# The Past versus the Present: Lessons from the Past that the US Army Can Use in the Present to Prepare Divisions for Large-Scale Combat Operations

A Monograph

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The US Army is currently in a period of transition as it seeks to complete a paradigm shift from the last 17 years of the Global War on Terrorism back to refocusing on large-scale combat operations with the release of the 2017 Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations. To complete this paradigm shift the Army needs to look at the past to see how it educated its officer corps, trained its divisions, implemented doctrinal changes, and prepared its division commanders for senior leadership. This monograph recommends that the US Army should refocus it education system to prepare its officers to serve as staff officers at the division level in order to gain the expertise to win at large-scale combat operations. To successfully prepare divisions for the rigor of large-scale combat operations realistic live exercises should be conducted at the division level like the Army maneuvers prior to World War Two and the exercises in the 1980s. Third, doctrinally the Army may be required to publish prescriptive doctrine like the 1976 "how to fight manuals" to guide education and training to complete the paradigm shift. Last, to better prepare senior leaders in the Army for division command, the Army needs to select future senior leaders to serve in key division staff positions.

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# Abstract

The Past versus the Present: Lessons from the Past that the US Army Can Use in the Present to Prepare Divisions for Large-Scale Combat Operations, by MAJ Patrick R. Tanner, US Army, 38 pages.

The US Army is currently in a period of transition as it seeks to complete a paradigm shift from the last seventeen years of the Global War on Terrorism back to refocusing on large-scale combat operations with the release of the 2017 Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations.* To complete this paradigm shift the Army needs to look at the past to how it educated its officer corps, trained it divisions, implemented doctrinal changes, and prepared its division commanders for senior leadership. This monograph recommends that the US Army should refocus it education system to prepare it officers to serve as staff officers at the division level in order to gain the expertise to win at large-scale combat operations. To successfully prepare divisions for the rigor of large-scale combat operations realistic live exercises should be conducted at the division level like the Army maneuvers prior to World War Two and the exercises in the 1980s. Third, doctrinally the Army may be required to publish prescriptive doctrine like the 1976 "how to fight manuals" to guide education and training to complete the paradigm shift. Last, to better prepare senior leaders in the Army for division command, renewed focus on putting officers with potential for senior leadership with in the Army should be selected to serve as division Chiefs of Staff, Operations Officers, and Planners.

# Contents

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AOWC | Advanced Operations Warfighting Course |
| BCT | Brigade Combat Team |
| BCTP | Battle Command Training Program |
| CAS3 | Combined Arms Service Staff School |
| CGSC | Command and General Staff College |
| CSA | Chief of Staff of the Army |
| CTG | Command Training Guidance |
| FM | Field Manual |
| FORSCOM | Forces Command |
| GDP | General Defense Plan |
| ID | Infantry Division |
| ILE | Intermediate Level Education |
| KD | Key Developmental |
| MCTP | Mission Command Training Program |
| MMAS | Masters of Military Arts and Sciences |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NTC | National Training Center |
| REFORGER | Return of Forces to Germany |
| RETO | Review of Education and Training of Officers |
| ROTC | Reserve Officer Training Command |
| SAMS | School of Advanced Military Studies |
| SSC | Senior Service College |
| TRADOC | Training and Doctrine Command |
| USMA | United States Military Academy |

# Introduction

> In some ways, it was like the debate of a group of savages as to how to extract a screw from a piece of wood. Accustomed only to nails, they made one effort to pull out the screw by main force, and now that it had failed they were devising methods of applying more force still, of obtaining more efficient pincers, of using levers and fulcrums so that more men could bring their strength to bear. They could hardly be blamed for not guessing that by rotating the screw it would come out after the exertion of far less effort; it would be a notion so different from anything they had ever encountered that they could laugh at the man who suggested it.
>
> —C.S. Forester, *The General*

*Sitting in his command post in Poland, in the not too distant future, Major General Smith sat in disbelief. How had his 52nd Infantry Division (ID) performed so poorly against the attacking first echelon of the Russian Army in the Baltic states. The Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Brigade, 52nd Infantry Division, had done so well during their National Training Center rotation last year, they built and maintained readiness better than any other unit assigned to Operation Atlantic Resolve according to the Chief of Staff of the Army, the European Command Commander, and his immediate boss, the US Army Europe Commander. 1/52's Tank and Bradley crews were proficient, they had done well at every gunnery and joint training exercise 52nd ID had devised over the last seven months. The battalions knew how to fight, they all performed better than expected at battalion live fires both in the United States and once arriving on the European continent.*

*The Stryker Brigade Combat Team and Airborne Brigade that were under operational control of the Division were some of the best trained units in the Army. As their Brigade Commander's pointed out during the divisions Pre-deployment Site Survey, twelve months ago. They conducted the first long distance road marches in Europe since the Cold War. They had participated in countless Brigade and Battalion level exercises with US Forces as well as with Joint, Interagency, and Multinational partners.*

*Was it the Division Leadership? Major General Smith knew the Chief of Staff did not have much experience in division operations, but his twenty-plus year career in some of the best*

*special operations units the United States had to offer made him one of most prolific leaders Major General Smith had ever served with. The Division Operations Officer, was the best Battalion Commander the 52nd ID had in the last three years. His Soldiers and officers respected him, his six combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, had provided him with a wealth of knowledge on how to lead and plan combat operations. Major General Smith also trusted the G3, and the insights that he had provided. Both the Deputy Commanding Generals brought a wealth of knowledge and skill. Their combined fifty years of services in the light units of the US Army had been a concern for the Division Commander, but they had overcome those fears by providing excellent recommendations and management of their assigned subordinate units and lanes back at Fort Wherever. Along with the Command Sergeant Major, the "big five" had built the perfect team in the eyes of Major General Smith.*

*Was it the Division Staff? The Chief and G3 had put the staff through its paces during the last eighteen months. The division had executed one Mission Command Training Program rotation, and it had done well. While the scenario wasn't focused on Europe, 52nd ID had still met all of the training objectives that Major General Smith had requested, and performed them far better than he or the Corps Commander could have expected. The division had exercised tactical command post operations, even simulating that Major General Smith and his core group of tactical command post staff were in a separate location from the division main command post and the Chief of Staff. The Deputy Command General for Support had commanded the Division Rear Area Command post and put the Sustainment Brigade through its paces. The Deputy Command General for Maneuver had done an excellent job replicating the Division TAC overseeing the breaching operations during the exercise.*

*Major General Smith knew that during the exercise Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) had allowed 52nd ID to continue to take briefings as if we were located at the same location. Since the exercise was digital, 52nd ID hadn't actually planned the movement of the division out of the assembly area, or really stressed the logistical systems that were required in*

*major division road marches from the assembly area to the brigade defensive fight positions, or the painstaking calculus of refuel on the move operations for an entire division. That would have taken time, and the since this was the first large-scale combat operation rotation the division had conducted there were far more important tasks to be practiced and trained.*

*In Major General Smith's opinion, the plan to plan for the operation had been text book. Subordinate units had received the plan well in advance. The Division had conducted map and digital rehearsals. The Deputy Commanding Generals had been satisfied with the back briefs they received from the Brigade Commanders. The digital rehearsals had identified some of the major time and space issues with the original base plan, but the planners had done well with subsequent fragmentary orders. While the plan was much different than anyone in the "big five" had been used to, it was nested with the 2017 FM 3-0, Operations.*

*Why had Major General Smith not anticipated the issues from the beginning? He never anticipated that simple act of getting out of the division assembly area would be so difficult. He did not have anyone else to blame. The Chief of Staff had done well getting the Staff through the planning process, the Deputy Commanding General's had ensured that the Brigades were trained and ready, and that sustainment and fires were all synchronized. The Division Command Sergeant Major had ensured that the necessary discipline and esprit-de-corps was alive in the division. As the phone rang, MG Smith, wished he had only forced the staff and subordinate units do the battle field calculus to identify the details that he read about in that book about the divisions operations during the Cold War.*

Like Major General Smith and the 52nd ID and the epigraph from C.S. Forester's classic novel, *The General,* Armies and for this case divisions have struggled with the details of warfighting. Having been accustomed to fighting with nails, when faced with extracting a screw from a piece of wood without the proper tools the tasks becomes very difficult, like planning the details for large-scale combat operations in the 52nd ID scenario. For the last twenty-two years US Army divisions continue to struggle to properly conduct the same mission essential tasks.

