

LESSONS FROM THE BRITISH DEFEAT COMBATING COLONIAL HYBRID WARFARE IN THE 1781 SOUTHERN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

A Monograph

by

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2014-01

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Department of Defense, Executive Service Directorate (0704-0188). Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 22-05-2014		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Monograph		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) JUL 2013 - MAY 2014	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE LESSONS FROM THE BRITISH DEFEAT COMBATING COLONIAL HYBRID WARFARE IN THE 1781 SOUTHERN THEATER OF OPERATIONS				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) JACKIE R. EAST LIEUTENANT COLONEL, KYARNG Intelligence				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD 100 Stimson Ave. Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT United States Army doctrine asserts hybrid threats characterize the current and future operational environment. Hybrid threats integrate operations, and transition forces, among the regular, irregular, and terrorist domains of warfare. Analysis of Americans practicing hybrid warfare against the British in the South during the 1781 campaign provides insights to the dealing with hybrid enemies today. To defeat hybrid enemies, armies need an organizational culture that supports transition among the different modes of warfare, create forces capable of transitioning among the modes of warfare, and recognize that excellence in one mode at the expense of proficiency in others may prevent the defeat of hybrid enemies. The British failed in the 1781 campaign because they could not transition irregulars into the regular mode of warfare. However, the Continental commander practiced hybrid warfare throughout 1781. He integrated forces across modes of warfare and leveraged tactical innovations, organizational innovations, and rifles to defeat the British and Loyalists in the Southern Theater of Operations.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Hybrid Warfare, Southern Theater, American Revolution, General Nathanael Greene, General Lord Cornwallis, Irregular					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 58	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)

Reset

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL PAGE

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Monograph Title: Lessons From the British Defeat Combating Colonial Hybrid Warfare in 1781
Southern Theater of Operations

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the US Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

LESSONS FROM THE BRITISH DEFEAT COMBATING COLONIAL HYBRID WARFARE IN 1781 SOUTHERN THEATER OF OPERATIONS, by LTC Jackie R. East, ARNG, 58 pages.

United States Army doctrine asserts hybrid threats characterize the current and future operational environment. Hybrid threats integrate operations, and transition forces, among the regular, irregular, and terrorist domains of warfare. Analysis of Americans practicing hybrid warfare against the British in the South during the 1781 campaign provides insights to the dealing with hybrid enemies today. To defeat hybrid enemies, armies need an organizational culture that supports transition among the different modes of warfare, creates forces capable of transitioning among the modes of warfare, and recognizes that excellence in one mode at the expense of proficiency in others may prevent the defeat of hybrid enemies.

The British operational approach in the 1780 southern campaign had defeated two continental armies and established Loyalist control over Georgia and South Carolina. The British were able to mobilize significant Loyalist and Tory forces throughout the theater. However, these forces were not intended to integrate into British and Provincial regular operations. Loyalist and British forces succeeded when they neutralized colonial ability to transition among modes of warfare. Further, British and Provincial regular forces succeeded when they integrated with Loyalist irregulars. However, the British failed in the 1781 campaign because they could not transition irregulars into the regular mode of warfare.

The new Continental commander practiced hybrid warfare throughout 1781. He integrated forces across modes of warfare and leveraged tactical innovations, organizational innovations, and rifles to defeat the British and Loyalists. He used hybrid warfare to enable his operational approach. He transitioned forces among the different modes of warfare and succeeded in concentrating forces defeat the British in detail. One year after the British victories in 1780, the British were defeated in the Southern Theater.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you, Renee and Evin. You sacrificed many weekends waiting for me to finish.

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INTRODUCTION

The United States Army characterizes the early 21st century as one of hybrid warfare and in a period of limited resources, the army plans to invest heavily to build the capability to defeat enemies practicing hybrid warfare.¹ Recent analysis identified several historical examples of hybrid warfare and offered compelling lessons. The Continental Army used hybrid warfare against the British in the Southern Theater of Operations during the American Revolutionary War. From December 1780 to December 1781, General Nathanael Greene successfully linked regular, irregular, and terrorist operations to defeat the British in the American Southern Theater of Operations.²

This campaign pitted American's use of hybrid warfare against a global super-power. The campaign began after the defeat of two colonial American armies in the Southern Theater, recognition by most of the South's residents that Britain could not be defeated in the region, and the appointment of General Greene to command the defeated colonial army. In 12 months, colonial forces in the Southern Theater transitioned from defeat to victory. Colonial forces in the South were victorious because the General Greene leveraged multiple types of warfare, conventional, irregular, and terrorism. The British were defeated because they failed to adapt to the colonial combination of conventional, irregular, and terrorist warfare as well as the technology available to the Continental Army.

¹Loretta Sanchez, et al., *Hybrid Warfare Briefing to the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities*, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives (Washington, DC: Government Accounting Office, 10 September 2010), 1-24.

²Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor, eds., *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-20.

Literature Review: Writing on the Southern Theater of Operations

Writings about the Southern Theater of Operations in the American Revolutionary War discuss the period using five distinct approaches. The first group takes great pains to collect and present data, primary source material, sift through secondary source material, and act as data repositories. These works trend toward the removal of value judgments. These works also include “just the facts” recitations of events, which includes works with limited analysis that place the events in spatial and temporal relation to each other.³ They best portray each side in honest clarity that neither judges nor opines, but lays out the position and argument for individual and collective assessment.⁴

³Patrick O’Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Volume 1 1771–1779 (New York: Booklocker.com, Inc, 2004); Patrick O’Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Volume 2 1780 (New York: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2004); Patrick O’Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Volume 3 1781 (New York: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2004); Patrick O’Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Volume 4 1782 (New York: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2006); C. T. Atkinson, “British Forces in North America, 1774-1781: Their Distribution and Strength,” *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 16, no. 61 (1937): 3-23; Henry Clinton, *The Headquarters Papers of the British Army in North America During the War of American Revolution* (Ann Arbor, MI: William L. Clements Library, 1929); Henry Steele Commager, *The Spirit of Seventy-Six* (New Jersey: Castle Books, 2002); Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris, *The Spirit of Seventy-Six: The Story of the American Revolution as Told by Participants* (Cambridge, MA, De Capo Press, 1968); Paul Hubert Smith, “The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (April 1968), 259-277; Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Volume 1 (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1981); Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Volume 2 (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1981); Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Volume 3, (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1981); John H. Rhodehamel, *The American Revolution: Writings from the War of Independence* (New York: Library of America, 2001).

⁴Hugh F. Rankin, *North Carolina in the American Revolution* (Raleigh, NC: Division of Archives and History, 1996); Dan L. Morrill, *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution* (Baltimore, MD: Nautical and Aviation Publishing. Co. of America, 1993); David Lee Russell, *The American Revolution in the Southern Colonies* (Charlotte, NC: McFarland, 2009); Lawrence Babits and Joshua B. Howard, *Long, Obstinate, and Bloody: The Battle of Guilford Courthouse* (Raleigh, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Hugh F. Rankin, *The North Carolina Continentals* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North

The second group concentrates on the abilities, acumen, and political sensitivities of General Nathanael Greene, the commander of American regular forces in the South. These highlight the ability of Greene to devise and implement a strategy and operational approach that defeated Cornwallis. They also celebrate the ability of Greene to innovate, maintain positive relations with Whig militia commanders, and recognize strategic opportunity.⁵ These works characterize Cornwallis as incompetent, risk acceptant, arrogant, anti-Tory, and disobedient.⁶

Others presented alternative views of the operations in the South during this period. They portray the British General Cornwallis like a character in a Shakespearean tragedy. These often place British operations within a context that make it difficult to see how any decision or action could have resulted in a different outcome. These works also tend to criticize Cornwallis for a lack of political and social awareness. They also accuse Cornwallis of losing battle for the people while he pursued Continental armies.⁷

Carolina Press, 1971).

⁵Theodore Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1960); Gilmore Simms, *The Life of Nathanael Greene, Major-General in the Army of the Revolution* (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1858); Terry Golway, *Washington's General: Nathanael Greene and the Triumph of the American Revolution* (New York: Owl Book, 2006); John Morgan Dederer, *Making Bricks Without Straw: Nathanael Greene's Southern Campaign and Mao Tse-Tung's Mobile War* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 2009); Gerald Carbone, *Nathanael Greene: A Biography of the American Revolution* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Charles Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene, Major General in the Army of the United States, and Commander of the Southern Department, in the War of the Revolution* (Philadelphia, PA: J. Maxwell, 1819); Laurence Edward Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping The Battle of Cowpens* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

⁶Franklin Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970); Henry Lee and Robert E. Lee, *The American Revolution in the South* (New York: Arno Press, 1969); Henry Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown: The American Revolution in the South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1981); Babits and Howard, *Long, Obstinate, and Bloody*; Robert Brown, *Kings Mountain and Cowpens Our Victory Was Complete* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2009).

⁷Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*; Mark Urban, *Fusiliers The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment in the American Revolution* (New York: Walker and Company, 2007); Russell Weigley,

Yet another set of writings about the Southern Theater of Operations deals with the role of the Patriot militia, their unique martial abilities, and claims the militia was the victor in the South. Authors often portray the Whig militia as a great co-opting machine that successfully leveraged terror, social peer pressure, and better leadership to defeat both the Loyalist militia and British army.⁸ A subset of this work approaches the issue as a civil war and evaluates the use of political violence during the period.⁹

The Partisan War: The South Carolina Campaign of 1780-1782 (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1970); Carole Watterson Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976); John Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War," *Army Logistician* 31, no. 5 (1999): 42; Matthew H. Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only: The British Army on Campaign in North America, 1775-1783* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008); Paul Hubert Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1964); William Seymour and W. F. N. Watson, *The Price of Folly: British Blunders in the War of American Independence* (London: Brassey's, 1995); Michael Pearson, *Those Damned Rebels: The American Revolution as Seen Through British Eyes* (New York: Putnam, 1972); Adam Norman Lynde, *The British Army in North America, 1755-1783: Defeat as a Consequence of the British Constitution* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1992); Daniel Canfield, "The Futility of Force and the Preservation of Power: British Strategic Failure in America, 1780-83," *Parameters* 42, no. 3 (Autumn 2012): 62-79.

⁸Michael Stephenson, *Patriot Battles: How the War of Independence Was Fought* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); John Phillips Resch and Walter Sargent, *War and Society in the American Revolution: Mobilization and Home Fronts* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007); John Nagy, *Spycraft of the American Revolution* (Yarhley, PA: Wstholme, 2009); Ronald Hoffman, Peter J. Albert and United States Capitol Historical Society, *Arms and Independence: The Military Character of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1984); Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene*; Brown, *Kings Mountain and Cowpens*; John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas* (New York: Wiley, 1997); Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping The Battle of Cowpens*; Thomas B. Allen, "The Over Mountain Men: At the 1780 Battle of Kings Mountain, a Force of Backwoods Hunters Known as the Over Mountain Men Thrashed the Loyalists, Altering the Destiny of the Southern States," *Military History* 27, no. 4 (2010): 34.

⁹Weigley, *The Partisan War*; Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*; Ed Southern, ed., *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blai Publisher, 2009); John W. Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1990); Jim Piccuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists, Indians, and Slaves in the Revolutionary South, 1775-1782* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008); Robert Stansbury Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1987); Anthony James, *America and Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2000); Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate and Peter

The final set of works frame the conflict with a popular theory or recasting of concepts. These works span a wide range of topics and support ideas about contemporary issues. Topics range from demonstrating the importance of supply and logistics to dangers of imperial overreach and the difficulties of defeating armed insurgency and rebellion far from home.¹⁰

The literature on the concept of hybrid warfare as a new type of warfare came out of the Israeli 2006 experience fighting Hezbollah in Lebanon. Three thousand Hezbollah troops combined the lethality of conventional weapons previously limited to state armies, with unconventional tactics, logistics, and command and control. Israel's 30,000 troops equipped with modern armored vehicles and supported with fourth generation aircraft could not gain tactical or operational successes against Hezbollah. Hybrid forces acquire commercially available

J. Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1985); Dan Higginbotham, *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988); Dan Higginbotham, "Some Reflections on the South in the American Revolution," *The Journal of Southern History* 73, no. 3 (2007): 659-670; Robert DeMond, *The Loyalists in North Carolina During the Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1940); Walter Edgar, *Partisans and Redcoats: The Southern Conflict that Turned the Tide of the American Revolution* (New York: Morrow, 2001); Robert M. Calhoon, Timothy M. Barnes and George A. Rawlyk, *Loyalists and Community in North America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994).

