desired political outcomes. We may be trading the strategy of friendly nation building for indecisive gunboat diplomacy applied from the operational periphery. Without the military stamina for a long war, we will have fewer operational and strategic options, and without decisive action, the conflict will extend and exacerbate our vulnerability. America can make the biggest bang in a brief battle, but the world knows that we can lose the little long wars. Does our national military strategy improve conditions, or is it only a spending plan pared in reaction to a fiscal deficit?

We mentors and our Afghan students have different mentalities. The Afghans understand Soviet-style logistics management, and our increasingly frequent resort to that simpler style shows that we probably are learning more from them than they from us.

Afghanistan is a culture of dialogue versus Power Point. They communicate with words instead of graphics. They even resist including diagrams in their technical documents. Dedicated and progressive Afghan public servants struggle to change their management culture while handicapped by the lack of educated staff personnel, automation tools required for modern management processes, and the lack of delegated authority to act.

The international coalition does not hand the Afghans much money about which to make decisions, anyway. We find it easier to bypass the Ministry of Defense and the strategic policy process that we

taught them and work problems directly with the Afghan General Staff. We thereby discredit the official civilian-led decision-making process about which we preach.

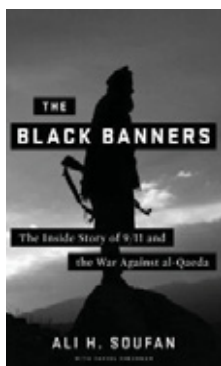
When the Afghan logistic bureaucracy seems stuck, the anxious American advisor instead often intervenes to buy the essential items with coalition funds. The Afghans quickly learned that Americans reward Afghan slowness with free stuff. Afghans value and admire hoarding (even junked government vehicles and dangerous obsolete ammunition are considered national treasures), and they try to keep their warehouses filled by ignoring requisitions. They are new to life-cycle management.

## How Will We Know When We Are Finished?

Some of the points discussed above were foreseeable and some are probably visible only in hindsight after a lot of “scar-tissue learning.” Either way, we should remember them in order to cope with the future. It is too late to make a U-turn in our Afghanistan strategy. Maybe reduced resourcing will allow nature to take its course and let the Afghans conduct their own war.

Maybe we will recognize mission accomplishment when an unarmed American can safely walk in the bazaar because the reformed local government is delivering peace and prosperity on the strength of its social contract with the governed. We will have forced change by playing to the native strengths and not wasting our resources in a forlorn hope of replacing its deeply ingrained cultural and institutional traditions. We will have understood and accepted that each side of the meeting table, with equal validity, views the other as strangely blind to the obvious. Directed or threatened violence is an indispensable component of effective diplomacy, so political leaders and soldiers will have beaten the odds together. **MR**

# MR BOOK REVIEWS



## THE BLACK BANNERS: The Inside Story of 9/11 and the War Against Al-Qaeda,

Ali H. Soufan with Daniel  
Freedman, W.W. Norton  
& Company, New York,  
2011, 572 pages, \$26.95

**A**LI SOUFAN, AN FBI

agent and interrogator, was in Yemen investigating Al-Qaeda's attack on the USS *Cole* when the 9/11 attacks took place. Many of his friends and colleagues died in the twin towers, including John O'Neill, his mentor and former boss. The next day, his headquarters ordered him to reinterrogate Fahd al-Quso, a member of Al-Qaeda in Yemen. The CIA sent him a file explaining why. When Soufan read the file, his hands shook. He ran to the bathroom, fell to the floor next to a toilet and threw up, unable to comprehend why the CIA had withheld such key intelligence for more than a year. If this intelligence, which the FBI had repeatedly requested, had been shared with the FBI before 9/11, "at a minimum, Khalid al-Mihdhar [one of the hijackers] would not have been allowed to just walk into the United States on 4 July 2001, and Nawaf al-Hazmi, Atta's deputy [another hijacker], would have been arrested." The interrogation of either of these hijackers could have then led to more arrests, and perhaps, foiled the entire plot.

This powerful anecdote is just one of many in Soufan's remarkable memoir, *The Black Banners: The Inside Story of 9/11 and the War Against Al-Qaeda*. An Arabic-speaking Lebanese American, Soufan served at the "tip of the spear" in America's fight against Al-Qaeda from 1997 to 2004. During this period, using traditional, noncoercive interrogation techniques, Soufan's team convinced many die-hard Al-Qaeda members that they should cooperate. After his team questioned L'Houssainne Khertchou, this Kenyan Al-Qaeda operative became the star witness in a trial that put four other operatives in prison for the 1998 East African embassy

bombings. Interrogations of Quso and Jamal al-Badawi led to confessions and convictions for their roles in the 1999 bombing of the USS *Cole*. His team "turned" Abu Jandal, Osama bin-Laden's personal bodyguard, which led to testimony that convinced Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's president, that Al-Qaeda was indeed behind the 9/11 attacks. Soufan's interrogations of Abu Zubaydah, a mid-level Al-Qaeda facilitator, yielded the intelligence that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed had orchestrated the attacks. Notably, during these and other interviews, his team uncovered Al-Qaeda plots that were then stopped.

As spectacular as these successes are, history will find far more interesting the institutional failures that Soufan's experiences illuminate. There is the failure of the CIA to adequately share intelligence with U.S. law enforcement agencies, thus ensuring the 9/11 attacks could take place. Just as damning is Soufan's eyewitness testimony concerning the utter ineffectiveness of so-called "enhanced" interrogation techniques. Soufan describes multiple interrogations in which he earned the trust and cooperation of Al-Qaeda operatives, only to have psychologists and amateur interrogators from the CIA destroy the rapport through brutality. He reports that once they used harsh techniques, detainees stopped providing substantial intelligence. Even more troubling, Soufan describes how the Bush administration extradited even cooperative sources to Arab countries, where they would be tortured, murdered, or soon released to rejoin Al-Qaeda's ranks.

However, *The Black Banners* is more than a book about American successes and failures; it is the most valuable primary source published to date on Al-Qaeda. This stands to reason. The terrorist organization was extremely small when Soufan fought it, so he could thus interrogate a sizeable percentage of its members. Through these interviews, we get a detailed, comprehensive view of the group. We learn that what "binds the operatives together is this narrative that convinces them that they're part of a divine plan." The narrative includes cherry-picked, apocryphal sayings of the prophet Mohammed ("hadith"), such as the suspect hadith, "If you see



the black banners coming from Khurasan [a medieval kingdom that included much of Afghanistan], join that army, even if you have to crawl over ice; no power will be able to stop it.” This alleged saying explains Al-Qaeda’s black flag and the group’s interest in Afghanistan. We also discover the degree to which Al-Qaeda’s rank and file are uneducated and, thus, easily manipulated by its leaders. Surprisingly easily, Soufan is able to convince many members to cooperate simply by teaching them the actual words of the Koran—words that contradict much of Al-Qaeda’s propaganda.