According to the MCTP and its predecessor, Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) , trends analysis from 1995 and 2011 show that division headquarters continue to poorly plan aspects of the maneuver, intelligence, fires, logistics, and mission command warfighting functions.[1]

So why has the US Army and its division headquarters struggled with the same tasks over the last two decades? This paper first argues that since World War Two, the US Army has prioritized the education of its officer corps for command rather than vital staff positions at the divisional level. Second, training of the division headquarters is prioritized after the training of subordinate units, and not since the Return of Forces to Germany exercises (REFORGER) in the 1980s, the US Army has not properly trained division and above echelon units at realistic real-world training exercises. Doctrinally, the Army may require prescriptive doctrine like the 1976 "how to fight manuals" to fully relearn the details of how to fight large-scale combat operations. Finally, by looking at the current serving division Commanding Generals, the US Army focuses on training its leaders for battalion and brigade operations, instead of large-scale combat operations at the division level. Combined, these effects will hinder the US Army's ability to conduct the paradigm shift from the last seventeen years of counter-insurgency operations to a force capable of conducting large-scale combat operations.

To validate the claim that since World War Two, the US Army has prioritized command over staff education the author conducts qualitative analysis of education process from World War One to 1947, and 1947 to present. Using primary and secondary sources, the author will show that the US Army prior to 1947, focused their education on both commanders and staff for service at the division and above levels. Since 1947, the author display evidence that the US Army has prepared officers to command echelons at the brigade and below, but has lacked in

[1] Michael S. Tucker and Jason P. Conroy, "Maintaining the Combat Edge," *Military Review XCI May-June 2011* (May 2011): 8-16, accessed September 12, 2017, http://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20110630_art005.pdf. Epigraph from C.S. Forester, *The General* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1993), 196.

providing the requisite training for staff officers at the division and above levels. The changes in the education of the US Army officer corps since 1947 is a major contributing factor to why the divisions continue to make the same mistakes in mission essential tasks over the last four decades.

In section two, the author shows evidence for how the training of US Army divisions has failed to prepare divisions staffs to successfully accomplish the tasks required to fight and win against a peer and near-peer threat today. By comparing the training programs of US Army divisions prior-to and during World War Two and the large-scale REFORGER training exercises in the 1980's, with the training programs of the divisions over the last twenty years it will be apparent that our current training strategies for divisions is lacking.

The third section provides an overview of the differences between the prescriptive 1976 "how to fight" doctrine and the current 2017 FM 3-0, *Operations.* In both eras of doctrine, the US Army was refocusing from the small-unit battlefields to large-scale combat operations. The prescriptive nature of the 1976 doctrine was instrumental in conducting the paradigm shift the US Army required to fight and win in the large-scale combat operational environment.

The fourth section of the paper uses qualitative analysis of the eleven current Division Commanding Generals, to assess what educational, training, command, and staff positions they had in common which prepared them for division command. Additionally, it provides evidence that the US Army favors expertise at the battalion and brigade levels over experience at the division and above headquarters. This analysis highlights why it is difficult to enhance the educational gaps in division staff officers by mentorship and leadership from senior commanders and staff at the division level.

In the final section of this paper, the author will provide recommendations for how the US Army can better educate, train, change doctrine, and enhance the leadership of its divisions so that they do not make the same mistakes from the last two decades during the next twenty years. Comparison of historical trends with that of the current training standards will highlight some of

the areas the US can adjust with respect to educational, training, and key developmental assignments of future senior leaders to better improve the division's ability to fight and win on the battlefields of the future without making same the mistakes that we have failed to learn since 1995.

## Section 1: Education

> I was going there [Staff College] not only to learn staff duties, but to fit myself for the higher command of troops. All in all, there was no more important phase of a professional soldier's career except command in battle. If I failed here I would have to show extraordinary qualities of leadership and intelligence to re-establish my military reputation; but I would be unlikely to get opportunities to show any such thing, for the Pavers would not post me back to regimental duty; they simply give me inferior staff jobs well away from the battlefield.
>
> —John Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay*

The Army has struggled with significant educational issues at the division level for years. Since the end of World War Two, the Army education system has not adequately prepared its officer corps to serve as division staff officers and commanders. Section One of this paper provides a qualitative analysis of the difference between the education programs for officers at the division level prior to 1947 and the education program since 1947.

The body of section one gives an overview of the US Army's professional military education system prior to 1947. During this period, the US Army focused on training officers to be effective commanders and staff officers of large unit formations (corps and division) by attending the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The two-year education adequately prepared officers to serve as both commanders and staff officers at the division level. Officers educated at Fort Leavenworth during the inter-war period, successfully served in senior level positions in World War Two.[2]

[2] Peter J. Schifferle, *America's School for War: Fort Leavenworth, Officer Education, and Victory in World War II, (*Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 6-7. This provides the evolution of US

The second portion of this section will provide an overview of the US Army's professional military education system since 1947. The current system has been modified to prepare officers to serve as commanders instead of general staff officers. Changes to the CGSC syllabus have resulted in an under-educated officer corps that is not prepared to lead at the divisional level. Second, the elimination of the Combined Arms Service Staff School (CAS3) from the Army's professional military education system has shaped a generation of leaders unprepared to serve on a division staff. The School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) provides a general staff education that prepares field grade officers to serve and lead on a divisional staff.

Section one concludes by restating why the officer education system prior to 1947 better prepared our officer corps for service at the division level. Additionally, it highlights that education is a major factor in the continuous negative performance trend at the division level since 1995.

## Education Prior to 1947

Following the adoption of the French staff system at the beginning of World War One and instrumental lessons learned on the conduct of large unit formations during the war, the Army revamped its officer education program to better prepare its officers for future service.[3] When the Command and General Staff School began classes at Fort Leavenworth, it had three main goals for its students.[4] First, the students would become experts in problem solving skills. Second,

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Army Officer education and doctrine from WWI to WWII. It provides an understanding of education and experience for the Commanders and Staff of large units during WWII. Epigraph quote is from John Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay: A Personal Narrative* (London, England: Michael Joseph LTD, 1961), 83.

[3] Schifferle, 6-7.