¹⁰Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War;" Donald J. Stoker, Kenneth J. Hagan and Michael T. McMaster, *Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010); Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves, and the American Revolution* (New York: Ecco, 2006); Michale Rose, *Washington's War The American War of Independence to the Iraqi Insurgency* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2008); Claudia Moreland and Toby Terrar, "Resisting the Professional Military During the American Revolution," *Peace Review* 22, no. 73 (2010): 73-81; William McDaniel, "Contemporary Lessons from the Past: A Second Look at South Carolina in the Revolutionary War," *Armor* 115, no. 5 (2006): 26; Lynde, *The British Army in North America, 1755-1783*; Gerald Horne, *Negro Comrades of the Crown: African Americans and the British Empire Fight the U.S. Before Emancipation* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Dederer, *Making Bricks Without Straw*; James S. Corum, *Bad Strategies: How Major Powers Fail in Counterinsurgency* (Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press, 2008); Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America, 1775-1783* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Jeremy Black, "British Strategy and the Struggle with France 1793-1815," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 4 (2008): 553-69; Duncan S. A. Bell, "Dissolving distance: Technology, Space, and Empire in British Political Thought, 1770-1900," *The Journal of Modern History* 77, no. 2 (2005): 523-62.

technology and weapons that are equal, or superior, to technology available to state armed forces. They evaluated the technology Israel possessed and exploited its weaknesses including mechanical systems, cognitive systems, and organization.¹¹

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, National Defense Strategy, and the latest Joint Operating Environment use Hybrid War and define it in similar ways. They focus on the blending of the conventional and unconventional.¹² Key is the use by non-state forces of equal or better technology than what is available to the state they are fighting. Hybrid warriors and hybrid organizations “simultaneously exploit all modes of warfare—conventional, irregular, terrorist, disruptive, and criminal” to defeat a Great Power.¹³ Compound warfare exploits these modes on dispersed and different battlefields. In contrast, hybrid warfare exploits these modes on the same battlefield and at the same time.¹⁴ According to Steven Williamson’s Army War College master’s thesis “From Fourth Generation Warfare to Hybrid War,” “Hybrid forces can effectively incorporate technologically advanced systems into their force structure and strategy... Operationally, hybrid military forces are superior to [Great Powers] within their limited operational spectrum.”¹⁵ This is especially true if hybrid forces face “large, ponderous, and hierarchical organizations that are mentally or doctrinally rigid.”¹⁶ Hybrid warfare goes back to

¹¹Greg Grant, “Hybrid Wars,” *Government Executive*, no. 50 (2008): 19-21.

¹²Steven C. Williamson, “From Fourth Generation Warfare to Hybrid War” (Master’s Thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2009), 21.

¹³Frank G. Hoffman, “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 41 (2009): 37.

¹⁴Williamson, “From Fourth General Warfare to Hybrid War,” 22.

¹⁵William J. Nemeth, USMC, “Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare” (Master’s Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2002), 5-12.

¹⁶Hoffman, “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges,” 38.

the ancient world.¹⁷ However, critiques of the hybrid model rightly attack its assumption of the enemy as supermen, digression from strategic and operational discussion to considerations of tactical employment of forces, and over emphasis on a possible future condition that ignores history.¹⁸

Current United States Army doctrine says,

[the] term hybrid threat [that] has evolved to capture the seeming increased complexity of operations, the multiplicity of actors involved, and the blurring between traditional elements of conflict. A *hybrid threat* is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, and/or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects. Hybrid threats combine regular forces governed by international law, military tradition, and custom with unregulated forces that act with no restrictions on violence or their targets. These may involve nation-state actors that employ protracted forms of warfare, possibly using proxy forces to coerce and intimidate, or non-state actors using operational concepts and high-end capabilities traditionally associated with states. Such varied forces and capabilities enable hybrid threats to capitalize on perceived vulnerabilities, making them particularly effective.¹⁹

Therefore, two main characteristics define hybrid warfare, the ability to employ technology normally attributable to states and the simultaneous and purposeful use of several forms of warfare. This analysis characterized hybrid threats as capable of transitioning through different modes of warfare, specializing in one, but capable of operating degraded in others while leveraging technological innovation.

This study is an analysis of General Cornwallis' operational approach to counter General Greene's use of hybrid warfare during the period of December 1780 to December 1781. Analysis

¹⁷Murray and Mansoor, *Hybrid Warfare Fighting Complex Opponents*, 12-30.

¹⁸Dan Cox, Thomas Brusino and Alex Ryan, "Why Hybrid Warfare is Tactics Not Strategy: A Rejoinder to 'Future Threats and Strategic Thinking,'" *Infinity Journal* 2, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 24-29.

¹⁹Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1-3.

of secondary sources provides an understanding of each general's operational approach. The study presents an analysis of General Cornwallis' operational approach to General Greene's use of technology and multiple forms of warfare. It describes how each general's operational approach evolved out of consideration of the operational environment and the other general's operational approach. Finally, the study offers an assessment of the United States Army doctrine's ability to integrate lessons drawn from General Cornwallis' failure to defeat the colonial general Greene's use of hybrid warfare in the Southern Theater of Operations during the 1781 campaign.

OPERATIONAL APPROACHES IN THE 1781 CAMPAIGN

General Greene's Operational Approach in the 1781 Campaign

General Greene, Continental Army commander of the Southern Theater of Operations, designed his operational approach to defeat British military power in the South. He planned for simultaneous operations using regular, irregular, and terrorist modes of warfare. Terrorism was a necessary component of Greene's operational approach because he had no other way of preventing the British from concentrating their overwhelming power in the South against his army. Terrorism was also the only means available to fight deep into the British security zone in South Carolina.²⁰

²⁰Thomas Bennett, "Early Operational Art: Nathanael Green's Carolina Campaign 1780-1781" (Masters Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 1993), 20; Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene*, 150-180; Nathanael Greene, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, ed. Richard Showman (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1976); Edward Hoffer, "Operational Art and Insurgency War: Nathanael Greene's Campaign in the Carolinas" (Master's Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 1988), 13-16; Todd J. Johnson, "Nathanael Greene's Implementation of Compound Warfare During the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution" (Master's Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2007), 21-29; William Johnson, *Sketches of the Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, Major General of the Armies of the United States*, in

General Greene divided the Southern Theater into a Deep-Close-Security construct. Greene's deep fight consisted of Whig irregular militia, and terrorists operating within their own modes of warfare against forces supporting the British in South Carolina. When conditions permitted, they integrated their forces and operated outside their modes of warfare to achieve objectives that supported the Continental Army, such as sieges against small Loyalist forts and garrisons. The definition of hybrid warfare distinguished among regular, irregular, and terrorist modes. Whig forces operated within and transitioned between each of these modes.²¹ Irregular warfare consisted of non-state military forces, unpaid militia in this case, conducting operations against paid unpaid militia, paid militia, and regular forces. In contrast, terrorists target civilians and military personnel in their homes and away from traditional battlefields.²²

The close fight consisted of the ground controlled by the Continental Army, its attached state militia, and local irregular militia operating in direct support of the army operating in North Carolina. The Continental Army's security zone included lines of communications, pre-positioned supply stocks, collected river craft, and the base of operations in Virginia.²³

Greene developed an operational approach for the 1781 campaign that maximized the capabilities of available forces and took into account all aspects of the operational environment. It consisted of six lines of effort. First, it fixed as much of the British and Loyalist forces in South Carolina as possible using Whig terrorist and irregular operations. Second, it organized and

the War of the Revolution (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1822), 357-358; Weigley, *The Partisan War*.

²¹Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 1-3.

²²Sanchez, et al., *Hybrid Warfare Briefing to the Subcommittee on Terrorism*, 16.

²³Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns*, 130-145; Hoffer, "Operational Art and Insurgency War: Nathanael Greene's Campaign in the Carolinas," 14-18.

concentrated irregular and terrorist forces that defeated Loyalists mobilizing in support of Cornwallis in North Carolina, defeated isolated British forts and garrisons in South Carolina, and enabled the Continental Army throughout the South. Third, it defeated or neutralized General Cornwallis' mobile army. Fourth, it leveraged rifled musket technology and defeated British conventional and Loyalist militia garrisons and forts in detail throughout the Carolina backcountry. Fifth, the approach transitioned most of the terrorist and irregular forces in South Carolina into the regular mode of warfare and contained remaining British mobile forces in Charleston, South Carolina. Sixth, it completed the restoration of Whig governance in the Carolinas and Georgia by transitioning Whig terrorists and irregulars into law enforcement.²⁴

General Greene's operational approach depended on rapidly transitioning troops among the modes of warfare to mass against British, Loyalists, or Tory terrorists as required. For instance, local militia irregulars separated into Whig radical terrorist cells when necessary. Further, Whig radicals often integrated with local militia irregulars to attack Loyalist militias and Provincial garrisons. The Continental Army supported operations in each mode of warfare and fully integrated State Militia and available local irregulars when operating in an area. Finally, the Whig irregular was a terrorist when conducting influence operations against the families and friends of Loyalists and potential Loyalists.²⁵

²⁴ Joel A. Woodward, "Comparative Evaluation of British and American Strategy in the Southern Campaign of 1780-1781" (Master's Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2002), 6-11; Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 120-157; Stephenson, *Patriot Battles*, 34-50.

²⁵ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*; Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene*, 151-155; Higginbotham, "Some Reflections on the South in the American Revolution," 659-670; William, *Sketches of the Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene*, 350-360.

Two Continental Army defeats in the Southern Theater in 1780 and unavailability of state militia made it impossible to assemble a regular military force capable of defeating the British in the South. The Continental congress directed all forces raised in the South to Greene's command. However, state legislatures determined the availability of state militia units to support Continental operations. These forces were largely unavailable to Green because of local political considerations.²⁶

For instance, the Virginia government acknowledged that between 40 and 50 percent of the state militia was potential loyalists. Therefore, the Virginia legislature and Continental Army considered Virginia militia unreliable and were largely unavailable to support Greene in 1781 because of political unreliability. Further, Virginia insisted it needed a large number of militia in the colony for its internal defense. They were unavailable to Greene and consumed supplies needed by his army.²⁷ The proximity of regular Loyalist forces from March to October 1781 caused many Tories in Virginia's militia to take control of militia units and refused to fight.²⁸ It is likely only the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown prevented loyalists from taking their units to the British in 1782.²⁹

Virginia was General Greene's primary base of operations and represented his security zone. The colony provided food for Greene's army, a staging base for manufactured material and forces from New England, and a recruitment center for militia from Virginia. Greene established

²⁶Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 288.

²⁷Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 283 and 290.

²⁸Ibid., 296.

²⁹Jeffrey J. Crow, *Liberty Men and Loyalists Disorder and Disaffection in North Carolina Backcountry* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 140-167; Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 206-207.

large intermediate bases along the rivers of North Carolina to support his army because of the instability in Virginia. Operations in 1780 stripped the area of forage and his army required stores to operate in the area in 1781.³⁰

Experienced North Carolina militia was generally available but the colony lacked the ability to pay or provision them. The cost of military operations against the British and Tories in 1780 cost more than \$12 million (\$5.2 billion in 2013) nearly bankrupting the colony.³¹ The colonial economy suffered from two campaigns in early 1780. The campaigns exhausted available forage and limited the number of troops the area could support.³² There was a barely functioning Whig government in North Carolina and a Tory uprising. General Greene estimated Loyalists in North Carolina dominated nearly half the counties and between one-third and one-half of the population in 1780 and 1781.³³ Therefore, Greene could only access most of this military capability in the form of irregulars and terrorists.

Providing state troops to support Greene's forces stressed the portion of North Carolina under Whig control. However, many Whig leaders became available thanks to British loyalty oath requirements. The British policy decree of June 3, 1780 required all citizens of the Southern Theater to swear loyalty to the King and participate in the Tory militia system. This drove many

³⁰Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 282; Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War," 42.