*The Black Banners* does have flaws. The CIA reviewed the manuscript, and those sections that cast the CIA in a negative light are heavily redacted. Indeed, some sections are barely readable. The book is also rather haphazardly organized, and its prose—while capable—is unexceptional. Nonetheless, future historians may one day deem this book the most important memoir of our generation. Ali Soufan not only personally exemplifies who Americans are at our best, but he vividly and uniquely describes—to our great shame—who we have been at our worst. Any American would benefit from reading this book, and it is a must-read for U.S. warfighters, foreign policy makers, historians, and intelligence and law enforcement personnel.

**LTC Douglas A. Pryer, U.S. Army, Afghanistan**

LTC Pryer is the author of *The Fight for the High Ground: The U.S. Army and Interrogation during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, May 2003–April 2004*.

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**CHINA AND COEXISTENCE: Beijing’s  
National Security Strategy for the  
Twenty-First Century,**

Liselotte Odgaard, The Johns Hopkins  
University Press, Baltimore, MD,  
2012, 264 pages, \$45.00

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**A**SSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT the Royal Danish Defence College, Institute for Strategy, Liselotte Odgaard has written a compelling book arguing that China will remain merely a would-be great power for the foreseeable future. She believes legitimate great power status comes about primarily through the combination of military and economic means, and that China will not soon

achieve this stature. However, China will pose a challenge to U.S. geopolitical interests and the U.S.-led international order by way of its peaceful coexistence policy.

In support of her thesis, Odgaard systematically details the evolution of China’s national security strategy over the last 20 years, highlighting its balance of peaceful coexistence and nationalism. She describes peaceful coexistence as a strategy that nations with less than great power status use to wield political influence (relying on diplomacy and statesmanship) as a means to influence global order to suit nationalist aspirations. In other words, peaceful coexistence is a tool used to persuade, not provoke. China seeks to use this strategy to influence global order by way of multilateral and international security institutions, such as the United Nations and smaller regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, to buy time to build its economy and military to achieve great power status.

Odgaard places this peaceful coexistence security strategy into effective historical context, drawing on early Soviet doctrine, China and India’s mid-century experience, and country case studies from the 19th and 20th centuries (e.g., Austria, Prussia, and Britain). She analyzes China’s application of its coexistence strategy to some border and sea disputes (e.g., Japan, Russia, India, and the South China Sea). China’s coexistence strategy allows China to expand its control while improving relations. Historically, this type of strategy has failed in the long run because it ultimately seeks benefits beyond a country’s relative international power base. Odgaard thinks this overreaching may prove problematic for China. Going forward, when considering China’s economic reliance on foreign trade and direct foreign investment to fuel its economic growth, the country must contend with its lack of support from politically reliable and loyal partner nations.

In contrast to the policy of peaceful coexistence, China has used coercive measures in dealing with Japan over economic and geopolitical issues by withholding much-needed rare-earth materials. China has also methodically isolated Taiwan from the international community by making economic arrangements with other nations contingent on them not recognizing Taiwan as an independent

state. Odgaard rightfully questions China's real strategic intent, signaling a note of caution to the United States.

This well researched, substantive, and thought-provoking book is laid out well and is easy to read and digest. Whether or not you agree with the author's logic and conclusions, the book is worth the read for its superb analysis. Military and inter-agency professionals, international relations and political science students and academics, as well as others interested in the emergence of China, its foreign policy, and its evolving role in international affairs would benefit from reading it.

**David A. Anderson, Ph.D., LtCol, USMC,  
Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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## **DRIFT: The Unmooring of American Military Power,**

Rachel Maddow, Crown Publishing,  
New York, 2012, 264 pages, \$25.00

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**F**EW MODERN BOOKS written by political commentators provide *Drift's* ideological dichotomy. Its author, Rachel Maddow, is a well-known television host on MSNBC who consistently takes a liberal, witty, and informed view of the news. However, the message in the book is as conservative as they come: that our government has overstepped its bounds and is incapable of representing our people, at least in respect to our national security. As she says, "Our political process doesn't actually determine what we do [in national security]. We're not directing that policy anymore; it just follows its own course." Despite the mechanisms put into place by the Founders to prevent the executive branch from solely conducting war, today there are no institutional brakes to warmaking.

Based mostly on historical anecdote and storytelling, *Drift* primarily concerns how the United States finds itself in this situation. This subtle shaping of a political narrative is the unfortunate direction the book takes. While the topic Maddow addresses is eminently pertinent to our contemporary military and society, she goes about describing it incompletely, leaving the reader unsatisfied.

However, one key point Maddow makes bears some additional thought: the placement of necessary warmaking capabilities in the Guard and Reserves

following Vietnam to better balance how our nation conducts war (referred to as the Abrams Doctrine). Throughout her narrative, she describes how this one institutional brake was bypassed in the 1990s and ultimately co-opted to conduct operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This has created a situation in which no societal mechanisms remain to prevent a president from beginning and conducting war.

Those who automatically change the channel when Maddow appears on television will not enjoy the book—semantically and stylistically, *Drift* is an extension of her TV show. However, the topic she discusses bears further debate from all sides and is well worth reading.

**CPT Nathan K. Finney,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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## **WE MEANT WELL: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People,**

Peter Van Buren, Metropolitan Books,  
Henry Holt and Company, LLC, New York,  
2011, 261 pages, \$25.00

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*"My goal was not to embarrass people but  
instead draw attention to what we as an  
organization have done."*

— Peter Van Buren, Interview on National  
Public Radio, 5 October 2011

**P**ETER VAN BUREN'S *We Meant Well* contains valuable lessons for leaders both military and civilian. Among its revelations, it raises ethical questions concerning the complexities of reconstruction in Iraq, and it does so from the perspective of an embedded provincial reconstruction team (PRT) leader. Van Buren's goal is to inform readers of flaws in our approach to the reconstruction of post-war Iraq. Many portions of his book do just that. However, readers should be aware that the book seems tendentious in places where the author delivers sarcastic, acerbic, and apparently vengeful observations. The author is humorous and articulate, and he delivers several useful discussions informing potential leaders of pitfalls in the vital work of reconstruction. This book can inspire reflection on how to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

Central to Van Buren's argument is that reconstruction efforts focused on input (spending money on programs) more than output (the results of those programs) and anyone attempting to change the status quo was punished. Van Buren reflects on the damaging impact this lack of fiscal accountability had on him. He states that none of his supervisors in the reconstruction offices at the U.S. embassy ever questioned a program he approved; however, he got into a great deal of trouble when he cancelled two programs he deemed fiscally irresponsible.