[4] Schifferle, 63.

students would master the principals and techniques required to employ large unit formations in combat. Lastly, according to Dr. Peter Schifferle in his book, *America's School for War,* students would have "the confidence that they could manage these large-formation command and staff tasks that had so greatly challenged officers in the AEF."[5]

The CGSC was the vital link in gaining the lessons learned from World War One and preparing the US Army for future conflicts. The school at Fort Leavenworth was the only school in the inter-war period that prepared the Army for the necessary skills required to win in World War Two, combined arms warfare. Combined arms warfare being the integration of infantry, armor, artillery, and airpower into integrated operations that was controlled by staffs and lead commanders to achieve immediate tactical objectives. According to Dr. Schifferle, the Command and General Staff School was focused on the division and corps operations from lessons learned in World War One. Which made the Fort Leavenworth school the only school in the army that dealt with general staff procedures for large unit formations, the division and corps.[6]

In their course of instruction, CGSC students were taught that to perform effectively on a general staff, it was required to be as knowledgeable as the general officers. On the other hand, as future general officers, the students were told they need to become experts at general staff work so they could teach and mentor less qualified subordinates.[7] As Dr. Schifferle stated, many "graduates become commanding generals and found themselves teaching undereducated junior officers to be general staff officers or Chiefs of Staff at the division level."[8] This counter balance

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[5] Schifferle, 190.

[6] Schifferle, 7.

[7] Schifferle, 191. The counterargument to Dr. Schifferle's work can be found in Jörg Muth, *Command Culture: Officer Education in the U.S. Army and the German Armed Forces, 1901-1940, and the Consequences for World War II* (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Press, 2011), 4-5. Muth argues that Army, and specifically the CGSC faculty "portray there teaching as excellent, yet the end product remained mediocre" for the Officers that served during World War Two.

[8] Schifferle, 8. Jörg Muth states that all division commanders and the majority of G-3 operations officers of higher staffs of World War Two attended the Leavenworth course in the 1920's. Muth, 7.

of expertise that the Leavenworth graduates brought to the management of army divisions in World War Two, was instrumental for the effective command and staff functioning of divisions during World War Two.[9]

## Present day Education

The current CGSC Catalog states the mission of the college is to educate and train leaders for the current Army Operating Concept in the joint governmental, service, and multinational environment, and also to advance the art and science of the of the profession of arms.[10] The CGSC of today focuses on educating select field grade officers to become adaptive leaders who are nested in the professional ethic and can form teams and work in any operating environment that they may be asked to serve.[11] The new course of study is based on a wide range of topics "including ethics, civil-military relations, joint forces, and contemporary operating environments."[12] To prepare future leaders for the operations discussed in the 2017 FM 3-0, *Operations*, CGSC must focus its curriculum on educating officers to serve on division and corps level staffs and the art and science of maneuvering large formations.

Significant changes have occurred at the CGSC since World War Two to assist in the preparation of leaders for large-scale combat operations. The limited course offerings and narrow-minded thinking that the school offered during the 1950's and early 1960's was

[9] Schifferle, 6. Jörg Muth attributes the Allies success in World War Two to the technological superiority and economic strength versus leadership and command capabilities. Muth, 5.

[10] US Department of the Army, Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Circular 350-1, *US Army Command and General Staff College Catalog – Academic Year 2015-2016* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 2016), 1-1, accessed December 01, 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/cace/350-1_CGSCCatalog.pdf.

[11] James P. Kane Jr., "The Broken Machine: The US Army Division in the Age of Brigade Modularity," School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph, May 25, 2017, 34, accessed November 1, 2017, http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll3/id/3640/rec/5.

[12] Kane, 33-34.

transitioned following the defeat of US Army in Vietnam.[13] During the 1970's, the US Army and the CSGC underwent a doctrinal revolution to prepare for the anticipated large-scale combat operations in the field of central Europe. Two of the major changes that occurred in the school were the development of the CAS3 and the SAMS.

In April 1981, the US Army began its first course of the CAS3 at Fort Leavenworth.[14] The course, which originated from the Review of Education and Training of Officers (RETO) study of 1977 and 1978, was developed with the intent of producing skilled staff officers that they would need to defeat a numerically superior communist forces the Army was preparing to fight following the defeat of Vietnam.[15] Operating in a fiscally constrained environment, the Army hypothesized that better trained and educated officers could mitigate the impact of the resourced constrained environment.

The RETO study identified that that the majority of staff officers in the Army divisions and corps of the day were filled primarily with field grade officers, specifically majors. It proposed that the Army should develop an additional training program with the primary mission of training all majors, both active component and reserve component, for service as staff officers of the field Army.[16]

In addition to the RETO studies, senior leaders within the Army also found that staff officers serving at the division and corps level were lacking fundamental skills required to serve successfully at the respective echelons of command. General Don Starry, the Training and Doctrine Commanding General, developed a vision of what he expected from the graduate of the

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[13] Boyd L. Dastrup, *The US Army Command and General Staff College: A Centennial History* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1982),127.

[14] Ralph Ekwall and Roland D. Griffith, *Constructing a Cube: A History of the Combined Arms Service Staff School* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1994), 1-8, accessed October 31, 2017, http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p4013coll4/id/512.

[15] Ekwall and Griffith, 1-1.

[16] Ekwall and Griffith, 1-1.

CAS3. His vision was founded on the principle that students should be educated on "what staffs are, what staffs do, and how staffs do their work." He proposed that students should learn about historical staff structures, joints staff organizations, and the current staff system. To understand how staffs operate, he suggested students receive a separate course of instruction on how Army units are commanded and controlled, how command posts are organized and operated, how to manage army units, and how to conduct staff estimates and the methods of analysis. Finally, to prepare them for doing staff work, he envisioned instruction to include the development and issuance of operations orders and directives, development of training programs in the Airland Battle doctrine of the period. His overarching guidance was that students should learn by doing in small staff groups to practice the realities they would face in the field army. Concluding that the intent of the education was to produce course graduates that are able to "aggregate, analyze, conceptualize, and summarize" and be good staff officers.[17]

Based on the RETO recommendations and feedback from general officers, including General Starry, the Chief of Staff of the Army approved CAS3 with caveats. General Edward Meyer decided that all captains in the Army would attend the course, instead of the previous recommendation that only officers not selected for CGSC attend. General Meyer's intent was to build a first-rate program that didn't promote a loser mentality among the officer corps, whereby making attendance mandatory for all officers.[18] Since the CSA decided that all officers would attend the course, the new target group for the course became captains with seven to nine years of service who would attend the course in a temporary duty status.[19] This enabled all officers to remain competitive for attendance to the CGSC if selected during their major promotion board, and prepared captains for service as staff officers prior to being promoted to the rank of major.

[17] Ekwall and Griffith, 1-6 – 1-7.

[18] Ekwall and Griffith, 1-6.

[19] Ekwall and Griffith, 6-3.

CAS3 was conducted at Fort Leavenworth in two phases. Phase one consisted of a non-resident education consisting of one hundred and forty hours. This phase provided officers with the foundational knowledge required to complete phase two of the course. The block of instruction consisted of courses on: organization of the Field Army; staff skills; Soviet equipment, organization, and operations; combined arms operations; and sustainment operations. Phase two was the nine-week temporary duty resident course at Fort Leavenworth. This block of instruction was the culmination event that enabled the students to practice all of the courses they had conducted during phase one. Block two consisted of a Low Intensity Conflict Exercise, Staff Technique Exercise, training management, a combat preparation exercised focused on logistics.[20]

According to a 1990 study of both graduates and supervisors, the course was achieving the goals originally intended. The survey concluded that the graduates increased their knowledge of the decision-making process and ability to coordinate staff actions, and they could produce better briefings and better correspondence than non-graduates.[21]

From 1981 until the school closed, the annual number of classes and course length was modified based on operational requirements and capacity, but over the schools twenty-three year history it graduated 64,745 students.[22] The school was deactivated in 2004, based on recommendations from an army study in 1997 and 2001 Army Training and Leadership Development Panel, that recommend all mid-level officers would attend the resident course of CGSC as a part of the Army's Intermediate Level Education. The Army believed modifications to the Officer Education System portions of CAS3 could be taught at the branch specifics

[20] Ekwall and Griffith, 1-2 – 1-4.

