Intelligence Preparation
Of The Future Operational Battlefield

A Monograph
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ABSTRACT

INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION OF THE FUTURE OPERATIONAL BATTLEFIELD by MAJ William F. Grimsley, USA, 52 pages.

The demise of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact left the United States with no single identifiable threat. The "victory" of the Cold War has not provided the US with a significant "peace dividend" as predicted, but instead presents an unstable and uncertain world. Future conflicts may present US forces with enemies which do not represent traditional nation-states but are instead formed from ethnic, religious, tribal, criminal, or corporate based groups.

The current intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process provides a useful framework for organizing information required by future commanders. What is lacking, however, is an appreciation for all of the intangible factors which may influence that battlefield based on the potential disparity of actors involved.

This monograph examines the theoretical and doctrinal underpinnings of the effectiveness of estimates, the IPB process, and the modern tenets of Army operations. Each of these areas provide a means of recognizing the need for additional information in the products provided to the future operational commander, and the methods by which this may be achieved.
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SECTION I-INTRODUCTION

The demise of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact left the United States with no single easily identifiable threat. The "victory" of the Cold War has not provided the United States with a significant peace dividend as predicted, but instead presents an unstable and uncertain world; an "international system (which) at once (has) become fluid and malleable." As the sole remaining superpower, the United States is faced with the additional dilemma of balancing the maintenance of its internal domestic strength with its leadership requirements abroad.

The decision to project and employ military power is necessarily derived from a complex analysis process at the strategic level. Once the decision is made to employ military forces, the analysis process required at the operational level is more detailed and complex. The responsible commander must assess his area of responsibility with respect to every aspect which could affect the accomplishment of his mission. Known at the tactical level as "intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB)," this analysis provides a doctrinal framework for assessing terrain, weather, and enemy.2

The potential threat environments facing the United States in the present and foreseeable future require a more extensive analysis process. The emergence of new nations, coupled with the proliferation of "non-national players like global business, cross-border political
movements like Greenpeace, religious movements like Islam, and burgeoning pan-ethnic groups who wish to organize the world along ethnic lines makes the preparation of the future operational battlefield more difficult. Training the present and future leaders of the United States armed forces to be capable of taking a broadened view of potential battlefields requires an expansion of the current process and concomitant intellectual rigor to provide the detailed analysis of a complex multi-polar world.

Before beginning any revision of doctrinal processes, it is important to investigate the theoretical underpinnings of that doctrine. Both classical and modern military theorists provide insights into the need for effective and detailed estimates of the potential enemy and ourselves. Theory also provides ideas on why groups choose war or other instruments of power to resolve conflicts. Current theorists of possible future wars are pointing to battlefields which may be significantly different from those to which the United States is accustomed.

As the world has changed, so has the United States' focus for executing military operations. Recent military missions such as Operation Provide Comfort (humanitarian assistance to Kurds in northern Iraq), Operation Restore Hope (humanitarian assistance to Somalia), and Operation Just Cause (rapid deployment simultaneous combat
operations in Panama) demonstrate the immense changes confronting a United States' military which was focused on the Soviet threat in Europe. The forward deployed forces of the past are being replaced by forces prepared for world-wide short notice contingency operations across the spectrum of conflict. Security strategies and supporting tactics, techniques, and procedures are being revised to reflect this change in the international environment. Current Joint Staff and US Army doctrine reflect this revision and provide a basis of evaluation for the need to expand how potential battlefields are assessed.

Tactics, techniques, and procedures for preparation of the battlefield are prevalent throughout the doctrinal publication and training system of the United States military. These "traditional" methods may have been adequate for evaluating weather, terrain and a monolithic threat, but are inadequate for unforeseen or non-traditional threats. Recent historical examples of military operations, such as operations in Somalia and Northern Iraq, illustrate the shortcomings of the process and highlight the need for an expanded view of the future battlefield which incorporates factors such as ethnicity, religious affiliation, crime syndicates, and multi-national corporations.

The commander on the future operational battlefield will need a vision which extends beyond the traditional military view of terrain, weather and enemy aligned within
the context of conflict between nation-states. Numerous theorists, writers, and experts in international relations believe, for example, that future wars will be between extra or trans-national forces. The preparation process may therefore need to include analysis of ethnic/cultural considerations, non-military technological status (e.g. computer nets), multi-national corporations, crime syndicates, and the potential for information manipulation/media influence in addition to the traditional factors of terrain, weather, and enemy forces.

Expansion of the IPB process to include the salient aspects of a particular operational area (e.g. ethnic and religious backgrounds of the local population, sacred sites, existence of extra-national armed forces) may need to be included in our analysis. It is the intellectual component of the analysis on why this additional information may be militarily important and how the expanded view of potential battlefields can be inculcated into the current and future United States military that is the difficult part.

The operational environment faced by the United States today is significantly different than that faced in the period since the fall of the Soviet Union. The lack of an easily identifiable threat, the decline of "traditional" order based along national lines, the rise of ethnic/cultural sources of power, and the proliferation of military and information technology combine to pose an
increasingly disordered world. It is incumbent on the United States to remain a viable leader in this complex international system, which therefore necessitates that the military as an instrument of national power revise the way in which it views the potential future operational battlefields throughout the world.

SECTION II-THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The military security systems of the world continue to change at a remarkable pace. The United States' diplomatic and military apparatus is revising the doctrinal methods by which they execute operations as well. The military has been especially proactive in the updating of keystone doctrinal publications to reflect the changes in the international security order. The underpinnings of this doctrine are rooted in a tradition of classical theory and principles coupled with a dynamic review process of current and emerging theories and principles on anticipating or adapting to changes in the current and future world.

The theoretical basis of doctrine is especially important when considering the subject of assessing the future operational battlefield and potential threats. Classical and emerging theory address the subject in detail as the basis for deciding to go to war, when to begin operations, where and with whom the war will be
fought, and what means to best employ to accomplish the strategic objectives assigned. Each of these questions are answered by employing an estimate process; a topic of great interest to the major theorists which form the basis for current and future US military doctrine.

Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz wrote that "War is the realm of uncertainty...A sensitive and discriminating judgement is called for; a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth." Because of this uncertainty and the requirement to know the truth, Clausewitz believed that some form of estimate of strengths, disposition, and likely actions must be performed. This estimate was a dynamic process, likely the result of the military leader given the mission of prosecuting the war.

Baron Antoine Henri Jomini, another theorist with great influence on US doctrine, stressed the need for estimates as well. Among the many requirements to prepare an army for war are the admonitions to know as much as possible about the terrain and forces of other nations as well as their propensity for military action, the resources and fiscal situation of each side, and the national character of people and leadership.

Perhaps the most famous classical military theorist with respect to intelligence estimates is Sun Tzu. His seemingly simple aphorism, "Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in
"peril," is but one of a multitude of passages which deal with estimates. Of additional interest to Sun Tzu was the weather, terrain, friendly forces, and the morale of each force.\textsuperscript{11}

Each of these theorists has had an enduring influence on the development and proliferation of US military doctrine. Their influences are prevalent throughout publications and the everyday lexicon of the armed forces. Drawing on personal experience and intellectual thought, all three classical theorists continually expound upon the absolute need for conducting an analysis of the situation confronting friendly forces before and during military operations. This analysis must go beyond determining the obvious and provide a means to glean those possibly intangible factors which may have enormous impact on operations.\textsuperscript{12} The means by which these theoretical precepts are expanded and applied has been adapted by many modern theorists as well. As the international security apparatus has increased in complexity since ancient China and the Napoleonic era of Europe, so has the requirement for updated theory on assessing potential threats increased.

War and peace since the 17th century has largely been the affair of nation-states or empires. Following the Clauzwitzian dictum that war is an extension of the normal political process,\textsuperscript{13} nations chose war or peace based on an assessment of relative strengths and chance for
successful outcome. Noted historian Geoffrey Blainey, analyzing historical examples, offers a more systematic approach to codifying the assessment process. Termed the "abacus of power," his approach provides a list of factors for assessing relative strengths of potential belligerents; including military forces and alliances, domestic stability, economic sustainability, ideology, and nationalistic fervor.\(^{14}\)

Blainey's abacus of power is an excellent tool for taking the precepts of the classical theorists and applying them to explain past wars between nation-states and possibly predict the occurrence of future wars. The classical through Blainey approach, however, assumes that it is an established and recognized nation-state which is contemplating or waging war, and that it is a direct reflection of some political aim.

The absence of nation-states with political objectives as a factor of war and the rise or resurgence of other sources of conflict (e.g. tribal feudalism, crime syndicates, drug cartels) may become more prevalent as the international security system becomes more complex. Numerous current theorists, in attempting to explain the modern and future world, assert that it transcends the political realm and is instead "...always an expression of culture, often a determinant of culture forms, in some societies the culture itself."\(^{15}\) What historian John Keegan describes is the potential for future wars to be
fought between belligerents which may have to be detected, analyzed, and explained in terms of assessment which is different than the Blainey assessment of national strengths.

The emergence of warfare which transcends the boundaries of traditional nation-states requires a shift in the method by which the US military assesses the relative strengths of potential enemies. The enemies may or may not be representative of a particular recognized nation. The current trend of theory is to explain present and future wars in terms of civilizations, "...the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species." The enemy "civilization" may be ethnically based, religiously affiliated, financially tied, or even part of a large crime syndicate.

Emerging theory, attempting to explain the past and provide a guide to the future, bases the existence of war on the clash of different technological and economic strata of particular civilizations. Futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler explain their theory of past and future war in dialectic terms as the collision of waves of history expressed in terms of development.

1st Wave civilizations are those whose economies are rooted in an agrarian base, 2d Wave is exemplified by industrialized economies, and 3d Wave civilizations derive
their strength and power from the proliferation and use of information. The distinction is often murky and frequently conflicting. According to the Tofflers, "When waves of history collide, whole civilizations clash...The deepest economic and strategic change of all is the coming division of the world into three distinct, differing, and potentially clashing civilizations."17

Assuming this theory provides an accurate picture of warfare in the foreseeable future, the problems presented to the operational commander in preparing his battlefield seem extraordinarily difficult when compared to his predecessors relying on the dicta of classical theorists. The 3d Wave, however, does not apply just to potential enemies. The development and proliferation of increasingly sophisticated information technology may provide the operational commander with a qualitative advantage over his enemy which is insurmountable. A comprehensive and detailed preparation of the future operational battlefield through the exploitation of this advantage which by necessity transcends the traditional elements of terrain, weather, and enemy may provide friendly forces with the decisive edge.

The incorporation of classical theory with existing and emerging theory is vital to the development and implementation of dynamic doctrine. The theoretical basis of the importance of effective estimates to determine if, when, where, with whom and how to wage war is vital to the
success of the United States military in the security environment of the world. The preparation of the future operational battlefield requires a greater understanding of the complexities of a world no longer aligned on simple ideological or cartographic lines, but facing "niche threats,"

"... a bewildering diversity of separatist wars, ethnic and religious violence, coups d'etat, border disputes, civil upheavals, and terrorist attacks, pushing waves of poverty stricken, war ridden immigrants (and scores of drug traffickers as well) across national boundaries."\(^{18}\)

Theory must continue to be both grounded in past success and future-looking to provide a rational basis for building doctrine which is vital and vibrant enough to meet the security challenges which face the operational commander of the present and near future. This is particularly true when discussing the process by which the operational commander assesses potential adversaries and areas of operations. As the world continues to become more complex, yet more accessible through the proliferation of information technology, the requirement for looking beyond the obvious increases exponentially.

Theory demonstrates that an understanding of the enemy and the nature of the conflict within the operational area is crucial to success. The commander on the future operational battlefield will have to develop
the means by which to gain a greater understanding of the situation through an analysis process which transcends the traditional factors of terrain, weather, and enemy forces.

SECTION III-DOCTRINAL FOUNDATIONS

The doctrine for the United States military provides operational commanders a basis for preparing future battlefields. What is lacking is a method, at the operational level, for incorporating intangible factors, such as ethnic/religious ties, cultural peculiarities, or the influence of non-traditional external factors (e.g. crime, drugs), with the traditional elements of terrain, weather, and enemy forces.