³¹Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 290; Time Travelers, *Measures of worth, inflation rates, relative values, worth of a dollar, purchase power*, 2014, www.measuringworth.com (accessed 5 January 2014).

³²Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 169; Jeffrey J. Crow, *Liberty Men and Loyalists Disorder and Disaffection in North Carolina Backcountry*; Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 147-163.

³³ Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 131.

neutral former North and South Carolina Whigs to join the Whig militia by the start of the 1781 campaign.³⁴ North Carolina militia concentrated to support the Continental regulars and put down Loyalist uprisings resulting from Cornwallis attempted invasion in October 1780. Whig terrorists convinced many North Carolina Loyalists to remain at home rather than join Cornwallis' second invasion attempt in March 1781.

South Carolina was Greene's deep zone. Its militia had broken into irregular and terrorist cells. The irregulars and terrorist cells provided needed intelligence for Greene's operational approach. Greene traded supplies and weapons to Whig irregulars and terrorist cells in return for cooperation and intelligence.³⁵ This trade helped overcome British disarmament and pacification in South Carolina. In South Carolina, the Whig irregulars and terrorist cells fixed British Provincial units, Loyalist militia, and Tory terrorists in the South Carolina backcountry, kept them dispersed, and prevented their operation against Continental and militia units massing in North Carolina. These forces were a critical part of Greene's effort at preventing the British from concentrating overwhelming power against the small army he could field in North Carolina between January and April 1781. Later, during April and May 1781, these forces concentrated to defeat regular British and Provincial units and garrisons.³⁶

³⁴John S. Pancake, *This Destructive War: The British Campaign in the Carolinas, 1780-1782* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 69-71; John W. Shy, "British Strategy for Pacifying the Southern Colonies, 1778-1781, 193-212" in *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution*, ed. Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 155-173.

³⁵Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 291; Moreland and Terrar, "Resisting the Professional Military During the American Revolution," 73-81.

³⁶Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns*, 255-271.

Greene made contact and coordinated with remnants of the Whig militia forces throughout the Carolina backcountry and South Carolina before starting his campaign. Greene coordinated with Francis Marion, the Swamp Fox, and convinced him to provide intelligence. Marion's forces supported Greene's campaign by keeping hundreds of Loyalist and Provincial troops away from Greene's Army. Marion's force transitioned between terrorist and irregular modes of warfare throughout 1780 and 1781. Greene was unable to convince the leader of South Carolina's militia, Thomas Sumter, to support the Continental Army before initiating the 1781 campaign. South Carolina militia forces selected Thomas Sumter as its commander against the British invasion in 1780. Sumter agreed to neutrality after the militia was defeated. Two Continental Army defeats, poor relations with General Greene's subordinate officers, a serious battle wound, and the presence of the British army in South Carolina neutralized Thomas Sumter and his militia forces, keeping them out of the conflict for most of 1781. Later in the 1781 campaign and after the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in March 1781, Sumter became an active supporter of Greene's campaign after Loyalists attacked his family.³⁷

The Whig irregulars and terrorists of South Carolina were important to Greene's operational approach for another reason. He understood that he had to establish governance over the areas he liberated from the British. There was no other available institution to draw the necessary leaders and law enforcement. Between 1777 and 1780, the militia was the primary institution supporting Whig political goals in the Southern Theater. However, the British defeated

³⁷Johnson, *Sketches of the Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene*, 500-508; Moreland and Terrar, "Resisting the Professional Military During the American Revolution," 73-81; Hoffman et al., *An Uncivil War in the Southern Backcountry*; Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 242-252; R. D. Bass, *Swamp Fox: The Life and Campaigns of General Francis Marion* (Columbia, SC: Sandlapper Press, 1972), 113-125.

Whig militia in 1780 and dismantled the formal Whig militia system by co-opting, killing, or neutralizing members. The militia in the backcountry had degenerated into family-based terrorist cell, but had retained their law enforcement role. Whig irregulars enforced decisions of Whig courts that traveled the backcountry after the British victory in August 1780. Whig courts continued to operate in the backcountry supported by loose networks of terrorist cells and the remnants of the Whig militia until Greene's containment of the British at Charleston in December 1781.³⁸ Prior to starting the 1781 campaign, General Greene made contacts with Whig or neutral political figures in the Carolinas and attempted to coordinate the return of Whig political control in territory Greene planned to liberate during his campaign. Whig political control meant Whig irregular and terrorist cells transitioning to legitimate law enforcement. Whig terrorist and militia became the Whig authorities once regular Continental forces neutralized British regular forces in an area.³⁹

Greene attempted to mobilize the Over Mountain Men to support his army. The Over Mountain Men were a community of frontiersmen who lived west of the Appalachian Mountains in defiance of British prohibitions against it. They were in near constant conflict with nearby Indians, were generally armed with rifled muskets, and feared a British victory in the Revolution would mean they would have to move back east of the Appalachians. When threatened, they could mobilize their entire community and field large and capable military forces. After Loyalists

³⁸ Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 147-149; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 282.

³⁹ Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 283; Woodward, "Comparative Evaluation of British and American Strategy in the Southern Campaign of 1780-1781," 66-86; David L. Russell, *The American Revolution in the Southern Colonies*; Lee and Lee, *The American Revolution in the South*, 521-548.

massing at Kings Mountain in October 1781 threatened them, the Over Mountain Men mobilized and defeated Cornwallis' supporting militia at Kings Mountain and delayed Cornwallis campaign from October 1780 to February 1781. The Over Mountain Men mobilized more than 1,000 fighters within a week. The mobilization was a response to British threats against their communities. The fighters almost universally possessed rifled muskets, which outranged the British smoothbore but took longer to reload. They were capable of maintaining and sustaining their operations for weeks. They proved they were the fastest infantry force in the Southern Theater. The belief their way of life would end should the British win the war strongly motivated them and enabled the total mobilization of their entire community.⁴⁰

The Tory defeat at Kings Mountain in October 1780 was a serious setback for development of the Loyalist militia system in the Southern Theater. The defeat prevented Cornwallis from invading North Carolina before the Continental Army completed its reorganization. The threat of Over Mountain Men intervention was a constant consideration in Lord Cornwallis' campaign planning and motivated his cooperation with the Indians west of the Appalachians.⁴¹

Greene chose the interior of North Carolina as his close zone and the interior of South Carolina as his deep zone. The need to retain his army and maintain greater mobility than the British supported this decision. Further, fighting in the interior increased the likelihood that the Over Mountain Men could support Continental Army operations. It also provided an opportunity to re-create the conditions of New Jersey in 1777 that bled the British of nearly 7,000 soldiers

⁴⁰Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 164–165.

⁴¹Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 167.

while they sought out forage to support their army. The interior of the Carolinas had less road and river infrastructure than the coast. Fewer people, small communities, and cash crop farming that provided little forage characterized the area.⁴² The area was crisscrossed by rivers and streams fed by the Appalachian Mountains to the west. This facilitated travel linking southeast locations with those in the northwest of the colonies. The waterways supported sustaining British military operations into the interior, but presented obstacles to movement between northern and southern locations, making pursuit of the Continental Army difficult.

Seasonal rains and snowmelt caused most of the water obstacles to swell and make them impassable during the campaign season. The mountains were a western boundary for British operations, not an obstacle to the Over Mountain Men supporting Whigs in the Carolinas.⁴³ Taking advantage of river obstacles, Whig militia and General Greene's staff took possession or destroyed every river craft they could find before the 1781 campaign began.⁴⁴ This tactic spawned asymmetries between Continental and British operational reach and tempo, which occurred between February and April 1781 and favored the Continental Army.

Greene conceived and launched his campaign of 1781 under several time constraints. The Continental Army was composed of almost 50 percent state militia at the end of December 1780. The militia's service ended in May 1781 and General Greene had to either achieve victory without the militia or convince the militia to remain past their enlistment. The presence of General Benedict Arnold's Loyalist Provincial forces in Virginia starting in December 1780 made

⁴²Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 305.

⁴³Allen, "The Over Mountain Men: At the 1780 Battle of Kings Mountain," 34.

⁴⁴Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 302.

replacement of demobilizing militia unlikely. Further, it was unclear how the Continental Congress would react to another defeat in the South or how long they would let him try to retake the Southern Theater.⁴⁵

The Continental Congress had already lost two armies in the Carolinas. Benedict Arnold's Loyalist army threatened Virginia and Loyalist sympathizers served throughout Virginia's militia.⁴⁶ The previous year's operations severely weakened the southern colonies and they were not capable of supporting a regular army for long. Further, General Washington wanted to consolidate the Continental Army, the State Militia, and the French Army to defeat the British in New York. All indications pointed to one last opportunity for Whigs in the South. Greene could not suffer a decisive defeat and had to use all available forces in the South quickly to maintain support for his army.

General Cornwallis' Operational Approach in the 1781 Campaign

General Cornwallis, British Army commander of the Southern Theater of Operations, designed his operational approach to defeat any Continental Army in the Southern Theater of Operations and occupy North Carolina. He planned for simultaneous operations using regular and irregular forces synchronized among, but not crossing, different modes of warfare. British conventional forces consisted of British Army and Provincial units assigned to the British mobile

⁴⁵ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 288-295; Lee, *The American Revolution in the South*, 213-218.

⁴⁶Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 283.

army and garrisons in coastal cities. Local Loyalists were irregular forces. Cornwallis did not consider operating Tory terrorist cells part of his operational approach.⁴⁷

Cornwallis depended on rapidly fielding sufficient forces to execute lines of effort within each separate mode of warfare. Loyalist forces mobilized and trained to fight within specific modes of warfare. Each force was to execute its line of effort protected from Continental Army interference by the British regular forces. Cornwallis' approach matched British regulars and select Provincial units against the Continental Army and its attached state militia. Other Provincial and British regular units garrisoned large coastal Loyalist cities to prevent Whig influence. Small detachments of Provisional troops working with Loyalist militia units garrisoned forts throughout the Carolina backcountry to defeat Whig irregulars and protect Loyalist communities. Paid loyalist militia pursued assigned lines of effort for to disrupt, neutralize, or defeat Whig terrorists and irregulars.⁴⁸

Cornwallis divided the battlefield into deep, close, and security zones. The deep zone included North Carolina and Virginia. Keeping the Whig militia from destroying Loyalist forces so they were available in the future to support British regular forces was the main line of effort in the deep area. The close zone was the border of South and North Carolina. It extended a few

⁴⁷ Christopher Hibbert, *Redcoats and Rebels: The American Revolution Through British Eyes* (New York: Norton, 1990), 23-78; Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*; Woodward, "Comparative Evaluation of British and American Strategy in the Southern Campaign of 1780-1781," 12-23; David Wilson, *The Southern Strategy: Britain's Conquest of South Carolina and Georgia, 1775-1780* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 212-240.

⁴⁸Pancake, *This Destructive War: The British Campaign in the Carolinas, 1780-1782*, 20-36; Jesse T. Pearson, "Failure of British Strategy During the Southern Campaign of the American Revolutionary War, 1780-81" (Master's Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, 2005), 78-88; Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*; Thomas B. Allen, *Tories: Fighting for the King in America's First Civil War* (New York: Harper, 2010); Atkinson, "British Forces in North America," 3-23; Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed*, 193-213.

days' march from the British regular army and its Provisional attachments. The lines of efforts in the close zone were the defeat of any Continental Army that appeared in North Carolina and the occupation of North Carolina. The security zone was British occupied South Carolina and Georgia. It included lines of communication among the British regular mobile army, the intermediate bases, port cities, and all assigned garrisons. The main line of effort in the security zone was the protection of Loyalist communities from Whig irregulars and terrorists.⁴⁹

General Cornwallis' operational approach depended on identifying the Continental Army marching through North Carolina and defeating it rapidly. Meanwhile, Loyalist militia and Provincial units garrisoning towns and cities were to defeat Whig militia and terrorists in South Carolina and Georgia. Cornwallis intended military forces to operate inside only their mode of warfare. British and Loyalist political and economic elites were to rebuild institutions to strengthen ties to Britain.