Van Buren got the message: spend your budget. Not only spend the budget, but also don't let on that projects are not going well. Van Buren describes taking a member of the media through a chicken processing plant built with U.S. funds. The plant never processed any chickens except when the media visited. During these visits, the sheik in charge of the plant would buy chickens and process them solely for the benefit of the visitor—a kind of chicken plant kabuki theatre.

This account does put reconstruction efforts in a poor light. The author himself felt compelled to participate in such actions. The fact that he did may alienate his readers. After all, others have used the excuse "I was following orders" to justify all kinds of wrongheaded activity. It is unclear if anyone actually ordered this charade, although the author does relate the trouble he got into for resisting it.

Van Buren's credibility as a whistle blower may seem suspect to some, but many military leaders might find his discussion of civilian-military relations informative and forthright. Brigade commanders in Iraq who had PRT teams assigned in their operational environment may have found working with them problematic due to differences in organizational culture. Those who have served on combat advising teams might have found similar challenges; working with fellow Americans can be more challenging than with Iraqi counterparts. Van Buren describes this challenge stating, "Most of the diplomacy I practiced in Iraq took place inside the wire." The irony that fellow Americans from different governmental agencies might face communication and cultural challenges is engaging and relevant. Leaders who must build effective teams consisting of diverse members, such as State Department employees, would benefit from this discussion.

Although vindictive at times, Van Buren is articulate, describing relevant problems as long as he stays on topic. For example, in one chapter he discusses a certain PRT member's sexual missteps down range using only a first name—this would fool no one and seems mean spirited. This account calls into question his statement on National Public Radio that he did not intend to embarrass people. Such lurid sections distract from his overall goal to inform American society of a problem with how taxpayer funds are being used in reconstruction.

Nevertheless, *We Meant Well* is for anyone who would like to see the Iraqi reconstruction environment through the eyes of this PRT chief's often perceptive account. This book is loaded with great discussion points for those studying ethics in a complex environment. *We Meant Well* would be a good book for senior leader discussions at brigade level and above. This is a cautionary tale for those who are involved in reconstruction efforts: This is how *not* to do reconstruction.

*LTC Richard A. McConnell, USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

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### HUMAN SECURITY IN A BORDERLESS WORLD,

Derek S. Reveron and Kathleen A. Mahoney-  
Norris, Westview Press, Boulder, CO,  
2011, 256 pages, \$32.00

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**A**LTHOUGH THE STATE has historically exercised primacy in international relations and security matters, the landscape of the dynamic, often ambiguous contemporary operating environment has expanded to include many more nonstate and transnational actors and belligerents. Over the last 20 years, this new "norm" has facilitated a shift in focus of international and national security from classic state-centric security issues to a broader set of issues that center on individuals who have transnational implications.

In *Human Security in a Borderless World*, authors Derek S. Reveron and Kathleen A. Mahoney-Norris, both experts in the field of national security affairs and national security studies, advocate the concept of human security—a people-centered approach focused on individual human beings and their rights and needs—to examine various security challenges that threaten individuals, societies, and governments



from a U.S. policy and security perspective. These challenges include poverty, disease, bad governance (failed or failing states), crime, corruption, and human rights abuses. Historically, the United States has taken a realist approach to national security focusing with other states on hard-power (military, economic) means to protect national interests (sovereignty, territorial integrity, government, institutions, and society).

This approach focused on protecting against the most catastrophic possibilities of nuclear attack and conventional attacks of rogue states. The security environment of the 21st century, complicated by the effects of globalization and economic interdependence, has challenged states to take a more constructivist approach to security focused on using soft power (diplomacy, pursuit of shared values, and human rights) to deal with the most likely threats posed by nonstate actors and transnational challenges. This timely and thought-provoking book's premise is that the only effective way the United States can contend with security concerns is to move beyond the traditional state-centered approach to national security to a broader human-security approach.

In their well-organized book, Reveron and Mahoney-Norris define and compare national security and human security, and review the international relations theories (realism, liberalism, and constructivism) that inform varying perspectives and approaches to security. The authors examine civic, economic, environmental, maritime, health, and cyber security, defining and framing the security problem, its relationship to national security, examining U.S. approaches and policy, and providing recommendations for improvement.

In the last chapter, the authors provide a model that incorporates and highlights the relationship between a broad spectrum of security challenges: traditional issues (nuclear and conventional attack, civil war, and insurgency); interrelated seam issues (civic, economic, environmental, maritime, health, and cyber security); human issues (crime, disease, poverty, corruption, bad governance, and human rights); military and nonmilitary means; and required capabilities.

Field Manual 5-0 states that "developing a thorough understanding of the operational environment is a continuous process . . . This understanding

will never be perfect, attempting to comprehend its complex nature helps identify the unintended consequences that may undermine well-intentioned efforts." *Human Security in a Borderless World* helps government officials and military leaders gain understanding of the operational environment and its various actors by capitalizing on multiple perspectives and varied sources of knowledge.

The book is a rewarding read for senior and midgrade military officers desiring a synopsis, analysis, and implications of transnational security issues affecting the United States.

**LTC Edward D. Jennings, USA, Retired,  
Leavenworth, Kansas**

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### **GHOSTS OF EMPIRE: Britain's Legacies in the Modern World,**

Kwasi Kwarteng, PublicAffairs Press,  
New York, 2012, 480 pages, \$29.99

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**W**HILE NO SHORTAGE of literature exists on the subject of the British Empire, *Ghosts of Empire* provides a fresh perspective that reminds us of our shared history and parallel paths. Its author, Kwasi Kwarteng, examines Britain's colonial legacy through a contemporary lens, drawing on the Crown's experience to frame a cautionary tale for America in the 21st century. At a time when many leading thinkers are pressing the United States to take a leading role in policing global unrest, Kwarteng cites the decline of the British Empire to urge restraint.