Although reliant on theory for its development, doctrine must reflect stipulations of the National Security Strategy for its practical application. The recent strategy documents (August 1991 and September 1993 [Draft]) outline in specific detail the changes in the international security environment and the means by which the United States' military will be employed to protect national interests. The focus of current strategy is a deliberate shift from deterring a monolithic threat with forward deployed forces to assessing multiple potential threats in regional conflicts with a combination of forward presence and contingency forces.¹⁹

To execute the missions dictated by the National Security Strategy, the United States military has begun
shifting its strategic doctrinal emphasis on assessing potential threats from focusing solely on the monolithic Soviet threat to viewing the world in terms of regional contingencies. To accomplish this shift requires a strategic estimate process which "...encompasses all the considerations that adversely affect the attainment of objectives throughout the operational continuum." These considerations include a strategic assessment of political, social, psychological, and economic factors; including ethnic, religious, and cultural characteristics.

While the world continues to change and the policy makers executing the strategic estimate process have begun to recognize that change, there remains a need for revised procedures at the operational level of war. The operational commander, the executor of campaigns, must also rely on doctrine as a guide for planning and executing missions. The doctrine available to the campaigning commander, however, discounts the intangible factors which may have a very direct and drastic impact on both enemy and friendly operations and instead focuses on the traditional elements of terrain, weather, and enemy forces.21

An additional factor derived from theory and central to the military doctrine of the United States is the center of gravity concept. Derived principally from Clausewitz, but expounded upon in one form or another by other theorists and doctrinaires, the center of gravity if
defined by the Army's keystone doctrinal publication, Field Manual 100-5, as

"...the hub of all power and movement upon which everything depends...The concept of the center of gravity is useful as an analytical tool to cause the joint commander and his staff to think about their own and the enemy's source of strength as they design the campaign and determine its objectives."[2]

The center of gravity on the future operational battlefield may be drastically different from that of a more traditional battlefield. The army of a nation may be replaced as the most important source of a belligerent's power, by the cultural ties of several ethnic groups within a region. The power of a group's devotion to a religious icon may be the center of gravity for an enemy force facing United States forces on the future battlefield.

The value of the center of gravity concept in the discussion of the preparation of the future operational battlefield lies in the fact that it may very likely exist outside the scope of the traditional factors associated with the nation-state. FM 100-5 states that "...ultimately the focus of all combat operations must be the enemy's will,"[23] but that will as a center of gravity may be different for an ethno-religious based threat which transcends existing international borders than for the nation-state threatening United States' national interests. By retaining center of gravity as a basic
doctrinal tool for focusing military power to defeat potential enemies, operational commanders have a means for identifying the critical factors of the future operational battlefield.

Doctrine provides a common framework for assessing the validity of current procedures and establishing the requirement for revisions based on changes in the operational environment. FM 100-5 lists 5 doctrinal tenets of Army operations which direct the conduct of planning, preparing, and executing missions: Initiative, Agility, Depth, Synchronization, and Versatility. Because they are derived from doctrine, these tenets provide a useful evaluation tool for assessing current methods for preparation of the operational battlefield and their applicability to the operational environment of the future.

Doctrine must support the execution of the National Security Strategy. With the rapid changes prevalent in the international security environment, doctrine must remain dynamic and with sufficient flexibility to anticipate or adapt based on learned or perceived changes. To remain viable, however, this doctrine should promote methods and procedures which also retain dynamism.

The validity of the intelligence estimate process, evaluated against recognized principles such as the tenets of Army operations, provides an excellent assessment of current operational procedures. Because they are rooted in
a doctrine designed to anticipate the future, the tenets are also the appropriate means of evaluating the effectiveness of expanding the intelligence estimate process. The changes in the world dictate that the United States may need to incorporate factors in the estimate beyond terrain, weather, and enemy which may have a direct impact on the commander's future operational battlefield.

SECTION IV-PREPARATION OF THE BATTLEFIELD

Doctrine provides a basis upon which tactics, techniques, and procedures may be built. A doctrine's flexibility is rooted in having a capability to shift based on the conditions prevalent within a given situation. The procedures which put doctrine into practice, therefore, must also have the same capability.

This is the problem the United States military is facing today; a major shift in the international security apparatus, a revision in doctrine, and the need to update the supporting tactics, techniques, and procedures. Today the operational commander faces conditions within a theater which do not even closely resemble the potential campaigns that were designed to meet and defeat the monolithic Soviet threat of the Cold War era.

Failure to make the intellectual and procedural changes have resulted in United States military failures or shortcomings in the past. To prevent recurrence of
relearning lessons at the expense of American forces, it is time to build a broader view of potential future operational battlefields to match the dynamic doctrine and support the National Security Strategy.

To execute military operations, "senior leaders require free and timely exchange of intelligence to make decisions with confidence." In a contingency-based force confronting a potentially unknown threat the requirement for intelligence becomes even more important. At the strategic level intelligence monitors the world, focusing on those regions or threats which present the greatest danger to the vital interests of the United States. With an enormous apparatus, incorporating multiple agencies with a variety of capabilities, the strategic intelligence system should provide a reasonable estimate of potential threats at the macro level.

Assuming the strategic system is capable of providing accurate and timely intelligence on identifying threats, the mission to counter a particular threat may be given to a military operational commander. How he defines the area of operations and the threat ultimately determines the effectiveness of the intelligence assessment for the conduct of a military mission. This is done through the process known as Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB).

This is a continuous four-step process, constantly updated with new information as it becomes available.
Outlined in great detail in US Army Field Manual 34-130, the steps are: 1-Define the battlefield environment (terrain, weather), 2-Evaluate the battlefield (effects on potential courses of action, 3-Evaluate the threat (composition, disposition, capabilities and limitations), 4-Determine threat courses of action (probable and most likely). The IPB process provides an excellent framework for providing the commander with information in a format useful for making decisions.