The British occupation of Georgia and South Carolina and the defeat of the Continental Army and militia in Camden, South Carolina in August 1780 removed formal Whig political and military institutions that had existed since 1777.⁵⁰ At the start of 1781, the Loyalist government in Georgia was reestablished. The Loyalist government in South Carolina consisted only of a

⁴⁹Canfield, "The Futility of Force and the Preservation of Power," 62-79; Daniel Canfield, "Understanding British Strategic Failure in America: 1780-1783" (Master's Thesis, Army War College, 2012), 3-12; John W. Shy, "British Strategy for Pacifying the Southern Colonies, 1778-1781," *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution*, ed. Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 155-173; Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*; Smith, "The American Loyalists," 259-277; Lee, *The American Revolution in the South*, 162-170; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 20-36.

⁵⁰Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 31-32; Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 7.

governor with some presence in large cities.⁵¹ Formal Tory law enforcement and taxation did not exist outside of areas patrolled from fortified posts or inside large towns, and cities. This reduced resources available to support British security operations. Loyalist militia were fully committed to reestablishing British authority throughout South Carolina and not considered suitable for use with British regular forces against the Continental Army.⁵²

Most wealthy supporters of the crown suffered social, economic, and legal terrorism designed to compel them to switch sides or leave the colonies between 1777 and 1780.⁵³ An exodus of the best-educated, wealthiest, politically astute, and most loyal Tories occurred.⁵⁴ However, even after the exodus, Loyalists and Tories outnumbered Whigs in many counties in the Carolinas and most counties in Georgia.⁵⁵ Much of the South Carolina Loyalist militia was committed to preventing further Whig terror attacks against remaining Loyalist communities.

The British suffered a shortage of muskets to enable mobilized Loyalist militia. There were not enough weapons available to arm all the Loyalists that rushed to service after the British captured Charleston in May 1780.⁵⁶ The shortage of weapons in the theater was recognized in 1776 when Loyalists mobilized against the Revolution and less than half of 1,400 militia

⁵¹Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 283.

⁵²Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution*, 23-43.

⁵³Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 29-31.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁵Crow, *Liberty Men and Loyalists Disorder and Disaffection in North Carolina Backcountry*, 63-81; Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 147-154.

⁵⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 187-188.

assembled in the Carolinas had muskets. The rest possessed swords.⁵⁷ The shortage appeared again in June 1780 when 1,300 loyalists, few with muskets, gathered to suppress Whig militia in support of British regular forces near Ramsour's Mill, North Carolina.⁵⁸ In both cases, the Whig militia attacked with superior arms and dispersed the loyalists.⁵⁹

Most significant Tory militia defeats correlate with insufficient numbers and quality of arms. Several rounds of Whig and British disarmament designed to pacify areas reduced available stocks of weapons and ammunition available to Loyalist and Tory militia. Reconstituting Provincial units further stressed the available stocks of weapons. The lack of weapons reduced the number of Loyalist forces capable of countering the Continental Army in South Carolina after in 1781. It also made southern Loyalist mobilization in 1782 ineffective. However, had the Continental Army been prevented from interfering, it seemed likely the Loyalist militia would succeed against Whig irregulars and terrorists.⁶⁰

Cornwallis established a militia recruitment and training system prior to initiating his 1781 campaign with the goal of increasing the quality of Loyalist militia. After Kings Mountain in October 1780, the British no longer intended militia to operate with British or Provincial forces conducting regular operations.⁶¹ The British paid and trained Loyalist militias to defeat irregular Whig forces, protect Loyalists from Whig terrorism, and garrison backcountry forts. Tory militia

⁵⁷Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 5.

⁵⁸Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 80–85.

⁵⁹Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 23.

⁶⁰Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 105; Rankin, *The North Carolina Continental Line in the American Revolution*, 8.

⁶¹Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 167.

organized locally, and unpaid, fought against Whig terrorist cells and criminal groups. Loyalist militia units could mass to perform independent operations supporting British and Provincial units, but were generally ineffective.

Militia recruitment and mobilization was successful and made available more than 8,000 paid Loyalist militia, Loyalist Provincials, and British regulars going into the 1781 campaign.⁶² This represented one in six of the estimated free male white population. An unknown number of Tories participated in local, unpaid, militias. It is unlikely that operational and strategic conditions would allow more white males to become available for military service.

South Carolina and Georgia depended on large numbers of slaves, which made use of militia outside their colonies risky. With a free white male population of only 48,000 in South Carolina and Georgia and almost 137,000 slaves, the fear of slave revolts prevented most potential recruits from serving. In addition, as long as Tory and Whig terrorist and militia units operated in the area, members of both militias were reluctant to leave their homes to support their side's regular military operations, even for a short time. Whig terrorist success from 1777 to 1780 and the many threats in the British security zone caused a shortage of men available for military service with the British mobile army under Cornwallis.⁶³

Likewise, his knowledge of conditions in New England and Virginia made Cornwallis expect few reinforcements and little supply from outside the Southern Theater. His supply ran

⁶²Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*; Smith, "The American Loyalists," 259-277; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 283.

⁶³ Larry E. Tise and North Carolina Bicentennial Committee, *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 174-203; Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), 4-17; Higginbotham, "Some Reflections on the South in the American Revolution," 659-670; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 290.

from Camden to the coast of South Carolina, then to New York, and finally to England, a trip of almost 4,000 miles. The Southern Theater had little manufacturing capability and all equipment had to come from occupied northern colonies or England. Neither additional British nor additional mercenary forces were available for service in the southern colonies. Operations in the New England and Middle Colonies required all available mercenary and regular forces.

Cornwallis had to generate forces from within the Southern Colonies. The British leveraged both slaves and Indians to overcome the shortage. However, the British affiliation with Indians and its arming of slaves negatively affected the legitimacy of Loyalist governance in the South.⁶⁴

Britain provided accommodations for free black units in the British army in the South in 1780. This had a negative impact on local support for the British army and the Tory cause. Many supported the Whigs because they did not call for arming slaves while the British were creating Loyalist Provincial free black military units. The policy of freeing blacks to serve in military units reduced Tory political and social legitimacy in the South. General Greene did not have to address the issue of blacks in his army when planning his 1781 campaign, although he was an advocate of allowing blacks to serve.⁶⁵

Cornwallis intended to mobilize Indian tribes to disrupt mobilization of Whig irregulars. Indian tribes allied with the British and Tories were able to generate considerable numbers of fighters, but lacked modern weapons. The distances between Indian, British, and Tory forces

⁶⁴Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*; Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War," 42; Brown, *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution*, 277-283 and 310-311; Pearson, "The Failure of British Strategy," 41-46.

⁶⁵Pearson, "Failure of British Strategy," 41-46; Schama, *Rough Crossings*, 2-8; Resch and Sargent, *War and Society in the American Revolution*, 17-29; Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 1-13.

made it difficult to operate in concert. In order to influence operations in much of the Carolina Backcountry, Indians had to bypass or infiltrate through territory controlled by the Over Mountain Men. Indians were unable to win any meaningful victories against the Over Mountain Men between 1770 and 1780, but did manage to fix them west of the Appalachians at some critical times in the 1781 campaign. However the net effect of Indian operations were that Tory and Whig militia worked together to defeat Indians, disrupted attempts to impose legitimate Loyalist political governance, and provided little benefit to the British.⁶⁶

Both sides experienced a critical lack of military leadership. The social and political nature of militia leadership made importing leaders from outside colonies nearly impossible. It was worse for the British and Tories because the Whigs had spent 1777-1780 effectively killing, co-opting, or dislocating the most capable Tory leaders.⁶⁷ The presence of the British army in central South Carolina allowed open support for Loyalist institutions. However, few of these Loyalist were capable military leaders.⁶⁸ Whig terror operations throughout South Carolina succeeded in preventing effective Loyalist leaders from active service. In order to allow talented Loyalist leadership to serve, the Loyalist militia had to defeat the Whig terrorist forces in South Carolina and this took time that was not available to the Loyalists.⁶⁹

The British position in the Southern Colonies was fragile in the beginning of 1781. Only the British mobile army could provide the space required for the large mobilization of militia at

⁶⁶Pearson, "Failure of British Strategy," 44-46; Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 18-26; Allen, "Over Mountain Men," 34.

⁶⁷Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 282.

⁶⁸Ibid., 302.

⁶⁹Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 24-43.

the end of 1780 that Cornwallis needed to secure the Carolinas. At the start of the 1781 campaign the British had garrisons of Provincial and local militia in all major coastal and river port cities in Georgia and South Carolina. Cornwallis posted large garrisons in Fort Ninety-Six, Rowan County, and the city of Camden in South Carolina. His primary maneuver force was at Winnsborough, South Carolina until the beginning of the 1781 campaign in January. Winnsborough was about 100 kilometers from each of the fort Ninety-Six, the North-South Carolina border, and the deep interior of the Piedmont, each of which allowed Cornwallis to support any of these places with his mobile army.⁷⁰

The British Army designated Camden as its primary logistics base supporting British forces preventing Continental Army penetration into South Carolina and would support any British attack into North Carolina. Cornwallis operated more than 100 miles from the sea. He had to establish control over a large inland territory that rivaled his campaign in New Jersey in 1777. British forces had rarely operated more than 15 miles from naval bases up to this time.⁷¹ Cornwallis chose the location because the nearby rivers were navigable by flat-bottomed transport boats and allowed supply via coastal craft from Charleston making it well-suited as an intermediate base for operations. Cornwallis' experience in New Jersey in 1776 and 1777 led him to expect a forage war he could not win. Therefore, he established sufficient stocks of supply to support his army in the absence of sufficient forage.⁷²

⁷⁰Urban, Fusiliers *The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment*, 195.

⁷¹Ibid., 191.

⁷²Atkinson, "British Forces in North America, 1774-1781," 3-23; Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War," 42; Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*, 138-143 and 235-246.

However, time was working against Cornwallis. Manpower shortages, Whig terrorists in his security zone, the massive mobilization of one in six of the Southern white population, risks of slave revolts, and mobilization of Whig irregulars and Over Mountain Men, were just a few of the threats to British control of Georgia and South Carolina in 1781. The Colonies secured recognition by France and indirect support from the Spanish and Dutch in 1778. At the end of 1780, French support included troops and naval task forces that made France fully vested in American Independence. The French had about 5,000 troops operating in the colonies and the French Fleet was operating in the Caribbean. It was unclear to the British in December 1780 when or how the French would use these forces to enable the Continental Army. Cornwallis likely understood that the longer the war went on without British victories the stronger the opposition became. Furthermore, the global war with France, Holland, and Spain made investments in retaining the colonies seem ill advised.⁷³

Military occupation of the colonies divided the British parliament and people. Some political elites in Britain viewed an independent America allied with Britain more beneficial than the costly occupation of the colonies. Cornwallis himself shared this view before assigned command in the colonies. British domestic opposition to war against the colonies was growing. Political conflict within parliament exacerbated the uncertainty as each side seized on the war in the colonies for its own purposes. It remained unclear how much time was available to the British Army in the colonies. No one could predict when the peace movement would gain control of the

⁷³Wilson, *The Southern Strategy*; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 142-156; Ferling, "100 Days that Shook the World," 45; Clinton, *The Headquarters Papers of the British Army*; Canfield, "The Futility of Force and the Preservation of Power," 62-79; Black, "British Strategy and the Struggle with France 1793-1815," 553-69.

British parliament. On-the-other-hand, he could hope the Continental Congress was losing patience with the Southern Theater. After losing two armies in the South, it was likely that another rapid and decisive defeat of a Continental Army could convince the congress to forget independence south of Virginia.⁷⁴

Additionally, the British defeat of the Continental Army at Camden in August 1780 made Loyalists believe British invasion was imminent. The belief set off a general Loyalist uprising against Whigs in North Carolina starting in September 1780, which the Whigs were defeating. A long British delay would mean no loyalists left to support British operations, fill the ranks of Loyalist militia units, replenish the ranks of the Provincial units, or represent the local authority of the British crown.⁷⁵

The British therefore needed to defeat another Continental Army, this time in North Carolina, as soon as possible. It would do many things for the British. First, it would buy time for pacification in the South. Second, it would expand British control to North Carolina. Third, it would protect the Loyalists and Tories in South Carolina. Fourth, it would shorten sea lines of communications with New York City. Fifth, it would deprive the Continentals of a recruiting base. Sixth, it would threaten Virginia. Seventh, it would strengthen the pro-war segment of the British Parliament. Finally, it would weaken or eliminate support for the Southern Theater within the Continental Congress. Therefore, Cornwallis attacked to defeat Greene's army as soon as he identified it and pursued it ruthlessly. However, upon failing to destroy the Continental Army at

⁷⁴Hoffer, "Operational Art and Insurgency War: Nathanael Greene," 4-5; Canfield, "The Futility of Force and the Preservation of Power," 62-79; Canfield, "Understanding British Strategic Failure in America: 1780-1783," 12-24.