Britain's colonial period represented an era of great confidence and opportunism for the Empire, when the Crown ruled the seas and the territories were flush with resources. The phrase, "The sun never set on the British Empire," was more than a euphemism for global reach; it was an undisputed truth, with colonies spanning the world from Iraq to India, from Burma to Hong Kong. However, administering those colonies proved more than challenging, and inconsistent foreign policy ultimately weakened colonial bonds to the point of failure. Unable to provide consistent and coherent policy, the Empire fell in decline through shortsighted decisions and broad failures in administrative oversight.

The author summons the lessons of colonialism to serve warning to the United States. More than

once, Kwarteng intimates that the only consistent aspect of American foreign policy over the past century has been inconsistency. This inconsistency threatens our global standing, limits our reach, and saps our influence and confidence. Kwarteng warns that America should heed the lessons of the *Ghosts of Empire* in charting a future course away from our shores. In many cases, the ghosts of the colonial period are at the root of our contemporary problems around the world.

Kwarteng, a conservative member of parliament from Spelthorne in Surrey, was born to Ghanaian parents in London in 1975. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, he attended Harvard University as a Kennedy Scholar before returning to Cambridge to complete his doctorate. He was elected to Parliament in 2010.

As strategic thinkers increasingly suggest that we are compelled to global action with a “responsibility to protect” the embattled populations of the world, *Ghosts of Empire* serves as a stark reminder of the lessons of the past. Already stretched thin by events in Iraq and Afghanistan, America lacks both the resources and the national will to extend a veil of protection across the planet. Our foreign policy is not sufficiently stable to maintain such a veil. Moreover, we simply cannot express such action in terms that support our national security interests.

*Ghosts of Empire* is not just a great read, engaging readers from beginning to end. It is a thought-provoking historical study with startling modern implications that will prove informative for any student of imperial history.

*LTC Steve Leonard,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

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**DEMOCRACY’S ARSENAL: Creating a  
Twenty-First-Century Defense Industry,**

Jacques S. Gansler, MIT Press,  
Cambridge, MA, 2011, 452 pages, \$45.00

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**T**HIS IS THE fourth major work on the defense industry by Jacques S. Gansler, a well-respected scholar and former Department of Defense (DOD) official. He writes that deep systemic change is needed to prepare the DOD and related defense industries for the coming decades. The shift of threats to nonstate actors using terrorism, nuclear

proliferation, and electronic warfare makes the development of new technologies and expanding international military cooperation growing challenges. The defense industry’s ability to respond is greatly threatened because its current development and acquisition model depends on outdated strategic concepts and budgets no longer sustainable due to an aging populace, an increasing debt load, and rising pension and healthcare costs.

Gansler begins with overviews of the defense industry and then goes on to provide detailed investigations of industry sectors along with the needed advice and direction on future policy changes. While recognizing that a single buyer dominates the current defense market, he believes the reintroduction of competitive elements among producers will reinvigorate the industry. Industry mergers, tight export controls, heavy government regulation, and the reluctance to rely on the technical expertise of non-U.S. researchers have stifled growth and innovation in the science and technology fields. Due to the high cost of dealing with DOD, many commercial companies have left the defense field and developed technologies that far outpace those sometimes available to the military.

To prepare for the coming challenges, Gansler argues that the government must revise tight regulations that reflect an isolationist approach to technological exchanges to make it easier for successful commercial companies to reintegrate their commercial operations with defense research and development. The United States must embrace globalization, realizing that the use of advanced technologies from other nations will ensure it fields the most up-to-date systems and provides greater interoperability with allied systems as coalition actions increase. The government should also concentrate on revitalizing its acquisition force and developing a logistics system that responds like a successful commercial operation. The Defense Department must pursue these changes within a model of development and acquisitions that builds cost reduction and schedule into the process. This new model must be based on developing net-centric systems, not individual platforms. Only then can DOD achieve the commercial phenomenon of paying less to get more, instead of the current trend of more expense for fewer and fewer platforms.

Gansler's work is a timely call to action. Defense needs and budgetary constraints are on a collision course. This work provides a framework for the change needed to avert that crisis. Senior leadership across acquisitions, logistics, and R&D in both the civilian and government sectors will benefit from engaging the arguments and observations raised by Gansler. The ability of the U.S. defense industry to respond to the coming challenges rests on how well these needed changes will be implemented.

*Jonathan E. Newell, Nashua, New Hampshire*

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**MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN THE  
21ST CENTURY: Science and Practice,**  
Kim-Yin Chan, Star Soh, and Regena Ramaya,  
CENGAGE Learning Asia, Singapore,  
2011, 257 pages, \$65.50

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**L**EADING IS FUNDAMENTAL to officer-ship. Officers should be students of leadership throughout their career. *Military Leadership in the 21st Century: Science and Practice* was written as a textbook to provide Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) junior officers and other military institutions around the world an introductory-level appreciation of the key concepts related to military leadership. Retired SAF officers Kim-Yin Chan, Star Soh, and Regena Ramaya are psychologists specializing in military psychology and sociology who had the chance to learn from the doctrine and leadership development and education practices of armed forces in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and Israel. Thus, *Military Leadership* transcends SAF approaches to leadership and is useful for any junior military leader who wants to understand the social sciences that underpin contemporary military leadership doctrine.

The authors explain fundamental leadership concepts such as stress, the psychology of human behavior in combat, motivation and morale, leadership styles and values, leading military teams in complex environments, and the profession of arms. They ask: Are leaders born or made? What is the difference between command and leadership? What is the difference between direct, organizational, and strategic leadership? The reason *Military Leadership* belongs on a professional officer's bookshelf is the manner in which the authors link leadership

theory to doctrine to illustrate using social sciences to improve individual and team performance.

*Military Leadership* may be designed to provide academic education to junior officers, but it provides a great reference book on foundational leadership principles. It is an excellent book not only for personal professional development to become a better leader, but also for discussion and education at the team or unit level to enhance performance.

*LTC Ted A. Thomas, Ph.D., USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

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**LIONS OF KANDAHAR: The Story of a  
Fight Against All Odds,** Rusty Bradley and  
Kevin Maurer, Bantam, New York,  
2011, 304 pages, \$26.00

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**I**N *LIONS OF Kandahar*, Major Rusty Bradley delivers a dose of reality through a rare firsthand account of Special Forces in action on the battlefield in southern Afghanistan during Operation Medusa.