[21] Ekwall and Griffith, 6-1.

[22] Ethan Rafuse, *On the Frontier – Preparing Leaders…Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: CGSC, 1981-2006* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 2006) 22.

advanced courses all officers attended, and the remainder of the CAS3 curriculum would be as a part of the CGSC course at Fort Leavenworth.[23]

By the mid 1970's, the US Army was adapting its organization for the technological advancement that had taken place throughout the world while the US remained focused on Vietnam, and the large-scale operations that were required to deter the Soviets on the plains of Europe. The 1973 Arab-Israeli War had proven to senior leaders in the Army that the war they had fought in the late 1960's and early 1970's was not the type of warfare they needed to prepare for in Europe. The tempo, standoff, and tactics of the communist threat they were preparing to face on the European continent had evolved over the last twenty years. With the development of the 1976 FM 100-5, *Operations* and the results of the RETO study, senior leadership of the US Army recognized that the Army would have to adapt for large-scale warfare against their communist foes. Additionally, as a part of the post-Vietnam reforms many critics of the Army recognized that the Army had become too heavily reliant on senior leaders that were weapons managers and not warfighters.[24] This change in warfare required the Army to not only improve doctrine, but also educational practices to better educate Officers for the complexities of war for generations to come.

One of the members of the RETO Study, Colonel Huba Wass de Czege, concurrently conducted a US Army War College study entitled, "Army Staff College Level Training Study." In his study, COL Wass de Czege's thesis was that the Army would have to revamp its educational process for field grade leaders to be able to deal with the complexities of warfare that were rapidly growing since the end of the Vietnam War. Wass De Czege, outlined the changes in warfare from World War Two to the early 1980's. The study found that the officer education

[23] Rafuse, 22.

[24] Michael Gordon and Bernard Traylor, *The General's War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the* Gulf (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company,1995), 123.

program of the US Army was much smaller to many of the other top tiered militaries in the world. Countries such as Israel, Canada, Britain, and Germany all required their Officers to attend formal military education programs that were much longer in length compared to their American counterparts. His analysis further pointed that during World War Two every division and corps had been commanded by Officers that had attended the two-year Fort Leavenworth course prior to the start of the war. In 1982, the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) was created to educate select officers in division and corps large unit operations.[25]

Based on his study and the results of the RETO study, COL Wass de Czege proposed to a select number of general officers from the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) that the second-year educational program be developed to educate a select number of graduates from the CGSC. The program would provide these select officers with the knowledge and skills to plan and conduct large scale military operations at the division and corps levels balanced with the theoretical, doctrinal, and historical perspectives to conduct operational art. The proposed school balanced the requirement given by general officer requirements to produce officers that were both "junior Henry Kissinger's" and tacticians.[26] Wass de Czege also envisioned an opportunity to develop leaders that would enhance the competence of the Army, by sending these specially educated officers back into the tactical and operational Army with the ability to teach fellow staff officers, resulting in organizations that were more proficient in large scale military operations and operational art and combat multipliers for Division and Corps commanders they would work for.[27]

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[25] Kevin C.M. Benson, *School of Advanced Military Studies Commemorative History 1984-2009* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 2009), 1-4, accessed November 11, 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/cgsc/Events/SAMS25th/SAMS25YearsHistory.pdf.

[26] Kevin C.M. Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi: The School of Advanced Military Studies and the Introduction of Operational Art into U.S. Army Doctrine 1983-1994" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2010), 15.

[27] Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi," 16.

In 1982, the SAMS course was established at Fort Leavenworth. COL Wass de Czege was chosen to implement his recommended plan and vision to a fully functional school and become its first Director. The first class began in June 1983.[28]

Since the school's inception, its graduates have played a critical role in every major military operation since Operation Just Cause in 1989.[29] However, it was not until the 1991 war in the Persian Gulf, that SAMS and its graduates would be relied upon to develop campaign plans for operations at the division echelon and above. In General H. Norman Schwarzkopf's autobiography, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, he described the frustration he and has planning staff were experiencing as they tried to develop an offensive ground campaign to defeat an entrenched Iraqi army. He stated that he and his staff were completely stumped, and unable to stretch the forces he had available into a winning campaign. He continued by stating that is when he reached out to the Department of the Army to request a fresh team of planners from SAMS to develop the ground campaign.[30]

In present day, the school annually produces around one hundred and forty graduates from all branches of the US military, allies, and interagency partners that are adaptive and agile leaders that can critically and creatively think and produce options for strategic and operational problems. Additionally, its graduates help senior leaders understand the complex operational environments and assist the commander in the visualization and description of those problems. Graduates are nested in the schools four pillars of operational theory, doctrine, history, and experience. They can clearly communicate orally, graphically, and in writing to various audiences. Finally, graduates are expected to be good team mates and leaders that have the

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[28] Benson, *School of Advanced Military Studies*, 1.

[29] Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi," 1. The author of this monograph could not find evidence that SAMS Graduates participated in Operation Restore Hope in Somalia from December 1992 until May 1993.

[30] H. Norman Schwarzkopf with Peter Petre, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 354.

courage to lead in organizations from above, beside and below. Graduates fill critical battle staff billets in Army divisions, corps, and Army Service Component Commands.[31] SAMS provides the educational bridge from the CGSC prior to World War Two to today's operational environment, by producing general staff officers and leaders that are prepared to fight and win in the large-scale combat operational environment facing our Army and nation today.

Another significant change in the curriculum and structure of CGSC occurred at the turn of the 21st century. A 1987 study and the 2001 Army Training and Leadership Development Panel recommended that all mid-level officers in the Army receive CGSC educations. Based on those recommendations, the Chief of Staff of the Army directed a formal change to Intermediate Level Education (ILE) at the CGSC. With the ILE, the army would divorce its standard practice of sending the top fifty percentile of a given year group and instead have all majors attend the ninety-day common core course, either in residency at Fort Leavenworth or at the newly established satellite campuses. The common core course "provided all officers regardless of branch, career field, or functional area with a standard educational experience" for leadership position in the joint, multinational, and interagency organizations. The course was comprised of four blocks of instruction. Critical reasoning and leadership and the fundamentals of three levels of war: tactical, operational, and strategic.[32]

Following the completion of the common core, all functional area officers and career fields other than the operations career field would attend follow-on courses and educational opportunities developed by their specific branch or functional area. Officers of the operations career field would remain at Fort Leavenworth in a resident status for the seven-month Advanced Operations Warfighting Course (AOWC). AOWC focused on the warfighting skills for the

[31] "School of Advanced Military Studies," US Army Combined Arms Center, accessed February 01, 2018, http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/cgsc/sams.