While a useful format, it is the details of the products which are derived from the process which are particularly important. In an environment as potentially confusing as those which face the commanders on the future operational battlefield, it is those details which will make the difference between disaster and success. The strategic intelligence may provide a general orientation on threats, but it is the operational commander who must refine the assessment for the execution of operations, and IPB at the operational level is "often fuzzy, large in volume, and fraught with uncertainty." Current publications on operational IPB provide little guidance on the components required which may differ from those required at the tactical level. FM 34-130 lists many non-traditional components of strategic IPB to include evaluations of local infrastructure, potential outside intervention/involvement, media influence and propaganda, sympathies/reactions of regional populations.
and organizations, regional economy, and regional legal systems. Operational commanders on the future battlefield, however, will be faced with the need for making assessments of the same, if not more, factors in greater detail and under stricter time constraints.

Current US Army doctrine, recognizing the dramatic changes in the world and the challenges which the operational commander faces, has provided the basis for expanding the view of potential battlefields. Battle space is a physical and intellectual three-dimensional view of the battlefield in which the operational commander dominates the enemy and protects his force. Within the context of operational IPB, the concept of battle space provides a means for the commander to expand his intellectual and battlefield horizons to include non-traditional factors which may have a decisive impact on operations.

The traditional factors of military intelligence, terrain, weather, and enemy are not anachronistic in the modern security environment. Terrain and weather and their effects on all courses of action must be studied, analyzed, and factored into an operational plan in great detail. Terrain, however, is generally a static factor; capable of detailed analysis in advance of an operation. Weather is not as static as terrain, but science provides some semblance of a tool to predict the prevalent...
conditions of a particular region in time and their effects on military operations.

The greatest challenge to operational IPB is the analysis of the human factors. Clausewitz' trinity of the nation-state: government, army, and people; places the emotion of passion which fans the flames of "primordial violence, hatred, and enmity" in the corner of the people. With the changes in the current and foreseeable future security environment, particularly with regard to the potential clashes involving groups other than nation-states, the trinity may be heavily skewed to the direction of the people and passion. The traditional army may be replaced by para-military forces, crime mobs, lawless bands, or a terrorist group with access to weapons of mass destruction. The "rational" government with whom the operational commander is prepared to confront may be changed to a revolutionary cell, a fanatic religious leader, or a multitude of tribal/clan leaders. While wars fought for traditional national interests fit nicely into Clausewitz' model of the trinity, the existence of things, ideas, gods, or icons which individuals hold precious may increasingly become the reason they fight and die and therefore the reason why fighting happens.

The challenge for operational IPB in this environment is to identify and analyze the myriad of details and factors to provide the commander with the means to execute a successful mission. The lack of an effective IPB which
encompasses factors beyond the traditional elements of terrain, weather, and enemy may prove disastrous.

The lack of an appreciation for the operational implications of non-traditional components of IPB was a factor in the conduct of the United States' combat operations in Vietnam. Focused on fighting the Soviet threat in Europe, the US Army intelligence was ill-prepared to collect and analyze information on an insurgent enemy. This training, coupled with the personnel policy of brief tour lengths "...contributed to the attitude prevalent among many intelligence officers that familiarity with the culture, language, and society of Vietnam was not essential in the performance of their duty."  

The intelligence discount of factors which may have been the root cause of the struggle in Vietnam caused United States' forces to focus on the main/conventional enemy formations instead of the insurgent forces which comprised the bulk of the threat. The adherence to the procedural aspects of the intelligence analysis system, without an accompanying intellectual broadening to incorporate intangible factors had a decisive impact on operations. In retrospect, this may have been to the detriment of the operational plan to support the government of South Vietnam.

Recent military operations of the United States demonstrate an increasing requirement to conduct IPB in a
non-traditional environment. At the conclusion of
Operation Desert Storm, United States and allies forces
were alerted for deployment to northern Iraq to provide
humanitarian assistance to the ethnic Kurdish population
(Operation Provide Comfort). The objectives of this
operation were to provide security for the Kurds from
Iraqi attack, deliver immediate relief supplies to
stabilize the suffering, establish a distribution system
and infrastructure for continuous logistics support,
construct temporary facilities for life support, and
ultimately transition the humanitarian operation to
international relief organizations to enable the Kurds to
return to their homes.34

Operation Provide Comfort was by necessity a crisis
action plan. Commanders assembled forces from 11 nations
and supplies from 30 nations in less than one month, and
were prepared to execute one day after the United Nations
passed Security Council Resolution 688.35 The situation
facing the planners and forces on the ground was both
confusing and complex. The terrain in the area of
responsibility is mountainous and difficult and the
weather was bitterly cold. The Iraqi armed forces were
prevalent throughout the area, as were security police.
Because of the cease-fire agreements signed to end
Operation Desert Storm, the presence of armed forces to
relieve a tense situation was further confused. This
situation was exasperated when allied forces confronted them on Iraqi sovereign territory.36

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the operation for planners to understand was the great diversity of factions within the vast amount of refugees who needed support. In addition to the three major political organizations: the Kurdish Democratic Party; the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan; and the Kurdish Workers Party; there were numerous other Kurdish "political, tribal and paramilitary organizations in the area, to include Iranian Kurd dissident groups...and numbers of Turcomans, Assyrian Christians, Chaldeans, and other Iraqi dissidents fleeing for political reasons."37 In anticipation of this complex social order and the planning considerations it may impose on the operation, the European Command organized the Joint Task Force with a large complement of special operations forces and regional experts who could provide guidance to the troops executing the security and relief missions.

The planning and execution of Operation Provide Comfort focused on adapting the doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures in place for NATO forces to the conditions of the assigned mission. The premier consideration for organization of the relief effort, particularly the location and administration of the various refugee camps and logistics distribution centers, was the coordination with the traditional leadership of the various refugee factions. The names of the areas
within the camps, for example, coincided with traditional Kurdish community organization.38

The method by which the Operation Provide Comfort Staff was able to accomplish its assigned mission with great efficiency stems from its organization and focus. The staff was built from existing organizations and supplemented with necessary specialties and skills as required. As the focus was on a combination of humanitarian relief with security, the troop list included a mix of special operations forces with conventional combat, combat support, and combat service support forces; and a significant amount of humanitarian organizations. The Joint Task Force developed a plan which relied on the inherent strengths of each organization involved.