⁷⁵Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 295-302.

Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781 the only chance to save the South was to join British forces in Virginia, reconstitute his army, and trust the militia to hold out against Greene until 1782 when he could cut Greene's supply and starve the Continental Army of replacements.⁷⁶

What Did Not Cause British Defeat in the 1781 Campaign

A short refutation of one reason why Cornwallis lost the campaign of 1781 in the South is necessary. Much has been made of Cornwallis' and other British statements of disappointment about the turnout of Loyalist militia.⁷⁷ Some authors had latched onto these statements and asserted it was a significant reason for the British failure in the south. Secondary literature often repeats that Loyalists failed to turn out and Loyalists chose not to act in support of the British. Some even assert the success of the Whig irregular forces in the South was such that few Loyalists remained in the South by the time Cornwallis conducted his campaign in 1781. However, the period from 1780 to 1782 campaigns possess numerous examples of successful British mobilization of Indians, local troops, and freed blacks.⁷⁸

Both Whig and Loyalist forces courted Indians. Indians near the Carolina backcountry and Georgia allied with the British and fielded several forces that intermittently fixed the Over Mountain Men and defeated Whig militia in 1780. Early in the Revolution, the British leveraged the outcome of the Regulator War, a short civil war in South Carolina, and mobilized the losing side in support of the Loyalist cause. Estimates placed these forces at two thousand throughout

⁷⁶Woodward, "Comparative Evaluation of British and American Strategy in the Southern Campaign of 1780-1781," 2-21; Franklin, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*, 311-344; Tokar, "Logistics and the British Defeat in the Revolutionary War," 42.

⁷⁷Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 24.

⁷⁸Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 2-3.

Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas in 1777.⁷⁹ Immediately after the conquest of South Carolina in 1780, the Tories of the Carolina backcountry began to mobilize. Nearly 1,100 Tories began to converge near Ramsour's mill in North Carolina in June 1780. However, the force lacked weapons and there were no British or Provincial units waiting to receive them. The Whig militia was able to defeat and disperse the Loyalists.⁸⁰

The British also successfully mobilized freed slaves and integrated them into their military effort. Almost 1,500 freed slaves joined the various British Loyalist and Provincial forces throughout the South.⁸¹ In 1781, the British chose not to fully implement a policy to create black units and excluded thousands from military service.⁸² In South Carolina, there were 3,500 active and paid Loyalist militia and more than 4,000 local Tory militia training by August 1780.⁸³ Nearly 1,500 were available for rapid mobilization beginning in 1781.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 53-59.

⁸⁰ Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 83.

⁸¹ Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry*, 60.

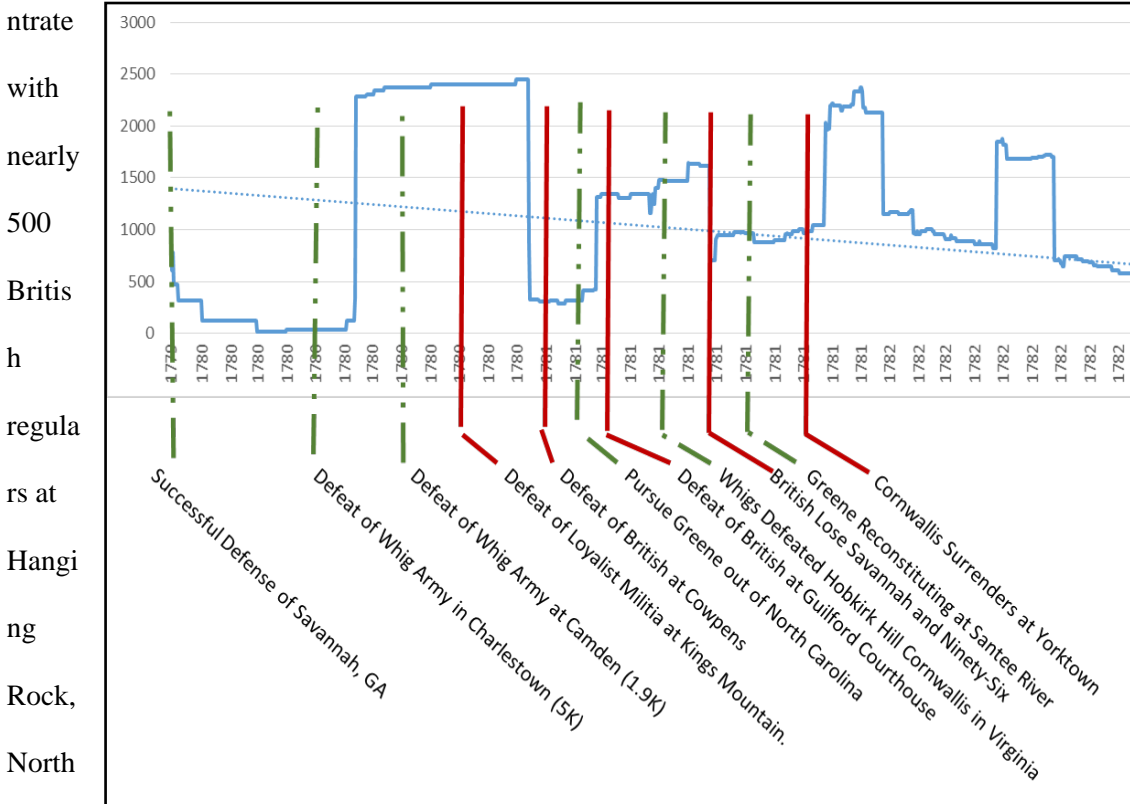
⁸² *Ibid.*, 67.

⁸³ Urban, *Fusiliers The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment in the American Revolution*, 196-197.

⁸⁴ Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 194.

British success in Georgia and South Carolina inspired Tories in North Carolina to

mobilize in September 1780. Whig forces defeated most mobilized Tories before they concentrated or armed effectively. Yet, at least 800 Tories managed to assemble in July 1780 and conce



Carolina.⁸⁵ Once Cornwallis invaded North Carolina in September 1780, he assigned the loyalist militia to protect his lines of supply, which garrisoned Camden, and prevented Whig attacks in the region. The British mobilized between 500 and 1,100 militia around Camden to protect the mobile army's lines of communication.⁸⁶

Figure 1. Paid Loyalists Operating in Southern Theater

⁸⁵Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 99; Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 159-160.

⁸⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 198.

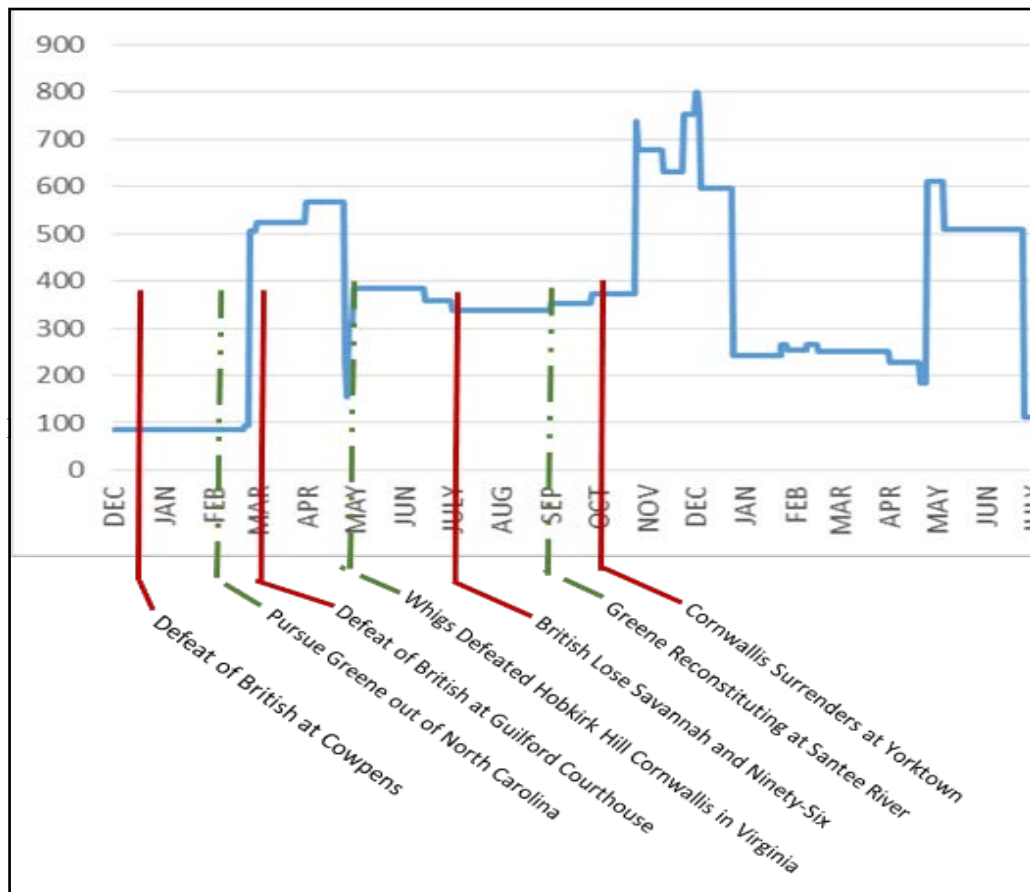
Source: Clark, Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War, Volume I.

Figure 1 is a compilation of material that shows the numbers of paid Loyalists supporting

British forces in the South.⁸⁷ It seems that Loyalist participation in the war remained high even after major defeats of Loyalist or British forces. Paid Loyalist militia and Provincial units numbered as many militia as General Greene had in his army during the campaign of 1781. In December 1781, even after Cornwallis defeat and under the threat of slave revolt and Whig terrorism, Loyalists mobilized nearly seven percent of the free white male population over the age

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⁸⁷Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Vol. I; Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Vol. II; Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, Vol. III; O'Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Vol. III.

⁸⁸Seven percent of the free white male population over age 15 according to the national census of 1790.

Source: Clark, Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War, Volume I.

Figure 2 illustrates the numbers of North Carolina Loyalists that mobilized after British and Loyalist defeats throughout 1781. After almost five years of radical Whig pressure and co-optation, Whig and Tory shared Indian fighting, and hundreds of loyalists forced into refugee status by radical Whigs at least 800 loyalists served on British militia rolls in North Carolina in December 1781. Additionally, North Carolina fielded a Provincial regiment and nearly 800 North Carolina loyalist irregulars served outside North Carolina with Cornwallis in Virginia. In September 1781, more than 500 loyalist militia continued to operate in North Carolina.⁸⁹ Between Cornwallis' leaving North Carolina in May 1781 and the evacuation of North Carolina in December 1782, almost 350 North Carolina provincials and 900 North Carolina militia members joined British garrisons along the coast.⁹⁰ Loyalists continued to mobilize in support of the British in spite of the defeats of over 1,000 loyalist-militia in 1778; more than 1,000 militia at Ramsour's Mill in June 1780, over 1,000 loyalists at Kings Mountain in October 1780, and the sad state of Cornwallis' army as it marched away from Guilford Courthouse in March 1781. The number of paid Loyalists fighting in North Carolina after the defeat of the British at Yorktown in October 1781 doubled to 2,000 in December 1781.⁹¹

The British were also able to convince many to desert the Continental Army and Whig militia. The British were able to convince many to join British units by creating special regiments that appealed to the different ethnic tendencies of Whig militia. For instance, it was likely that the

⁸⁹Troxler, *The Loyalist Experience in North Carolina*, 24-26.

⁹⁰Ibid., 37. Such plundering, requisition, confiscation, and seizures began as early as 1776.