[32] Rafuse, 22-23.

officers to be successful commanders at the battalion and brigade levels, and the requisite skills to serve as staff officers at the division and above levels.[33] Because AOWC was not a part of the common core curriculum, there was an educational block for all officers that attend the satellite course, they were not receiving the education to help them serve as general staff officers in the organizations that will command and control the large-scale combat operations as visualized in FM 3-0, *Operations.*

In 2012, the Army announced another monumental shift to improve the officer ILE. Due to the Global War on Terrorism, ILE attendance was affected by operational tempo hindering some major's ability to attend ILE during the prescribed timeframes, creating a backlog in ILE. The changes were seen as the answer to ensure that one-hundred percent of all majors would have the opportunity to attend ILE prior to their key developmental positions. The changes optimized the ILE process, the top fiftieth percentile of majors by year group would again attend the resident ILE course at Fort Leavenworth. Thus, returning to standards prior to the changes implemented in 2002. The selection process would be a merit based board process conducted in conjunction with the major selection board. For the officers not selected to attend the resident course at Fort Leavenworth, they would be selected to either attend a fourteen-week satellite course or distributed on-line version of the core course.[34]

In conclusion, mid-level officer training at the Command and General Staff college prior to and during World War Two successfully prepared an expanding Army to conduct large-scale combat operations across the globe. Since World War Two the Army has developed CAS3 and SAMS courses that successfully prepared officers for the rigors of general staff work and command at the brigade and battalion levels. With the deletion of the CAS3 course, the Army

[33] Rafuse, 24.

[34] Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, "Army Announces Optimization of Intermediate Level Education," September 24, 2012, accessed on February 07, 2018, https://www.army.mil/article/87406/army_announces_optimization_of_intermediate_level_education.

has failed to modify CGSC and advanced course education to adequately prepare officers to be valued general staff officers at the division and corps level. SAMS is the only remaining course that adequately prepares officers for the rigor of large-scale combat operations in accordance with the comparable educational opportunities that officers received prior to World War Two.

## Section 2: Training

According to the 2017 Army FM 3-0, *Operations*, the Army has stated that "large-scale combat operations present the greatest challenge to Army forces." Additionally, stating that "large-scale combat operations have been more chaotic, intense, lethal, brutal, and destructive than those [operations] the Army has experienced in several decades." FM 3-0 further states that the US Army's experiences in the last two decades in Iraq and Afghanistan are not the most dangerous conflicts that Army will face in the future. This section provides an overview and comparison of the how the US Army prepared divisions to conduct large-scale combat operations in World War Two and the 1980's to the current training strategies for today's US Army divisions. The section begins with the overview of how US Army divisions trained prior to World War Two and the adjustments made to the training program through the remainder of the war. Next, it analyzes of the current training strategies for US Army divisions.[35]

### World War Two Division Training

Army Ground Forces Command was the given the monumental task of preparing US Army divisions for large-scale combat operations from March 1942 through 1944. Army Ground Forces mission was to prepare large formations to conduct combined arms operations through field training, rather than school or replacement training, with a special emphasis on the

[35] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 1-1 - 1-2.

divisional formation.[36] The initial training strategy for a division began with the arrival of the Division Commander and his staff at thirty-seven days prior to activation (D-37). From D-37 until D+15, the new division received its training cadre, personnel, and equipment. This section will focus on the fifty-two-week training cycle that certified divisions for deployment that begin on D+15. The fifty-two-week certification program began with seventeen weeks of basic and individual training, followed by thirteen weeks of unit training, and ended with fourteen weeks of combined arms training from the regiment to division level. The remaining eight weeks of training were allocated for review, air, and mechanized training. [37] The focus of this section is the training of the division headquarters for large-scale combat operations and the remainder of this section focuses on the fourteen weeks of combined arms training for regiments and division headquarters.

The purpose of the combined arms training program was "to wield several units of a division into a division team, capable of acting as a concerted whole and maintaining itself under any and all battle conditions." [38] This was conducted through a series of three exercises. First, regimental combat team exercises which culminated in field maneuvers. Second, division exercises and maneuvers. Lastly, command post exercises executed by the regimental combat teams and division. The exercises were directed and overseen by the next higher commander, in this case the division commander oversees the regimental combat teams exercise, and corps commanders directed the division exercises. These exercises comprised of both day and night operations, and in wooded and open terrain to prepare the division to serve in a variety of

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[36] Robert R. Palmer, Bell I. Wiley, and William R. Keast, *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops: The Army Ground Forces, United States Army in World War II* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1948), VII.

[37] Robert R. Palmer, Bell I. Wiley, and William R. Keast, "Chart 1: Building an Infantry Triangular Division (Plan of 17 January 1942), *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops: The Army Ground Forces, United States Army in World War II* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1948), 435.

[38] Palmer, Wiley, and Keast, *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops*, 447.

locations and environments. Additionally, they provided divisions with the opportunity to command subordinate and support units.[39]

In 1943 Army Ground Forces modified the divisional training program by converting the California-Arizona Maneuver Area into a model Theater of Operations. The California-Arizona Maneuver Area enabled divisions to devote an additional thirteen weeks to post graduate training in conditions that closely replicated the combat conditions of World War Two theaters.[40] Additionally, the California-Arizona Maneuver Area, along with the Louisiana and North Carolina maneuvers that occurred prior to the war, allowed divisions to practice large-scale combat operations as part of larger formations, corps and armies.[41]

The training plan developed by Army Ground Forces from 1942 through 1994, combined with the realistic training maneuvers in the California-Arizona Maneuver Area, and Louisiana and North Carolina maneuvers were instrumental in the division commander and staff's ability to conduct large-scale combat operations during World War Two. As stated in James Wheelers book, *The Big Red One: America's Legendary 1st Infantry Division from World War 1 to Desert Storm,* "the experiences by senior officers of commanding large units in the field exercises was invaluable for the future of the US Army." It also gave "General Marshall the means to assess senior leadership prior to sending a unit to war."[42]

## Division Training in the 1970's and 1980's

As the Army returned from the rice paddies of Vietnam in the early 1970s, the Army again transitioned to focusing on the large-scale combat operations in Europe. As discussed in

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[39] Palmer, Wiley, and Keast, *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops*, 447.

[40] Palmer, Wiley, and Keast, *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops*, 450.

[41] James Wheeler, *The Big Red One: America's Legendary 1st Infantry Division from World War 1 to Desert Storm* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 132.

[42] Wheeler, *The Big Red One*, 135-136.

section one, the Army underwent a doctrinal and education transition that also had a major effect of how it trained its divisions for large-scale combat. The pinnacle training and rehearsal exercise for US Army divisions was the massive annual REFORGER exercises. At the time, the General Defense Plan (GDP) of Europe required the US Army to reinforce the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with ten divisions in ten days. This reinforcement was in addition to the 200,000 US Army Soldiers already assigned to the two corps, four heavy divisions, three separate brigades, and two armored cavalry regiments already stationed in the Europe.[43]

In his book, *The 1st Infantry Division and the US Army Transformed,* Gregory Fontenot provides a rich description of how important the REFORGER exercises were with respect to large-scale realistic training and rehearsal experience for US Army Divisions. For twenty-four years REFORGER enabled divisions to rehearse plans beginning with port through rear-area security operations. Maneuvers in Europe provided platoons through corps relevant and realistic experience in command and control.[44] In addition, REFORGER taught divisions the "battlefield calculus" required to win against a superior strength Soviet Union.[45] The experience of the annual exercises provided a venue for divisions to learn valuable lessons in logistics, maintenance, and coordination required to deploy large formations and maneuvers. [46]

With the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the Army stopped the annual REFORGER exercises after twenty-four years. While the need for the exercises was critical in the Army's ability to train for large-scale combat operations at the division level, the void would be replaced with simulated training environments through the development of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP).

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[43] John Sloan Brown, *Kevlar Legions: The Transformation of the U.S. Army, 1989-2005* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2011), 35-37.