In the summer of 2006, Taliban forces had gained momentum and massed in the Panjwayi Valley within striking distance of their ultimate prize, Kandahar City. In response, the NATO forces of Regional Command South planned Operation Medusa to clear the thousands of Taliban from Panjwayi and eliminate the threat to Kandahar. The plan utilized Afghan Army forces operating under the tutelage of three Special Forces A-teams, one commanded by Bradley, to conduct reconnaissance of the valley, distract Taliban forces, and establish blocking positions to the south while Canadian forces conducted the main attack. As often happens in war, operations diverged from the plan.

With the Special Forces teams and their Afghan partners watching from the other side of the valley, the main coalition attack ran into stiff resistance and a counterattack that threatened the success of the entire operation. Realizing this, Bradley and his comrades quickly identified Sperwan Ghar, a decisive piece of high ground in the valley, as the key to regaining the initiative and enabling the attack to continue. The small force assaulted the hill and entered into a brutal firefight with close to 1,000 enemy fighters who also realized its importance. Against all odds, through grit and enthusiasm and discipline and craft, the extremely outnumbered



Afghan and Special Forces detachment took the ground, ending any chance the Taliban fighters had for success.

While it conveys a small but important piece of the history of the war in Afghanistan, *Lions of Kandahar* is not a history text; it is a story about the men involved and well worth the read. Writing in the first person, Bradley intermingles classic Special Forces bravado with his penchant for storytelling to bring his pages to life. Further, he juxtaposes the relative comfort of life in the United States with the realities of war by including such personal memories as his arrival in theater and a conversation with his daughter on the phone.

Bradley's detailed, evocative description of the Special Forces and Afghan warfighters' selfless and herculean actions is a tribute to those who took Sperwan Ghar. This book will appeal to anyone interested in military operations in Afghanistan. In addition, those who wish to learn more about the capabilities of U.S. Army Special Forces will find *Lions of Kandahar* an entertaining and informative read.

*Shane Vesley, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

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### **FALLEN ELITES: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany,**

Andrew Bickford, Stanford University Press,  
Palo Alto, CA, 2011, 268 pages, \$22.95

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**E**VER WONDER WHAT happened to the East German Army? Veterans of the Cold War, especially those stationed in West Germany during this era, may conjure up images of a sinister, monolithic force that was the first line of defense for the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe. What happened to this vaunted adversary after the end of the Cold War and the German reunification? Did it simply go quietly into the night? How exactly did it become part of the present-day German Army?

Assistant professor of anthropology at George Mason University Andrew Bickford examines this and related questions in a fascinating study of the military reunification process in post-Cold War Germany. Bickford's tells us the East German Army, or NVA (*Nationale Volksarmee*) became the "military other" in the new Germany. Bickford

convincingly argues that the reunified *bundeswehr* quickly and systematically emasculated the NVA, because it sought to distance itself from an entity it considered illegal, irrelevant, and hopelessly linked to the former communist regime.

Virtually overnight, the NVA disbanded and the majority of its members became jobless. Officers above the rank of lieutenant colonel were automatically retired, while only a small portion of other NVA members joined the new army. Perhaps most egregious, Germany now considered former NVA constituents as "members of a foreign military," treating them as nonsoldiers and de facto second-class citizens. An unequal pension system and the denial of military burials further humiliated the NVA. A segment of reunified Germany thus quickly became politically and economically isolated and disenfranchised.

Why should we care about the demise of the NVA, a military associated with the losing side in the Cold War? Bickford argues that Germany mishandled the NVA issue, and it is difficult to disagree with him. Members of the NVA should have had full status as German soldiers and greater equality (parity was untenable) in the *bundeswehr*. The NVA's marginalization made the path to reunification more difficult, and attested to East Germany's general treatment as an unequal partner in the reunification process.

Meticulously researched, highly readable, and instructive, Bickford's work gives tremendous insight into what it means to be a soldier serving a state associated with the losing side. *Fallen Elites* has applicability to future reunification scenarios, such as the Korean peninsula. I strongly recommended it to students of the Cold War and German reunification and civil-military relations specialists.

*Mark Montesclaros, Fort Gordon, Georgia*



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**STRIKING BACK: Combat in Korea,  
March–April 1951,**

Edited by William T. Bowers,  
University Press of Kentucky, Lexington,  
2010, 450 pages. \$40.00

**PASSING THE TEST: Combat in Korea,  
April–June 1951,**

Edited by William T. Bowers and  
John T. Greenwood,  
University Press of Kentucky, Lexington,  
2011, 486 pages, \$40.00

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**S**TRIKING BACK and *Passing the Test* are the second and third in a series of Korean War combat narratives edited by William T. Bowers. They describe events from March to June 1951 from battalion and below. Bowers died in 2008 after the first volume was published; he had a second volume nearly ready for publication and a third volume in draft. John Greenwood, a former colleague, saw the second volume through to publication, completed work on the third, and shares credit as editor.

Bowers uses Army historian post-combat interviews to narrate the fighting at the battalion, company, platoon, and individual soldier levels. He intersperses the interviews with passages from division and corps combat reports to provide context by describing the larger tactical situation, and concerns himself with the operational or strategic aspects of the war only as they provide context for tactics. As he compares the interviews with other primary sources, he shows that the confusion of combat remains after the fighting ends.

In *Striking Back*, Bowers narrates parts of the UN Counteroffensive in the winter of 1951, concentrating on the actions of UN forces in the central mountains, the areas north of Seoul, and in central Korea. In March, UN forces advanced to liberate Seoul, killing as many communists as possible and taking positions north of the 38th parallel in a series of limited offensives. As their offensive wound down, UN troops prepared themselves to meet the fifth Chinese offensive as described in *Passing the Test*.

In *Striking Back*, Bowers follows regiments of the 7th Infantry and the 1st Cavalry Divisions in their actions in the central mountains. Here one sees

the importance of logistics in an austere environment characterized by poor or nonexistent roads in rugged, mountainous terrain and the ingenious ways logisticians kept the units supplied. The problems occurred as battalions resupplied their companies.

Bowers follows the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team as part of an armor-infantry task force, as it traps and destroys a large portion of the Chinese and North Korean troops concentrated north of Seoul. He then shifts attention to central Korea and follows the attacks of the 2nd Infantry and 1st Cavalry Divisions around the Hwach'on Reservoir to destroy the Communist forces there and seize the dam that controlled the river waters flowing through UN forces' rear areas.

The narrative shifts west to study the 24th Infantry Regiment's actions conducting an assault crossing of the Hant'an River. *Striking Back* concludes as the Chinese finish their preparations for their fifth (spring) offensive, which they launched in late April.