⁹¹Relative to free white males over age 15 as recorded in the 1790 national census.

creation of a Volunteers of Ireland Regiment caused half of all Continental deserters joining the British being Irish.⁹²

Loyalist forces concentrated in Charleston and raised four new companies of troops after Whigs seized most of the backcountry and lowland interior in May 1781. General Greene estimated there were 2,000 Loyalists serving in the Carolina and Georgia militia, nearly equal to his army, in the fall of 1781. Even after the British decision to stop offensive operations and make peace with the colonies, more than 1,000 Provincials, and 1,000 Loyalist militia were still willing to fight the Whigs. They believed they could remain in the British Empire by creating a pro-British pocket in the Carolinas that Whigs could not defeat. Significant Tory terrorist forces also operated throughout the Carolinas, which prevented Whig supply and security operations. It is unlikely that Cornwallis' failure against Greene's hybrid method of warfare was due to a lack of Loyalists support in the South.⁹³

What Did Cause British Failure in 1781 Campaign

Cornwallis failed to defeat Greene's hybrid operational approach. Cornwallis faced an enemy that possessed organizational innovations enabled by rifled musket technology unavailable to the British and Loyalists. He recognized Greene's simultaneous, nested, and synchronized campaign using multiple modes of warfare including regular, irregular, and terrorism. Cornwallis targeted the regular component of Greene's approach believing that it was the Whig center of gravity in the South. He innovated when possible to maximize his chances of overcoming

⁹²Urban, *Fusiliers The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment in the American Revolution*, 197.

⁹³Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 249, 275, and 280-290.

Greene's technological advantage. However, Greene ensured that all Continental and Whig forces were capable of transitioning among the different modes of warfare so he could concentrate capability in each mode to prevent defeat and best leverage his technological advantage.⁹⁴

Simultaneous, Nested, and Synchronized Modes of Warfare

General Greene planned for the integrated use of each mode of warfare available to him. Further, he recognized that Whigs operating within each mode were insufficient by themselves to defeat British or Loyalists contesting the space. The only way to succeed within each mode was to transition forces in and out of each as necessary. For instance, Whig terrorists had to become local irregulars to mass against Loyalist militia and then local militia to work with Continental regulars.⁹⁵ He built his operational approach around the idea of transitioning forces among the different modes of warfare.

General Greene's command of the Continental Army in the South and its return to the Carolinas in February 1781 re-invigorated Whig terrorists throughout the region. Reinforced with Continental Army troops, Whig terrorists stepped up their assassinations and murders of loyalists. They represented a threat well beyond the ability of the local loyalist militia or British garrisons to prevent or defeat. By the end of February 1781, many loyalists found themselves forced to seek

⁹⁴Bell, "Dissolving Distance," 523-62; Brown, *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution*, 239-249; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 91-107; Woodward, "A Comparative Evaluation of British and American Strategy," 37-54; Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*, 134-137 and 247-250.

⁹⁵Wier, *The Violent Spirit*, 145-159; Bass, *The Swamp Fox*, 67-85; Crow and Tise, *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution*, 174-203; Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 46-69; Hoffman, Tate and Albert, *An Uncivil War The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*, 116.

protection from Whigs and the Continental Army detachments supporting them.⁹⁶ This proved a drain on Loyalist support and a forcing factor in Cornwallis' decision to attack Greene's army, pursue it, and defeat it at the first opportunity.

General John Morgan's regular dragoons and mounted infantry had operated with Whig irregulars and terrorists in December 1780 and January 1781 before the battle of Cowpens. Within two weeks, they killed or wounded 150 Tory terrorists, captured 140, and allowed only sixty to escape.⁹⁷ Greene's approach succeeded in fixing large portions of available Loyalist forces and gave him an opportunity for a quick victory.

Once Greene neutralized Cornwallis' mobile army by convincing Cornwallis to leave the Carolinas, his operational approach succeeded in concentrating irregulars into regular units and enabled the Continental Army to go on the offensive against British regulars in South Carolina. Whig irregulars transitioned in and out of different modes of warfare as a practice. A South Carolina militia force commanded by Thomas Sumter operated both as a brigade and as dispersed irregular units. On several occasions, the brigade concentrated six hundred or more men on the battlefield.⁹⁸ By August 1781 Greene's militia irregulars, state militia, and state regulars were nearly equally effective. In the Battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781, Greene's militia performed as well as regulars. It gave Greene a force capable of meeting the British on equal terms. Greene could mass forces to conduct operations within any mode of warfare.⁹⁹

⁹⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 238–239.

⁹⁷Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 299-300.

⁹⁸Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 99.

⁹⁹Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 377-378; Pancake, *The Destructive War*, 204-222; Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 46-69; Lee, *The American Revolution in the South*,

The ability to concentrate forces from across the different modes of warfare provided Greene a sufficient regular force to contain remaining British regulars and many of the remaining Loyalist forces in South Carolina near Charleston by December 1781. A critical enabler to this line of operation was the transition by some Whig irregulars to the terrorist mode of warfare to conduct terror attacks as close as forty miles of Charleston. Whig terrorism targeted Loyalist militia officers and every man known to be a loyalist, killing some and forcing the rest into Charleston to await transport out of the colonies. This succeeded in displacing the most capable Loyalist forces into Charleston and allowing the re-establishment of Whig governance in South Carolina.¹⁰⁰

Cornwallis' approach to defeat the Continental Army and supporting militia was to maximize combined arms and mass capabilities within the different modes of warfare. The British activated paid Loyalist militia to garrison forts and prevent the massing of Whig militia and irregulars. The British expected unpaid Loyalist militia to defeat Whig terrorist cells. Cornwallis was confident that Loyalist and British forces would prevail in their assigned modes of warfare. He neither expected nor encouraged forces to operate outside their mode of warfare. Loyalist defeat was generally the outcome when they attempted to fight outside their designated mode of warfare.¹⁰¹

The British fully integrated Provincial forces with regular forces. However, as demonstrated at the Battle of Rocky Mount July 13, 1780 and later at the Battle of Hanging Rock

315-394; Scher and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats*, 453-466.

¹⁰⁰Urban, *Fusiliers The Saga of a British Redcoat*, 254.

¹⁰¹Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure*, 169-216.

in North Carolina July 21, 1780, they were much less inclined to integrate or leverage Loyalist militia irregulars or Tory terrorists. The company post at Rocky Mount had no militia to perform security or reconnaissance functions, which allowed Whig militia to approach the post and assault it. Whig militia surprised and defeated superior British and Loyalist forces in the area in detail at the Battle of Hanging Rock.¹⁰² The Loyalist irregulars and British regulars did not work together and both neglected to put out security.¹⁰³ Hanging Rock was the first check to British Victory in the Carolina's since before 1778 when 600 Whig militiamen defeated the 800 Tory irregulars and afterwards a relief force of 500 British regulars.¹⁰⁴

Loyalist militia did experience some success against Whig terrorist cells and irregulars. When Loyalist irregulars were effective, Whig irregulars transitioned into the terrorist mode of warfare and succeeded in degrading the leadership and motivation of many Tory units.¹⁰⁵ The approach of the Continental Army in August 1780 significantly disrupted training, organization, and equipping of loyalist forces in South Carolina, reducing loyalist ability to operate as irregulars and defeat Whig terrorist cells.¹⁰⁶ However, they continued to try to do so until June 1781 when defeated by concentrated Continental regulars and irregulars.

After Cornwallis moved his army into Virginia the commander of British and loyalist forces in South Carolina attempted to mass and integrate both regular and irregular forces at Camden in April and May 1781. The supply base at Camden proved inadequate to support the

¹⁰²Rankin, *The North Carolina Continental Line in the American Revolution*, 67–71.

¹⁰³Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 97–100.

¹⁰⁴Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas* 89-99.

¹⁰⁵Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 197.

¹⁰⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 191.

large number of militia that rallied in support of the British and the British sent most home.¹⁰⁷

The inability to transition the irregular militia into the regular mode of warfare and sustain them reduced the ability of British forces remaining in South Carolina prevent Greene from executing his operational approach. It allowed Whig and Continental forces to defeat the British and loyalists in detail throughout the Carolinas and Georgia over the remainder of 1781.

However, Cornwallis' operational approach worked well while it neutralized the Continental Army. For instance, during Greene's Continental Army withdrawal from South Carolina and before the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, Cornwallis' regulars, Loyalist irregulars, and Tory terrorists nested their operations and prevented Whig militia turnout. Only 300 militia irregulars rallied to Greene's army during this time.¹⁰⁸ Further, the Virginia militia units with Greene's army left when their terms expired in March and April 1781 and there seemed little hope of victory in 1781.¹⁰⁹ However, Cornwallis did not continue integrated operations among the different modes of warfare and instead pursued Greene with only regular forces. This was in accordance with his operational approach designating his main line of effort to be the destruction of the Continental Army in North Carolina by his British regulars.

Following the failed pursuit of Greene to the Dan River in Virginia in February 1781, Cornwallis moved to Hillsborough, North Carolina in March 1781 to reconstitute his forces. He intended to transition as many North Carolina Loyalist irregulars as possible into the regular mode of warfare and thereby increase the size of his army. However, Cornwallis' failure to

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 244.

¹⁰⁸Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 313.

¹⁰⁹Brown, *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution*, 223-229; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 312.

support the concentration of irregulars with regular forces resulted in the annihilation of between 300 and 400 lightly armed loyalists. Thousands of Loyalists recruits never made it to Cornwallis because of the influence of Whig regular and irregular forces operating around Hillsborough. Cornwallis' operational approach did not foresee the need to provide Loyalists with the capability of defending themselves from Continental regulars, and it neglected the protection of Loyalists while they concentrated to support his army.¹¹⁰

When British and Loyalist troop strength was adequate within each mode of warfare, and operations were nested, they succeeded in limiting the Continental Army's ability to transition forces among the different modes of warfare. For instance, when Greene's army sieged Ninety-Six in May and June 1781, no Whig militia rallied to him. Instead, Greene suffered from a steady trickle and then a flood of desertions from his Carolina militia. British and Loyalist operations were so effective around Ninety-Six that when the fort was evacuated in June 1781 most of the population in the area left with the garrison. General Greene estimated that the Tories outnumbered the Whigs five to one in the area around the fort.¹¹¹

Indian operations in support of the British offer another example of wasted opportunity. Cornwallis ordered British contacts with the Indians to influence them to attack to fix the Over-Mountain Men irregulars outside the British area of operations leading into the 1781 campaign. Cherokee and Creek operations succeeded in denying Greene badly needed reinforcements between February and May 1781. North Carolina militia operations against the Indians diverted

¹¹⁰Urban, *Fusiliers The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment in the American Revolution*, 234; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 322-323.

¹¹¹Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 355-362; Caldwell, *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene*, 297-300; Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 57-62; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 206-215.

supplies from Greene's army in April causing a dangerous ammunition shortage. In May, Indians expanded their influence and diverted South Carolina militia from assisting the siege of Ninety-Six. Threats against Whigs in the backcountry reduced Greene's strength to the point it could not both siege the fort and defend against British relief.¹¹²

Indian operations succeeded in severely weakening Whig and Continental operations in the Southern Theater from the end of December 1780 to early June 1781.¹¹³ The failure of Cornwallis to exploit the opportunity was due to his inability to mass forces for the destruction of the Continental Army and its supporting Whig irregular militia. Cornwallis' desire to defeat the Continental Army in February and March 1781 did not allow time for effects of Indian operations to influence Greene's forces.

Synchronizing, coordinating, and linking these different counter-revolutionary forces did occur, but it was often ad-hoc and did not support a clear line of effort supporting Cornwallis' operational approach.¹¹⁴ When Loyalist irregulars and Provincial or British regulars operated in integrated forces, they often experienced much greater success than when they operated independently. Tories and Indians had been cooperating since 1776 and had perfected their operations by 1780. A small group of British dragoons augmented Loyalist militia and defeated Whig militia near Waxhaws in May 1780. Included in the list of Whig prisoners of the battle was the future American President Andrew Jackson.¹¹⁵ Black regular dragoons and white irregular

¹¹²Weigley, *The Partisan War*, 57-62; Lee, *The American Revolution in the South*, 383-410.

¹¹³Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 260.

¹¹⁴Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 150.

¹¹⁵Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 137.

militia worked effectively together throughout 1782.¹¹⁶ Finally, British regulars and Loyalist irregulars had developed into fully integrated garrisons and defensive forces within British forts in the Carolina Backcountry. The most successful example was the combined force of five hundred that held off the Continental Army at the fort at Ninety-Six for two weeks.¹¹⁷ Successful garrisons transitioned regular and irregular forces between the two modes of warfare as the situation required and until overwhelmed by the capability of the Continental Army and Whig irregular militia.

The backcountry war between Whigs and Tories was a draw in February 1781. Neither group operated without fear of attack by the other. The unarmed masses of each side sought the safety of swamps and forests rather than risk nighttime terrorism. The situation changed after Cornwallis moved his army into Virginia and the Continental Army transitioned to irregular fighting in support of Whigs after April 1781. The British had only a limited concept of transitioning forces among the different modes of warfare and no supply base existed sufficient to support concentration. Therefore, a few thousand Continentals, enabled by Whig irregular militia, neutralized and then defeated British efforts to secure and protect Loyalists in the backcountry and the lowland interior of South Carolina, even though outnumbered by Loyalists and British regular garrisons. Cornwallis designed his operational approach to prevent the Continental Army from supporting Whig irregulars. Therefore, it did not include creating conditions that allowed for massing of Loyalist forces required to defeat the Continental Army and Whig irregulars operating together in the backcountry. The British General who took over the responsibility for the

¹¹⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 334.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 250.

Carolinas when Cornwallis left successfully concentrated forces several times against Greene. Doing so spoiled Continental Army operations and forced Greene to withdraw from his objectives. However, by December of 1781 the British had insufficient forces to defeat Greene.¹¹⁸

Technology: Rifled Musket and Organizational Innovation

The British experienced the Whigs' wide use of rifled muskets and the weapon's superiority over the standard European smooth bore musket at the second Battle of Saratoga in October 1777. While the battlefield limited the use of the weapon against the British main lines, Daniel Morgan's company of rifleman defeated British scouting efforts and left them blind throughout the battle. Previous battles had demonstrated its advantage in range. The weapon's shortcoming was its significantly lower rate of fire versus the smooth bore musket.¹¹⁹

The British implemented tactical innovations to prevent prolonged exposure to rifled fire. First, they adopted skirmish tactics and moved away from traditional volley ranks. Second, they rapidly occupied the battlefield and immediately conducted a bayonette charge to defeat Whig militia units as fast as possible. Finally, they minimized reserve forces and positioned them beyond the range of rifled fire. However, these innovations were not part of Loyalist militia training or operations. The British trained only regular units this way. The second order effect of Whig use of these technical innovations was the British all-or-nothing approach seeking decisive battle with little room for failure or error.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 244–247; Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, 76-112.

¹¹⁹Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 173; Rogers Young, *Rifles and Riflemen at the Battle of Kings Mountain*, 1-28.

¹²⁰Urban, *Fusiliers: The Saga of a British Redcoat Regiment in the American Revolution*, 65-97;

The rifle and organizational innovations employed by Whigs and the Continental Army were critical to shaping Greene's operational approach. These innovations allowed Greene to successfully transition irregulars into the regular mode of warfare. Irregular units lacked the resiliency to participate in traditional exchange of fire from lines, or bayonette charges. The rifle provided the means for irregulars to influence the outcomes of engagements while the organizational change provided the way to integrate irregulars into engagements. Greene's use of rifles and irregulars reinforced Cornwallis' belief that rapid assault was necessary to defeat Greene. There were other options to defeat Greene's use of rifles and irregulars, but it seems that Cornwallis' aggressiveness, desire to own the initiative, and other operational and strategic considerations drove him to accept the fallacy that there was no other way to fight.

The tactical training of regular British units influenced Cornwallis' operational approach. The dependence on disciplined and resilient forces conducting rapid and multiple charges left little room for irregular integration in engagements. Further, this approach required concentration of all regular forces and left few available to support irregular forces.

Performance of Loyalist militia at the Battle of Kings Mountain in October 1780 reinforced Cornwallis' belief his approach was the right one. It seemed he took the wrong lesson from the battle and continued to discount the value of Loyalist irregulars. Examples exist that demonstrate transition of regular forces to the irregular mode of warfare in support of Loyalists was successful. An alternate lesson could have been to mirror Greene's use of militia as a tool of attrition on the flanks and front to screen his regulars. It seemed that Cornwallis suffered from

Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, 12-19.

confirmation bias and saw examples validating his operational approach in almost every engagement Loyalist were involved.

The Loyalist militia, without regular British forces enabling them, responded to Whig operations by occupying defensible terrain and receiving Whig attacks. However, Loyalist militia possessed shorter-range smoothbore muskets that allowed Whigs to use the rifles' range and accuracy to defeat them. This occurred at Kings Mountain in October 1780 when the Over Mountain Men killed key Loyalist militia leaders. The Loyalist units disintegrated shortly after.¹²¹ Again, at the Battle of Cowpens in January 1781, rifles devastated the British and Provincial officer ranks and caused their units to disintegrate.¹²² Cornwallis viewed these events as confirmation that irregulars were unable to operate against Continental forces rather than evidence that irregulars, if used correctly, were essential to defeat Greene's approach. Instead of transitioning Loyalist irregulars into the regular mode and innovating his use of these forces to overcome advantages the irregulars gave Greene's army, Cornwallis fixated on his stratified and split approach. He sought more of the same, but faster and with greater shock.

Cornwallis sought the decisive defeat of the Continental Army at Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781. He immediately transitioned from the march to the assault, which reduced the time officers were exposed to rifle fire.¹²³ The speed of British assaults reduced, but did not eliminate, the impact of the rifle. During the battle, rifles devastated his officer ranks, and

¹²¹Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 64–165; Allen, “The Over Mountain Men,” 34.

¹²²Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping*, 199; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 330.

¹²³Southern, *Voices of the American Revolution in the Carolinas*, 224.

Continental tactical depth depleted his enlisted ranks, forcing the development of a new operational approach. Cornwallis moved to Virginia in April based on the outcome of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. After the battle, Greene recognized the value of irregulars with rifles and made it clear that the Continental Army needed the Mountain Men's rifles to defeat Cornwallis should he return.¹²⁴

Wide use of rifles by Whig militia enabled Greene's operational approach. Rifles gave Whig militia range and accuracy that allowed the defeat of under-armed Loyalists. Irregulars' rifles neutralized many British fortifications when combined with other means. Almost all British forts seized by Whigs occurred when irregulars were able to fire rifles into the fort from terrain or towers. The use of the rifle was critical in allowing Greene to execute his line of effort to reduce Loyalist forts in the backcountry. The rifle also allowed terrorist and irregulars to transition to regular siege operations in support of Greene's army. However, when British and Loyalists were able to neutralize Whig rifles by erecting barricades and sandbags atop fort walls, such as at the Fort in Ninety-Six in May and June 1781, the forts did not fall. Such counter measures forced Greene to fall back on traditional siege tactics. He failed taking the forts by force.¹²⁵

Rifles made Loyalist disengagement and retreat incredibly difficult after engagements. Whig irregulars made a habit of killing fleeing Loyalists at up to 140 yards. This caused many Loyalists to surrender instead of retreating. Rifles also prevented pursuit by mounted British

¹²⁴ Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 381-382.

¹²⁵ O'Kelly, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter*, Vol. III, 242-258; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 343.

dragoons of Whig irregular forces.¹²⁶ This preserved Whig irregular forces and allowed their transition between terrorist and irregular modes of warfare.

The Battle of Eutaw Springs in September 1781 resulted in the containment of the British mobile army in South Carolina. However, Greene risked defeat and sacrificed decisive victory over the British when he neutralized his rifles by placing them in the line with his regular musket equipped troops. At the same time, the effectiveness of integrated Whig irregulars into the regular force validated Greene's operational approach. The irregulars fought as well as the regulars in offensive operations.¹²⁷ Likewise, when the British were able to leverage the power of the rifle, the outcomes were in their favor. During the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill, South Carolina in April 1781, the British rifles disrupted Continental attacks, killed Continental and militia officers, and enabled defeat of Continental forces.¹²⁸ The British victory disrupted the Continental Army and delayed its attack on Charleston for six weeks.

Rifles were not the only innovation available to the Continentals. They also practiced organizational innovation that brought depth to their forces on the battlefield and created conditions for full exploitation of the capability of the rifle and irregulars. Organizational innovation provided Greene the tool he needed to ensure his army was not decisively defeated. It also provided a role for integrated Whig irregulars in the regular formations of the Continental Army, and enabled Greene's line of effort transitioning forces among the different modes of warfare.

¹²⁶Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 234-235.

¹²⁷Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, 212-217; Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 378.

¹²⁸Piecuch, *Three Peoples One King Loyalists*, 247.

The Continental Army leaders recognized British shock tactics negated the effectiveness of the rifle and disintegrated operations so quickly the British rarely felt the full weight of Continental fires. General Greene's second in command, General Morgan, added depth to the battlefield in both space and time at the battle of Cowpens in January 1781 to increase British exposure to Continental musket fire. He did this by arraying his forces in three lines, separated but within musket range of each other. The first two were composed of militia and the third was composed of Continental regular units.¹²⁹ The Continental formations required the British to assault and defeat each Continental defensive line in turn to win. Irregular troops equipped with rifles supported the Continental lines from the flanks. Rifle fire disrupted and destroyed British leadership while the British were reforming and preparing for the next assault. The first and second militia lines rallied when the Continental defense delayed the British assault sufficiently.¹³⁰

The British launched their assault using the tactics that defeated two Continental Armies in the South. However, the new Continental tactical disposition caused disruption in the British attack. Three subsequent defensive lines combined with effective rifle fire from the flanks significantly decreased the tempo of British assaults. At Cowpens in January 1781, the delay in defeating the Continental line allowed the Whigs to rally their defeated militia and recommit

¹²⁹Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution*, 304-305.

¹³⁰Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 316.

them to the battle.¹³¹ A combined Continental Army and militia counter-attack and the level of disruption among British units caused the British force to disintegrate.¹³²

Later in the Campaign, after a vigorous pursuit that cost the British their baggage train and most of its artillery, General Greene and General Cornwallis met at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina on March 15, 1781. Greene implemented the tactical innovations of Cowpens but failed to keep the lines within musket range of each other. Cornwallis recognized the organizational innovation resulted in increased depth of the Continental force. He responded by increasing his tempo and eliminated his reserve to increase the power of his attack. His forces had to break each line faster and with less reorganization time between each line to negate the depth of the Continental defense. Cornwallis' employed overwhelming superiority and shock against each line to reduce the time British forces were subject to devastating rifle fire from militia irregulars on his flanks. Increasing the tempo of his operations also denied the Continentals any chance of rallying defeated militia forces. Cornwallis's force defeated Greene's in less than ninety minutes. However, the Continental line retreated in good order leaving twenty-nine British officers killed or wounded by rifle fire. The Continental Army killed or wounded nearly one-fourth of the British mobile army. The pyrrhic victory caused Cornwallis to change his operational approach. He moved his remaining mobile army to Virginia, hoping to concentrate with British forces in the Colony and force Greene to leave the Carolinas.¹³³

¹³¹Rankin, *The North Carolina Continental Line in the American Revolution*, 67–71.

¹³²Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 316.

¹³³Babits and Howard, *Long, Obstinate, and Bloody*; Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 330.

CONCLUSION

Today, the United States is a super power facing a world where threats maximize the use of different forms of warfare and technology to overcome U.S. strengths. The U.S. finds itself in the role of Britain in 1781 attempting to defeat enemies that use hybrid warfare. Evaluating an operational approach to defeat Americans who themselves conducted hybrid warfare offers a way around the tendency to discount other's experience because of cultural and ethno-centrism or lack of familiarity.

The British experience in the Southern Theater of Operations presents several lessons in the fighting and losing of hybrid warfare. The colonial commander General Greene formulated a campaign that leveraged all the modes of warfare to defeat the greatest military power of the day. Greene's campaign integrated and transitioned regular, irregular, and terrorist forces among the different modes of warfare. He was able to leverage advanced off-the-shelf weapon technology and implement innovative tactics to overcome superiority of British regular forces and enable his operational approach.

Lord Cornwallis effectively mobilized local forces to bring security to many Loyalists. He also integrated local regular forces with British formations to secure military success against conventional Continental forces. However, his creation of stratified British and colonial security forces made his approach vulnerable to Greene's hybrid approach. It allowed Greene to defeat British and Loyalist forces in detail and prevented the British from successfully concentrating across modes of warfare against Whigs or the Continental Army.

Lord Cornwallis' failures against hybrid warfare offer several lessons. First, even after four years of co-optation and violence, Loyalists remained in the area ready to mobilize in support of the British. Second, British doctrine and concepts of proper warfare prevented them

from understanding and countering the terrorism and coercion employed against Loyalists. It also prevented the British from realizing the value of neutral groups in their conflict. Third, Loyalist security forces failed because British regulars did not integrate with them. Finally, the British commander believed a direct approach that defeated regular forces in the theater ensured victory. When that failed, he used an indirect approach, believing that attacking the means of support was an effective way to defeat a hybrid enemy. Indirect approaches failed to defeat the hybrid enemy. It also provided time and space for the hybrid enemy to defeat local internal security forces in detail.

Under most circumstances, the United States Army does not have the luxury of choosing when they intervene against a hybrid threat. However, the more time provided the hybrid threat to use nearly unconstrained coercion against potential local U.S. allies, the more difficult it is to counter their influence after intervention. Cornwallis demonstrated it is possible to mobilize pro-government support relatively rapidly, even in the worst operational environment. Mobilization may take time, but the forces became available as long as the Hybrid threat was contained.

Terrorism and coercion is an essential tool in a war against a hybrid threat. While unpopular in the west, local forces should use terror and coercion to maintain the neutrality of those most likely to join the opposition, keep those on the side of the government from defecting, and punish those who actively joined the opposition. Leaving the opposition alone in the use of terror and coercion is a significant impediment to pro-government victory.¹³⁴

¹³⁴Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: MA: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 87-91.

The nature of hybrid warfare does not give the United States the luxury of picking and choosing what capability locally built security forces should possess. Locally raised forces must be multi-role and effectively trained to defeat and utilize all components of hybrid warfare. Likewise, forces from different modes of warfare must transition among them as necessary. Designing single role security forces allows the opposition to create and employ asymmetries.

Lord Cornwallis created single role security forces. He neither designed them to fight integrated nor equipped them with the technology to defeat Whigs. A general policy of disarmament often prevented loyalist civilians from defending themselves against Whig terrorism. Sometimes, an armed civilian population is not a sign of a losing pro-government effort, but a critical stage in the government gaining supremacy over a segment of the hybrid threat.

Loyalist militia and irregulars were generally effective at maintaining local security when the British Army provided the proper equipment and basing. However, these forces were often ineffective in the regular mode of warfare. The defeat of ill-equipped and ill-prepared Loyalist irregulars fighting in the regular mode forced the British to abandon their best opportunity to seize North Carolina.

U.S. doctrine has within it the means to defeat hybrid threats. However, it needs to clearly articulate that the transition of forces among modes of warfare to defeat hybrid threats may be necessary. Likewise, the dependence on stratified security forces, each with their own responsibilities, possesses significant risks to defeating a hybrid threat. Finally, a hybrid threat requires more than just applying counter-insurgency, offensive, defensive, and stability doctrine. Hybrid threats require doctrine that allows integration of forces across modes of warfare, natural transition of forces among the modes of warfare, and an enemy focused approach. Cornwallis'

experience in the Southern Theater demonstrated that success against military threats created legitimacy for Loyalist governance and kept the people from supporting Whig hybrid threats.

United States Army doctrine acknowledges operational environments are unique, leaders will encounter new and unanticipated enemy capability, and the enemy will force adaptation while the army is engaged in operations. Doctrine acknowledges operational environments are dynamic; characterizes threats are characterized as hybrid and require Army forces prepared to transition rapidly from one type of operation to another.¹³⁵ The tenets of Unified Land Operations provide the basis for mental and organizational ability to combat hybrid threats. Flexibility enables adaptive forces that can transition among and defeat enemies in the different modes of warfare used by hybrid threats. The tenet of integration causes Army leaders to seek out ways to use Army capabilities to compliment joint, interagency, and multinational partners. Adaptability causes Army leaders to adjust operations based on continuous assessment. Finally, depth causes Army leaders to determine how to arrange forces to affect operations in space, time, and purpose to prevent the effective employment of enemy forces, reserves, logistics, and other capabilities.¹³⁶

The hybrid threat in the Southern Campaign was flexible, adaptive, practiced integration of forces across all modes of warfare, and created depth operationally and tactically. The British effort in the southern colonies practiced limited flexibility and adaptability while using Provincial forces. Cornwallis operated regular and irregular forces separately. Each adhered to its own mode of warfare, even after Colonial forces demonstrated the capability to defeat Loyalists and the British in either mode using integrated regular and irregular forces.

¹³⁵Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, 1, 4, and 2-3.

¹³⁶Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, 7.

Cornwallis created operational depth by layering his forces in the theater. Regular and Provincial forces created an outer crust to defeat Continental troops and prevent them from penetrating into the theater. Provincial and militia forces garrisoned forts and cities that controlled much of the population. Loyalist irregulars and terrorists influenced the space between Provincial and militia garrisons. However, the depth Cornwallis created lacked the flexibility to concentrate forces and depended on the ability of British regular forces to defeat Continental armies in North Carolina before they penetrated into South Carolina. Finally, British forces in the south had to deny themselves tactical depth in order to mass sufficient combat power to overcome the Continental Army's organization and technology.

Cornwallis' experience against Greene in 1781 offers a warning to U.S. forces. Today, U.S. doctrine and U.S. practice is divergent. While the tenets of Unified Land Operations says U.S. forces should use General Greene's operational approach, in the last half of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq they resembled Cornwallis' approach. The U.S. created stratified security forces that lacked integration, could not transition among the different forms of warfare, and depended on U.S. conventional capability to protect them from capable threats.

The Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0 fails to recognize the lessons of the 1781 campaign. The ADRP 3-0 differentiates the individual and collective skills units require for stability from offensive and defensive operations. It asserts that units require dedicated training before engaging in operations within a specific mode of warfare. Likewise, it asserts retraining is necessary when transitioning between modes. However, Greene and Cornwallis' experience was that success comes to the side less capable in each individual mode of warfare but that attained a balance of capability among all the elements of decisive action. Greene's forces were inferior to Cornwallis within any individual mode of warfare. Whig irregular victories did

not change British control of Georgia and South Carolina and did not establish Whig dominance in North Carolina. Even after the removal of Cornwallis' regular force, neither Whig irregulars nor Continental regulars could defeat the British security forces without integration. By transitioning forces between the different modes, Greene was able to create greater capability than the British were within any mode of warfare.¹³⁷

The ADRP 3-0's discussions of simultaneity and transitions seem to reflect lessons of the 1781 campaign. Doctrine only needs to clearly articulate that the concept of simultaneity goes beyond conducting multiple tasks at the same time. ADRP 3-0's discussion of simultaneity implies different units with their own capability execute simultaneous tasks in time and space.¹³⁸ . Discussion of simultaneity should include reference to forces' simultaneous operation using multiple modes of warfare. The concept of depth may imply this, but it is not clear.¹³⁹ The ADRP 3-0 clearly articulates that decisive action is not about phasing, it is about concurrent offensive, defensive, and stability operations. However, the discussion is linear and does not clearly recognize the need to transition forces among the different modes of warfare while conducting the same task, but against different threats or at a different scale. Army forces must execute concurrent operations within the regular, irregular, and terrorist modes of warfare. However, it must also rapidly and comfortably transition forces among modes for two reasons. First, resource constraints make it necessary to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of forces. Second, sufficient capability must be concentrated within a mode of warfare to ensure victory. Cornwallis

¹³⁷Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, 2-3.

¹³⁸Ibid., 2-4.

¹³⁹Ibid., 2-4.

demonstrated that economy of force efforts within some modes while seeking decisive victory in another is high risk and likely to fail. The lesson of the 1781 campaign is U.S. forces must be capable of conducting tasks within any mode of warfare to a standard sufficient for victory. Further, U.S. forces sacrificing ability within one mode of warfare to gain excellence in another risks defeat by hybrid enemies.¹⁴⁰

The ADRP 3-0 discusses why transitions among phases occur and is sufficient to reflect lessons of the 1781 campaign. Discussion of transition due to change of mission or change in conditions may imply a transition among modes of warfare.¹⁴¹ In addition, the discussion specifies transitions occur due to culmination. ADRP 3-0 defines culmination as the point when a force is no longer capable of continuing its current form of operations. However, when discussing transitions in decisive action, ADRP 3-0 does specify that transitions can also include moving among tasks within decisive operations; attack, defend, and stability.¹⁴²

Doctrine expanded the purpose of transitions from dealing with issues of culmination to dealing with task management inside decisive operations. This provides space to include the concept of transitioning among the modes of warfare. For example, a unit may transition to another mode of warfare so it mitigates its culmination in its current mode of warfare, extends operational reach using a new mode of warfare, increases capability within another mode, or because it was successful within its former mode of warfare. Greene's irregular terrorists often transitioned to irregular militia roles because they had successfully neutralized Tories in an area.

¹⁴⁰Department of the Army, ADRP 3-0, 2-7.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 4-8.

¹⁴²Ibid., 2.7.

Greene's irregular militia often transitioned out of irregular and into the regular mode of warfare and fought with Continental units because Loyalist irregulars were not a threat. Likewise, Continental units transitioned to irregular mode of warfare because they had defeated the major regular units and to increase the capability within the irregular mode of warfare inside their area of operations. The prevention of culmination was not the driving consideration behind these transitions, but changes in tasks often were.

The Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 recognized that combatant commanders execute concurrent operations that have different military end states.¹⁴³ This is in line with what is necessary to defeat hybrid warfare. However, Greene demonstrated operations that rose above different forces with different military end states. Greene's operational approach defined his forces' military end state by the mode of warfare they were executing. Continental Army units' end state was defeat of British regulars when they were fighting within the regular mode, protect Whig militia when in irregular mode, and prevent Loyalist terrorism targeting Whig supporters in terrorist modes respectively.

Criticism of the Army's full spectrum operations concept focuses on the Army's inability to be good at all the components of the spectrum at the same time. However, the 1781 campaign demonstrated that when fighting a hybrid threat it is better to be good enough in each mode than excellent in only one. It is enough to prevent the enemy's victory within each mode of warfare rather than defeat the enemy in only one. An organizational culture built upon readiness to transition among modes of warfare as conditions demand is important to the success of the U.S.

¹⁴³Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), V-2.

Army against hybrid enemies. Doctrine that advocates for transitions among operations, adaptability, and decisive action of units specially trained for their specific mode of warfare is less useful. Further, Army units may not excel in certain modes of warfare because of structural and not training reasons. Changes in structure and clarification of doctrine may enable the Army to neutralize criticism of its inability to conduct the operations of decisive action simultaneously with the same force.¹⁴⁴

Another important lesson from the 1781 campaign concerns center of gravity. The center of gravity of a hybrid threat, even within the environment of an insurgency, is not the people. Failure to secure the people only matters if you fail to defeat the forces operating within the different modes of hybrid warfare. Likewise, legitimate government is a problematic objective when fighting a hybrid enemy. Victories against forces operating within the different modes of warfare defined legitimate government in an area where the war mobilized one third of the population to one side or the other in 1781. The center of gravity of the hybrid army was the Continental Army. The operational center of gravity of the British became the British regular forces because without them the Loyalist irregular and terrorist forces maintaining control of the colonies were unable to defeat the Continental hybrid approach to warfare. Neither commander pursued the people as the center of gravity. Yet, both operational approaches were capable of gaining victory in the Southern Colonies in 1781. Greene demonstrated this through success. Cornwallis's approach required but an increase in regular capability via additional troops or

¹⁴⁴Austin Long, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence - The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine 1660-1970 and 2003-2006* (Arlington, VA: National Defense Research Institute, Rand, 2008), vii.

tactics that neutralized the Continental Army's development of tactical depth and the rifle.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵Ibid., vii.

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