[44] Gregory Fontenot, *The 1st Infantry Division and the US Army Transformed: Road to Victory in Desert Storm 1970-1991* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2017), 13-15.

[45] Fontenot, 45.

[46] Fontenot, 13-15.

## Modern Division Training

In his initial message to the Army, General Mark Milley the 39th Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) stated that "readiness is #1, and there is no other #1" priority. He continued by stating that the Army and the Nation's most valuable asset is our Soldiers and that we must never put them in combat "untrained, poorly led, undermanned, or with less than best equipment." [47] To echo the CSA's priorities General Robert Abrams, the US Forces Command (FORSCOM) Commanding General, stated that readiness supports the CSA's requirement to win decisively against near-peer threats in large-scale combat operations. Further stating that "it is no longer good enough to focus solely on the next assigned unit mission. We have to be "Ready Now"…..and be prepared to Fight and Win our Nation's wars when called upon.[48]

In the *FORSCOM Command Training Guidance (CTG) – Fiscal Year 2018,* General Abrams identifies three locations that divisions and subordinate units must train to build and maintain proficiency to be "Ready Now" to win our nations wars. First, at the Combat Training Centers and Warfighter Exercise Programs. He states that the programs are the cornerstone to the training strategy to win against a near-peer hybrid enemy. Second, is the Home Station Training Operational Environment. The Home Station Training Operational Environment must be designed to replicate as best as the possible the threats that the Army can expect to fight at Combat Training Centers, Warfighter Exercises, and in combat. Third, because of the Army's operational tempo, division and subordinate units must leverage the Joint Exercise Program and Overseas Deployments for Training events when assigned to Army Service Component

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[47] Mark A. Milley, "39th Chief of Staff of the Army Initial Message to the Army," Army Training Network, accessed October 31, 2017, https://atn.army.mil/dsp_template.aspx?dpID=617.

[48] Robert B. Abrams, "FORSCOM Command Training Guidance (CTG) – Fiscal Year 2018," Army Training Network, March 24, 2017, accessed October 31, 2017, https://atn.army.mil/dsp_template.aspx?dpID=617.

Commands. The Joint Exercise Program and Overseas Deployments for Training events must be quality developed exercises that sustain readiness of deployed units. Lastly, he states the number one constrained resource for commanders at all levels, company through division, is the lack available time to conduct training. To maintain the "Ready Now" state that he directs, units at the division and below level must master the fundamentals through multiple repetitions and iterations of training. Leaders and Soldiers that master the fundamentals will learn the muscle memory of the tasks they are required to perform.[49]

By the early 1980's, the US Army, like today, faced a near-peer or peer competitor that was believed to be roughly equal or greater then in strength, and roughly had parity with US military technology. Home station training had been adversely affected by space limitations and battlefield realism. Additionally, the ample land that had helped develop the cohesive divisions of World War Two no longer existed. The land that once enabled a division of twenty thousand Soldiers was no longer able to support brigade and battalion level exercises of six hundred to a couple thousands of Soldiers because of the restrictions emplaced by public and private groups concerned with aviation safety, communications regulations, and protection of the environment.[50] To mitigate the shortage in land the US Army developed the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, CA, which became operational in 1984. The mission of the NTC is to "conduct tough, realistic, Unified Land Operations with our Unified Action Partners to prepare Brigade Combat Teams for combat."[51] Since US Army brigade combat teams became modularized the NTC and the other Combat Training Center locations have become the certification training for

[49] Abrams, 1-8.

[50] Anne W. Chapman, TRADOC Historical Monograph Series: *The Origins and Development of the National Training Center 1976-1984* (Fort Monroe, VA: US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1992), 5-6.

[51] "NTC Mission," US Army National Training Center, accessed November 10, 2017, http://www.irwin.army.mil/Pages/Units/NTC/NTC.html.

brigade combat teams on an annual basis. Unlike World War Two, division headquarters no longer conduct realistic training maneuvering subordinate BCTs in live real-world war games.

To enhance the proficiency of division and corps level staffs the US Army developed the Battle Command Training Program in 1987 at Fort Leavenworth, KS. BCTP was developed to improve battlefield command and control of combined arms operations in a combat environment. BCTP also provided division and corps level computer simulation training that replicated the live force-on-force training being conducted for brigade combat teams and below at the other Combat Training Centers. The training enables Senior Commanders and Staff "to develop current, relevant, campaign-quality, joint and expeditionary mission command instincts and skills." The command changed its name to the Mission Command Training Program in accordance with current Army doctrine, but remains the capstone combat training center.[52] In his 2017 School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph, "The Broken Machine: The US Army Division in the age of Brigade Modularity," MAJ James Kane stated that with no other general staff training program other than MCTP, the exercises developed mundane staff procedures instead of allowing division headquarters to rehearse large-scale combat operations.[53]

The current Army training strategy enables brigade level units to conduct Combat Training Center rotations every other year. Additionally, Army divisional headquarters conduct MCTP rotations once every two years. The current command length tours for Battalion through Division Commanders is currently two years, junior officer and enlisted Soldiers typically remain with a unit for three years, and field grade officers transition annually. This translates to a unit conducting a Combat Training Center rotation once during a command tour length, with officers and enlisted personnel from the staff and subordinate units continually transitioning during that

[52] "Mission Command Training Program: MCTP History," US Combined Arms Center, accessed November 10, 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/cact/mctp/MCTP%20History.pdf.

[53] Kane, 33.

two-year time frame. This is unlike the personnel in World War Two divisions that remained in their unit from activation of the unit through the established training regime and deployment. The wealth of experience in the World War Two units remained for the duration of large-scale combat operations.

## Section 3: Doctrine

Like the Army of today, the Army following the Vietnam War also went through a paradigm shift from the Army's experience in the rice-paddies of South-East Asia to preparing for large-scale combat operations in the fields of Europe against a near peer foe, the Soviet Union. It took Senior Leaders in the Army to identify the changes in education, training, and doctrine to fix the gaps in the experience of its senior leaders and help make the successful transition. This section will focus on the doctrinal shift that occurred with the 1976 FM 100-5, *Operations,* and compare it with the current foundational document the 2017 FM 3-0, *Operations.* The section will begin with an overview and description of how the Army developed the 1976 manual and the outcomes that came from that foundational document. Second, it will provide a brief overview of the shortfalls with the current FM 3-0, *Operations,* and describe the challenges the US Army will face from a doctrinal lens in the paradigm shift it is currently trying to overcome to fight and win in the large-scale combat environment anticipated in the future.