In *Passing the Test*, the focus is on the Chinese spring offensive. Much of the narrative concentrates on blocking the communist advance to Seoul. The Chinese goal was to seize Seoul after destroying the UN forces and then proceed to Taejon, Taegu, and Pusan to unite Korea under Kim Il Sung. The stubborn defense in all sectors destroyed the plan, and the UN counteroffensive ended in June.

Bowers concentrates on the actions that took place during the first week of the Chinese offensive. He details the actions of the hard-pressed troops guarding the northern approaches to Seoul on the Imjin and at Kap'yeong. He describes the effects of the disintegration of the ROK 6th Division on the UN units holding its flanks. The hard fighting that led to the destruction of the Gloucestershire Battalion allowed its neighboring units to retreat in good order and establish a new line.

Bowers concentrates on the fighting below the Soyang River from May to early June that stopped the Fifth Chinese Offensive. He emphasizes the difficulties UN forces faced, especially in maneuver and supply, while fighting in mountainous terrain. Bowers shows there is still much to learn from the 38 months of combat in Korea, which, between January and June 1951, was a series of limited offensives designed to destroy communist fighting power using superior firepower. At the end of the

fighting, the tactical situation changed for both the UN and the communists. From July 1951 until the armistice two years later, attacks were predicated on the desire to fight while negotiating.

Weaving together accounts of the fighting at different tactical levels gives one an understanding of particular military aspects of the Korean War, casting new light on a forgotten war. These two books and their predecessor volume are well worth reading.

*Lewis Bernstein, Ph.D., Seoul, Korea*

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**THE LAST MISSION OF THE  
WHAM BAM BOYS: Courage, Tragedy,  
and Justice in World War II,**

Gregory Freeman, Palgrave MacMillan,  
New York, 2011, 236 pages, \$26.00

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**T**HE LAST MISSION of the *Wham Bam Boys: Courage, Tragedy, and Justice in World War II*, is the story of a downed B-17 crew in 1945. During their first bombing mission, their aircraft was hit by flak, the crew bailed, and eventually—after capture—found themselves confronted by a hostile civilian mob in Rüsselsheim, Germany. Six of the American crewmembers were beaten and shot to death and later hastily buried in the town's cemetery. After the war, American military authorities prosecuted 11 Rüsselsheim citizens for murder.

Gregory Freeman's telling of the story is uneven, but his handling of trial dialogue is excellent. Perhaps the book's greatest strength is its ability to convey the simple pain, uncertainty, and raw emotion experienced by the crew's stateside families, who for so long held out the hope that their loved ones were still alive. Three crewmembers survived—and Freeman tells their stories in a particularly effective manner.

That said, there are several places where *The Last Mission of the Wham Bam Boys* falls short. This is not an exhaustive scholarly work, and it contains only a short bibliography, which itself lacks what are usually considered the definitive works on the American strategic bombing campaign. Equally odd is the salient fact that this exact topic was thoroughly covered in an earlier book, *Wolfsangel: A German City on Trial* by August Nigro. Other than some interviews with the crew's families, there is

little added and much omitted in this new telling. Indeed, some of the "borrowing" from Nigro's work is too close for comfort.

Freeman is not a subject matter expert in either strategic bombing or the nuances of military justice. There are several factual errors (e.g., stating that the Army Air Corps became the Army Air Force [sic] in 1944—it happened in June 1941 and it was the Army Air Forces.) Although Freeman takes great pains to walk through the post-war trial, he entirely skips over the chief reason the trial is important. It was one of the fledgling applications of war crimes law to civilians, something not previously envisioned under the Geneva Convention's rules against the abuse of prisoners of war.

Army prosecutor, and later Watergate special counsel, Leon Jaworski is a central character in Freeman's account, and Freeman deftly portrays Jaworski's role. However, what is puzzling is his omission of Jaworski's earlier (and more famous) role in the 1944 Lawton, Oklahoma, court martial of 43 African-American service members charged with rioting and murder. Jaworski likewise successfully prosecuted several German prisoners of war for the murder of a fellow prisoner turned informant—all this before reporting to Darmstadt to begin the trial of the Rüsselsheim citizens.

New looks at existing scholarship are welcome, provided there is truly value-added. Unfortunately, *The Last Mission of the Wham Bam Boys* does not deliver on that.

*Mark M. Hull, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

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**AXIS SALLY: THE AMERICAN VOICE  
OF NAZI GERMANY,**

Richard Lucas, Casemate Publishers,  
Philadelphia and Newbury,  
2010, 321 pages, \$29.95

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**I**F ANYONE was tailor-made for cable TV movie-of-the-week treatment, it was Mildred Gillars, a failed showgirl and actress whose background included a miserable midwestern small-town childhood, brushes with the law, a stint as a nude model, a suicide attempt, and a lifetime's worth of tragic love affairs. She longed for stage and screen stardom—but settled in middle age for international success as a radio performer.



It all sounds pedestrian enough in a clichéd, melodramatic movie-of-the-week kind of way, except for the fact that Mildred's life played out against the backdrop of the Great Depression, the rise of Nazism in Europe, World War II, and the start of the Cold War—and that Mildred Gillars was the notorious “Axis Sally.” The same Axis Sally whose velvet, come-hither voice cajoled thousands of lonely G.I.s scattered in foxholes across Europe and North Africa to tune in to her daily Reichsradio broadcasts where she introduced contemporary music and induced homesickness. Her carefully scripted patter interwoven with running commentary espoused Nazi principles and anti-Semitism.

In his thoroughly researched book, *Axis Sally, The American Voice of Nazi Germany*, author Richard Lucas traces the path of the woman eventually arrested and tried for treason for her role in attempting to convince Americans to abandon “Roosevelt's War” and see the light of day from the German perspective. Hunted down and arrested by U.S. authorities after the war, she was convicted in federal court on only one of 10 counts, and sent to prison for more than a decade. On parole, she lived out her years as a music teacher in an Ohio convent school. Never marrying, she died in poverty in 1988.

But in his treatment of her story, Lucas points out the many paradoxes that plague any in-depth analysis of how Mildred transformed into Sally. Was she merely a sad, vulnerable spinster-to-be, manipulated by paramours who used her for their own personal and propagandistic purposes, or was she a scheming opportunist? Did she only agree to become Axis Sally under Nazi threat of deportation to a concentration camp, or was it simply a shrewd career move? Was her trial a travesty of justice, presided over by a biased judge unwittingly aided and abetted by her own inept defense counsel, or did she get what she deserved?