The most important aspect of the plan was an understanding that the nature of the area of operations was different than a more traditional battlefield, such as the recent Operation Desert Storm had been. The staff understood that

"In addition to the traditional intelligence analysis, this type of operation called for a strong and immediate provision of 'cultural' intelligence. Information on the Kurds such as their political and tribal structure; lifestyle habits such as food, clothing, etc.; leaders and military organizations; and history of their conflicts, became valuable Essential Elements of Information for Combined Task Force leaders."39

Operation Provide Comfort seems to provide a vision of some of the considerations commanders on the future
operational battlefield will also face. The organizational and intellectual comprehension that the environment has changed, and the active adaptation of procedures to meet that change helped Operation Provide Comfort achieve a successful end state.

In December 1992, United States forces were ordered to the country of Somalia (Operation Restore Hope) to stabilize the turmoil, facilitate relief efforts by a multitude of non-governmental organizations, restore order and security, and eventually transition the operation to United Nations forces. A mix of forces from all branches of United States forces and other government agencies were initially involved, along with numerous non-governmental organizations. Forces from other nations eventually deployed to Somalia as part of the relief and security effort.

The situation in Somalia in December 1992 was very confusing to the operational planners. There was no formal national government, the ruling structure having been replaced by leaders from the various clans and tribes; the traditional leadership of the Somalis. In some instances, the boundaries of the clans extended past the recognized national border of Somalia. Numerous armed forces existed throughout the area as well, controlling land, local populations, and the routes required for delivery of food and medicine.
IPB in the planning for Operation Restore Hope was undoubtedly difficult. The preparation done appears to have yielded some faulty results based on assumptions made by planners on the situation in Somalia prior to United States' forces deployment. The world watched on real-time television as United States Marines came ashore in tactical formations to be greeted by international news media complete with cameras and lights. An initial report from the Combined Arms Assessment Team states:

"A more accurate IPB of the AOR (area of responsibility) last fall may have profiled the societal and political environment as less hostile toward the military than originally projected... A significant portion of the force deployed was subsequently not used or needed." 41

A more comprehensive IPB, including a broader view of cultural factors and other organizations (government and non-government) at work in the country, may have prevented some of the problems with the force deployment phase of Operation Restore Hope.

The true test of the effectiveness of IPB for Somalia was in the main effort phase; the feeding of a starving population held hostage by clans, outlaws, and armed bands of para-military forces. Initial map estimates completed as part of the IPB identified key points within Somalia based on a traditional view of the military aspects of terrain. This analysis helped define the boundaries of humanitarian relief sectors to be manned by United States
forces. The "friendly" lines on the map, however, did not necessarily align with the traditional Somali lines of clan, sub-clan, and warlord alignments and loyalties; thus causing significant problems in security of United States forces and their ability to aid in relief operations.  

The assessment of terrain and weather had a large impact on the method by which United States forces were employed. The threat integration portion of the IPB for Operation Restore Hope, however, yields the most compelling evidence for the need to expand the process for the operational battlefields of the future. In addition to the complex social order of the Somalis themselves, the area was also host to a vast number of people from a variety of relief organizations, contractors, quasi-military groups, crime organizations/black marketeers, and refugees. Each specific region of Somalia has its own unique social system and conditions. One of the shortcomings in the continuous IPB of Somalia was the conscious application of lessons learned from one area to another.

If the complex situations confronting commanders in Vietnam, Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Restore Hope are characteristic of the battlefields of potential future missions of the United States forces, and the doctrinal IPB process needed expansion to support the operational commanders, then some evaluation is necessary to assess the process and provide recommendations for
improvement. As discussed earlier, the 5 tenets of Army operations provide a doctrinal basis for assessment and feedback for recommended revisions to the IPB process.

In order to apply the tenet of initiative to operations, the commander must be prepared to take offensive, aggressive action to deny the enemy force the opportunity to set the conditions of the battlefield. IPB must support this by anticipating the actions of the enemy force and its use of terrain and weather. In the cases of Vietnam and Somalia, the IPB process did not support the commander with the appropriate information to make decisions which denied the initiative to the enemy.

In Somalia in particular, commanders relied on a traditional view of potential enemy forces and discounted the fact that their source of strength lay in their clan associations and loyalties. As mentioned earlier, this caused enormous friction during operations across clan "boundaries." Intelligence officers were forced to react, building a situational template based on incidents, rather than providing the operational commander with pertinent information in advance on which to build a cogent campaign plan. In Operation Restore Hope, however, the overlaying of humanitarian relief areas based on traditional ethnic structure and the use of significant amounts of regional expertise and local human intelligence seems to have provided the commanders with the necessary information to make effective decisions.
Agility requires the intellectual and physical capability to be quicker than the enemy in making and executing decisions; and therefore seize and hold the initiative. The traditional view of the battlefield which is restricted to an analysis of terrain, weather, and enemy forces did not provide the depth of intelligence required for agile friendly forces, particularly during operations in Somalia. The IPB process remained focused on recording events after they happened, rather than anticipating actions. There is evidence that clan and paramilitary forces which eventually displayed open hostility to JTF Somalia forces demonstrated an understanding of the importance of initiative and agility by adapting their tactics to the prevalent conditions, including the actions of US forces.47

Depth and synchronization require IPB to be proactive and anticipatory. Commanders drive IPB by providing guidance and clear intent on what they expect from the process. To focus combat power in an extended concept of time and space necessitates that IPB provide the operational commander with a detailed analysis of the sources of enemy strength (center[s] of gravity) and decisive point(s). The historical example of Vietnam, reinforced in greater detail in Somalia, shows that the IPB relied on an analysis of terrain, weather, and enemy within a conventional operation scenario. Because the operational environment was different the traditional IPB
yielded faulty assessments, thereby causing commanders to diffuse combat power, rather than synchronize operations throughout the depth of the battlefield. Actions taken to provide support to Kurds in northern Iraq seem to provide a different example of the application of the IPB process to incorporate a wider view of the operational battlefield. This inclusion of cultural and ethnic factors in the planning and early execution phases provided the forces executing the mission with a means to operate cohesively throughout the required depth of the area.

The fifth, and newest, tenet of Army operations, versatility, is perhaps the most important criterion for assessing the IPB process in historical context and future application. Conventional units, relying on conventional procedures, have attempted, and will continue to attempt, to execute conventional war operations on battlefields which may require something different. The recent operations in northern Iraq and Somalia highlight this. The IPB process, executed by those trained to template a monolithic threat, did not provide the commanders the means by which to make informed and effective decisions on the battlefield. However, it was not the process itself that was lacking in versatility, but rather the intellectual thought which provided the contents to the process.

If the chief function of military intelligence is "...offensively to achieve and defensively to avert
surprise," then the IPB process must be enforced. The process, however, is only as effective as its content. The procedural format for IPB is already present to incorporate less-traditional factors of a potential battlefield which may have great impact on the conduct of operations. As shown in the cases of Vietnam, Iraq, and Somalia, reliance on the traditional approach may not be sufficient to execute operations. Future operations will be increasingly complex, uncertain, and full of ambiguity, requiring an "innovative 'paradigm breaking' approach to analysis." 49

SECTION V-EXPANDING THE HORIZONS

Given a confusing strategic situation and the accompanying possibility of military operations, the commander on the future battlefield must be prepared to assimilate diverse information and make decisions under severe time constraints. Determining what information is pertinent to the commander, and therefore requiring analysis, has expanded beyond the traditional assessment of terrain, weather, and enemy forces to include factors such as ethnicity, culture, religion, or economic alliances.

Alvin and Heidi Toffler's description of the international security environment as a dialectic process involving the clash of "waves" of civilizations based on
relative technological development provides a means of predicting future conflicts at the strategic level. Each wave of progress also carries with it an accompanying amount of strategic information gathering/disseminating technology in terms of amount and sophistication. This information technology may serve the operational commander by providing intelligence that goes beyond spying to gather information and make estimates, but is "...a vibrant contributor to the knowledge system of a society as a whole."  

The information technology contribution to the operational commander may be great when confronted with a situation involving a potential threat which is in close technological proximity to the United States. The real dilemma, however, lies in a situation similar to Operation Restore Hope where the potential threat is "unsophisticated" and the source of its strength lies in less tangible factors than a main fighting force. It is in this situation that the IPB process must not cause operational commanders to become "...prisoners of their unilinear means-end rationality...incapable of think(ing) holistically and therefore unable to comprehend the complex relationships among inter-twined cyclic factors."  

If the commander remains stuck in following the process to the exclusion of other salient aspects of his operational area, such as tribal loyalties which may
be the source of an enemy's strength, then the rationale for the process is no longer valid and the results flawed.

The means by which the IPB process can be enhanced is through the intellectual broadening of horizons; expanding the view of the operational battlefield to include factors beyond terrain, weather, and enemy forces. To achieve this requires an understanding of the changed nature of the international security environment which includes: the possible decline of the power of some nation-states in favor of loyalty to a civilization; the influence of culture, ethnicity, and religion on humanity; and the impact of environmental factors or availability of resources on particular groups or factions.

The social scientist, Leslie A. White, likens groups of people in terms of physiological development. An aboriginal tribe, for example, is equated to a colony of cells; bound together by kinship and mutual aid. The modern nation-state is represented by the simple fish or flat-worm; capable of some cerebral activity but with largely semi-dependent physical parts. The value of this illustration to the subject of IPB in the future operational environment lies in the potential for analysis of the decline or demise of a particular nation-state in favor of one or more of its parts which feels bound to a larger civilization or culture.

This shift may take a variety of shapes and forms, but historian and political scientist Samuel Huntington
divides future conflict into two broad categories: micro-level and macro-level. The micro-level conflicts will develop between adjacent groups along the fault lines between civilizations, possibly within existing and recognized nation-state borders. The macro-level conflict involves different civilizations competing for relative military/economic power, control of international institutions, allies, or to competitively promote their political or religious values.\textsuperscript{53}

The United States may face future conflicts which involve nation-states as in Operation Desert Storm, or be confronted with an enemy force whose strength transcends the recognized order of a nation-state as in Operation Restore Hope. In lieu of a traditional governmental structure, the threat "...organizations are likely to be constructed on charismatic lines...and be motivated less by 'professionalism' than by fanatical, ideologically-based loyalties."\textsuperscript{54}

There are also more tangible indicators of potential conflicts which may involve United States forces in the future. The competition for resources and the global environment may be a recurring source of conflict. The growth of a civilization's population, particularly among the poor, could lead to mass migration and therefore proliferation of inter-civilization conflict.\textsuperscript{55}

Given these factors as examples of the complex international security environment facing the commander on
the future operational battlefield, the need for expanding the intellectual horizons of the IPB process becomes obvious. Achieving that expansion is more difficult, but should be of paramount concern to the United States. The National Security Strategy is based on the assumption that threats can be identified, and if the military instrument of power is deemed appropriate then force will be projected on a contingency basis.

Operation Restore Hope demonstrated what happens when force is projected without the appropriate depth in the IPB process. In the potentially confusing operational environment of the future, "IPB takes on an increased importance (particularly) in a power projection army."56

The dilemma lies in satisfying this important requirement through intellectual change. The IPB process is not necessarily broken, it is the application of the process and the details of the content which need refocusing to support the operational commander. The application requires a conscious effort to break out of a traditional and reactive approach to intelligence and use the available people, systems, and technology to support the requirements inherent in a force projection environment.

The earlier-referenced "flat-worm" nation-state of social scientist Leslie White shows limited cerebral activity. This relatively low state of intellectual evolution is largely based on cause and effect
relationships. In a fairly static world with a monolithic threat, the ability to react based on a standard set of norms may have been adequate.

In the current and future security environment, however, the United States must be able to forecast and act based on proactive, thoughtful and detailed analysis of information from all sources. As White states, "Reflexes and tropisms are not always bad things for a nation...but this is not intelligence."\(^{57}\)

How to inculcate the instincts and training in those persons charged with providing an accurate and proactive IPB to the operational commander requires an institutional commitment to solving the problem and clear guidance from the commander himself. Assuming that accurate and timely intelligence is a great factor in operational success on the battlefield, the investment in the solution is worth the cost. Effective intelligence requires an intellectual discipline which "...has much in common with scholarship, and the standards which are demanded in scholarship are those which should be applied to intelligence."\(^{58}\) The institution must provide the education, training, assignment opportunity, and path to success for those persons responsible for operational IPB.

The United States Army, for example, has extensive training programs, worldwide assignment opportunities and multiple career paths for intelligence officers. The Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program provides advanced civil
schooling and operational assignment opportunities for officers from all basic branches in a specific region of the world. Each of these career fields have the potential for providing real-time and insightful analysis of possible future operational battlefields. This is particularly true with regard to those intangible factors of a region such as ethnicity, religion, or cultural peculiarities. Despite their potential for broadening the horizons of IPB, however, career intelligence officers and foreign area officers are selected for promotion at rates below officers of other basic branches or functional areas.\textsuperscript{59}

In order to encourage the intellectual change required in the content of the future operational IPB may necessitate changes in the training of all officers, not simply adjusting minimum promotion selection rates for intelligence and foreign area experts. Officers who are basic-branch qualified and demonstrate potential for advancement have the skills of providing insightful analysis on a particular aspect of a possible future battlefield or threat. There is a precedent for sending officers abroad for extended periods to observe other forces, either formally or informally (e.g. George B. McClellan in the Crimea, Joseph Stilwell in China in the 1930s). These in a sense served as intellectual sabbaticals that enhanced the Army's capability and the intellectual thinking of the individual as well. Officers
who are placed in these opportunities gain not only a traditional view of potential battlefields, but absorb the salient aspects of the cultural environment as well.

The future operational battlefield will require the commander to orchestrate not only the combat power of the military instrument, but may require the integration of other agencies, both governmental and non-governmental into an overarching theater campaign plan. The IPB of this operational battle space may be enhanced by intelligence provided by these extra-military elements. This is particularly true of organizations which have a long tradition of service in regions of the world where the military may be lacking expertise. One lesson cited from Operation Restore Hope states that in the future, "it will be difficult to obtain much of the required information without an interagency approach to the IPB process."

There are numerous approaches which may be taken to revise the methods by which information is provided to the operational IPB process. The depth of information required for the future battlefield will be detailed and often confusing. The future commander will be increasingly faced with uncertainty and complex situations which mandate rapid and informed decisions. The analysis of terrain, weather, and enemy forces is a large portion of what the commander may need. Other factors, such as culture, religion, or ethnicity, may have a greater impact on the operational environment and how a commander applies
instruments of power to accomplish his mission. By encouraging intellectual change and broadening the horizons of the view taken of IPB, the operational commander can readily incorporate all pertinent information into decision-making process.

SECTION VI—SIGNIFICANCE AND CONCLUSION

The United States is faced with an increasingly complex and confusing strategic picture composed of existing nation-states, emerging nations, resurgent civilizations formed along religious and ethnic ties, global economic unions, corporate cartels, and international crime syndicates. The decision to use military forces in this environment requires an intensive effort to gather all of the pertinent information to support the commander on the operational battlefield of the future.

The United States has invested vast amounts of time, research, and money in the development and acquisition of the technical means to gather information. The proliferation of technologically advanced intelligence gathering hardware is evident from the strategic level down to the maneuver battalion level. The value of the technological edge inherent in these systems is immense, particularly if confronted with a technologically sophisticated enemy.
As noted throughout the previous sections, however, the international environment has changed, and the future enemy confronting the United States may not be technologically symmetrical. To overcome the disparity between what intelligence can be obtained, and the deep analysis required to execute military operations in the current security environment requires intellectual change.

Change must not be simply made for change's sake, but must be rooted in an established need for an increasing depth in understanding the complexities of the modern world. Reliant on force presence and projection to counter possibly unforeseen threats, the United States military must rely increasingly on tried and tested processes in the execution of operations. The intelligence preparation of the battlefield process inculcated in the force through education and training events provides a ready start point for expanding the military's operational view of potential battlefields.

The tenets of Army operations provide a start point for evaluating the efficiency of the process in the past and revisions for application in the future. The historical examples examined both successful and unsuccessful applications of operational IPB and demonstrated the need for an expanded vision of the future battlefield. Figure 1 illustrates how the IPB process could be used as a basis for developing a greater depth of analysis of the intangible factors which appear to be
increasingly prevalent in the international security environment.

Templatting terrain, weather, and enemy forces remains a valid requirement for the execution of military operations. With the demise of nations and the resultant rise of other factors, such as the clan loyalties which influenced Operation Restore Hope, the focus of IPB must be expanded.

The revisions required in the IPB process begin with the intellectual recognition that the focus is no longer
on a monolithic and relatively predictable threat. Future missions are likely to present the operational planner with no enemy order of battle, threat doctrine, or standard tables of organization and equipment. It is only through a determined, reasoned, and informed approach that the commander will be prepared to project force into this confusing environment and win.

To achieve this goal requires senior leaders to provide planners with clear intent on what information is needed and the means to make the changes necessary. This may include non-traditional approaches to information gathering such as increasing unit deployments for training in the region, language training, or professional sabbaticals. Information is critical to the success of an operation, and the complex security environment of the world requires a wider view of the battlefield.

Theory and doctrine provide a basis for understanding the importance of intelligence and estimates on the outcome of a military operation. The process by which that information is conveyed to the commander is important, but the content is what will determine its ultimate effectiveness to the commander. The estimate must provide the commander with pertinent information with which to make increasingly difficult and time-constrained decisions. The intellectual rigor which is applied to a detailed analysis of information may ultimately determine its worth. As Clausewitz eloquently summarized it:

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"The size and variety of factors to be weighed, and the uncertainty about the proper scale to use, are bound to make far more difficult to reach the right conclusion...We must recognize that the conclusion reached can be no more wholly objective than in any other war, but will be shaped by the qualities of mind and character of the men making the decision..."61

The intelligence preparation of the future operational battlefield will be no less confusing or uncertain than those of the 19th century. What is required today is the understanding that change is the only constant. With that change comes a responsibility to maintain a focus on the mission and to provide a greater amount of timely and effective analysis of pertinent information to the commander charged with execution of that mission.
ENDNOTES


2Field Manual 100-5, *Operations* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 14 June 1993), p. 2-8. Intelligence preparation of the battlefield is also known in some units as Commander's preparation of the battlefield. It is a multi-step process which will be discussed in detail in Section IV.


5Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations", (*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993), p. 39. "The next world war, if there is one, will be a war between civilizations."

6Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy" (*The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994), p. 59. An example of this potential disorder is Kaplan's assertion that 95% of the increase in the world's population, greater than 3.5 Billion by 2050, will be in the world's poorest regions.

7National Security Strategy of the United States. Among the major shifts is the change from reliance on forward deployed military forces to forward presence and deployable forces as a means of employing the military instrument of power to achieve national strategic objectives.

8US Army Field Manual 100-5 (1993), *Air Force Manual 1-1* (1992), *Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-1* (1992), and the recent establishment of the Navy Doctrine Command are all military doctrinal innovations which demonstrate major changes in emphasis from traditional "European Scenario" wars to power projection, contingency operations, operations other than war, and joint/combined warfighting.


Clausewitz, pp. 100-105. Each of these passages outline the essential characteristics of effective generals (leaders). Key among the common traits outlined is the importance placed on leaders having an uncommon genius (coup d’oeil). This genius is the ability to see beyond the obvious and have the strength of character to act on instinct to gain decisive advantage over the enemy. The commonality of the passages is remarkable given the difference in historical periods and cultural influence.

Clark, pp.80-81, 87.

Blainey, pp. 122-123. The seven factors for assessing relative strength are: military strength and the ability to apply it; predictions of external actors and their influence; perceptions of internal stability and unity; memory (or lack thereof) of the harshness and reality of war; prosperity and economic sustainment; nationalism and ideology; and personality and intellect of leaders.


Huntington, p. 24. Civilizations will ultimately clash because of the following reasons: differences are real and basic to humanity; the world is shrinking with increased information and transportation technology which increases interaction; modernization and social change leads to a physical separation from traditional localities and weakens ties the traditional nation-state; the intrusion of the "West" and its power coupled with new resurgence of ethno-centricism among non-Western areas; culture is generally immutable; growth of economic regionalism.

Toffler, pp. 18-19.

Ibid., pp.89-92.


Ibid, p. III-6; FM 100-5, p. 3-5. While recognizing that the strategic environment has changed, both keystone documents rely heavily on the traditional elements of infrastructure, terrain, weather, and capabilities of potential enemies as the required focus of operational intelligence.

FM 100-5, p. 6-7.

Ibid, p. 6-7.

Ibid, pp. 2-6 thru 2-9. Initiative "sets or changes the terms of battle by action and implies and offensive spirit in the conduct of all operations"; Agility is "the ability of friendly forces to react faster than the enemy and is a prerequisite for seizing and holding the initiative"; Depth requires "the extension of operations in time, space, and purpose," to forecast and anticipate so that the enemy can be attacked simultaneously throughout the depth of the battlefield: Synchronization is the act of "arranging activities in time and space to mass at the decisive point"; and Versatility is "the ability of units to meet diverse requirements... forces must be prepared to move rapidly from one geographical region to another and from one type of warfare to another in quick succession."


Ibid, LTC Bruns. This monograph provides a cogent system for predicting strategic threats, both nation and non-nation based, which views all regions of the world. The system incorporates a filter process which focuses the strategic intelligence collection effort on: Orientation (background information), Intent (collective will), and Catalysts (alliances, resources, geo-political position) to analyze capabilities. This filter process narrows the field of potential threats down to an analysis of vital
interests which may be in conflict with those of the United States.


28FM 100-7, p. 2-30.

29FM 34-130, p. 6-2.

30FM 100-5, p. 6-12 thru 6-13.

31On War, p. 89.


35Cavanaugh, LTC John P., "Operation Provide Comfort: A Model for Future NATO Operations", (Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Military Studies, 28 May 1992), pp. 7-9. Initial forces and supplies were assembled/prepared in anticipation of the mission. President Bush issued the execute order for US forces after the UN resolution on 5 April. JTF Provide Comfort was formed on 6 April, and the first relief supplies were delivered on 7 April.


37Ibid., pp. 2-6.


40US Army, Revised Final Draft, Operation Restore Hope Lessons Learned Report, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Center for Army Lessons Learned, 16 August, 1993), p. 3. Operation Restore Hope was planned as a four phased
operation: Phase I-Deploy; Phase II-Feed/Assist feeding of starving population; Phase III-Expand security to restore order to outlying areas and reduce influence of armed lawless bands; Phase IV-Transition mission to United Nations forces. Total planned time for the operation was 146 days.


47Maggert, BG Bert, "Report: IPB in Unfamiliar Environments," (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 28 January 1993), p. 6. BG Maggert notes that Somali clan forces repeatedly changed their methods of operation based on some assessment of how US forces would act or react. He believes that in any future analysis of threat capability, an important aspect should be an assessment of adaptability.


50Toffler, pp. 161-163.


53Huntington, p. 29.

54van Creveld, p. 197.


56Maggert, p. 6.

57White, p. 104.

58McLachlan, p. 53.

59Department of the Army, Active Duty Promotion Lists to Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, and Major for FY 94 all show a below-average selection rate for Military Intelligence and Foreign Area Officer. The most recent promotion list (Colonel) for example, has a selection rate of 26% for MI, 33.3% for SF, and 38% for FAO. Every other "mainstream" functional area (54-Plans, Operations, Training, 41-Personnel Management, 49-Operations Research and Systems Analysis, 45-Comptroller, 51/97-Acquisition Corps, and 46-Public Affairs) has a higher selection rate for Colonel.

60Maggert, p. 8.

61Clausewitz, p. 586.
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