### 1976 FM 100-5, *Operations*

Following America's departure from Vietnam, the Army realized it required a doctrinal change to accommodate for the technological advances in equipment and weapons, lessons learned from the 1973 Arab Israeli War, and to reorient the Army from small-unit operations in Vietnam back to large-scale conventional operations in Europe. The task fell to the first commander of TRADOC, General William Depuy. Depuy's vision to reestablish confidence in

the services ability to deter Soviet aggression in Europe was nested in the lessons he learned from the 1973 war. The war proved to him that modern weaponry of that war was more lethal and allowed for greater standoff than any war before. To accommodate for those changes in warfare, Depuy believed the Army would again have to return to combined arms warfare with improved tactical concepts that were trained at the individual and unit level to be successful. Additionally, it would require support from other services and multinational partners, specifically the Air Force, NATO, and Germany, to be successful.[54]

Depuy's vision was realized in the 1976 *Operations* manual that was signed and released on July 1st, 1976. The manual again returned to the title of previous editions to symbolize that as a capstone document, it its audience was the entire Army, not just deployed forces aboard. The camouflaged manual in a three ring binder was designed to prove to the reader that the document was for use in the field. Within its pages, it provided graphs, colorful maps, vignettes, and charts in the essence of earlier nineteenth century manuals to prove to its readers the doctrine was important and essential. The manual clearly articulated that the intent of the new doctrine was to win the land battle, and was intended to prepare the Army to do such by providing the base knowledge for education and training at service schools and across the Army. Additionally, the manual was intended to educate the leaders and staffs of the divisional level and below, who would be required to win the first battle against a superior force, a key lesson from the 1973 war. For the first time in the life span of the Field Service Regulations and 100-5 series, the 1976 version stressed the importance of the defense over the offense, which is a major departure from all previous versions. This concept was in adherence to understanding of Soviet doctrine the Army anticipated facing in Europe, where as the Soviets would conduct probing attacking's to

[54] Walter E. Kretchik, *U.S. Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2011), 193-197.

locate weaknesses in NATO defenses, create deep penetrations at those decisive points, and strike deep into the rear of NATO forces.[55]

While the 1976 capstone doctrine was intended to be a doctrinal revolution, it met harsh resistance from the Army. Many of the concepts in the manual were untested prior to publication. The proposed paradigm shift in the importance of the defense over the offense, and equipment and technology over the Soldier both met extreme resistance from the force. Through the remainder of the 1970s and early 1980s the Army realized that the capstone manual must be replaced.[56]

While the foundational document was replaced in the early 1980s with a version in 1982 and 1986 focused on the broader threats of Middle East, North Korea, and Europe. The 1976 version did have the impact that Depuy was trying to create. The later versions of FM 100-5 did not reject the 1976 version, but built on its concepts to provide operational depth and a balanced focus on offense and defense operations. Depuy had accomplished what he intended with the 1976 manual, he forced the educational, training, and doctrinal shifts to prepare an Army to conduct large-scale combat operations.[57]

## 2017 FM 3-0, *Operations*

In the Forward of the 2017 edition, Lieutenant General Michael Lundy, the Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth stated that "we must be ready to win with the forces we have, and having the right doctrine is a critical part of that readiness." He continued by stating that the 2017 *Operations* manual provides the doctrinal approach for large units, brigades through theater armies, to address the challenges of operational environment,

[55] Kretchik, 197-201.

[56] Kretchik, 200-202.

[57] Fontenot, 45-46.

prevent conflict, and win during large-scale combat operations. While the manual is not specific on threats the Army may face, it does have similarities of the 1982 and 1986 Airland Battle doctrine. Focusing on the major threats of the day, Russia, the Middle East, and North Korea.[58]

While the new doctrine is a step in the right direction and will assist the US Army in its paradigm shift from combat of the last twenty years to large-scale combat operations that the Army anticipates fighting in the future, it will have difficulties that the doctrine of the 1970s and 1980s did not have. As previously described with the 1976 manual, while there were many shortcomings with the doctrine in general, its prescriptive nature focused the Army on becoming an expert at not only fighting with the Army that it had, but against the Soviet Army that it anticipated fighting. The "how to fight" manuals of 1976 "stimulated productive debate about doctrine, how to fight, and how to train."[59] Additionally, in Fontenot's book he deduced that General Starry "believed that if commanders understood Soviet tactics and weapons as wells as they knew their own, they could solve the conundrum of how to fight outnumbered and win.[60] Unlike the current version of FM 3-0, the 1976 version provided the "battlefield calculus" expertise required to assist an inexperienced Army to conduct large-scale combat operations. Without the prescriptive doctrine to fill the gap between the Army of yesterday and the Army of tomorrow, the US Army will struggle to fully conduct the paradigm shift required to conduct large-scale combat operations and win in the near future.

[58] US Army, FM 3-0 (2017), Forward.

[59] Fontenot, 28.

[60] Fontenot, 45.

# Section 4: Experience

> I have developed almost an obsession as to the certainty with which you can judge a division, or any other larger unit, merely by knowing its commander intimately. Of course, we have had pounded into us all throughout school courses that the exact level of a commander's personality and ability is always reflected in his unit—but I did not realize, until opportunity came for comparisons on a rather large scale, how infallibly the commander and unit are almost one and the same.
>
> —General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Marshall and His Generals: U.S. Army Commanders (sic) in World War II*

The final section of this paper focuses on one of the most important elements of the Army's ability to successfully conduct large-scale combat operations, the Commander. As General of the Army Eisenhower stated, in the epigraph, the commander and the unit that he or she leads are inextricably linked.[61] The unit takes on the personality and abilities of the commander, for better or worse. This paper has discussed the changes in doctrine, training, and education that officers from World War Two to present have experienced, but what common themes or experiences do the current eleven division commanders in the US Army have that prepared them for division command? How much time have they spent getting ready for division command, and what has groomed them for leading an echelon that is vitally important to the Army's ability to conduct large-scale combat operations?

This section compares the current eleven division commanders serving in the US Army. It compares five categories: commissioning source, education, staff positions, command positions, and combat experience. The analysis highlights that while the current division commanders have been successful at all levels of command from the platoon to the brigade echelons, and have successfully completed key developmental staff jobs at the battalion and

[61] Stephen R. Taaffe, *Marshall and His Generals: U.S. Army Commanders in World War II* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2011) 11. The epigraph is quoted in Taaffe's book from the original source Dwight Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 253.

bridge levels, there is a significant decrease in experience at the division level prior to taking command of a US Army division. This appears to be a complete contradiction to the experiences and expertise expected of the division commanders that General George Marshall expected from his division commanders during World War Two. The commanders that lead the ninety divisions during the war were expected to be the most experienced and educated officers in the division. They were expected and relied upon to educate and train the less experienced officers in the organization.[62] Like the comparisons of education, training, and doctrine, the comparison between the General Officers from World War Two and today are important. The General Officers of World War Two conducted large-scale combat operations and won. Additionally, as the Army reorients towards large-scale combat operations, a lot can be learned from how the Army prepared its Division Commanders in World War Two.

Of the eleven division commanders, four were commissioned in 1986, one in 1987, five in 1988, and the youngest in 1990. The eldest of the cohort have thirty-one years of experience while the youngest has twenty-seven. Eight received commissions from the United States Military Academy (USMA), the remaining three were from the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. Six of the Commanders are infantry officers, while the remaining five are armor officers.[63]

Educationally, this cohort has similar experiences from initial officer training through their time at Fort Leavenworth. All officers attended either the Infantry or Armor Basic Courses upon commissioning based on their branch assignments. All officers attended the same advanced coursed based on branch assignment, expect for one infantry officer who attended the Armor

[62] Schifferle, 8.

[63] "General Officer Resumes," US Army General Officer Management Office (GOMO), accessed on February 15, 2018, https://www.gomo.army.mil/Ext/Portal/Positions/Positions.aspx?View=4. Data on the eleven Division Commanders was compiled by conducting an analysis of the resumes obtained from the 2-/1- Star Army Positions. Analysis for this report is only based on the current Division Commanders, and does not factor in previous commander's data for analysis.

Advanced Course. One officer attended both the Armor Advanced Course and the Field Artillery Advanced Course. All of the officers in this sample attended the resident CGSC course at Leavenworth and CAS3.[64] Only one of the officers attended SAMS upon his graduation from CSGC. While only one attended the SAMS, all Officers did attend graduate level programs. Seven have master's degrees from civilian universities, and the remaining officers received Masters of Military Arts and Sciences (MMAS) degrees from CGSC. Educationally, the officers are very similar up until Senior Service College (SSC) attendance. Three of the eleven, attended the Army War College and received additional master's degrees. Five attended Sister Service schools (Naval, Air, or National) and upon graduation received advanced degrees. Three attended the SSC equivalent fellowships at Duke University, Georgetown, and Harvard and were required to attend the Joint and Combined Warfighter School.[65] Zero officers in this sample have PhDs.

Combined with educational opportunities and experiences, two officers served as instructors at the USMA and the US Naval War College. Two were doctrine writers, one of which was a participant in Project Warrior and served as an Observer Controller at the NTC. These assignments are all are highly competitive and in some cases nomative. All but the USMA teaching experience enables Officers to build upon their previous educational assignments and become experts at Army doctrine for the time period they conduct the assignment.

[64] CAS3 is a Temporary Duty Assignment (TDY), and is not documented on the General Officer Management Office Resume format, but based on the Year Groups of these officers, the assumption is made that all Officers analyzed in this report were graduates.

[65] "The Joint and Combined Warfighting School," Joint Force Staff College, last modified March 17, 2015, accessed March 21, 2018, http://jfsc.ndu.edu/Academics/Joint-and-Combined-Warfighting-School-JCWS/. JCWS provides selected leaders in the grade of O-4 through O-6 with Joint Professional Military Education II (JMPE-II) credit for completing the ten week programs that prepares officers that are capable of creatively and effective planners at the operational level or war for joint and combined military forces. This course is requirement for all SSC Officers selected to attend Fellowships that do not provide JPME-II credit as a part of their programs.

For Field Grade Key Developmental (KD) assignments, eleven tours were conducted as Battalion Operations Officers and four tours as Battalion Executive Officers.[66] Additionally, seven tours were completed as Brigade Operations Officers and three tours as Brigade Executive Officers. The data for KD assignments is not abnormal, it highlights that Officers selected for battalion level command successfully completed tours at the battalion and brigade levels, with the vast majority of assignments as operations officers at both levels showing an expertise and experience in the low tactical level of war.

For experience at the division level, the data shows that only three officers had any time as primary staff officers on a division staff prior to selection for division command. Of the eleven Commanding Generals, only one served as a Division Operations Officer, one served as a Division Chief of Staff, and the sole SAMS graduate served as a Division Planner. A fourth Officer is the only Officer selected to serve at the corps level as a Chief of Staff. This equates to only twenty seven percent of the current Division Commanding Generals with significant experience at the division or corps level. Based on these statistics other than education, where are Officers selected for Division Command receiving their experience and knowledge base for leading such organizations?

Of the eleven officers, seventeen tours were conducted in close proximity to senior Army leaders as Aide-de-Camps, Executive Officers, Secretary of General Staff positions, or positions with three or four-star headquarters as members of the Commanders Initiative Group or Commanders Action Group. Ten of those seventeen tours were in positions of Aides-de-Camp for Major Generals, Lieutenant Generals, or Generals.[67]

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[66] For Battalion and Bridge Level KD assignments, the number of total tours has been analyzed. A tour for the purpose of this report is assignments in that position, not the individual person. A large portion of the officers sampled conducted multiple tours in the same position in different Battalions or Brigades.

[67] Of the ten Aide-de-Camp tours, multiple Officers served as Aides to different General Officers on multiple occasions.

Based on the information provided above in reference the amount of time that the current Division Commander's spent at division and corps levels staffs, versus the amount of time and tours conducted on the personal staffs of General Officers, it can be assumed that the latter assignments were monumental experiences for the development of Officers in their preparation for high level command in the US Army. With a lack of experience serving on division and corps staffs, close proximity to General Officers has filled the gap in education, training, and experience. While the experience prepared them to serve as General Officers, this report is unable to determine how these experiences prepared them to educate inexperienced Staff Officers, and how well they are or were prepared to teach and train large-scale combat operations at the division level.

All eleven officers commanded tactical battalions and brigades with combat experience in counter-insurgency environments (COIN) in both Iraq and or Afghanistan, except for two officers that commanded brigades in Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) at Fort Benning, GA. With respect to combat experience, it is important to note that in addition to their COIN experiences since September 11, 2001, five of the eleven officers had experiences at the low tactical level in troops or companies during the 1991 Gulf War, and one officer commanded a Battalion during the invasion of Iraq in 2003. While the Gulf War and Iraq invasion are the most recent examples of large-scale combat operations, both operations were conducted with a vast amount of time to prepare for the operations, and are hard to compare to the operations the Army experienced during World War Two and Korea.

Based on this analysis, the current trend in the Army to prepare officers for Division level command is required professional military education gates, expertise at battalion and brigade levels, and experience serving in at least one assignment in close proximity to a General Officer. Expertise at the division and corps levels as a Staff Officer is not highly valued for promotion to General Officer and selection to serve as a Division Commander. To win at large-scale combat operations, expertise and experience by the Division Commander is critical to the success of the

organization. His or her ability to question facts, assumptions, opportunities, and risks is vital to drive his or her staff to build and develop options that enable to organization to win.

## Section 5: Recommendations/Conclusion

For the US Army to conduct large-scale combat operations and win, it is important for the Army to continue the paradigm shift from small unit operations and take the key lessons from past to evolve the Army. The lessons from the history of the Army's Officer Education System, training, doctrine, and leadership experience will enable the US Army to successfully complete the paradigm shift they are seeking, and win on the battlefields of the future.

Modifying the current Officer Education System to refocus mid-grade leaders on the expertise of conducting large-scale combat operations and the "battlefield calculus" required to win will pay dividends for the US Army in near and long term. Not only will this refocus, enable officers to be effective Staff Officers at the division and above echelons, but it will also enable them to provide sound staff work that today's Division Commanders require as the Army continues its evolution from small unit combat operations to large-scale combat operations.

Conducting large-scale maneuvers for the division like the exercises conducted by divisions prior to deployment during World War Two and the REFORGER exercises of the 1970s and 1980s will enhance the experience of its officer corps and the Army institution as a whole. The modification of the Officer Education System, coupled with enhancements to the US Army's training methodology, enhance the Army's ability to complete the paradigm shift from the combat operations of the past twenty years to the large-scale environment envisioned in the 2017 FM 3-0, *Operations*, at a faster pace. As Section 3 states, future versions of Army doctrine may require to be more prescriptive to offset the educational and training gaps in the "battlefield calculus" to fight and win in large-scale combat operations. Much like the debate and revolutionary changes in education and training that came from the 1976 FM 100-5, *Operations.*

As Section 4 states, the experience of our Division Commander's for large-scale combat operations will not change overnight. For the Army to complete the paradigm shift to large-scale combat operations, Officers with high potential for advancement should be selected to serve as the Division Chief of Staff, Operations Officer, and Planner. The vital leadership lessons and expertise learned while serving as a Division Chief of Staff, Operations Officer, and Planner are lessons and experiences that will assist our future Division Commanders in their duties and responsibilities leading divisions. Like the Officer Corps of World War Two, the expertise and knowledge that Division Commanders and Chiefs of Staff were vital in the education of junior Staff Officers and leaders of the future.

With the changes to the Army's education and training methodologies, and increased experience of its leaders serving at the division level, Major General Smith and the 52nd ID in might have seen the battlefield in Europe differently. Expertise in the "battlefield calculus" of division operations is tough work, but the work our nation requires the US Army to execute and win.

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