The author seems to be wrestling with his own doubts about Gillars' culpability, often sympathetically referring to her as “friendless” and her situation “tragic.” He notes that other American wartime radio propagandists such as Iva Toguri d'Aquino (“Tokyo Rose”) and Rita Luisa Zucca (Rome's “Axis Sally”) received lesser (in the case of d'Aquino) or no punishment (Zucca had renounced her U.S. citizenship prior to the war and was therefore immune from prosecution for treason).

In his research, the author unearths some long-forgotten aspects of the now mythic Axis Sally. Known primarily in pop history for her programs aimed at G.I.s, Gillars also performed as “Midge at the Mike” in a series of homespun broadcasts aimed via shortwave radio at hometown America, where her audience was the “girls” back home. However, Lucas does not present any evidence that anything Axis Sally said or did prompted Americans to change their minds about the Nazis or the war. Many people on the home front and G.I.s on the front lines did look forward to her broadcasts, but seemed to tune out the rhetoric while listening to the music. Stateside audiences gleaned information about casualties—the injured, missing, or dead, the kind of reporting Sally later said was her patriotic duty to do.

The author tries mightily to do justice to his complicated subject, but shoddy editing and a limp, convoluted literary style often get in the way of what should have been a fascinating story about a complex woman, at once powerful and powerless, talented and talentless, vain and insecure.

*Carol Saynisch, Steilacoom, Washington*

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**BROTHERS, RIVALS, VICTORS:  
Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley and the  
Partnership that Drove the Allied  
Conquest in Europe**, Jonathan W. Jordan,  
NAL Trade, New York,  
2011, 547 pages, \$28.95

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**I**N *BROTHERS, RIVALS, Victors: Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley and the Partnership that Drove the Allied Conquest in Europe*, Jonathan W. Jordan discusses three unique, influential military figures. Each made his mark on history, each worked toward the same end state, but each saw the path through war and politics differently, and the journey along these paths shaped the relationship of these men as they strove to eliminate tyranny.

General Eisenhower matures in years, as he develops into the statesman and commander responsible for making difficult decisions and managing an Army of historical proportions. General Bradley is the faithful and methodical leader who always places the Army ahead of personal ambition, and finally, General Patton comes through as the

hammer, a brilliant tactician overshadowed only by his own foibles.

The book's organization allows the reader to meet each of these great generals in their younger days and appreciate the establishment of their relationships. It portrays General Marshall as a behind-the-scenes manager setting conditions for each to reach a destiny. It presents Eisenhower's ability to organize the team and use both Bradley and Patton's strengths in such a way to strike fear into the enemy. Additionally, the author does his best to shield both so they receive the deserved credit for their fighting abilities.

One of the book's strongest qualities reveals a clashing of personalities not often seen in the movies or in documentaries. On more than one occasion, Eisenhower displayed a temper when dealing with Patton that most would find hard to believe. (Eisenhower is usually portrayed as the great statesman who appears calm and in control at all times.) Additionally, Bradley is constantly at odds with the decisions made by Patton. Patton's need to achieve success impairs his military judgment on more than one occasion.

As the book discusses Bradley's reflection on his career, it becomes apparent that he is somewhat bitter about how he is overshadowed. Bradley reveals that "Eisenhower was a political wizard, but a tactical bumbler." As for Patton, he revealed that he was "the most ambitious man and the strangest duck he had ever known."

*Brothers, Rivals, Victors* is highly recommended to those interested in the leaders who guided our military through one of the most difficult struggles of the 20th century. The author grabs the reader by offering insights not commonly known about these generals.

**Allen D. Reece, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Gordon Satellite Campus**

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**GUERRILLA LEADER: T.E. Lawrence  
and the Arab Revolt,**

James J. Schneider, Bantam Books,  
New York, 2011,  
313 pages, \$28.00

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**T**HOMAS EDWARD LAWRENCE was an extremely effective battlefield officer, a brilliant writer and military theorist, and protagonist in a personal drama that has captured the attention

of people across the world. James J. Schneider has taken on quite a subject and produced quite a book. All biographers have to focus. Basil Liddell Hart, interwar England's foremost writer on military affairs, tried to establish a faithful narrative of events in *Colonel Lawrence: The Man Behind the Legend* (1934.) (He had direct help from his subject matter, a friend, who answered Liddell Hart's inquiries.) And, Harvard psychiatrist John Mack emphasized personal compulsions originating in birth out-of-wedlock, in his Pulitzer Prize winning *A Prince of Our Disorder* (1976).

Schneider, an expert on military theory, which he taught at the School of Advanced Military Studies, places Lawrence's military role in the Middle Eastern theater of World War I. That subject is not as obvious as it might first appear. The character in question was simply overwhelming, and he remains so. It is well to remember the context that Schneider provides: that the ultimate purpose of the theater was to expose Germany's southeast flank, to preserve a lifeline into Russia, and to disrupt Turkish railroad lines and troop formations so that Edward ("Bloody Bill") Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force could penetrate into the heartland of Turkey's Arab empire. Lawrence knew his military role and his limitations. His guerrilla operations behind enemy lines helped set the stage for the success of 1918. The campaign never proved decisive for World War I but, to coin a phrase, a legend was born.

Lawrence remains a source of wisdom. Soldiers and Marines in Iraq have been following his advice from *The Arab Bulletin*, 20 August 1917: "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is." To learn a lot more, read *Guerrilla Leader*.

**Michael Pearlman, Ph.D. Lawrence, Kansas**

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**LEE: A Life of Virtue,**

John Perry, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 2010,  
226 pages, \$19.99

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**W**HO WAS ROBERT E. Lee? What made him important? Author John Perry tells Lee's

story with skill and simplicity. Readers who are experts on Lee will find *Lee: A Life of Virtue* a pleasant read, and readers wanting to know more about Lee will find the book informative and interesting.

Here is an example: during the Mexican War, General Winfield Scott held a planning meeting with Captain Lee and Lieutenants George Gordon Meade, George B. McClellan, Joseph E. Johnston, and P.G.T. Beauregard. Lee's father-in-law was George Washington Parke Custis [Washington was his legal guardian]. Custis's daughter, Mary Anna Custis, was Lee's wife. Light Horse Harry Lee, who fought in the Revolution, was Lee's father. Light Horse Harry composed the famous phrase "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen" to describe George Washington. On 14 October 1824, the Marquis de Lafayette visited the Lee family—the same Lafayette who fought during the Revolutionary War with Washington and who became extremely close to him. Robert E. Lee was a man in the tradition of George Washington. Character, virtue, and honor are what defined Lee. This is what makes his career worth studying.

Lee ranked second in his class at West Point and became adjutant of the corps. He graduated without a single demerit at a time when cadets could not drink alcohol, play cards, use tobacco, or read novels. Lee wrote, "Though opposed to secession and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States." Lincoln said something quite similar in his 4 March 1861 inaugural address: "I have no purpose directly or indirectly to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists; I believe I have no lawful right to do so."

Lee had much to overcome when he took over as commander of the Confederate Army. The North had a population of 22 million people, the South just 9 million, giving the North a massive advantage over the South. In 1861, the North had 10 times the advantage in industrial production; it had a 30-times advantage in firearms over the South. These facts helped drive Lee's strategy.

Unlike today, no instant communications existed, so when Lee gave an order to his generals, he included the words "if practicable." Perry argues this was a mistake. Lee was being too much of a gentleman. However, knowing that the situation might have changed by the time his order reached the field commander, Lee gave his field commanders the flex-

ibility to do what the latest intelligence called for.

After the war, Lee became president of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia. Something Lee said at the time sums him up as a leader and as a man: "We have but one rule here, and that is that every student must be a gentlemen." Readers will understand and like Lee more after reading this book.

**Robert Previdi, Manhasset, New York**

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### **HELLCAT: The Epic Story of World War II's Most Daring Submarine Raid**

Peter Sasgen, NAL Caliber, New York,  
2011, 336 pages, \$26.95

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**W**HY SHOULD A land-warfare-oriented person bother to read a book about World War II submarine warfare? What could he possibly learn? Quite a lot, actually. Small unit leadership, leader development, operational-level senior leadership, strategic-level senior leadership, force management, materiel acquisition, technology integration, risk-benefit analysis, leadership accountability, grief counselling, and service member family relations.

Up until the summer of 1945, it was too risky for Allied subs to enter the Sea of Japan because of its sea mines. As long as Japan had freedom of navigation in the Sea of Japan, it continued to support its war effort with raw materials, finished goods, and food. Japan was effectively isolated, except for its secure lines of communication in the Sea of Japan. Despite the results of a devastating air campaign, Japan was not likely to be defeated until it was completely cut off from the Asian mainland.

*Hellcats, The Epic Story of World War II's Most Daring Submarine Raid* enjoys the advantage of the passage of time, the declassification of rich sources, and a global picture retrospective—for example, learning where the critical sonar system came from and what it took to get it and use it as a tactical enabler.

Peter Sasgen addresses the irony of such a risky effort and acknowledges the impending use of the atomic bomb, something even very senior Navy leadership did not know at the time. He asks if the losses were worth the results, but he also puts both the question and its answer in an appropriate context.



He asks, “Given what they knew (and didn’t know), were these good decisions?” I remembered an old saw from business school: “Never judge the *quality* of a decision by its outcome. Bad decision makers can get lucky, and good decision makers can get very unlucky.”

Sasgen approaches the subject on various levels. At the strategic level, how could Japan be truly defeated, and what emerging materiel and technology could bring that about? What resources were required, and how could the Allies obtain them? At the operational level, what operations would effect Japan’s isolation, and how could the forces available accomplish that? At the tactical

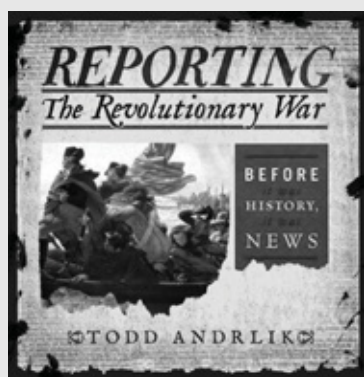
level, how could task forces maneuver be to inflict maximum damage on Japan’s war effort? These are interrelated questions, and Sasgen addresses their interrelation masterfully.

He also weaves a very human story throughout the book. Warfighters who venture out to combat do not always return unscathed, if they return at all. How do they maintain family relationships in such an environment of uncertainty, and how do their families cope?

I recommend this book. There are lessons for almost everyone. Sasgen’s *Hellcats* delivers the fascinating real story of this mission.

*Thomas E. Ward, II, Ph.D.,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

## MR We Recommend



### **REPORTING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR: Before It Was History, It Was News**

*Todd Andrlik, Sourcebooks  
Naperville, IL, 2012, 400 pages, \$39.99*

**C**OLONIAL PAPERS PUBLISHED between 1763 and 1783 fanned the flames of revolution in America, provided critical correspondence during the war, sustained loyalty to the cause, and ultimately aided in the outcome. Reporting the Revolution brings an unprecedented look at colonial newspapers detailing the biggest battles, milestones, and major events of the American Revolution. Written by colonists and revolutionaries themselves, these newspapers are a look back in time and tell the story of the battle for independence unlike any version that has been told.



In Sparta, the returning general-if he had overcome the enemy by deception or persuasion-sacrificed an ox and if by force of arms, a cock. For although the Spartans were the most warlike of peoples, they believed that an exploit achieved by means of argument and intelligence was greater and more worthy of a human being than one effected by mere force and courage.

Plutarch, "Marcellus" in *Makers of Rome*, translated by Ian Scott-Kilvert (New York: Penguin Classics, 1978), 109.

Corinthian helmet from the tomb of Denda. From a Greek workshop in South Italy, 500–490 BC.



Former Women's Army Corps commandant and advocate for women's military service COL Mary Louise Rasmuson passed away 30 July 2012 in Anchorage, Alaska, at the age of 101. This collage depicts some highlights of her illustrious career.

## Results of the 2012 General William E. DePuy Combined Arms Center Writing Competition

**1st Place:** "Breaking the Kevlar Ceiling," Jacqueline S.L. Escobar

**2nd Place:** "Women: The Combat Multiplier of Asymmetric Warfare," COL Clark Summers

**3rd Place:** "Fighting and Winning Like Women," Dr. Robert M. Hill

### **Honorable Mention:**

"This, She'll Defend," MAJ Matthew J. Yandura

"Be Anything," Heather Sapp

"A Woman's Place is on the Frontlines," CPT Daniell Williams

### **Judges**

Major General Heidi V. Brown, Deputy, Test and Assessment, Missile Defense Agency, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama

Brigadier General Laura J. Richardson, Deputy Commanding General-Support, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas

Lieutenant Colonel Janet R. Holliday, en route as Deputy CJ1, ISAF Headquarters, Kabul, Afghanistan

Sergeant First Class Kristine M. Baker, Senior Human Resources NCOIC, 15th Military Police Brigade, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas