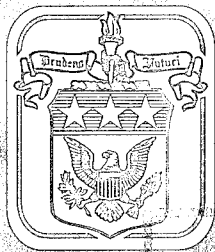
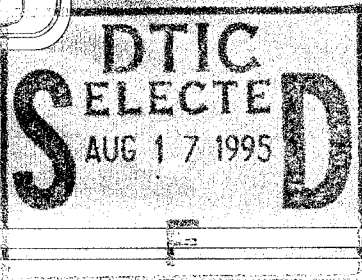


# PARAMETER

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"NOT TO PROMOTE WAR, BUT TO PRESERVE PEACE . . ."

# US ARMY WAR COLLEGE

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*The US Army's Senior Professional Journal*

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## *From the Editor*

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### *In This Issue . . .*

Paul Christopher probes the dilemma facing the officer who cannot reconcile the commissioning oath to participation in a conflict or war that he or she believes to be unjust. His argument and conclusion are compelling and timely.

Edward J. Villacres and Christopher Bassford compare the “remarkable trinity” and a contemporary expression of it usually cited as “people, army, and government.” They note the latter’s contribution to renewed interest in US strategic thought following the Vietnam War, but challenge its adequacy as an expression of Clausewitz’s intent, especially when it is used to denigrate *On War*.

Jeffrey Record asks if the strategic vision on which we base our defense planning has been adjusted to new realities, or if we are designing strategies based on “the familiar and comfortable at the expense of the more likely and less pleasant.” He examines asymmetry between the US military and prospective adversaries, the emergence of values-driven as opposed to interest-driven interventions, and defense acquisition programs.

Steven Metz looks at the changing nature of insurgency, calling for introspection, assessment, and reflection on the proposition that “the strategic environment determines the form and salience of insurgency.” His assessment of changes in the strategic environment and in forms of insurgency suggests that direct US involvement in counterinsurgency operations is becoming a high-risk/low-benefit activity.

Edward J. Filiberti analyzes the forms and functions of strategic guidance provided by the National Security Council system to the departments and agencies charged with carrying out national security strategy. He demonstrates the value of a common form to be used for developing such guidance, for communicating the guidance throughout the NSC system, and for managing change as the strategy is carried out.

Richard G. Maxon examines the right of a nation to act in self defense, tracing the concept from its origins through the establishment of the United Nations to current applications. His review, which includes customary international law and Article 51 of the UN Charter, produces a set of criteria to analyze the appropriateness of using military force in self defense.

William Terpeluk asks if the Union pursuit of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia following the Battle of Gettysburg could possibly have been successful. He concludes that it could not, citing the constraints of time, the personalities of the leaders, operational limitations on the Union Army, and the difficulties of terrain and weather.

Gregory C. Sieminski explains how and why the services arrive at the names and nicknames used to identify combat operations and campaigns. His survey extends from the German army’s naming of operations late in World



War I to the development of names by contemporary military planners. Analysis of public reaction to operational nicknames demonstrates the importance of such names to service and joint commanders and staffs.

*Review Essays* continue to evaluate current and "classical" books and articles on the topics under review. Russell Ramsey surveys the worldwide conflict over illicit drugs, with particular emphasis on Latin America. Ryan J. McCombie examines several texts of varying quality on American special operations forces and activities. Colin F. Baxter assembles assessments of the relative merits of Allied and Nazi troops in the Normandy campaign, while Wayne A. Silkett looks at fact and fiction in evaluations of the air war in Europe. Paul F. Braim opens his examination of several books on Vietnam with an appraisal of Robert S. McNamara's recent account of his tenure as Secretary of Defense during the early years of that conflict.

The feature title—Getting It "About Right"—refers to Sir Michael Howard's essay in the March 1974 issue of *The RUSI Journal*, "Military Science in an Age of Peace." The essay has much to offer to contemporary defense professionals. Defining "military science" as "disciplined thinking about military affairs," the author notes that "flexibility in the minds of the Armed Forces and in their organization . . . needs above all to be developed in peacetime" even as he acknowledges the inherent difficulty "for the military to absorb, encourage, and nurture outstanding original thinkers in their midst." He adds, "It is the task of military science in an age of peace to prevent . . . doctrines from being too badly wrong." In the event, he says, even if the armed forces do err in their thinking, "What matters is their capacity to get it right quickly when the moment arrives." The feature displays work in progress on Sir Michael's thesis; future issues will continue the theme.

### ***Distribution to USAWC Alumni***

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Helping USAWC graduates continue their education after they've said farewell to Carlisle remains the central part of our journal's purpose. — JJM. □

# Unjust War and Moral Obligation: What Should Officers Do?

PAUL CHRISTOPHER

Robert McNamara's recent injudicious remarks concerning the US war with Vietnam, released in hardback on the 20th anniversary of our withdrawal from Saigon, raise a number of questions concerning what, if any, obligation professional soldiers have to serve in wars they believe to be unjust. According to McNamara, who was the Secretary of Defense during the early years of the ground war in Vietnam (1961-1968), he was convinced—fully seven years before the war ended—both that it was unwinnable and that the United States should withdraw. Had the US government acted at that time on McNamara's assessment (which he kept from the public), close to 50,000 US soldiers and many, many more Vietnamese soldiers and civilians who died in the war could still be alive today.

What does this mean for the US military profession? Are professional soldiers culpable in some way for fighting in a war that the Secretary of Defense believed was unwinnable and thereby unjust? Should those of us who were military leaders at the time have resigned our commissions—assuming that we, like the Secretary of Defense, believed the war to be an unjust one? Should we have undertaken some form of civil disobedience? What should we do in the future if similar instances arise?

Until recently the answers to these questions seemed obvious: our long-standing tradition of civilian control of the military meant that soldiers go where and when they are told to go, provided that the telling is done by legally elected officials imbued with the power to make such decisions. This is the view to which we in the military have long given our adherence and our lives. After publishing a text on military ethics, however, where I mention this view only in passing,<sup>1</sup> I have spoken with a number of colleagues who have taken issue with this position. They suggest that although this position may be true from a legal perspective, it is not the case from a moral one. Some have argued that no person can ever abrogate his or her moral agency, and that just as military officers should

refuse to obey immoral orders from their superiors when they are fighting *in war*, so they must do so when they are ordered *to war*.

Such arguments perhaps require us to rethink the notion of whether soldiers are morally obligated to fight in wars they believe to be unjust. The appearance of McNamara's book sharpens the point. Having rethought the proposition thoroughly, I believe that our long-held position on this topic is dead right. The purpose of this article is to explain why.

### ***Political Responsibility and Military Responsibility***

In Shakespeare's dramatic account of the Battle of Agincourt, Henry V, in an effort to assess the morale of his forces, disguises himself as a common soldier and visits some of his troops in the British encampment on the evening before the battle. When he encounters three infantrymen who wish that they were safely back in England (rather than France where the battle occurs), the King, still in disguise, responds, "Methinks I could not die anywhere so contented as in the king's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honorable."

"That's more than we know," one of the infantrymen replies. A second soldier adds: "Ay, or more than we should seek after, for we know enough if we know we are the king's subjects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us." Thus does Shakespeare teach his 17th-century British audience about the just war distinction between political and military responsibility regarding warfare.

The notion that soldiers are praised or blamed only for how they fight in a war—for military virtues such as courage, honor, and loyalty—rather than for the justness of the war itself is not an idea that begins with Shakespeare. Since antiquity, civilized nations have recognized a logical separation between *jus ad bellum* (the justice of wars) and *jus in bello* (justice in wars). According to the just war tradition, decisions regarding whether or not force should be used to achieve political objectives are always political decisions, while decisions concerning *how* that force is employed—the actual conduct of war—are the responsibility of the professional soldier. It is the former concept, that of *jus ad bellum* or decisions concerning going to war, that is of primary concern to the question at hand.

Fundamental to the US political system is the concept of civilian control of the military. Army Field Manual 100-5 identifies "proper subordination to political authority" as one of the core values that makes up our Army's identity. What does this mean? Does it mean that civilians such as the Secretary of Defense or the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee can tell

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the military how to train, how to fight, how to interrogate prisoners, how to treat civilian refugees in a war zone, and how much ammunition to carry? No. These are issues that only members of the military profession are competent to decide.

The reason we maintain armed forces led by a highly trained, technically proficient, and well-compensated group of professionals is because as a nation we recognize that warfighting is an incredibly difficult, challenging endeavor that requires considerable specialized expertise. It would be ludicrous to permit persons from outside the profession to make technical decisions regarding how force should be managed in training or on the battlefield. Deciding about the conduct of war falls under *jus in bello*, justice in war, and such decisions are the responsibility of military professionals.

Subordination of the military to political authority means that the responsibility and the authority for going to war rests with the political leadership. Notice that this limits the military in a number of ways. On one hand, the guardians of the state (the soldiers) cannot make decisions regarding either going to war or negotiating for peace without the authority of their political constituency. Such actions would be morally and legally wrong. Thus Plato, for example, writing 2500 years ago, subscribed to the idea that generals who either go to war or negotiate peace without the approval of the political establishment should be executed.

On the other hand, subordination to properly constituted civil authority means that military professionals can't refuse to go when the political establishment orders them to do so. Again, such actions are morally and legally wrong.

In many countries, this separation between political and military decisionmaking is considered so important that soldiers are not even allowed to vote. In this country, military personnel on active duty can vote—they are considered *citizen* soldiers—but they are prohibited by law from being politically active.

This restriction on political decisionmaking concerning war was the basis for President Harry Truman's relief of General Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War. MacArthur had made public pronouncements concerning the war's political objectives. This same conceptual dichotomy concerning war caused difficulties for General H. Norman Schwarzkopf when he made ill-advised comments to the news media lamenting the US/UN decision not to invade Iraq. Recall that he later publicly retracted his statements. During the same war, Air Force General Mike Dugan was not so lucky. When he made public statements without the approval of our political leaders about US political objectives that he had established for his forces, he was relieved as the Air Force Chief of Staff and had to retire from military service.

To take this principle one step further, suppose that the President and Congress have decided that force is not called for, but that many military leaders believe that it is warranted. Surely we would not want military leaders to embark on offensive operations without political approval, even if the operations included only such relatively "passive" actions as mining foreign harbors.

Military leaders may privately make recommendations to the national leadership when they are asked for them, but they are prohibited from establishing or publicly influencing political objectives. Even the notion of resignation on principle seems circumscribed where decisions on the use of military forces are at issue. A military officer's resignation when called to arms, especially that of a senior officer, would constitute a public statement about that officer's assessment of the political objectives. Just as officers ought not to fight when the President decides against the use of force, they ought not to refuse to fight when the President orders them to.

*"If his cause be wrong . . ."*

A second consideration for understanding this issue is the legal stipulation that soldiers be immune from the crime of war at the policy level. Soldiers are, as the legal philosopher Vitoria tells us, considered to be imbued with invincible ignorance as far as the justice of a war is concerned. Thus soldiers who fight in an unjust war are protected from prosecution when the war is over. So, when the International Tribunal at Nuremberg charged German leaders with crimes against peace, only a few very senior military leaders who were actively involved in political decisionmaking regarding acts of aggression were prosecuted for that crime.

The fact is that we often never know objectively and with any degree of certainty which side in a war is just, even in retrospect. In domestic society we agree to abide by a system of formal justice, recognizing that ideal or objective justice is often impossible to achieve; so must it be regarding political decisions in international society. This system of accepting formal justice in domestic society is well established and accepted in our country, and the concept should apply similarly to professional soldiers and their approach to war. Perhaps an example will be helpful here.

Consider a highly publicized murder trial, for example: After the evidence is presented by both sides in accordance with accepted rules, a judge or jury will deliberate and reach a verdict of guilt or innocence. In many cases, we will never know for certain whether the accused did it or not, but our society accepts the verdict of the jury as long as the proper formal procedures were followed because we believe that this method is the one most likely to give justice. We regard adherence to the formal process of justice to be so sacrosanct that when proper formal procedures are not followed, even in cases of obvious guilt, charges are dismissed and convictions overturned.

Analogously, when the American people enter a national debate regarding the use of force, and when the President and Congress, following proper constitutional procedures, either decide to use force to achieve some political objective or decide to refrain from doing so, that decision is formally just. It is as close to objective justice as we know how to get. Our elected

leaders in this case are the judge and jury, and we in the armed forces agree to abide by the decision of the court.

Moreover, it is profoundly arrogant for officers to take the view, as some do, that after the national debate takes place, and after the President and Congress have decided to act, then the officer should have the latitude to follow his or her own conscience, either acceding to or declining to follow the orders of the President. And of course, if such an individual assessment is to be morally permissible for officers, then it must be morally permissible for soldiers of all ranks. Accepting this position inevitably leads to one of two unsatisfactory conclusions. One is that we permit soldiers to legally leave military service whenever they don't agree with a political decision. The other option is to acknowledge that requiring soldiers to go to war against their will is immoral, but to make such a political decision legally binding on them anyway. The first alternative would make a mockery of the very notion of having a standing army, and the second one would make a mockery of our legal system.

When the American people hire, train, equip, and support a professional officer corps, they expect those officers to be responsive to elected authority regarding when they should do the job for which they have been hired, trained and equipped.

### ***First Principles***

Military officership is a profession, not simply a vocation. Part of what it means to be a member of a profession is having a deep commitment to a set of abstract values and principles that define the profession. This means that members of a profession accept certain values that are specific to their profession as being more fundamental than other values. For example, the Hippocratic Oath, written in 429 B.C., states in part: "I will apply medicinal measures for the benefit of the sick according to my ability and judgment. I will keep them from harm and injustice. I will not give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect."

Military officership, too, entails commitment to a set of principles. When one takes the oath of office in the profession of arms, he or she swears to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." This constitutes an agreement to abide by political authority for all *jus ad bellum* decisions: we pledge to fight in wars that are formally just, and also to fight them according to the just war tradition and warrior ethos that defines the professional military ethic. A refusal to go when called upon constitutes an abandonment of the oath of office, of the profession of arms, and of the soldiers who depend on their officers for competent leadership. It is a betrayal of the national trust.

#### **NOTE**

1. Paul Christopher, *The Ethics of War & Peace: An Introduction to Moral and Legal Issues* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1984), p. 90.

# Reclaiming the Clausewitzian Trinity

EDWARD J. VILLACRES and  
CHRISTOPHER BASSFORD

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In a recent *Parameters* article, "US Military Doctrine and the Revolution in Military Affairs" (Autumn 1994), Dr. David Jablonsky made frequent reference to the theories of Carl von Clausewitz in order to illustrate points about strategy and doctrine. Jablonsky's discussion of his central subject demonstrated his usual flair and insight. On one particular point, however, his use of Clausewitz touched an ambiguity that is becoming troublesome to many students of the Prussian philosopher of war.

The problem appears in Jablonsky's discussion of "what Clausewitz had referred to as the 'remarkable trinity': the military, the government, and the people."<sup>1</sup> There is a serious discrepancy between this definition of the "remarkable trinity" and the definition given by Clausewitz himself in *On War*: Clausewitz defines the components of the trinity as (1) primordial violence, hatred, and enmity; (2) the play of chance and probability; and (3) war's element of subordination to rational policy.<sup>2</sup> By no means originating with Jablonsky, this discrepancy appears frequently in recent analyses, both those that enlist Clausewitz's support and those that attack the Prussian philosopher of war as benighted, evil, or simply irrelevant. In fact, the "remarkable" or "paradoxical" trinity<sup>3</sup> is one of the Clausewitzian concepts most frequently cited in all of recent military literature. Since interpretations of Clausewitz are a source of such extensive controversy, it seems important to differentiate between what Clausewitz actually said and other concepts of a trinity that are derived from, but not the same as, the "remarkable trinity" defined in *On War*.<sup>4</sup>

Definition of the trinity as "people, army, and government" seems to have originated in Harry Summers' important and influential study, *On Strat-*

egy: *A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1982). This version of Clausewitz's concept was derived from a secondary discussion in which Clausewitz developed a linkage between his "remarkable trinity" of war (violent emotion, chance, and rational policy) and the social trinity of people, army, and government. It appears in the introduction to Summers' book: "The task of the military theorist, Clausewitz said, is to develop a theory that maintains a balance among what he calls a trinity of war—the people, the government, and the Army."<sup>5</sup> That definition is repeated in *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*: "Particularly apt was Clausewitz's emphasis on the 'remarkable trinity' of the people, the government, and the army as the essential basis for military operations."<sup>6</sup> Using this concept of the trinity throughout both books with great success, Colonel Summers made it a valuable analytical tool. It is nonetheless an alteration of the concept as it is expressed in *On War*. Perhaps it would be more accurate to refer to the concept in this form as the "Summersian Trinity."

Another possible source for this definition could be a passage from Michael Howard's brief book in the *Past Masters* series, entitled simply *Clausewitz*. The first chapter contains this observation: "But even as he redrafted yet another idea came to him: that of war as a 'remarkable trinity,' in which the directing policy of the government, the professional qualities of the army, and the attitude of the population all played an equally significant part."<sup>7</sup> Howard's discussion did not clearly delineate the original trinity when noting its relationship to the people, army, and government. This potential source of confusion is not cleared up until the final paragraph of the book, where Howard directly quotes Clausewitz's original definition.<sup>8</sup>

In any case, the "people, army, government" interpretation of the trinity has caught on among both proponents of Clausewitz and his critics. For example, this definition is repeated even in a recent book by one of the authors of the present article, Chris Bassford's *Clausewitz in English: The Reception of Clausewitz in Britain and America, 1815-1945*. Bassford's two brief references to the trinity are made matter-of-factly and there is no real discussion of the issue. Briefly summarizing post-1945 events in this field of study, Bassford used the phrases "Clausewitz's famous trinity of the people, the army, and the government" and "By clarifying the interplay among the trinity of army, government, and people . . . ."<sup>9</sup> Bassford, very much a proponent of Clausewitzian theory, was aware of the discrepancy between Summers' use of the trinity and

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*“It is the trinity’s capacity to encompass so much of the nature of war, and so much of Clausewitzian theory, that makes it such a valuable, if complex, analytical tool.”*

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Clausewitz’s, but decided—rather pedantically—not to belabor the issue because it fell outside the chronological limits of his book.

More important, the “people, army, government” construct has been used by authors like Martin van Creveld and John Keegan to consign Clausewitz to irrelevance.<sup>10</sup> These writers like to claim that this essentially social paradigm is obsolete and so, therefore, is all of Clausewitzian theory. The state, in this view, is rapidly becoming irrelevant to warmaking, and distinctions between the “people” and the “army” are meaningless when wars are in fact fought not between states but between armed and irrevocably hostile populations. Thus future war, to use Van Creveld’s term, will be “non-trinitarian.”

### *Another View*

The alternative way to define the composition of this “remarkable trinity” is as, first, violent emotion and hatred; second, chance and probability; and third, the subordination of war to rational thought as an instrument of policy. This view is supported by three prominent interpreters of Clausewitz: Peter Paret, Raymond Aron, and Azar Gat. In the new version of *Makers of Modern Strategy*, Paret gives this definition:

The second major dialectical relationship that runs through the eight books of *On War* is encompassed in the assertion that real war is a composite of three elements. Its dominant tendencies, Clausewitz declared, “always make war a remarkable trinity,” composed of violence and passion; uncertainty, chance, and probability; and political purpose and effect.<sup>11</sup>

Paret also defines the trinity this way in his book *Clausewitz and the State*:

Real war, Clausewitz declared, was a composite of three elements: violence and passion; the scope afforded by all human intercourse to chance and probability, but also to genius, intelligence, [and] courage; and its subordination to politics, which, Clausewitz characteristically argued, made it subject to reason.<sup>12</sup>

In *Clausewitz: Philosopher of War*, Raymond Aron gives a definition that incorporates the linkage of the trinity to its corresponding elements of society (the people, military, and government) but still maintains the primary focus on the dominant tendencies of war:

From the dualist conception follows, in the final stage, in Chapter 1 of Book 1, the definition of the strange trinity: original violence (people), free activity of the spirit (war leader), supremacy of understanding (government).<sup>13</sup>

Azar Gat similarly defines the “remarkable trinity” in *The Origins of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz*. He echoes the view that it refers to violence, chance, and politics:

The unity of the phenomenon of war, that is, the constitutive element common to all wars, is salvaged. The “primordial violence, hatred, and enmity” of the nature of war are directed by the “commander’s creative spirit” through the “play of chance and probability” to achieve the political aim. This is the “remarkable trinity” which is presented by Clausewitz at the end of the first chapter of Book I, and which makes war “more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case.”<sup>14</sup>

### ***The Consequences for Theory***

Thus the lines are drawn between two very different approaches to this influential concept. The most direct way to clarify this matter is to examine the relevant passage in *On War* itself:

War is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case. As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make war a remarkable trinity—composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force; of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.

The first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government. The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people; the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance depends on the particular character of the commander and the army; but the political aims are the business of government alone.

These three tendencies are like three different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in their relationship to one another. A theory that ignores any one of them or seeks to fix an arbitrary relationship between them would conflict with reality to such an extent that for this reason alone it would be totally useless.

Our task therefore is to develop a theory that maintains a balance between these three tendencies, like an object suspended between three magnets.<sup>15</sup>

Let us analyze this quotation in detail.

In arguing that war is more than a chameleon (an animal that merely changes color to match its surroundings, but otherwise remains identical),

Clausewitz is saying that war is a phenomenon that, depending on conditions, can actually take on radically different forms. The basic sources of changes in those conditions lie in the elements of his “trinity.”

Far from comprising “the people, the army, and the government,” Clausewitz’s trinity is really made up of three categories of forces: irrational forces (violent emotion, i.e. “primordial violence, hatred, and enmity”); non-rational forces (i.e. forces not the product of human thought or intent, such as “friction” and “the play of chance and probability”); and rationality (war’s subordination to reason, “as an instrument of policy”).<sup>16</sup>

Clausewitz then *connects* each of those forces “mainly” to one of three sets of human actors: the people, the army, and the government:

- The people are paired mainly with irrational forces—the emotions of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, or, by implication, the lack thereof. It is quite possible to fight and even win wars whose outcome is of little concern to one’s people, especially if that is the case on both sides.

- The army (which refers, of course, to military forces in general) and its commander are paired mainly with the non-rational forces of friction, chance, and probability. Fighting organizations deal with those factors under the creative guidance of the commander (and creativity depends on something more than mere rationality, including, one hopes, the divine spark of talent or genius).

- The government is paired mainly with the rational force of calculation—policy is, ideally, driven by reason. This corresponds to the famous argument that “war is an instrument of policy.” Clausewitz knew perfectly well, however, that this ideal of rational policy is not always met: “That [policy] can err, subserve the ambitions, private interests, and vanity of those in power, is neither here nor there. . . . [H]ere we can only treat policy as representative of all interests of the community.”<sup>17</sup>

We stress the word “mainly”<sup>18</sup> because it is clear that each of the three categories that together constitute the actual trinity affects all of these human actors to some quite variable extent. The army’s officers and men and the political leaders are also, to varying degrees in different societies, members of “the people.” In democratic societies, at least, the people are expected to play a role in rational decisionmaking, whereas political leaders are as often driven by personal needs as by rational calculation of their societies’ practical requirements. Events on the army’s battlefields have a tremendous influence both on the people and on the political leadership, while popular and political factors, in turn, affect the army’s performance.

Thus, when Clausewitz speaks of war as a “total phenomenon,” he is not talking about war in the abstract (“absolute war”), nor about war “in theory.” He is talking about *real* war, war as we actually experience it, and he is describing just why it is that war is so dynamic, so unpredictable, so kaleidoscopic in its appearance. The concluding simile in our excerpt from *On War* is a nearly exact analogy: Clausewitz is saying that theory must be, as war

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***“Fighting organizations deal with the non-rational forces of friction, chance, and probability under the creative guidance of the commander.”***

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is, “like an object suspended between three magnets.” He is referring to the observed scientific fact that such a pendulum, once set swinging among three centers of attraction, behaves in a nonlinear manner—it never establishes a repeating pattern. As it enters a phase of its arc in which it is more strongly affected by one force than the others, it gains a momentum which carries it on into zones where the other forces can begin to exert their powers more strongly. The actual path of the suspended object is never determined by one force alone but by the interaction among them, which is forever and unavoidably shifting.

The trinity also provides us with clues as to what Clausewitz meant by his famous phrase, “war is a continuation [*fortsetzung*] of politics by other means.” This oft-quoted sentence contains two very different messages because of the dual meaning of the German word he used: *Politik*. That one word encompasses the two quite different English words “policy” and “politics.” The *policy* aspects he discusses are those connected with the trinity’s element of rational calculation. *Politics*, on the other hand, encompasses the whole trinity: Politics is a struggle for power between opposing forces—political events and outcomes are rarely if ever the product of any single actor’s conscious intentions. Politics, as any intelligent watcher of the evening news soon realizes, is a chaotic process involving competing personalities (whose *individual* actions may indeed have a rational basis), chance and friction, and popular emotion. (Is the candidate’s most brilliant speech blown off the airwaves by a natural disaster in the countryside? Will his embarrassing slip of the tongue get picked up by the evening news? Can a widespread “throw-the-bums out” mentality engulf even the most responsible politician?) The “remarkable trinity” is, in fact, Clausewitz’s description of the psychological environment of politics, of which “war is a continuation.” The only element of this political trinity that makes it unique to *war* is that the emotions discussed are those that might incline people to violence, whereas politics in general will involve the full range of human feelings. Thus Clausewitz tells us that the conscious conduct of war (strategy, etc.) *should* be a continuation of rational calculation and policy, but also that war *inevitably* originates and exists within the chaotic, unpredictable realm of politics.

The trinity metaphor, as given here, therefore serves to sum up much of Clausewitz's approach to war. In itself, however, Clausewitz's description of the interaction among the elements of the trinity leaves out the fact, strongly emphasized elsewhere in *On War*, that war is always an interaction between opposing *groups*. That is, this trinity exists on all sides of any conflict, thus further complicating the picture.

An approach to theory that denies or minimizes the role of any of these forces or the interaction among them is, therefore, by definition wrong. The soldier who expects the events of war to unfold in any other way—particularly in a rational, orderly way—is doomed to be surprised, disappointed, and frustrated.

### *The Meaning for Military Analysis*

Interpreting the meandering course of any real-world war as the product of a trinity of forces (emotion, chance, and rationality) is altogether different from discussing a trinity of actors (people, army, and government). The concept of the "remarkable trinity" is a basis for the practical political-military analysis of particular wars, not a description of the social structures—which may alter over time—that support war. There is, of course, a significant analytical benefit to be gained by noting the relationships among the people, army, and government—ignoring any of these elements or distorting their relationship will undermine any society's war effort—but this version of the trinity is derived from an *illustration* of Clausewitz's key concept, not the concept itself.

Therefore, the positive use of the "people, army, government" construct is valid and useful when it is employed by a Clausewitzian proponent like Harry Summers, but it by no means explores all of the important implications of the trinitarian concept. When, on the other hand, writers such as Martin van Creveld or John Keegan use the "people, army, government" construct in attempts to define and thence to marginalize Clausewitzian theory, the result is neither valid nor useful.<sup>19</sup>

The latter point is true whether or not one accepts arguments that the state is becoming an irrelevant factor in modern war. There are, in fact, many arguments to be made in defense of the Summersian approach. In any conflict organized enough to be called war, there will be some kind of leadership organization, some group of fighters, some kind of population base—if not people, army, and government *per se*, then people, army, and government analogs. Regarding the alleged death of the state, a much stronger argument can be made that the Western-style "nation state" is in fact in the ascendancy worldwide: A great many of the conflicts we are seeing are in fact the struggles of ethnic nations to establish their own states on the ruins of the more traditional imperial states. (Writers like Van Creveld and Keegan frequently confuse the terms "state" and "nation-state," two non-contiguous concepts.)

This is clearly the case in the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. The establishment of an independent Eritrea and a proto-Palestine offers rather different examples. There are in fact many weak states out there, but most of the successful low-intensity wars Van Creveld cites have merely resulted in the replacement of such weak states by new and stronger states, and almost all of the warfare going on at present is between states and state-wannabees. As for the drug-war variant, note that Colombia effectively destroyed the Medellin Cartel when it ceased to be merely a criminal organization and sought to vie with the state for primacy. And let us remember that any warfare in which the United States engages is going to be “state warfare” on at least one side.

Further, Clausewitz’s ideas are not nearly so time- and culture-bound as Van Creveld and Keegan imply. The states of Clausewitz’s era bore little resemblance to either the United States or the two Vietnams of the 1960s, and yet the relevance of *On War* to the Vietnam War is clear; indeed, it was that conflict which brought Clausewitz to the fore in American military circles.

We can, however, quite easily disregard the whole issue of the state and simply analyze military-political events in terms of Clausewitz’s original trinity of emotion, chance, and policy (or our reformulation of it: irrational, non-rational, and rational factors). Take for example the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Keegan claims that this is an entirely “apolitical” war, driven exclusively by irrational ethnic hatreds and fought by peoples, not armies.<sup>20</sup> Thus only one leg of Clausewitz’s trinity is operative (the people, if we accept the “people, army, government” paradigm; violent emotion, if we take Clausewitz’s own construction). But this is clearly nonsense. The Bosnian War is being fought by conventional armies pursuing rational if extremely brutal political policies. These policies are aimed at the creation of new, independent, ethnic-based political entities—in other words, “nation-states,” which Yugoslavia was not.<sup>21</sup>

Let us look at Clausewitz’s trinity as it has manifested itself in Serbia. The breakup of Yugoslavia was driven by the needs of politicians like Slobodan Milosevic to find a new basis of legitimacy for their continuance in power. With Marxism dead, there was not much to turn to except ethnic identification, a violent emotion always latent in the Balkan peoples. Milosevic sensibly—rationally—grabbed that powerful handle. This was a successful approach for Milosevic in Serbia itself. He sustained it as long as he could do so profitably. Emotions got out of hand, however, and the pendulum moved into the irrational zone. When Bosnian Serb atrocities and intransigence provoked the international community into actions that threatened his political future, Milosevic’s government altered its policies. Cut off from Serbian governmental support, the Bosnian Serb army became in essence an independent force; the pendulum was now in the zone of military chance, probability, and talent. The army’s unexpectedly successful response to a Muslim counteroffensive, without Milosevic’s guidance or assistance, put its leaders (Radovan Karadzic and

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***“One can identify all of Clausewitz’s most  
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Ratko Mladic) in the driver’s seat. The pendulum will no doubt drift further before this article gets into print.

The Bosnian War has come to involve a huge number of players. Some of them are states, many are non- or sub-state actors, others are supra-national organizations. Trying to describe each player as a unit made up of “people, army, and government” would be a dubious enterprise. No matter how we tally up the players, however, the forces of Clausewitz’s original trinity are clearly at work, and in exactly the dynamic manner he described.

Herein lies the great value of the “trinitarian” approach to war. Exclusively rational models cannot account for the willingness of peoples to plunge their societies into the nightmarish chaos of war. Simplistic “cultural” explanations like Keegan’s miss the dynamic effect of calculating (if often stupid or self-centered) leaders. Technological models—and most discussions of “future war” are heavily if not exclusively technology-driven—cannot describe the real wars that we have already experienced in the post-Cold War era. The courses of these wars have in fact been driven not by technology (which remains essentially a tool), but by the complex interplay among opposing sets of popular emotions, military skills, and political calculations.

Political-military analysis, which should precede any attempt to make strategy, has to be based on the real, if messy (or, more properly, nonlinear), factors that Clausewitz describes.

### ***Conclusions***

Many readers find Clausewitzian theory to be frustratingly complex. The standard Clausewitz set for satisfactory theory is, however, difficult to argue with: that it not conflict with reality. A theory that accurately depicts the complexities of war is thus necessarily complex (which is not to say that every complex theory is necessarily correct). Nor should we forget that Clausewitz saw his theory as a basis for study, not as doctrine.

Despite the oft-noted fact that *On War* is an unfinished work, the ideas Clausewitz expressed in it are remarkably well integrated. If we pick up and follow any one major thread of his argument, we will eventually find it firmly connected to each of the other key ideas. It would be a mistake, therefore, to approach the trinity concept as a discrete bit of wisdom that can somehow be

extracted from the larger work. The trinity establishes a dialectical relationship among the dominant tendencies of war that are revealed by analysis in the rest of the book; it combines the elements that make war such a complex phenomenon. One can identify all of Clausewitz's most profound insights with one or another element of the trinity. The component dealing with violence and emotion (irrational forces) relates directly to his discussion of moral forces in war and the proposition that war is distinguished from other forms of human interaction by its resort to organized violence. The component dealing with chance and probability (non-rational forces) reflects his ideas about the role of military genius and the creative spirit in dealing with the fog and friction of war; operational ideas like the "center of gravity"<sup>22</sup> also relate to this aspect of the trinity. The component dealing with war's subordination to policy (rational forces) relates to his ideas about the relationship between ends and means, war as the continuation of policy, and the dichotomy between limited and absolute war.

Thus we can see that in this one, briefly described concept, Clausewitz unified many of the ideas he developed over 30-plus years of studying the nature of war: It represents his thinking at its most mature and sophisticated level. Clausewitz subtitled the section where he introduces the concept as "The Consequences for Theory," and it is the last section of Chapter One, Book One, the only part of the book Clausewitz considered finished (and probably the last part he wrote before he died). The trinity is therefore best understood as the theoretical capstone of Clausewitz's entire work. A thoughtful reading of the relevant passage in *On War*, combined with a willingness to integrate the points made there with the rest of the philosopher's argument, will make this clear. It is the trinity's capacity to encompass so much of the nature of war, and so much of Clausewitzian theory, that makes it such a valuable, if complex, analytical tool.

To reduce the original trinitarian concept to an allegedly obsolete social paradigm of "people, army, and government," as Clausewitz's recent critics have done, is not merely an oversimplification and a distortion of its meaning: It fundamentally misses the point of this great body of military theory. It would be a tragic mistake to accept the consequences of that error. Our military educators' often annoying fixation on Clausewitz's work has brought a much-needed professional sophistication to the thinking of America's military institutions in the generation since Vietnam. There is nothing better on the horizon.<sup>23</sup>

#### NOTES

1. David Jablonsky, "US Military Doctrine and the Revolution in Military Affairs," *Parameters*, 24 (Autumn 1994), 18-36. Jablonsky also uses the trinity, very effectively but in much the same manner, as the basis for the 59-page introduction to his book, *Churchill and Hitler: Essays on the Political-Military Direction of Total War* (Portland, Ore.: Frank Cass, 1994).



2. Admittedly, this distinction does not contradict the main thrust of Jablonsky's article about the "Revolution in Military Affairs," but our intent here is to clarify the source of the concept that Jablonsky attributed to Clausewitz and invoked to put the RMA into a societal context.

3. Translations of the original German phrase, *wunderliche Dreifaltigkeit*, differ significantly: remarkable, paradoxical, strange. "Marvelous" or "fascinating" might best capture Clausewitz's meaning.

4. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. & trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976).

5. Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1982), pp. 26-27.

6. Harry G. Summers, Jr. *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War* (New York: Dell, 1992), p. 11.

7. Michael Howard, *Clausewitz* (Oxford, Eng.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), p. 20.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

9. Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz in English: The Reception of Clausewitz in Britain and America, 1815-1945* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), pp. 24, 203.

10. See Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991); John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Knopf, 1993). See also Steven Metz, "A Wake for Clausewitz: Toward a Philosophy of 21st-Century Warfare," *Parameters*, 24 (Winter 1994-95), 126-32.

11. Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 186-213.

12. Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories, and His Times* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), p. 368.

13. Raymond Aron, *Clausewitz: Philosopher of War*, trans. Christine Booker and Norman Stone (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), p. 85.

14. Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz* (Oxford, Eng.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), p. 236.

15. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 89.

16. This breakdown of Clausewitz's trinity into "rational, non-rational, and irrational forces" appeals to us because it seems to represent a symmetrical and inclusive approach to reality. It is also, at least potentially, a distortion of Clausewitz's argument. Concerning this specific approach, West Point professor Tony Echevarria says "[Bassford's] own interpretation of Clausewitz's understanding of the relationship between war and politics . . . , while accurate, betrays a decidedly contemporary political-scientific framework of analysis—one which the 19th century philosopher of war would not have had available to him." Antulio J. Echevarria, draft review of "Clausewitz in English" submitted to *Armed Forces and Society*.

17. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 606.

18. It reads "*mehr ... zugewendet*" in the original German.

19. But then, neither Van Creveld nor Keegan is really interested in advertising (or, in Keegan's case, even in comprehending) the actual character of Clausewitz's ideas. Van Creveld, who in 1986 authored an article entitled "The Eternal Clausewitz," in *Clausewitz and Modern Strategy*, ed. Michael Handel (London: Frank Cass, 1986), pp. 35-50, has come to regard Clausewitz as a competitor whose influence has to be diminished; the depth of his actual understanding of *On War* varies greatly. Keegan's problems with Clausewitz are explored in Christopher Bassford's article "John Keegan and the Grand Tradition of Trashing Clausewitz," *War in History*, November 1994, pp. 319-36.

20. Keegan, *Warfare*, p. 58.

21. There was, however, some reason to hope that a Yugoslav nationality could be created in the future, much as a French nationality was created in the later Middle Ages.

22. The concept of an operational or strategic "center of gravity" is in essence a probabilistic tool to reduce the inevitable complexities and swirling uncertainties of war to a manageable level. Maintaining our focus on a small number of key factors (preferably just one) does not reduce the "fog of war," it simply makes it less distracting. Identifying those factors, as anyone who has tried it soon learns, is a creative rather than a purely rational process.

23. Certainly not in Keegan's nor Van Creveld's work, nor even in the useful writings of Alvin and Heidi Toffler. That fact stands out even in a recent attempt to substitute those writers for Clausewitz and to bury the Prussian philosopher: Steven Metz, "A Wake for Clausewitz," *Parameters*, 24 (Winter 1994-95), 126-32. As Metz correctly notes, there is virtually nothing in Keegan's book that is of any relevance for real-world policies, programs, or strategies. The Tofflers acknowledge that their vision of a "Third Wave" provides only an additional overlay, not a replacement, for the existing world; Metz asserts that they say very little about the strategic, political, social, or psychological elements of war, precisely the areas in which Clausewitz excels. In fact, the only writer that Metz describes as truly grappling with the key new problems of war, Ralph Peters, is himself a fervent proponent for the study of Clausewitz.

# Ready for What and Modernized Against Whom? A Strategic Perspective on Readiness and Modernization

JEFFREY RECORD

Trade-offs between readiness and modernization come with the territory of any defense budget. Choosing between the two can be particularly painful in periods of declining total expenditure. We are entering a second decade of steadily declining annual real defense spending. Allegations of eroding force readiness are mounting. The Clinton Administration earlier this year agreed to add \$25 billion to the defense budget over the next six years to improve combat readiness and the quality of life for US troops. The Administration subsequently sent to Congress a supplemental request for an additional \$2.6 billion to cover the costs of recent and unexpected peace and humanitarian relief operations. The House of Representatives added \$600 million to that supplemental appropriation.

Doubts nevertheless remain as to whether we can afford to complete costly modernization programs. Among them are the Navy's F/A-18 E/F fighter and *Arleigh Burke* destroyer programs, the Air Force's F-22 fighter and C-17 transport programs, and the Marine Corps' V-22 tilt-rotor aircraft program.

Military readiness has become a hot issue on Capitol Hill, with some of the Administration's more irresponsible critics claiming that we are headed for the hollow forces of the post-Vietnam era. There was much ado about the decline to C-3 readiness status of three US Army heavy divisions, even though they all were late-deploying divisions, and two were slated to be disbanded. The Army deliberately slipped their readiness, however, by temporarily raiding their operations and maintenance accounts to pay for the costs of the unexpected Operation Restore Democracy and other similar enterprises. A better way of doing business would be for Congress to authorize the Pentagon to obligate money to pay for such operations at the time they are conducted, and then send the bills over in the form of supplemental requests. This would relieve the

Pentagon from having to rob Peter to pay Paul for the duration of such operations. At any rate, this budgetary intervention did not endanger the Republic.

There is simply no comparison between the state of our military establishment in the 1970s and that of today. Our present armed forces are not defeated, demoralized, despised, drug-ridden, and awash in high-school drop-outs, Category IVs, AWOLs, desertions, and courts-martial. No one wants to go back to the 1970s, and memories of that decade account in part (along with no small measure of political posturing by those who seek to paint the Administration as soft on defense) for the degree to which readiness has become the latest congressional defense fad.

Congress has traditionally focused on the budgetary aspects of readiness and modernization at the line-item level, and in times of budgetary stress has tended to favor modernization even at the expense of readiness. Until recently, readiness has had practically nothing in the way of a political constituency, whereas procurement programs, especially the big-ticket ones, drip with them. Moreover, it is easy to convince yourself that a vote for modernization is a vote for readiness, even at the cost of fewer dollars allocated to training and operations and maintenance. Superbly trained and supported troops equipped with inferior weapons may be considered unready for combat.

In terms of training, sustainability, and weaponry, it is always better to be ready and modern than unready and obsolete. What Congress does not look at, because it is constitutionally incapable of doing so in a coherent fashion, is the broader and far more critical question: Ready for what? What exactly should we expect our military to do? Against whom do we modernize? Have we correctly identified future threats to our security and the proper forces for dealing with those threats? Are we breathlessly and blindly pursuing modernization for its own sake, or are we tying it in with the quality and pace of hostile competition?

These are the questions I would like to address. Informed line-item judgments on readiness and modernization hinge on informed judgments at the level of strategy, whose formulation is the responsibility of the Executive Branch. Our present strategy portends an excessive readiness for the familiar and comfortable at the expense of preparation for the more likely and less pleasant.

### ***Introducing Realism Into Our Assessments***

The basis of present strategy is the Administration's Bottom-Up Review, a 1993 assessment of US force requirements in the post-Soviet-threat world.

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The assessment concluded, among other things, that the United States should maintain ground, sea, and air forces sufficient to prevail in two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies. For planning purposes the assessment postulated another Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (and Saudi Arabia's eastern province) and another North Korean invasion of South Korea—two large and thoroughly conventional wars fought on familiar territory against familiar Soviet-model armies.

Congressional and other critics rightly point to disparities between stated requirements for waging two major wars concurrently and the existing and planned forces that would actually be available. Shortfalls are especially pronounced in airlift, sealift, and long-range aerial bombardment. Critics also note that the Bottom-Up Review more or less ignores the impact of Haiti- and Somalia-like operations on our capacity to fight another Korean and another Persian Gulf war at the same time.

Few in Congress or elsewhere, however, have questioned the realism of the scenario. How likely is it that we would be drawn into two major wars at the same time? What are the opportunity costs of preparing for such a prospect?

The prospect of twin wars has been a bugaboo of US force planners since the eve of World War II—the only conflict in which the US military was in fact called upon to wage simultaneously what amounted to two separate wars. Chances for another world war, however, disappeared with the Soviet Union's demise.

Moreover, two points should be kept in mind with respect to World War II. First, the two-front dilemma came about only because of Hitler's utterly gratuitous declaration of war on the United States just after Pearl Harbor—a move that has to go down as one of the most strategically stupid decisions ever undertaken by a head of state. Had Hitler instead declared that Germany had no quarrel with the United States, and therefore would remain at peace with it, President Roosevelt would have been hard put to obtain a congressional declaration of war on Germany, or, with one, to pursue a Germany-first strategy. Second, during World War II the United States was compelled to pursue a win-hold-win strategy against Germany and Japan, respectively, even though we spent 40 percent of the GNP on defense, placed 12 million Americans under arms, and had powerful allies (unlike Germany or Japan). We sought to—and did—defeat Germany first, while initially remaining on the strategic defense in the Pacific.

In the decades since 1945, US planners persisted in postulating scenarios involving at least two concurrent conflicts, even though we have never had the resources to wage two big wars at the same time. Recall that the Vietnam conflict was a "half-war" in contemporary US force planning nomenclature.

More to the point, our enemies have without exception refused to take advantage of our involvement in one war to start another one with us; not during the three years of the Korean War, the ten years of the Vietnam War, or the eight months of the Persian Gulf crisis of 1990-91.

States almost always go to war for specific reasons independent of whether an adversary is already at war with another country. This is especially

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*“Our present strategy portends an excessive readiness for the familiar and comfortable at the expense of preparation for the more likely and less pleasant.”*

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true for states contemplating potentially war-provoking acts against the world's sole remaining superpower. In none of the three major wars we have fought since 1945 did our enemies, when contemplating aggression, believe that their aggressive acts would prompt war with the United States.

If prospects for being drawn into two large-scale conventional conflicts at the same time are remote, prudence dictates maintenance of sufficient military power to deal quickly and effectively with such conflicts one at a time. And for this we are well prepared. Our force structure remains optimized for interstate conventional combat, and it proved devastating in our last conventional war, against Saddam Hussein's large—albeit incompetently led—Soviet-model forces. Though most national military establishments in the Third World, which today includes much of the former Soviet Union, are incapable of waging large-scale conventional warfare, the few that are or have the potential to do so are all authoritarian states with ambitions hostile to US security interests. Among those states are Iran, Iraq, Syria, a radicalized Egypt, and China.

Russia can be excluded for probably at least the next decade. Russia's conventional military forces have deteriorated to the point where they have great difficulty suppressing even small insurrections inside Russia's own borders. The humiliating performance of the Russian forces in Chechnya reveals the extent to which draft avoidance, demoralization, disobedience, desertion, political tension, professional incompetence, and the virtual collapse of combat support and combat service support capabilities have wrecked what just a decade ago was an army that awed many NATO force planners.

China is included not just as a potential regional threat but as a potential global threat. We need to be wary of today's commonplace notion that the United States is the last superpower, that we will never again face the kind of global and robust threat to our vital security interests once posed by the Soviet Union, and before that, the Axis Powers. The present planning focus on regional conflict should not blind us to the probable emergence over the next decade or two of at least one regional superpower capable of delivering significant numbers of nuclear weapons over intercontinental distances and of projecting conventional forces well beyond their national frontiers. China comes first to mind. China's vast and talented population and spectacular economic performance could pro-

vide the foundation for a military challenge in Asia of a magnitude similar to that posed by the growth of Japanese military power in the 1930s.

Our capacity for large-scale interstate conventional combat is indispensable to our security. It served us well in Korea and the Persian Gulf, where we continue to have vital interests threatened by adversaries who have amassed or are seeking to amass significant, and in the case of North Korea, vast amounts of conventional military power.

But is preparation for large-scale interstate conventional combat enough? Some observers argue that the Desert Storm-inspired model of conventional combat at the regional level is largely irrelevant to what they believe to be the more likely security challenges in the post-Soviet world. They say we are entering an era of smaller, mainly unconventional and culturally motivated conflicts, waged for the most part inside rather than across established national boundaries. Others, such as the Defense Budget Project's Andrew Krepinevich, assert that Desert Storm's very success will encourage our adversaries to sidestep head-on collisions with US conventional military power, in favor of strategies and tactics against which that power is poorly suited to respond. Still others, like Johns Hopkins Professor Andrew J. Bacevich, contend that the United States will seek to avoid direct involvement in unconventional conflicts, and if unable to avoid involvement, will inevitably perform poorly. In his view the culprit is a Pentagon still so petrified by the prospect of another Vietnam that it has deliberately blocked attempts to prepare effectively for unconventional conflict—and this, says Bacevich, at a time when the age of conventional military practice is drawing to a close.

I tend to believe that we are entering an era in which the predominant form of conflict will be smaller and less conventional wars waged mostly within recognized national borders. State disintegration in much of Africa, the collapse of the Soviet empire, the potential decomposition of Russia itself, and the likely spread of politically radical Islam—all portend a host of politically and militarily messy conflicts. They also portend a continuation of strong pressures to participate in operations other than war, especially in peace, humanitarian relief, and nation-building operations.

But whether I am right or wrong, most would agree with the proposition that a military establishment dedicated almost exclusively to preparation for conventional combat, and strongly averse to dealing with violent challenges that cannot be effectively dealt with by conventional means, is a military establishment that is not ready for unconventional conflict. Our own military performance in this century reveals a clear correlation between the type of combat we faced and how successful we were. Almost all of our military victories were gained against conventionally armed states that in the end failed to match either the quality or quantity of US (and allied) manpower, materiel, and raw firepower. Wilhemine Germany, Imperial Japan, Nazi Germany, and Baathist Iraq were simply overwhelmed.

In contrast, our military failures and humiliations for the most part have been at the hands of opponents having little or nothing in the way of sea and air power, or even ground forces other than light infantry. Most of them could not hope to prevail over US forces conventionally. But they did prevail because they employed a combination of unconventional strategy and tactics and had a greater willingness to fight and die. The United States was stymied by Philippine *insurrectos*, stalemated in Korea, defeated in Vietnam, and embarrassed in Lebanon and Somalia by opponents who succeeded in denying to US forces the kinds of targets most vulnerable to overwhelming firepower, while at the same time demonstrating superior political stamina in terms of enduring combat's duration and cost.

To be sure, there were factors on our side other than our military conventionality that contributed to these failures, including excessive micro-management of military operations from above, an absence of interests worth the price of the fight, and an underestimation of enemy political will and fighting prowess. But the fact remains that military forces designed primarily for one type of warfare are inherently ill-suited for other kinds of warfare. Race horses perform poorly at rodeos and behind plows.

Of the Pentagon's commitment to conventional military orthodoxy and aversion to the unconventional, Andrew Bacevich has written:

Adversaries as different as Mohammed Farah Aideed and Radovan Karadzic have all too readily grasped the opportunities implicit in this fact. No doubt they respect the American military establishment for its formidable strengths. They are also shrewd enough to circumvent those strengths and to exploit the vulnerabilities inherent in the rigid American adherence to professional conventions regarding the use of force. As long as US military policies are held hostage to such conventions, those vulnerabilities will persist. The abiding theme of twentieth century military history is that the changing character of modern war long ago turned the flank of conventional military practice, limiting its application to an ever narrowing spectrum of contingencies.<sup>1</sup>

Far more of a challenge than Iraq presented four years ago will be forthcoming from Iran, which in its continuing campaign against American power and influence in Southwest Asia has relied not on direct conventional military challenges, but rather on more successful, indirect, unconventional instruments such as terrorism, hostage-taking, and subversion. Add to these ingredients weapons of mass destruction and a keen attention to surreptitiously exploiting US conventional military weaknesses, such as mining Gulf waters, and you have what Andrew Krepinevich has called a "Streetfighter State." Such a state relies on unconventional acts of violence and is prepared to wage a protracted struggle. Iran, and nations like it, are willing to absorb what the United States would consider a disproportionate amount of punishment to achieve their goals. The Streetfighter State exploits American social weak-

nesses, such as impatience and aversion to casualties, while at the same time denying US firepower decisive targets or at least easily attackable ones.<sup>2</sup>

It's not that the US military is preparing for the wrong war. It's just that there is more than one war—any single “right” war—to prepare for in the post-Cold War world. Stuffing money into the defense budget readiness accounts prepares us for conventional warfare but not for much else, and that “much else” may come to dominate the international military environment.

Krepinevich has written:

It would seem that, rather than maintaining a force structure for two “last wars,” the Defense Department might consider expending some additional resources, especially intellectual capital, examining how the United States military might explore innovative operational concepts that help it cope with the Streetfighter State. Such conceptual innovation need not break the budget . . . [D]uring the 1920s and 1930s the US military successfully engineered a number of conceptual, or “intellectual,” breakthroughs in response to dramatic changes in the geopolitical and military technical environment. The military services did it through a mixture of good fortune and far-sighted leaders, both military and civilian, who were sufficiently adaptive and innovative to nurture the “intellectual breakthroughs” that led to the rise of carrier aviation, strategic aerial bombardment, and modern amphibious assault operations. They accomplished this sea change while military budgets were extremely tight. War-gaming and prototyping were emphasized, as opposed to full-scale production of systems. In essence, the services benefitted from a relatively small force structure, which allowed them to move more quickly into the new form of warfare once it was identified and the nation found itself confronted with great power rivals.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Operations Other than War***

What of operations other than war, which in recent years have figured far more prominently on the Pentagon's agenda than they do in the Bottom-Up Review's assessment of future US military requirements? The issue here is not just the Pentagon's readiness or lack of readiness for such operations; rather it is the wisdom of participation. Most of these operations have taken place in areas of little or no strategic interest to the United States. At the very minimum, the United States should be more discriminating than it has been up to now.

Some of those who in the past criticized anti-Communist interventions now seem to believe that with the end of the Cold War, American military power should be reoriented away from the defense of traditional interests toward the promotion of American values abroad. They look favorably on military intervention, when and where possible, to transform dictatorships into democracies—as in Haiti; to halt genocide—as in Bosnia; and to provide relief to the sick and starving—as in Somalia and Rwanda. These are all desirable objectives. But value-driven, as opposed to interest-driven, interventions raise two issues: first, the utility of military power as a means of promoting American values overseas,



and second, the effects of operations other than war on preparation for war itself. For some things, the Pentagon is inherently unready.

The Defense Department has been predictably and rightly skeptical about value-driven interventions. There is no question about our capacity to project massive infrastructure overseas—to fly into a place like Somalia or Rwanda and immediately begin to feed, shelter, and provide health care for desperate multitudes. Had it not been for the American military, with its unmatched strategic mobility and logistical capabilities, hundreds of thousands—maybe millions—more Kurds, Somalis, and Rwandans would have died.

However, intervention in a humanitarian crisis that is the product of civil war, as opposed to natural disaster, carries with it the risk of being drawn into taking sides in that civil war. When suffering has political rather than natural causes, attempts to lessen that suffering can have adverse political—and ultimately adverse military—consequences. This is the lesson of our ill-advised and ill-fated interventions in Lebanon and Somalia. Feeding and sheltering people is a simple and straightforward proposition. Making peace and building nations are much more complex and demanding undertakings.

Enduring democratic institutions cannot be created by foreigners in poverty-stricken and largely illiterate societies that have known only tyranny, anarchy, or both. It is not for the United States, and certainly not for our armed forces, to assume primary responsibility for building other nations. We could and did so with Germany and Japan after World War II, but only because they were completely defeated militarily, we wielded absolute power over their political destinies, and we were prepared to keep troops in both countries for decades. Furthermore, both countries were economically viable and had highly literate populations.

None of these ingredients is present in Haiti. Haiti is a failed state riven by irreconcilable political and social divisions. The unexpectedly low incidence of violence against US forces in Haiti should not obscure the almost certain futility of our intervention there.

Also an object of justifiable Defense Department skepticism are peace-enforcement operations, especially in areas where we have no compelling strategic interests. Such operations, unlike genuine peace-keeping, presume actual or imminent resistance by at least one of the parties to the nominally “settled” dispute. In Bosnia, the Administration has committed the United States in principle to contribute ground combat forces to enforce a peace agreement that has yet to be reached. That agreement has proven elusive precisely because no one can come up with a formula for Bosnia’s territorial division satisfactory to all parties concerned. Moreover, even if an agreement is reached, it probably will be inherently unenforceable simply because it will not be honored the moment one side or another thinks it could “create new facts on the ground” to get a better deal. This has been the history of the seemingly endless cease-fire agreements in the former Yugoslavia. There is no reason to believe a territorial

settlement would fare any better. In Bosnia, peace enforcement would be synonymous with war. And that war would be in an area where the United States has never had interests critical to its security.

Participation in peace and humanitarian operations carries with it significant strategic and budgetary opportunity costs as well as domestic political risks. As of the beginning of 1995, the United States had almost 23,000 troops deployed worldwide performing operations other than war. In February, the Defense Department requested a \$2 billion supplemental appropriation to cover the \$124 million in costs incurred last year in Haiti and for what it estimates it will spend in Haiti and other humanitarian and peace operations for the remainder of fiscal 1995.<sup>4</sup> Such operations traditionally have been financed out of service operations and maintenance accounts. Because these operations are not conducted on behalf of self-evident strategic interests, but often entail risk of and actual combat, they are, in terms of public and congressional support, politically difficult to sustain. Unexpected casualties exacerbate the situation by rendering such operations vulnerable to early termination. The humiliating departure of American forces from Lebanon and from Somalia indicate this reality.

### *The Place of Modernization*

Let me now turn to the subject of modernization. For 40 years we modernized primarily against a Soviet threat which no longer exists and which will not be reconstituted, if ever, in any amount of time meaningful for US force planning purposes. During that 40 years the Pentagon and its allies on Capitol Hill and in the defense industry often exaggerated both the quantity and quality of the Soviet threat, which was real enough without amplification aimed at justifying budgets and satisfying worst-case planning.

There is nothing left to exaggerate, what with the Soviet Union's disappearance and Russia's military decrepitude. Even during the Cold War the United States never had any real peer in the quality of its air and sea power, notwithstanding the enormous investments the Soviet Union made in both. Even in such weapon categories as armor and artillery, the United States for the most part maintained a qualitative lead, though not one sufficient to offset the sheer size of Soviet ground forces.

Today, and for the foreseeable future, there is no foreign power able and willing to compete broadly and effectively with the United States in the quality of modern arms and their associated technologies. This does not mean that we should cease research and development and stop fielding new technologies. We want to maintain a substantial qualitative lead over any potential foe down the line. It does mean, however, that we can dispense with the urgency with which large buys of new and technologically more advanced weapons were rushed into the inventory as fast as they could be procured. It means that we can be much more selective in deciding what to field and when. We don't have to deploy every generation of technologically advanced weap-

only. In some cases development and testing of a prototype is sufficient as we wait for the next generational leap in technology to come to fruition.

The post-Soviet world is a world in which we can significantly slow, and in some cases even halt, investment in the technologies of nuclear deterrence, strategic ballistic missile defense, anti-submarine warfare, and land and fleet air defense. We are no longer producing nuclear weapons; we won't need intercontinental ballistic missile defenses for the foreseeable future, assuming such defenses are feasible and affordable; few Third World countries have submarine forces worth the name; and no foreign air force today poses a serious threat to US surface forces because no foreign air force can gain air superiority over US air forces.

It is a world, in short, in which we can and must take a hard, fresh look at our modernization priorities. A good example is the F-22. A stealthy air superiority fighter would certainly be nice to have seven years from now, but the money could be far better spent. We will be able to perform the air superiority mission successfully against our potential adversaries for the foreseeable future with existing aircraft and modifications thereof. Only three or four countries field fighter aircraft and fighter pilots of a quality even approaching that of the United States, and they are all allies. The F-22 program could be limited to prototyping and testing, with some or all of the savings applied to resolve the one genuine crisis in US tactical aviation today, which is the sorry state of the US Navy's air-to-ground strike capabilities.

Another example is the Marine Corps' V-22 Osprey. Once again, this is a nice-to-have but very expensive technology. But, once again, it is a technology that may not be essential to future US Marine Corps' operations and for which an acceptable substitute—in this case helicopters (new and upgraded)—is available. Tilt-rotor aircraft seem well suited for such missions as special operations and anti-submarine warfare. The Marine Corps, however, has justified their acquisition primarily on the basis of enhancing performance of a mission whose utility and feasibility are highly questionable. Not since the 1950 Inchon landing has the Corps been called upon to conduct an amphibious assault. Amphibious assaults are acts of last resort and are not undertaken when more favorable alternatives are available, as they have been since Inchon. Moreover, an enemy doesn't have to be very sophisticated to turn an assault into a bloody mess or even to deter an assault outright. Four years ago, the presence of Iraqi mines, which damaged two major American warships, contributed significantly to the US military leadership's decision to forego an amphibious assault on Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War. Money for the V-22 could be far better spent in strengthening the US Navy's chronically inadequate counter-mine-warfare capabilities.

### ***Keeping Things in Strategic Perspective***

The strategic situation we find ourselves in today in some ways resembles that which we confronted after World War I. During the 1920s and early

1930s we could plan our forces, pace their modernization, and make acquisition decisions on the assumption that US involvement in great power conflict was years if not decades away. The assumption of years of strategic warning did not reduce the imperatives of research and development, prototyping and testing, and doctrinal development; but it did relax the urgency of acquisition. There was no need to go to full-scale production with every new advance in technology. Full-scale production was ordered only when it became apparent, in the latter half of the 1930s, that another world war was in the making.

Back then, of course, it was far easier to move from a peacetime to a wartime economy. Technology in general was much simpler then, and the disparity between the civilian and military applications was considerably more narrow.

An informed strategic perspective on readiness and modernization, which is a component of readiness, broadly defined, is essential to making the right choices on operational and tactical readiness. In 1939 the French army was supremely ready for the kind of war it knew how to fight, wanted to fight, and which it assumed (or hoped) the Germans would fight. The French army also fielded air and ground technologies that were qualitatively competitive with those of the *Wehrmacht*. However, those technologies were present on the battlefield in very limited number because, during the interwar period, the French General Staff felt safe only in repeatedly and indiscriminately carrying new technologies into full-scale production.

I recently re-read David Halberstam's masterpiece on Vietnam, *The Best and the Brightest*,<sup>5</sup> which ought to be required reading for every commissioned officer in the United States. One of the aspects of our defeat there that really jumps out even 20 years after Saigon became Ho Chi Minh City is the stunning combination of material readiness and intellectual unreadiness with which we entered Vietnam. We had enormous quantities of people, mobility, and firepower dedicated to the war effort. But we were utterly—and happily—ignorant of Vietnamese society and history, and especially of our Vietnamese adversary's character and style of warfare. Worse still, civilian and military leaders alike believed that knowledge of such things really didn't matter; what counted was only that which could be counted, and we had overwhelming numbers of everything. We were going to fight *our* kind of war in Vietnam, and the enemy would simply have to submit. Like the French in 1940, we were superbly ready: they for World War I, and we for another Korean War.

#### NOTES

1. A. J. Bacevich, "The Limits of Orthodoxy: The Use of Force After the Cold War," paper presented before the Aspen Institute Conference on the Use of Force in the Post-Cold War Era, Aspen, Colorado, 14-19 August 1994, pp. 19-20.

2. Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Bottom-Up Review: An Assessment* (Washington: Defense Budget Project, 1994), pp. 41-44.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

4. Eric Schmitt, "Military and Budget Office Duel Over Surprise Expenses," *The New York Times*, 18 January 1995, p. A19.

5. David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1972).

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# A Flame Kept Burning: Counterinsurgency Support After the Cold War

STEVEN METZ

The insurgents of the world are sleeping. Outside the former Soviet Union, few new insurgencies have emerged since the end of the Cold War, and many old ones, from the Philippines to Peru, from Mozambique to El Salvador, from Northern Ireland to Israel, are lurching toward political settlement. But sleep is not death—it is a time for rejuvenation. Since the means and the motives for protracted political violence persist, it will prove as attractive to the discontented of the world in the post-Cold War global security environment as it did before. Eventually insurgency will awaken. When it does, the United States will be required to respond.

Since the late 1940s, the importance of counterinsurgency in American national security strategy has ebbed and flowed. Often it was not considered strategically significant and the defense community paid it little attention. When the President did decide that insurgency posed a threat, as during the Kennedy and first Reagan administrations, the military and the defense community had to craft or update an appropriate conceptual framework, organization, and doctrine. Like a phoenix, American counterinsurgency capability periodically died, only to be reborn from the ashes. One determinant of this process was how the period of remission was spent. When a cadre of counterinsurgency experts within the military and defense community used it to ponder past efforts and analyze the changing nature of insurgency, the reconstitution of understanding and capability was relatively easy.

Today, there is no pressing strategic rationale for US engagement in counterinsurgency, but history suggests that if the United States remains involved in the Third World, one may emerge. This is the time, then, for

introspection, assessment, and reflection—for keeping the intellectual flame burning. Just as combat units train after an operation in order to prepare for future ones (while hoping they never occur), the US military and other elements of the defense community must train mentally for future counterinsurgency. To do this now will shorten the period of learning and adaptation should counterinsurgency support again become an important part of our national security strategy.

### *The Post-Cold War Security Environment*

The evolution of US counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine has been shaped by Vietnam and El Salvador. After Vietnam, specialists considered the essence of US counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine sound, but concluded that it had not been applied properly in Southeast Asia. US counterinsurgency support in El Salvador thus did not require a radical revision of either strategy or doctrine, but simply better application.<sup>1</sup> This was correct. Despite some stark differences, Vietnam and El Salvador both occurred within the same strategic environment. In terms of the broad nature of the threat and the wider geostrategic concerns that shaped American decisionmaking, Vietnam and El Salvador shared more features than not.

Today, US counterinsurgency strategy continues to assume that the wisdom gained in Southeast Asia and Central America holds. El Salvador is thought to have proven the correctness of our strategy and doctrine. “The El Salvador experience,” Victor Rosello writes, “generally validated the US Army’s Foreign Internal Defense doctrine in countering insurgency.”<sup>2</sup> But future counterinsurgency may not emulate the past; the similarities between Vietnam and El Salvador may be much greater than those between El Salvador and what comes after it. Since the strategic environment determines the form and salience of insurgency, the United States now needs to revise its counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine. Some trends in the post-Cold War strategic environment may inhibit insurgency; others will simply force it to mutate. Many of them, though, will alter the strategic calculus for the United States, leading policymakers to reconsider where, when, why, and how they engage in counterinsurgency support.

In his seminal book *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Samuel Huntington argued that political development entails the creation and mainte-

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nance of institutions capable of dealing with demands on the state.<sup>3</sup> The contemporary Third World is undergoing mitosis, splitting into those able to craft adaptive and viable institutions and those unable to do so. Success at institution-building is manifested in the global trend toward democracy.<sup>4</sup> Since functioning democracies are less susceptible to insurgency, even if not altogether exempt, this is good news. Failed institution-building results, at best, in the division of states into sub-national units with security the purview of warlords and militias. At worst, the outcome is anarchy and a Hobbesian war of all against all.

Robert Kaplan, among others, contends that the trend toward anarchy will eventually win out and much of the Third World will see "the withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war."<sup>5</sup> Afghanistan, where "there is no civil law, no government, no economy—only guns and drugs and anger," may portend the Third World's future.<sup>6</sup>

While political results are mixed, macroeconomic trends favor fragmentation over sustainable democracy. Despite the economic take-off of a few states, most of the Third World seems unable to sustain a level of economic growth able to keep pace with population. The transformation to democracy can take place in a stagnant economy, but it cannot be sustained.

A second related trend is the routinization of violence. Crime becomes omnipresent. While crime is growing in nearly all countries, this trend is most threatening in developing countries where un- and underemployment are epidemic and police forces are overwhelmed, ineffective, or corrupt. In much of the Third World, walls topped by concertina wire and backed by elaborate alarm systems are standard on even middle-class homes. In poorer neighborhoods, dirt-floored, single-room houses have thick bars on the windows. More and more businesses have their own heavily armed guards. In Panama, for instance, one sees frozen yogurt shops protected by men with M-16s.

Worse yet, the global routinization of violence has spawned entire generations for whom protracted conflict is normal. Whether in Lebanon, Gaza, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, or Liberia, youth see violence not as an aberration, but as an intrinsic part of life. It takes little to spark insurgency in such a context.

On the positive side, the end of the Cold War delegitimized the sponsorship of insurgency as an element of a state's national security policy. Only pariah states like Iran dabble in exporting insurgency and terrorism. The end of the Cold War also allowed a surge in the ability of the United Nations to cobble together coalitions for peacekeeping and to broker negotiated solutions to conflict.

The end of the Cold War did not end the US commitment to global engagement, but it has led us to redefine national interests. American leaders have long had little tolerance for military casualties in areas without clear

national interests—witness Reagan’s withdrawal from Beirut. With the demise of the superpower competition, the areas and issues worth spilling blood for have shrunk.

### *The Changing Nature of Insurgency*

As the strategic environment changes, insurgency itself is mutating. Maoist “people’s war,” after all, was a reflection of the Cold War security environment. Now new forms of insurgency appear to be emerging. Distilled to its essence, a revolutionary strategy includes goals and methods. The goals of Maoist “people’s war” were the seizure of political power and the revolutionary transformation of the political and economic systems. Its methods were political and guerrilla warfare, followed if necessary by conventional military action. Post-Cold War insurgents may seek political, social, and economic transformation that is revolutionary in its extent, but not necessarily revolutionary in the Marxist sense of building a new system. For instance, reactionary insurgency, in which a religious-based group attempts to seize power from a secular, modernizing government—as the Iranians did in 1979—may be common. In some ways this will also emulate Cold War revolutionary insurgency in that legitimacy will be the focus, control of the state the goal, and external support important. Tactically, however, future reactionary insurgents will largely be urban with an emphasis on terrorism rather than on rural guerrilla war. This type of insurgency will be most dangerous if it again becomes a technique of interstate conflict, with external sponsors using insurgency to weaken an opponent.

Other post-Cold War insurgent movements will not seek to seize the state in order to change the political, social, and economic system. Many regions of the Global South will suffer from what Larry Cable calls “defensive” insurgency, where some subgroup within a state, whether ethnic, tribal, racial, or religious, seeks autonomy or outright independence.<sup>7</sup> Given the extent of primal conflict in the post-Cold War world, such secessionist-separatist insurgencies may be the dominant form during the next decade. This form is also the closest to traditional “people’s war,” since the insurgents will place great stock in the creation of “liberated zones.” But where Maoists based mobilization and support on political ideology, secessionist insurgents will use primal ties. This will alter the essence of counterinsurgency. When the opponent was Maoist, the government could build legitimacy by offering the people a better deal than the insurgents. When the roots of the conflict are primal, with the government controlled by a different group than the insurgents, legitimacy will be extraordinarily difficult, perhaps impossible, for the regime to win. As bitter struggles in Peru and Guatemala have shown, the tendency will be for the government to consider all members of the group supporting the insurgency as enemies. And from a regional perspective, secessionist-



separatist insurgencies will be particularly dangerous since they can easily spill over state borders.

What can be called commercial insurgency also will pose security threats without seeking the outright seizure of state power.<sup>8</sup> Commercial insurgency will be a form of what is becoming known as “gray area phenomena”—powerful criminal organizations with a political veneer and the ability to threaten national security rather than just law and order.<sup>9</sup> In fact, many commercial insurgencies may see an alliance of those for whom political objectives are preeminent and the criminal dimension simply a necessary evil, and those for whom the accumulation of wealth through crime is the primary objective and politics simply a rhetorical veneer to garner some support that they might not otherwise gain. It is this political component that distinguishes commercial insurgents from traditional organized crime. Most often, though, commercial insurgencies probably will not attempt to rule the state but will seek instead a compliant regime that allows them to pursue criminal activity unimpeded. If that is impossible, they will use persistent violence to weaken and distract the state. In many ways, commercial insurgency has the longest historic lineage—quasi-political bandits and pirates, from Robin Hood to Carlos Lehder, have posed pervasive security threats throughout history. Better-organized commercial insurgents will rely on such activities as the production and shipment of drugs. Anarchic commercial insurgents such as the current rebel movements in Sierra Leone and Liberia will simply loot.<sup>10</sup>

Another emerging form of insurgency will be aimed at multinational political organizations and military forces attempting to stabilize failed states. These will emulate anticolonial conflicts in Algeria, Angola, and the first phase of Vietnam as the insurgents play on nationalism and, to an extent, racial divisions. Since public support in the nations providing the multinational force will often be precarious or weak, the insurgents will need only to create instability and cause casualties among the multinational force. Somalia is a prototype for this new type of insurgency.

Within this array of goals, the methods used by insurgents will vary according to the nature of the regime they oppose and the extent of their support network. If the legitimacy of the regime is weak, insurgents may follow something like Maoist techniques. If the regime is a democracy with at least moderately strong legitimacy, insurgents may pursue what US Army doctrine calls “subversive insurgency.” This will combine a legitimate, above-ground element participating in the political process and an underground using political or criminal violence to weaken or delegitimize the government. It thus can also be called camouflaged insurgency. The insurgents will camouflage the connection between the above-ground and underground elements for two reasons. They will try to avoid alienating potential allies opposed to the regime but not in favor of violence, and they will seek to complicate attempts by the government to obtain outside assistance. It is much easier for a regime to

acquire international support to fight an avowed revolutionary insurgency than to oppose a camouflaged insurgency that gives all the appearance of general disorder or widespread crime. When the underground element does destabilize the state and the above-ground element seizes power, the immediate problem for the new government will be reining in its violent wing. It will first attempt cooptation. Failing that, the government will have all of the intelligence needed to violently crush the underground, thus cementing its legitimacy by bringing order and stability.

For the United States, subversive insurgencies may pose intractable strategic problems because they will strike at fragile democracies, and because their covert nature will make early intervention difficult. Like many forms of insurgency, camouflaged insurgency will be difficult to recognize until it is so far developed that cures are painful.

### *The Changing Strategic Calculus*

In combination, changes in the strategic environment and mutations in insurgency undercut the basic assumptions of US counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine. For example, during the Cold War, American policymakers often assumed that the costs of not acting when a friendly government faced a Marxist insurgency outweighed the potential risks and costs of engagement. In the post-Cold War strategic environment, this may hold only when insurgents intend to destabilize their neighbors. Marxism was a proselytizing ideology. From Leon Trotsky to Daniel Ortega, its adherents linked their own political survival to spreading the revolution. Future insurgents may not automatically come to the same conclusion, particularly if they see that destabilizing neighbors and spreading the insurgency is likely to provoke serious international involvement, making them less, rather than more, secure.

This prospect carries important implications for the United States. Victory by non-proselytizing insurgents, even those ideologically hostile to the United States, is unlikely to threaten our interests. Existing policy and strategy suggest two reasons for US concern for insurgency. One is an updated "domino theory." If most post-Cold War insurgents do not seek to spread violence, however, this argument weakens. It is also true that it is easier to contain a radical state run by former insurgents than to prevent insurgent victory. The other reason for American concern is access to raw materials and markets. But, as Benjamin S. Schwarz writes, "America's essential interests very rarely depend upon which group controls resources or power within underdeveloped countries. . . . [B]asic American economic interests seem relatively secure whatever happens politically in the Third World."<sup>11</sup> This does not mean that the United States has no economic interests in the Third World, but simply that who holds power there will have only a marginal effect on those interests. Since victorious insurgents must undertake post-conflict national reconstruction, they are unlikely to stop exporting raw materials. They may be

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***“Changes in the strategic environment and mutations in insurgency undercut the basic assumptions of US counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine.”***

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more likely to close their markets, but these are often insignificant anyway. And, even if victorious insurgents did deny the United States access to a resource or market, the costs to the United States would ultimately be less than the burden of protracted counterinsurgency support to regain access.

In the post-Cold War security environment, the costs and risks of counterinsurgency are increasingly altering the basic strategic calculus. Counterinsurgency always risks damaging the United States' credibility, either by association with a repressive or corrupt regime, or by staking our prestige on the outcome of a conflict and forcing us to choose between the economic costs of engagement or the political costs of disengagement. Put simply, a government in serious danger of defeat by an insurgency is often a bad ally. Hypothetically, we could engage in counterinsurgencies only where the beleaguered government is not so bad. But this is extraordinarily difficult, mostly because of the way the United States usually becomes involved in counterinsurgency. Rather than making a rational cost-benefit assessment and then committing assistance until the end of the conflict, we stumble in and persist as the political costs of disengagement mount. During the Cold War, we often rushed in to bail out governments facing imminent defeat and then found that rather than a summer romance, we had entered a marriage. In the post-Cold War period, our involvement in counterinsurgency may grow out of peace operations, but it will still be inadvertent more often than not. The Clinton Administration's national security strategy does not specifically mention counterinsurgency other than "nation assistance" in Latin America, but its emphasis on global engagement, expanding democracy, and supporting peace operations opens the way for inadvertent involvement.<sup>12</sup>

American engagement in counterinsurgency also risks damaging the social, political, and economic system of the friendly state. For South Vietnam, our cure may not have been worse than the disease, but it was close. In El Salvador we were able to avoid damaging the state and society to the extent that we did in Vietnam, but a regime may eschew badly needed reform and negotiation with insurgents if it thinks American assistance will allow outright victory. It is possible that the Salvadoran military recognized that the collapse

of the Soviet Union spelled the end of massive US support, and thus finally allowed a negotiated settlement that could have been reached several years earlier. American involvement in counterinsurgency, then, is often like lending money to a chronic gambler—it postpones real resolution of the problem rather than solving it.

Counterinsurgency can also damage our own institutions and morale. The erosion of national purpose and respect for authority engendered by Vietnam has taken years to ameliorate and may never be fully cured. Future American engagement in counterinsurgency might also provoke domestic terrorism. With easy global transportation, the existence of a variety of emigre communities in the United States, and a perception of the American public's unwillingness to accept casualties from peripheral conflicts, insurgents could open an "American front" and target public health, financial networks, communications systems, and the ecology.

During the Cold War, the United States assumed that only we were willing and able to provide effective counterinsurgency support. This was always questionable. Often the British and French better understood revolutionary insurgency than we did. And other states proved to be effective suppliers of counterinsurgency support, such as the Israelis and Taiwanese in Guatemala. In the post-Cold War security environment, the most effective counterinsurgency support may come from military institutions with extensive experience either as counterinsurgents—the South Africans, Israelis, Peruvians, Filipinos, Colombians, and Salvadorans, for instance—or those such as the Zimbabweans which were once insurgents themselves. Thus there may be others both willing and able to provide counterinsurgency support in the post-Cold War security environment. US effort might be better spent augmenting the planning, intelligence, sustainment, and mobility capabilities of such regional counterinsurgents than directly aiding a threatened regime.

Finally, our Cold War-era counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine assumed we understood insurgency better than the threatened regime. Whether this was true or not, there is little evidence that we fully grasp the motives, fears, and hopes driving emerging forms of insurgency. We are particularly likely to fail against insurgents driven by intangible motives like justice, dignity, and the attainment of personal meaning and identity. If, in Martin van Creveld's words, "future war will be waged for the souls of men," the United States will face overwhelming difficulties in counterinsurgency.<sup>13</sup> As our limited experience with "holy terrorists" in the Middle East shows, we are ill-equipped to deal with the root causes of religion-driven violence.<sup>14</sup>

In the post-Cold War strategic environment, then, counterinsurgency is increasingly becoming a high risk/low benefit activity. The US military and defense community must make policymakers aware of this while simultaneously watching for changes in the strategic calculus.

## ***Conclusions***

American counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine must be revised to reflect the post-Cold War strategic environment. Because counterinsurgency is not a central element of our current national security strategy, such revision must deal with broad concepts rather than specifics, thus paving the way for a reconstitution of capability should the strategic calculus change and a new rationale for counterinsurgency emerge.

The first step should be conceptual expansion. Our notion of insurgency itself must be expanded to reflect the complexity of the new security environment. The first post-Cold War revision of FM 100-20—now called *Operations Other Than War*—recognizes the variegation of insurgency that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. While continuing to emphasize Maoist “people’s war,” the manual pays greater attention to urban and subversive insurgency than its predecessors. It also stresses that US neutrality in insurgencies “will be the norm.” The new doctrine, though, still argues that “success in counterinsurgency goes to the party that achieves the greater popular support,” thus continuing to view Third World conflict as a contest with Western notions of rationality.<sup>15</sup> It does not offer advice on how to deal with gray area phenomena, “irrational” enemies for whom violence is not a means to political ends, or what Ralph Peters calls “the new warrior class”—“erratic primitives of shifting allegiance, habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order.”<sup>16</sup>

John Keegan points out that cultures like the United States with a Clausewitzian belief in the connection of war and politics often have difficulty comprehending, much less defeating, opponents with other motives.<sup>17</sup> It is the job of experts in the military and defense community to help overcome this tendency. Some movement in this direction has taken place. New joint doctrine, for instance, states that foreign internal defense “has traditionally been focused on defeating an organized movement attempting to overthrow the government,” but in the future “may address other threats.” Threats such as civil disorder, narcotrafficking, and terrorism “may, in fact, predominate in the future as traditional power centers shift, suppressed cultural and ethnic rivalries surface, and the economic incentives of illegal drug-trafficking continue.”<sup>18</sup> To transcend the conceptual limits of the Cold War, insurgency should be considered as simply protracted, organized violence—whether revolutionary or nonrevolutionary, political or nonpolitical, and open or clandestine—which threatens security and requires a government response.

The second step should be the building of consensus on basic principles. Given the post-Cold War security environment, four principles seem appropriate. One is rigid selectivity. The key factor when the United States considers engaging in counterinsurgency support is whether the threatened state and regime warrants the effort. During the Cold War, the simple fact that a noncommunist regime faced a communist challenge led us to engage in counterinsur-

gency support. In the post-Cold War world, we can and must be much more discerning. The international system is not domestic society where every citizen, no matter how reprehensible, deserves assistance. We should, in other words, consider providing counterinsurgency support only when the threatened state is an existing democracy rather than a potential one. Of course our standards for defining democracy must be somewhat flexible, but not to the point of emptiness.

The second principle of our post-Cold War counterinsurgency strategy should be multilateralism. When engaging in counterinsurgency, we should engineer an international support coalition both to enlarge the assistance available to the threatened state and to avoid staking US credibility on the outcome of the conflict. Even though American counterinsurgency strategy has long called for multinational efforts, we seldom attempted to be “one among equals” but instead formed hierarchical coalitions where we clearly bore the brunt of the effort.<sup>19</sup> Horizontal coalitions should be the way of the future. We might lead such coalitions in the Western Hemisphere, but rely on others elsewhere.

The third principle should be concentration on secondary support. We could lead the way in deterring, isolating, and punishing external sponsors of insurgency. Within a multinational counterinsurgency support coalition, we should focus on our special skills and provide intelligence, mobility, planning support, and psychological operations training rather than massive financial assistance or tactical training and advice. In general we should be a second-tier supporter providing assistance to regional states with greater experience in counterinsurgency and a more direct stake in a conflict (thus making them more likely to persist in a protracted struggle). After all, one of the things that made the Soviet Union effective in sponsoring insurgency was reliance on surrogates like Cuba and North Vietnam. The United States should heed this example.

The fourth principle of our post-Cold War counterinsurgency strategy should be organizational coherence. The United States may need a new organization to confront new forms of insurgency. With the exception of secessionist-separatist insurgency, all post-Cold War forms will be far removed from the Army’s traditional areas of expertise and will be more police functions than military ones. The Army should thus encourage the formation of a permanent civil-military cadre of experts with a strong emphasis on law enforcement and intelligence collection and analysis. Rod Paschall’s argument that Western military forces are not proficient at counterinsurgency and should be replaced by “an international corporation composed of former Western officers and soldiers skilled in acceptable counterinsurgency techniques” rings even truer today than when written in 1990.<sup>20</sup>

What can the Army do to speed reconstitution should policymakers again deem counterinsurgency strategically significant? Working closely with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, the Army should use its intellectual resources to “keep the flame burning,” at least at a low level. Sponsored research, symposia, workshops,

conferences, discussion papers, working groups, publications, and debate in the Army educational system can contribute to this. The wargames, planning exercises, and case studies used in the Army's professional educational system should consider commercial, subversive, and spiritual insurgency as well as Maoist "people's war." The Army also should make sure it retains a cadre of counterinsurgency experts within its ranks during downsizing. If we are lucky, no strategic rationale for extensive US involvement in counterinsurgency will emerge and this cadre will never be activated. But it is the fate of the military to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. With clear thinking now, the Army can be ready to offer effective advice should the strategic environment change and the United States once again see a rationale for major involvement in counterinsurgency support.

#### NOTES

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# National Strategic Guidance: Do We Need a Standard Format?

EDWARD J. FILIBERTI

**I**n February 1944, a directive from the Combined Chiefs to General Dwight D. Eisenhower defined in a few brief sentences the task for what became the largest amphibious invasion in the history of warfare:

Task. You will enter the continent of Europe and in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces. The date for entering the Continent is the month of May, 1944. After adequate channel ports have been secured, exploitation will be directed towards securing an area that will facilitate both ground and air operations.<sup>1</sup>

The clarity, simplicity, and focus of the directive are remarkable. Military leaders would agree that such quality guidance is essential to the successful prosecution of war. But what of the national strategic direction currently given to our military and other departments and agencies? Is it not just as essential? How is this multi-agency strategic guidance formulated and issued, and does it routinely convey the necessary information to successfully wage a war? The potentially disastrous consequences of strategic failure demand an answer to these questions and an examination of both the process and product of national strategic guidance formulation.

Much has been said and written about the need to define and balance the ends, ways, and means of war before entering into a conflict. Yet, for all the importance placed upon a sound strategic concept, little has been written about the essential elements of strategic guidance. This article examines the current system for formulating strategic guidance at the national level and assesses the quality of that guidance. It then describes the essential elements of strategic guidance. Finally, it proposes a format that can facilitate the



formulation and communication of comprehensive strategic guidance from the National Security Council to the executing federal departments and agencies.

### *The System*

Strategic decisionmaking is an incredibly complex activity. Consider this description by former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld:

Given the nature of our world, there are very few issues that are single department or single agency. For example, the matter of selling grain to Poland is simultaneously a matter of interest for the Departments of Agriculture, Treasury, State, and Labor, and for congressional relations, the general counsel, and probably several other departments and agencies. So it is not possible to turn government over to the cabinet and expect it to work. Coordination is needed. That is the responsibility of the White House. It falls essentially on the NSC to serve as the coordinator for the principal participants in the national security and foreign policy decision-making process, namely, State, Defense, CIA, ACDA, the Chiefs. But it also involves the analysis of foreign defense policy with considerations relating to economic policy and domestic policy.<sup>2</sup>

Strategic guidance, formulated and issued at the highest levels of the US government, is developed within a system that has specific participants, structures, and processes. Let us examine this system from two perspectives: that of the staff agency and decisionmakers who devise and publish the guidance, and that of the organizations and leaders who receive and implement the guidance.

#### *The National Security Council System*

Joint Publication O-2 states that "the President of the United States, advised by the National Security Council, is responsible to the American people for national security unity of effort."<sup>3</sup> The National Security Council (NSC), currently composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, and other designated cabinet and subcabinet officials, is the principal forum for formulating, approving, and disseminating strategic guidance at the national level.<sup>4</sup> The NSC system includes the members of the council and the council staff, any supporting interagency committees, and their defined procedures.

The system's active participants, procedures, policies, and document names and contents are determined by each administration. They vary according to the nature of a crisis, the personalities involved, and the types of

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decisions required.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, the NSC system usually experiences major changes following the election of a new President. Each new administration publishes a decision memorandum establishing and defining the NSC system and outlining the basic structure of interagency decisionmaking. These memoranda are broad in scope and do not directly address the actual form and content of strategic guidance nor the elements of that guidance.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, strategic guidance issued by the NSC varies significantly from one administration to another and, within a given administration, from crisis to crisis.

A critique of the nuances, differences, and scope of national policy formulation, approval, and dissemination peculiar to each administration is beyond the scope of this article. In most recent administrations, however, policy formulation has been increasingly managed by the NSC using interagency working groups or committees, some permanent and others temporary, chaired by the National Security Advisor, Vice President, NSC principal, or appropriate Assistant-Secretary-level official.<sup>7</sup>

Two general categories of strategic guidance emerge from this process: long-term strategic policy guidance and short-term strategic decision directives.<sup>8</sup> The first type addresses long-term policy objectives with either a worldwide perspective on an important issue or a long-term assessment of strategy in a specific region. It may also outline key national interests, values, and objectives. This guidance may be published in the National Security Strategy (NSS) or in memoranda written, coordinated, and distributed by the NSC staff, such as the guidance on the Strategic Defense Initiative (NSDD 85) or Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (PDD 25). Generally, the guidance provides continuity in foreign policy as it focuses, coordinates, and directs the various governmental organizations in applying their respective instruments of national power (military, economic, diplomatic, and informational) to meet strategic goals and objectives.

Emerging crises or short-notice events normally generate the second type of guidance. In response to a crisis, the NSC or a special interagency planning group conducts time-sensitive analyses, determines appropriate actions, and issues strategic guidance through approved decision directives. They may also approve proposed courses of action or on-the-shelf contingency plans. These two types of guidance generally constitute the written directives that guide the execution of US national security activities.

Within this system and over time, memoranda and directives assume a predictable form as an administration formulates, coordinates, and publishes strategic guidance for similar activities. Because there are no formalized decision criteria or standard formats for issuing strategic guidance, the thoroughness and quality of that guidance varies substantially from document to document, from crisis to crisis, and from administration to administration.<sup>9</sup> The resultant products reflect a process that lacks both a standardized structure and a set of relevant factors to be considered and communicated before committing US elements of

power.<sup>10</sup> What emerges is strategic guidance that tends "to reflect a lowest common denominator of agency positions, or an incoherent compromise of partly or wholly inconsistent views."<sup>11</sup> The guidance is usually so vague that powerful and sometimes recalcitrant bureaucratic agencies are free to pursue their own independent and often conflicting policies.<sup>12</sup> On occasion, this has contributed to disaster as strategies emerge from the interagency process with ill-defined ends, flawed concepts, or insufficient means.<sup>13</sup>

### *The Executing Agencies*

The NSC is the sole agency of the Executive Branch that can issue authoritative directives to all government agencies.<sup>14</sup> The participating government agencies and departments respond to the NSC and, in turn, devise implementing plans and direct their subordinate elements in the execution of their portions of the strategy. Incomplete strategic guidance requires agencies to continually supplement their initial concepts or frequently respond to inquiries from their field elements. In this manner, effective operations become dependent, in part, upon the internal communications channels of the various agencies controlling and monitoring their subordinate elements outside of Washington. Morton Halperin, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and member of the NSC staff, describes how the process can be utterly ineffective:

Presidential decisions vary in specificity. They are often conveyed only in policy statements expressing a sentiment or intention. The statements may indicate in general that certain kinds of action should be taken but not say who should take them. Even if they do specify the actor, they seldom indicate when the action should be taken or the details of how it should be done. In fact the instructions are so vague as to leave all the actors free to continue behaving as they have in the past.<sup>15</sup>

Wide differences in agency internal procedures and communications capabilities complicate the dissemination of strategic guidance and the augmentation of that guidance once their subordinate elements are deployed. The Department of Defense, for example, has specific, well-defined internal procedures that address both deliberate planning and the crisis-action process as well as detailed reporting requirements that facilitate control. The department has standardized formats for issuing strategic military guidance to the Commanders in Chief of combatant commands. Conversely, the Department of State, despite having a formal organization and specific message protocols, has no established format for issuing guidance while directing diplomatic strategies in support of the national strategy.<sup>16</sup> Other participating government and nongovernmental agencies may have neither formal organizational structures nor standard communications procedures.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, DOD activities and compliance are much easier to direct and monitor, while other agencies may or may not have adequate lines of authority, communications, or reporting systems.

Carnes Lord, a former NSC staff member, highlights this incongruence: "What has perhaps been most neglected is the impact on national-level decision-making of the institutional fragmentation and lack of communication that characterizes the national security bureaucracy outside of Washington."<sup>18</sup> This fragmentation is aggravated by diverse agency cultures, philosophies, goals, organizational mismatches, political agendas, and competing policies that all serve to impede voluntary cooperation. Thus, the synchronization of the multitude of agencies involved in the execution of strategy depends necessarily on initial NSC guidance, the voluntary cooperation of disparate agencies, or active NSC control through fragmented channels. The nature of this system places an even greater reliance on the initial strategic guidance.

The NSC and subordinate agencies combine to create a disjointed system that depends on consensus, informal relationships, and loose inter-agency coordination. All too frequently, the strategy reflects the process. Comprehensive strategic guidance could offset the seemingly dysfunctional activities of the diverse players in the NSC system. Ideal guidance would ensure that opportunities for enhancing our national security posture would not be missed through a lack of strategic direction or by a requirement to compromise with other agencies all subject to the authority of the NSC. The required unity of effort can be established only by the President; that effort necessarily depends upon adequate and complete strategic guidance. Could a standardized form for disseminating guidance improve the process?

### ***Requirement for a Standard Format***

From 1981 through 1983, Carnes Lord was Director of International Communications and Information Policy on the National Security Council Staff. In his words,

Little systematic analysis seems to have been devoted to the question of the character of presidential decision documents on national security issues and their handling . . . . Generally speaking, there is little evidence of consistency in the occasion, the purpose, the format, or the specificity of NSDDs . . . . It would make sense to consider whether a wider range of documents ought to be available to the President for the dissemination of decisions of different types and levels of specificity and classification, with more rigorously defined formats to improve integration of presidential decisionmaking and facilitate implementation.<sup>19</sup>

Formats have long been used in organizations to facilitate communications.<sup>20</sup> They provide a common framework for the inclusion and transmittal of essential elements of information that apply to similar situations. Although formats do not guarantee quality, they can ensure that guidance is comprehensive and facilitate the communication of task-oriented information. Through the use of standard formats, composers and recipients know in advance the sequence in which information is to be provided. This allows senders and

receivers to simultaneously reason through deductive or, depending on the sequence, inductive thought processes to define both the general situation and their specific task requirements.<sup>21</sup> Standard formats also permit the deliberate sequencing of elements of information relative to their importance.<sup>22</sup> The adoption of a standard format for strategic guidance by the NSC could assist in the formulation of a more complete strategy and improve the comprehension of that strategy by the agencies required to carry out its provisions.<sup>23</sup>

The end of the Cold War has brought about a less dangerous but perhaps more complex world. Major Ralph Peters argues convincingly in his recent article "After the Revolution," that the United States and the military will be increasingly involved in "filthy missions" that will require multi-agency involvement that will routinely exceed the normal doctrinal roles and charters of all involved in the missions. These missions may include operations against transnational criminal, terrorist, fundamentalist, and political organizations that do not conform to standard foreign policy approaches.<sup>24</sup> The National Security Strategy of "Engagement and Enlargement" also has increased the frequency of US involvement in such missions and placed a greater emphasis on the roles of nonmilitary government agencies and nongovernmental agencies. The effective coordination of these agencies in unified, joint, and combined operations across the spectrum of conflict is becoming more frequent and complex. It is also essential to achieving national objectives. This strategic environment portends an even greater need for complete and comprehensive strategic guidance and supports the adoption of a standard format.

### *The Elements of Strategic Guidance*

General Albert C. Wedemeyer, principal author of the Army's strategic plan for World War II, spoke of an approach to strategy that remains appropriate today:

Strategy properly conceived . . . seemed to me to require a transcendence of the narrowly military perspectives that the term traditionally implied. Strategy required a systematic consideration and use of all the so-called instruments of policy—political, economic, psychological, et cetera, as well as military—in pursuing national objectives. Indeed, the nonmilitary factors deserved unequivocal priority over the military, the latter to be employed only as a last resort.<sup>25</sup>

Strategic guidance should provide elements of information that the appropriate government departments and agencies need if they are to take coordinated action and achieve the desired strategic objectives. These elements become apparent from an analysis of the theoretical requirements for directing strategic action, from the considerations and rationale for engagements outlined in the current National Security Strategy, and from an examination of the military's joint doctrine information requirements.

### *Theoretical Elements of Strategic Guidance*

In theory, a coherent and effective national security strategy would efficiently align and balance the strategic ends, ways, and means in pursuit of our national interests and in consonance with our societal values.<sup>26</sup> The JCS defines national security strategy as:

the art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military, informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security. It encompasses national defense, foreign relations, and economic relations and assistance; and [it] aims, among other objectives, at providing a favorable foreign relations position, and a defense posture capable of defeating hostile action.<sup>27</sup>

Logically then, guidance should address at the strategic level the ends, ways, and means for carrying out national security strategy. When specifying the ways, strategic guidance should direct and synchronize the activities of the appropriate agencies responsible for employing the diplomatic, economic, military, and informational elements of power.

The selected strategy also should provide the rationale for the policy by explaining the “why” of the strategic concept. The rationale for strategic engagements frequently allows the executing agencies to anticipate strategic direction by defining and describing the overall intent of the engagement. In this regard, one analyst has pointed out, “Often, it is not that the official is totally uninformed or that he completely misunderstands his orders. Rather, he has no way of grasping the nuances behind decisions, no guidance as to why he is told to do what he has been told to do.”<sup>28</sup> Although critical, the “why” is only one part of the full range of information elements. As Wedemeyer observed, generally a strategist must “answer the traditional questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how.”<sup>29</sup> Conceptually, these constitute the total elements of a strategic concept. They are inclusive. What remains is to focus these elements as they pertain to strategic engagement.

### *Strategic Guidance Implications in the National Security Strategy*

The February 1995 National Security Strategy directs that US forces will be prepared and deployed “to support US diplomacy in responding to key dangers—those posed by weapons of mass destruction, regional aggression, and threats to the stability of states.”<sup>30</sup> The strategy defines the general principles regarding whether, when, and how forces will be employed. More specifically,

- The strategy specifies that decisions to use force are to be related to the degree of importance of the area or crisis to our national interests (vital, important, and humanitarian), and it specifies that a decision to intervene militarily will depend on the appropriateness of the use of armed forces and the degree of risk.

- The strategy calls for weighing the costs and benefits of the use of military force and outlines a series of rhetorical questions that should be answered before committing forces. These questions are designed to:

- ♦ address the alternative use of nonmilitary means;
- ♦ specify a clearly defined and achievable mission;
- ♦ compare the risks and costs of intervention with the resources required to achieve the strategic goals;
- ♦ assess the support of the American people and their elected representatives for a military intervention; and
- ♦ specify the criteria for success or failure and define an exit strategy.

- The strategy describes the general principles influencing how force will be used and the factors guiding unilateral or multilateral action.<sup>31</sup>

These considerations generally provide the rationale for involvement in an area or crisis and answer certain aspects of *why* a mission is being undertaken and certain aspects of *how* the selected strategy is to achieve the stated goals. Analysis and resolution of ambiguities related to these considerations is essential information for the executing agencies. Although the NSS procedures provide a reasonable foundation for establishing a common format for transmitting presidential guidance and decisions, the information needs of the military's joint doctrine require a greater degree of specificity than that anticipated by the NSC.

#### *Joint Doctrine's Specified Strategic Guidance Requirements*

Related to the theoretical and inferred elements of strategic guidance are the requirements outlined in current US military doctrine. The Joint Staff identifies the essential strategic requirements of the National Command Authority in JCS Pub 3-0. These requirements provide valuable insights into what guidance DOD requires to execute national strategy. According to joint doctrine, the National Command Authority should ensure that:

- (1) Military objectives to be achieved are defined, understood, and achievable.
- (2) Active service forces are ready for combat and Reserve component forces are appropriately mobilized and readied to join active forces.
- (3) Intelligence systems and efforts focus on the operational area, including opposing nations and their armed forces.
- (4) *Strategic direction is current and timely.*
- (5) Defense and other governmental agencies support the [joint force commander's] employment of forces.
- (6) The CONUS base and other combatant commands are ready to provide needed support.
- (7) Allies and coalition partners are available when appropriate.
- (8) Forces and supplies deploy into the operational area in a timely manner to support the [joint force commander's] concept of operation.<sup>32</sup>

These eight essential elements of joint warfighting requirements provide a good starting point for determining what guidance the National Security Council should provide to government departments and agencies. Although many of the elements pertain to other than DOD activities, the above list does not include the requirements of all involved agencies. Additionally, the NSC is not obligated, nor has it felt compelled, to conform to the doctrine of its subordinate Defense Department. Thus, there is a need for a standard format that subsumes the requirements of the Defense Department and other participating agencies and routinely provides adequate and comprehensive guidance.

The foregoing theoretical requirements, combined with strategic engagement principles and military doctrinal needs, provide the basis for establishing a format for strategic guidance. What remains is to determine how best to package the essential elements of information in a format acceptable to the NSC and federal departments and agencies. The format should facilitate the formulation of comprehensive strategic guidance for interagency coordination of crisis response or long-range planning activities.

### ***Proposed Format for Strategic Guidance***

It is beyond the scope of this article to provide an inclusive format that could apply to all government and nongovernmental organizations for every crisis or engagement. Not every decision directive must address in detail all eight elements of the format proposed below, but none of the eight categories should be ignored in providing strategic guidance. The nature of the engagement, the amount of time for analysis, and the degree of prior planning may alter significantly the amount of detail required in guidance or directives. The description that follows does provide, however, representative types of the information required. Therefore, the types of information described in the following paragraphs should be provided in the preparation phase of an engagement or as soon as possible after an engagement has begun.

*1. Strategic Context.* At a minimum, this section should explain why an engagement is being considered. It should highlight the event, opportunity, or problem that led to the strategic action and why it is sufficiently important for the United States to be engaged. It should contain an assessment that provides an overview of the entire strategic situation while addressing the major influences on US alternatives. Content of this section could include US national interests and values at stake, the nature and intensity of the threat, conflicting or competing national interests in other regions, and an overview of the expected responses of other major actors who may have significant interests in the region or crisis.

*2. Engagement Objectives.* This section would address primarily what the engagement is to accomplish. It would specify the selected strategic objectives and should logically follow from the strategic context discussion. It also should portray a clear cause-and-effect relationship between the objectives



selected and the underlying rationale for engagement. For example, an objective presented as an "end state" condition would describe the social, political, economic, military, and geographical status of the nations to be affected by the engagement. If applicable, this section could include a hierarchical set of end states reflecting optimal to satisfactory completion conditions and an assessment of their corresponding risks. Desired or proposed end states should resolve the problems or realize the opportunities defined in the section on Strategic Context.

*3. Engagement Concept.* This section would address when, where, and how the engagement is to occur and outline the concept for achieving the specified objectives. It would record the NSC's concept of how the prescribed objectives are to be attained. This concept should synchronize all agencies in time and space, coordinating their efforts, sequencing phases, and establishing priorities. When appropriate, a subparagraph for each agency, describing its assigned tasks or its unique role in achieving the overall strategic objectives, should be included. This section might also include detailed instructions to the participating departments and agencies. For example, it might address to the military such issues as mobilization, increased readiness, and pre-hostility force deployments; it might address to intelligence agencies a discussion of space-based intelligence systems, in-country human intelligence sources, and area and opposing force analyses; for the Department of State it might address solidifying the support of allies and coalition partners, securing basing or overflight rights, or assessing the positions of other foreign nations. The foregoing are only representative of the range and variety of information required when developing the concept for interagency responses to presidential guidance or directive.

*4. Marshalling and Sustaining the National Will.* This section would focus on the domestic political environment. It should outline the concept for gaining and maintaining public support for the strategy. This portion could assign supporting public affairs tasks to governmental agencies consistent with the strategic concept. It also could indicate those aspects of the engagement that are not releasable to the public and establish the time or event that would trigger release of certain specified information. Finally, this section should assess the anticipated public response to likely or expected incidents associated with the execution of the strategic concept.

*5. Command and Control and Organizational Hierarchy.* This section would establish unity of effort for interagency planning and support at the national and international levels. It would establish lines of authority, responsibility, and reporting. It would designate the lead agency for the various phases of the strategic concept and the event or time that determines when responsibility as lead agency transfers.

*6. Constraints and Special Authorizations.* This section could specify any limitations on normal agency prerogatives and provide the rationale for their imposition. The rationale should explain in terms of cause and effect the relationship of the prevented activity to the predicted undesirable outcome. It

also should define operations that are precluded and specify the fundamentals for establishing rules of engagement. This portion of the guidance would establish any special authority required by a department, agency, or individual diplomat and would specify authority for targeting the opposing nation's national command authority, country infrastructure, or other special targets as appropriate. Finally, it would specify those activities for which planning and coordination have been delegated and others for which decision authority would be withheld at the NSC level.

*7. Strategy Review Criteria.* This section would establish specific and tangible criteria that would initiate a reassessment of the strategic engagement. It would set timelines and milestones for such a review, possibly indicating degrees of success or failure. This part also would specify measures of effectiveness to be used in monitoring and assessing the performance of the participating agencies. Finally, it would articulate exit criteria short of mission accomplishment in terms of the overall cost, declining public support, competing national interests, or possible emerging alternative threats to the national security.

*8. Strategic Contingency Options.* This section would address branches and sequels for the central strategic concept. Branches are activities or phases that pose a high risk or have a high degree of uncertainty that can be expected and planned for. They outline alternative strategies that might be pursued based upon changed circumstances. Sequels are potential follow-on strategies that take into account the possibilities of success, failure, or disengagement without a decision. Branches and sequels are necessarily related to the strategy review criteria. At a minimum, this section would provide the exit strategy for the engagement.

The above format was used during a Strategic Crises Exercise conducted at the Army War College in March 1995. It proved to be remarkably flexible and effective in use during the 10-day computer-based exercise. War College students who used the format expanded the specific elements listed here and focused the exercise guidance to address a broad range of world crises. The scenario of the exercise included two near-simultaneous major regional contingencies in North Africa and the Middle East, civil war in southern Africa, commerce raiding in the South Pacific, international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in Latin America, and peacekeeping and peacemaking operations in Eastern Europe. The format proved adaptable and facilitated the formulation and communication of strategic guidance for each of the various contingencies throughout the exercise.<sup>33</sup>

## ***Conclusions***

As the United States breaks new ground in "filthy missions" in support of a ubiquitous global strategy of engagement and enlargement, the clarity of our purpose, the unity of our effort, and the effective employment of our scarce resources will become paramount concerns of senior leaders. Effec-

tive strategic guidance is the sine qua non of workable foreign and defense policies. The consequences of failure at the strategic level are severe; Field Marshal Keitel pointed out at the Nuremberg trials that "a mistake in strategy can only be made good in the next war."<sup>34</sup>

The current ad hoc system of formulating strategic guidance is clearly not conducive to producing strategies appropriate to our foreign policy initiatives or responses to crises. American history is replete with tragic examples: Korea, the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, Beirut, Somalia. If we are to limit future strategic blunders, we need to rethink how we formulate, disseminate, and monitor the execution of national military strategy. Policymakers who place Americans in peril without a clear understanding of the strategic objectives—or what is necessary to attain those objectives—risk increasing the list of foreign policy failures. Lives will be sacrificed and too-soon forgotten as the institutional memory becomes absorbed either in the glory that envelops success or in the partisan political analyses of a failure.

Standardizing the format for preparing and communicating strategic guidance will not guarantee success. What it can do is provide a reasonably complete framework to help national leaders consider all relevant aspects of a proposed strategic engagement. Such a format also will facilitate the communication of those strategies to the agencies that must carry them out. Whether this format or an alternative is adopted, the policymaking apparatus must continue to refine its strategic planning system. When the United States acts, it should do so with clarity of purpose and unity of effort. Our country and its armed services deserve no less.

#### NOTES

1. Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, in the series *United States Army in World War II, The European Theater of Operations* (Washington: US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1951), p. 457.

2. Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., and Jacquelyn K. Davis, *National Security Decisions, The Participants Speak* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath/Lexington, 1990), p. 12.

3. Joint Publication 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)* (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J-7, 11 August 1994), p. 1-3.

4. The National Security Act of 1947, P.L. 253, 26 July 1947 and amendments of 1949, 1953, 1958 (Washington: GPO). The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of the CIA are formally designated as advisors. The "NSC system" also encompasses interagency working group activities as specified in the agency operating procedures and relevant presidential directives specifying policy formulation.

5. A detailed description of the NSC system and the variance between the Carter and Reagan Administrations is covered in detail in Christopher C. Shoemaker's *The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions*, Association of the United States Army, *The Land Warfare Papers*, No. 3 (Arlington, Va.: AUSA, Institute of Land Warfare, December 1989).

6. See Jimmy Carter, *Presidential Directive/NSC-2, The National Security Council System* (Washington: The White House, 1977); Ronald Reagan, *National Security Decision Directive Number 2: National Security Council Structure* (Washington: The White House, 1982); and William J. Clinton, *Presidential Decision Directive/PDD 2, Organization of the National Security Council* (Washington: The White House, 20 January 1993), hereinafter *PDD #2*.

7. The framework of the current NSC system is outlined in *PDD #2*, p. 3.

8. Carnes Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), pp. 94-102. Lord proposes six types of strategic planning: strategic intelligence, net assessment, long-term planning, short-term planning, resource allocation, and crisis planning. Of these, only long-term, short-term, and crisis

planning result in directives that are relevant to this analysis. Additionally, the differences in short-term and crisis strategic decision guidance requirements are not significant enough to warrant separate treatment.

9. The author attempted to obtain several decision directives for the most recent major strategic crises to analyze and empirically derive the required elements of strategic guidance and operative formats; however, the actual directives are classified and compartmentalized and could not be released. An official who has served in the NSC Records Branch since the beginning of Nixon's Administration was contacted by phone and provided the stated assessment. Phone interview with NSC records official, Topic: Formats for Decision Directives and Staff Procedures for the NSC, National Security Council Records and Access Branch, Old Executive Office Building, 17th and Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C., 18 October 1994.

10. Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics & Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1974), pp. 235-38. See also Lord, pp. 156-58.

11. Lord, p. 31.

12. Ibid. See also I. M. Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 158-60; and Halperin, p. 235.

13. A discussion of the effects of concurrence-seeking on defective policymaking at the NSC level and the corresponding foreign policy failures can be found in Glenn P. Hastedt, *American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, Future* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1991), p. 168.

14. Draft Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (First Draft) (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J-7, 31 January 1995), p. II-3.

15. Halperin, p. 235.

16. Interview with Marc A. Baas, Deputy Commandant for International Affairs, USAWC, Topic: Procedures and Message/Cable Formats for Internal State Department Communications to Ambassadors, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 21 October 1994. See also Halperin, pp. 239-41; and Lord, pp. 158-59.

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23. Robert E. Hunter, *Organizing for National Security*, in the *Significant Issues Series*, Vol. 10, No. 11 (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988), pp. 11, 42.

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25. Cited in Charles E. Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present, Writing the Victory Plan of 1941* (Washington: US Army, Center of Military History, 1990), p. 18, as quoted from Keith E. Eiler, "The Man Who Planned Victory: An Interview with Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer," *American Heritage*, 34 (No. 6, 1983), 38.

26. Former Army Chief of Staff General Maxwell D. Taylor defined strategy as "consisting of objectives, ways, and means." Cited in Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., *Military Strategy: Theory and Application* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 1993), p. 3.

27. Joint Pub 0-2, p. I-3.

28. Halperin, p. 240. See also Destler, p. 198.

29. Wedemeyer as quoted by Kirkpatrick, p. 60.

30. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (Washington: The White House, February 1995), p. 12.

31. Ibid, pp. 12-13.

32. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J7, 9 September 1993), p. I-9. Emphasis added.

33. Exercise brief-back, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 24 March 1995.

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# Nature's Eldest Law: A Survey of a Nation's Right To Act in Self-Defense

RICHARD G. MAXON

On 14 April 1993, Kuwaiti authorities uncovered an assassination plot against former US President George Bush.<sup>1</sup> This plot was to be carried out against President Bush during a three-day visit to Kuwait. From an intensive two-month investigation, the United States government determined that the explosive device contained features found only in bombs made by groups linked to Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Further, public statements by the Saddam Hussein government following the Gulf War claimed that Iraq would hunt down President Bush and punish him.<sup>3</sup> The United States concluded that the Iraqi Intelligence Service had been ordered to carry out the attack on President Bush. On 26 June 1993, President Clinton, claiming his actions were in self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, ordered the US military to launch an attack on the headquarters of the Iraqi Intelligence Service. Twenty-three cruise missiles were fired, destroying the headquarters and killing six people.<sup>4</sup> An assassination attempt by a foreign government against a former United States President: this was a clear case warranting a military response in self-defense. Or was it? The answer to this question is not as clear as it initially may seem.

With the increase in terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, border disputes, and ethnic unrest, it is becoming increasingly ambiguous when a nation may lawfully resort to the use of armed force for its self-defense and the defense of other nations.<sup>5</sup> Article 51 of the United Nations Charter attempts to codify the circumstances in which a nation may act in self-defense. Despite the express language of Article 51, much debate has taken place concerning the meaning of this article, when the right to act in self-defense accrues, and, perhaps more important, when it ceases. This article

briefly reviews the customary international law concepts of a nation's right to resort to military force in its self-defense. Next, self-defense under the United Nations Charter, and various arguments concerning its application, are examined. Finally, the article suggests criteria to assist in the analysis of when the use of military force in self-defense is lawfully justified.

### *Customary International Law*

To understand the right of a nation to use military force in its own self defense, it is necessary to understand why this right exists. The recognized purpose of self-defense is to deter aggression and to protect the interests of the state.<sup>6</sup> Its goal is preventive in nature and not retributive.<sup>7</sup>

Seventeenth-century Spaniards believed that the right of self-defense was limited to the protection of territory. Other writers of the day believed that the right extended to the violation of any national right.<sup>8</sup> Fault by the other party was seen as a precondition to the legitimate exercise of the right of self-defense. Unfortunately, these early writers failed to provide much guidance on the degree of injury or fault necessary to justify military action.<sup>9</sup>

Historically, states demanded a right of self-defense of considerable scope. Customary international law authorized a state targeted by another state to employ military force as necessary to protect itself.<sup>10</sup> The law recognized, as a minimum, the right of a state to act to protect against threats to its political independence or territorial integrity.<sup>11</sup> The right to act in self-defense was not limited only to instances of actual armed attack. States were permitted to act when the imminence of attack was of such a high degree that a nonviolent resolution of a dispute was precluded.<sup>12</sup>

### *The "Caroline" Case*

The *Caroline* case is the most often cited precedent in the customary international law of self-defense. In 1837, during the revolt in Canada against the British, a ship named the *Caroline* would periodically sail from US territory into Canada. It would reinforce and resupply the rebels and then return to the United States. To put an end to this, British forces entered the United States, seized the *Caroline*, and destroyed her, killing two US citizens.<sup>13</sup> Upon receiving a protest from the United States, the British claimed they had acted lawfully in self-defense.

In an exchange of letters with the British government, Secretary of State Daniel Webster outlined what he believed were the conditions for a

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proper claim of self defense. Secretary Webster stated that there "must be a necessity of self-defense, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means and no moment for deliberation." He further argued that the act should involve "nothing unreasonable or excessive, since the act justified by the necessity of self-defense must be limited by that necessity and kept clearly within it."<sup>14</sup> While never admitting culpability, the British apologized to the United States for the incident. Secretary Webster's *Caroline* criteria, described in the literature as those of "necessity" and "proportionality," continue to form the basis for analysis of the right of self-defense.

"Necessity" is the most important precondition to the legitimate use of military force in self-defense. In determining whether the use of military force is necessary, many factors must be carefully balanced. These factors include the nature of the coercion being applied by the aggressor state, the aggressor state's relative size and power, the nature of the aggressor's objectives, and the consequences if those objectives are achieved.<sup>15</sup> The target state makes the initial determination of the necessity of using military force in self-defense.<sup>16</sup>

"Proportionality" is the "requirement that the use of force or coercion be limited in intensity and magnitude to what is reasonably necessary promptly to secure the permissible objectives of self-defense."<sup>17</sup> Because the purpose of self-defense is to preserve the status quo, proportionality requires that military action cease once the danger has been eliminated.

Despite widespread reference to the *Caroline* factors, they have not been accepted without criticism. Many argue that these criteria are too restrictive, having been written in an era when an enemy literally had to be massed on the border to be a threat. With nuclear weapons and rapid delivery techniques, the requirement that no action be taken until "force be overwhelming, leaving no choice of means and no moment for deliberation" is seen by some commentators as unrealistic in today's world.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, the *Caroline* factors continue to be relied upon in the analysis of potential self-defense situations.

#### *When Does the Right of Self-Defense Arise?*

The prerequisite to the lawful right to act in self-defense is an injury (violation of a legal obligation), inflicted or threatened, by one state against a substantive right of another state.<sup>19</sup> It is generally accepted that military force may be used to:

- *Protect a nation's political independence.* Every state has a responsibility to respect the political independence of every other state. Force may be used to protect such independence when it is threatened and all reasonably available avenues of peaceful resolution have proved unavailing.

- *Protect a nation's territorial integrity.* Each state has an inherent right to protect its national borders, airspace, and territorial waters from acts of aggression.

• *Protect citizens and their property abroad.* A state has a right to protect its citizens abroad if their lives are placed in jeopardy and the host state is either unwilling or unable to provide the necessary protection.<sup>20</sup>

While these rights are widely acknowledged in the customary international law, they are not absolute. They must be balanced against similar rights enjoyed by other states and the maintenance of peace in the international community.<sup>21</sup> When, in the judgment of the injured state, the necessity of acting in self-defense outweighs any harm such act imposes, it may lawfully resort to the use of military force.<sup>22</sup>

### *The United Nations Charter*

Following World War II, the United Nations was created to, among other things, establish global order and provide a forum in which international disputes may be resolved without the use of armed force. The United Nations Charter has as a central theme the maintenance of peace and security between nations. Its aim is to substitute a community response for unilateral action in deterring aggression.<sup>23</sup> Three objectives form the foundation of this order. They include:

- The maintenance of an orderly world that emphasizes cooperation among states.
- A preference for change by peaceful processes rather than coercion.
- The minimization of destruction.<sup>24</sup>

The United Nations Charter condemns aggression and requires the use of peaceful means to settle disputes. To facilitate this process, the Charter establishes the Security Council, which is given the responsibility for maintaining international peace. While preferring community action, the Charter also recognizes a state's inherent right to take unilateral action in self-defense.<sup>25</sup>

### *Self-Defense Under the United Nations Charter*

The United Nations Charter recognizes the use of military force as lawful in only two instances, either as part of a United Nations authorized military operation to restore the peace under Article 42 or for self-defense under Article 51.<sup>26</sup> Article 51 provides:

Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of the right of self defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.



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***“With the increase in terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, border disputes, and ethnic unrest, it is becoming increasingly ambiguous when a nation may resort to armed force for its self-defense.”***

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Despite the seemingly clear language of this article, considerable controversy surrounds the extent to which a member may take action in self-defense under the Charter. Many international law scholars argue that the customary international law doctrine of self-defense, as developed from the *Caroline* case, survives under the Charter. These scholars believe that the Charter was not intended to restrict the right of a nation to take defensive action in any material way.<sup>27</sup>

Others argue that while the right to self-defense exists in the customary international law, each member of the United Nations, by adopting the Charter, has waived its rights to those aspects of self-defense that are not specifically permitted under Article 51.<sup>28</sup> They reason that the United Nations was established to create order and that reliance on the customary international law would be counterproductive to that goal.<sup>29</sup> While the majority of the experts in the field hold the opinion that the right of self-defense remains unimpaired under the Charter, this dispute remains largely unresolved.

#### *Anticipatory Self-Defense Under the United Nations Charter*

The most intense debate concerning the right to act in self-defense under the Charter focuses on the right of a nation to act in self-defense in anticipation of an armed attack. There is little question that before the Charter, a right to act in self-defense, as recognized by the customary international law, included the right to act in anticipatory self-defense.<sup>30</sup> Article 51 with its language “if an armed attack occurs,” has been seen by some commentators as restricting a nation’s ability to lawfully invoke that right. Others believe no such limitation was intended and that the right to act in anticipation of an attack remains intact. The main arguments of each position are briefly outlined below.

*Restrictivist View.* Critics of the customary right to engage in acts of anticipatory self-defense have been referred to as belonging to the “restrictive school.”<sup>31</sup> These critics believe that member states have only those rights affirmatively granted by the Charter. One such right permits actions in self-defense only once an armed attack occurs. Two policy considerations are

advanced to support this position. First, determining whether an armed attack is imminent is extremely difficult.<sup>32</sup> An error in calculation could lead a militarily powerful nation to start a war of massive proportions based on the mistaken belief that it was about to be attacked.<sup>33</sup> Second, anticipatory self-defense is grounded in customary international law that provides no clear guidelines for its use.<sup>34</sup> In the restrictivist view, the conditions in which such law may be relied upon are too vague to be of much help for the decisionmaker. This philosophy represents the minority view.

*Expansivist School.* The predominant view, to which the United States subscribes,<sup>35</sup> has been termed by one commentator as the "Expansive School."<sup>36</sup> Those who hold this view advocate that Article 51 permits anticipatory self-defense in response to an imminent armed attack.

Expansivists argue that the restrictive view is a marked departure from the customary international law and that such a departure should not be lightly presumed. They believe that since Article 51 does not unequivocally limit the right of self-defense, it should not be construed as eliminating the customary law right to use military force against a threatened attack.<sup>37</sup>

One advocate for the expansive reading of Article 51 states: "It would be a travesty of the purposes of the Charter to compel a defending state to allow its assailant to deliver the first, and perhaps fatal, blow. . . . To read Article 51 otherwise is to protect the aggressor's right to the first strike."<sup>38</sup> This observation is particularly compelling in the era of nuclear weapons and modern delivery systems. The destructive capability of modern weapons, and reduced reaction times, pose a tremendous threat to the nonaggressor nation. As one commentator has put it, "No one could seriously contend that any nation in the world should commit suicide by failing to prevent an imminent armed attack by its enemies."<sup>39</sup>

*Drafters Intent.* The debates that took place during the drafting of the Charter suggest that there was no intent to exclude anticipatory self-defense from the application of Article 51.<sup>40</sup> In a report issued before the adoption of the Charter, the drafting committee said, "The use of arms in legitimate self-defense remains admitted and unimpaired."<sup>41</sup> This language, which implies that the Committee intended to adopt the customary international law, is consistent with the position that anticipatory self-defense is considered to fall within the intent of the Charter. There is no clear indication that the drafters of the Charter intended any other result. Quite the contrary, the practice of most member states since the Charter was adopted has been to recognize acts of anticipatory self-defense as legitimate.<sup>42</sup>

#### *The Effect of Security Council Actions on the Right to Self-Defense*

Article 51 requires member states to immediately report to the Security Council any measures taken in self-defense. These reporting requirements are intended to provide the Security Council with notice of the events sur-

rounding the use of force.<sup>43</sup> Once defensive military actions are reported by a member state, the Security Council is charged with determining and implementing the measures designed to restore the international peace. What happens to a nation's right to continue to act in self-defense once the Security Council has taken action? Two opposing views are advanced in the literature.

One point of view holds that the Security Council has plenary authority in this area and that its actions preclude further self-defense measures. Advocates of this position believe the right of self-defense may be exercised only before the United Nations takes action.<sup>44</sup> They argue it would be inconsistent with the creation of international order to allow nations to invoke Article 51 after the Security Council has decided what measures are necessary to end the conflict.

The opposing position is that Security Council actions do not prevent continued self-defense measures if those actions have not had the necessary effect of halting acts of aggression.<sup>45</sup> One commentator argues it would be absurd to conclude that Security Council action terminated the right to engage in self-defense activities.<sup>46</sup> He reasons that Security Council action cannot be intended to deprive a state its right to defend itself when the invader has not complied with the Council's order.<sup>47</sup>

It is tempting to claim that the root issue in this debate concerns who decides whether the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. This issue is, in reality, just food for academic thought. It would be a rare case when a state would cease defending itself and place its fate totally in the hands of a third party (the United Nations). This is particularly true when one considers the limited success rate of the United Nations. As a practical matter, each party—the Security Council and the defending state—must make its own determination of the effectiveness of the UN measures. Should the individual state reach a conclusion different from the Security Council, it will continue its military response as it deems appropriate. The defending state, however, runs the risk of being declared the aggressor by the Security Council. Such a finding would subject the defending state to sanctions or enforcement actions.

While the United Nations Charter does not specifically recognize this parallel decisionmaking process, the interests of all parties are well served by it. The defending state is allowed to take the actions it believes are necessary for its own defense.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, the international community is permitted to review that decision under the necessity and proportionality criteria and impose sanctions if necessary.<sup>49</sup>

### *Collective Self-Defense*

The Charter in general, and Article 51 in particular, adopt the customary international right of collective self-defense. To constitute a legitimate exercise of collective self-defense, all conditions for the exercise of individual

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***“The purpose of self-defense is to deter aggression . . . . Its goal is preventive in nature, not retributive.”***

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self-defense must be met with one additional requirement.<sup>50</sup> The defending state must have declared itself the victim of an armed attack and requested assistance.<sup>51</sup> Further, there is no recognized right of a third-party state to intervene in internal conflicts where the issue in question is one of a group’s right of self-determination.<sup>52</sup> Finally, treaties alone do not provide adequate justification for a third-party state to intervene.<sup>53</sup> There must be an independent, underlying legal justification that meets the requirements of self-defense.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Self-Defense Criteria***

Questions concerning whether a nation is entitled to act in self-defense often spring from an ambiguous conglomeration of facts. While it is difficult to create a model that will resolve all issues in all cases, it is useful to have some method for analyzing differing fact patterns. The following questions are offered as a basis for evaluating the legitimacy of the use of military force in self-defense.<sup>55</sup> Accompanying each question is a brief discussion of its significance to the analysis.

- *1. Is the proposed response aimed at protecting the status quo?* Actions in self-defense, like those taken in the Gulf War, are preventive in nature. Actions that have retribution as the objective are not self-defense and are aggressive in nature.

- *2. Has there been a violation of a legal obligation?* Each member state of the United Nations is obligated by Article 2(4) to refrain from using force or threats of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. Threats to either of these fundamental values would violate that legal duty. Some commentators have included threats to citizens, with a concurrent failure, or inability, of the host government to afford protection, as sufficient grounds for invoking Article 51 self-defense rights. The United States has adopted this position. This policy may be seen in the US actions taken in the failed attempt to rescue US hostages in Iran (1981), as well as in the successful operations in Grenada (1982) and Panama (1989).

- *3. Has there been an actual armed attack from an external source?* As distinguished from anticipatory self-defense, which will be discussed later, the clearest case for self-defense arises when one state has been subjected to

armed attack by another state or an organization sponsored by another state. Article 2(7) cautions that entities internal to the state are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Security Council and are not governed by Article 51.

- *4. Is the response, or proposed response, timely?* Actions in self-defense must not be remote in time from the initial aggression. A delayed response may be seen by the international community as a threat to international peace and security. The need for immediacy (necessity) of action is lost if too much time lapses between the initial overt act of aggression and the defensive reaction.

- *5. Is the military response in self-defense necessary?* Article 2(3) of the Charter cautions all member states to resolve their disputes by peaceful means. Article 33 requires parties to a dispute to refer it to the Security Council should they fail in its resolution. Before military force may be used in self-defense, the threatened state is required to attempt all practicable, peaceful means to resolve the dispute. If there is a realistic, meaningful alternative to military action, self-defense is not available. There is, however, no requirement to exhaust all peaceful means if it would be fruitless to do so. If, however, the need for military action is not clear, it is not justified.

- *6. Is the military response in self-defense proportionate to the threat?* A nation acting in self-defense may use force no greater than that needed to halt the danger posed by an aggressor nation. The response must be proportional in terms of both the nature and the amount of force employed to repel the attack. An excessive response may be viewed by the Security Council as an aggressive action and subject the defending nation to sanctions or enforcement actions.

- *7. Has any military response been immediately reported to the Security Council?* Article 51 requires military actions taken in self-defense to be immediately reported to the Security Council. This permits the Security Council to take the actions it deems appropriate to restore international peace and security. The failure to report such actions quickly may create the impression that the defending state lacks conviction that its actions were lawful. Further, quick notification of the Security Council allows a more rapid response aimed at terminating the armed aggression.

- *8. Has the Security Council taken meaningful, effective measures to stop the aggressive conduct?* Once the Security Council takes effective action to end the aggressive acts of a state, the target state must cease its self-defense activities. The failure to do so will be viewed as an aggressive act itself. Each nation must decide for itself whether the acts of the Security Council are sufficient to restore international peace and security. Should a nation acting in self-defense decide the UN actions are insufficient, it may continue to act in its own self-defense. That nation, however, runs the risk of the international community reaching a different conclusion and imposing sanctions.

### *Anticipatory Self-Defense*

The circumstances for acting in anticipatory self-defense are the same as those for self-defense except that an actual armed attack has not yet occurred. They often arise in situations involving state-supported terrorism, such as when the United States found it necessary to attack Libya in 1986. The conduct of a nation engaging in preemptive actions will be reviewed against the totality of the circumstances existing at the time the decision to take action was made. In other words, the reasonableness of the conduct will be examined. The key question is this: *Is there an imminent or immediate threat of an armed attack?* In determining whether an attack is imminent, justifying preemptive action, several factors should be considered:

- *Are there objective indicators that an attack is imminent?* Factors such as troop buildups, increased alert levels, increased training tempo, and reserve call-ups may suggest that an attack is imminent.

- *Does the past conduct or hostile declarations of the alleged aggressor reasonably lead to a conclusion that an attack is probable?* A pattern of aggressive past conduct or hostile public statements may demonstrate an intention by an aggressor nation to launch an armed attack.

- *What is the nature of the weapons available to the alleged aggressor nation, and does it have the ability to use them effectively?* Weapons of mass destruction and modern delivery systems make waiting for an actual armed attack exceedingly dangerous. While possession of such weapons alone is not indicative of an intent to use them, it is a factor that must be considered with all other relevant factors.

- *Is the use of force the last resort after exhausting all practicable, peaceful means?* Unlike actions in self-defense following an armed attack, preemptive actions generally mean some time is available for peaceful resolution. There will be closer scrutiny of the efforts made to resolve a dispute when a nation acts in a preemptive manner. The failure to exhaust practicable remedies may result in sanctions for aggressive conduct.

### *Collective Self-Defense*

One additional criterion exists when collective self-defense is contemplated:

- *Has the target state requested assistance?* Without such a request, as was made by Kuwait in 1990, a third-party nation will be seen as having improperly intervened in the situation. This intervention may be seen as an aggressive act justifying the imposition of sanctions by the United Nations.

### *Self-Defense Criteria Applied*

Returning to the missile attack on Iraq described in the introduction, how would the United States claim of self-defense fare when compared against the proposed criteria? A review of the criteria demonstrates that this claim,

which on its face has a certain appeal, falls short of requirements for properly invoking Article 51. Each element is briefly reviewed below.

- *1. Was the response aimed at protecting the status quo?* With the alleged attack occurring in April and the response conducted in June, it is difficult to conclude that the actions of the United States were preventive in nature. The attempted attack had already been averted when the Kuwaiti government exposed the plot and arrested those involved.

- *2. Was there a violation of a legal obligation?* If the conclusion by the United States that the assassination attempt against former President Bush was ordered by the Iraqi government is correct, there has been a violation of a legal obligation. Iraq is required to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of the United States. These rights, absent a state of war, are infringed when a political leader is identified for assassination by a foreign government.

- *3. Was there an actual attack?* A state-directed assassination attempt against a former President may properly be seen as an attack against the United States and its sovereignty. Such an attempt was not merely a random act, but a carefully designed plot to punish President Bush for his actions in executing his office as the head of the United States government.

- *4. Was the response timely?* This criterion represents one of the biggest obstacles to the US claim of self-defense under Article 51. More than two months passed from the date the assassination attempt was exposed to the date military action was taken. During this time the United States conducted an investigation to determine who was behind the plot. Only upon satisfying itself as to its origins did the United States respond militarily. The need for immediacy of action, however, is difficult to support after the passage of more than two months. No current or imminent attack was being thwarted by the US actions.

- *5. Was the military response necessary?* This requirement also poses some difficulty for the US claim of self-defense. No attempt was made to resolve this issue through peaceful means. With the passage of time the need for a military response became more and more remote. It cannot be determined whether further UN sanctions or enforcement actions would have been futile, because that option does not appear to have been explored.

- *6. Was the response proportionate?* The attack was aimed at the headquarters of the Iraqi Intelligence Service, the organization identified as being behind the assassination plot. Collateral damage was minimized. Twenty-three cruise missiles were fired with the resultant loss of life limited to six people. The requirement for a proportionate response appears to have been met by its restrictive nature and limited collateral damage.

- *7. Was the action immediately reported to the Security Council?* This criterion was also met. The United States requested a special meeting of

the Security Council for the next day. At that meeting the United States advised the Security Council of the actions it had taken and the reasons therefor.

• 8. *Did the Security Council take meaningful, effective measures to stop the aggressive conduct?* The Security Council only learned of the actions after they had taken place. The United States did not request any formal statement or resolution approving its actions. As the military response by the United States had been completed, there was little for the Security Council to do.

Perhaps the more plausible claim of self-defense available to the United States is that it was acting to preempt future attacks by Iraq against the national interests of the United States. This argument, however, is not without its problems. The United States did not demonstrate that an imminent threat of armed attack existed at the time military actions took place in June. There were, however, several factors that would have supported this claim. First, public declarations by Iraqi government officials indicated an intent to take action against a former US President. Their actions in April clearly indicated an intent to take steps to carry out those threats. Further, as a nation identified as supporting terrorism, Iraq has demonstrated a willingness and an ability to use those tactics against the interests of the United States.

The difficulty the United States has in sustaining a claim of anticipatory self-defense is that it has not pointed to any evidence that Iraq was planning any further attempts against the United States. It is difficult, therefore, to conclude that the missile attack in June 1993 preempted any aggressive actions by Iraq.

In matching the response of the United States against the proposed criteria, a claim of the need to act in self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter lacks substance. In pressing its claim of self-defense before the United Nations, the United States was no doubt aided by a general lack of respect by the world community for Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Little criticism was leveled at the United States for the actions it took. This lack of criticism resulted not so much from a consensus that the actions of the United States were a legitimate exercise of the right to act in self-defense but rather from a general disapproval of the Iraqi government.

### ***Conclusion***

The use of military force in national self-defense is a right long recognized by the international community. Under customary international law nations are permitted to act in self-defense if there is a need to do so and the extent of the military response is not disproportionate to the threat. With the establishment of the United Nations, whose goal is to establish a world order aimed at maintaining international peace and security, the extent of a nation's right to act in self-defense is less clear.

Considerable controversy surrounds the ability of a nation to take preemptive action to defend against a perceived imminent threat or to continue



its defensive efforts after the Security Council has taken measures aimed at ending the hostilities. Most scholars support the right of nations to take these actions in their own defense. Those in the minority, however, make many valid points in arguing that such conduct is contrary to the purposes of the United Nations and undermines the authority of the Security Council. The extent of the right to act in self-defense is not always clear, and considerable debate continues over these issues.

The criteria above are offered to assist in the analysis of whether the legal right to act in self-defense has accrued. They are intended as a guide for policymakers in reviewing a particular set of circumstances and making informed decisions concerning an appropriate course of conduct.

Even the best analysis may be overcome by the politics of the situation. In the case of the attack on the Iraqi Intelligence Headquarters, the argument that the actions of the United States conformed with the requirements of Article 51 appears to be insupportable by the facts. The despicable actions of Saddam Hussein and his government, however, allowed the United States to take this action without fear of being chastised by the international community.

In any particular set of circumstances, it is the reasonableness of the actions taken by a nation which will be the key factor in appraising whether defensive actions are justified. It is on this basis that the international community will ultimately judge a nation's conduct.

#### NOTES

The title of this article refers to a quotation from Dryden: "Self-defense is nature's eldest law."

1. Richard Bernstein, "U.S. Presents Evidence to U.N. Justifying its Missile Attack on Iraq," *The New York Times*, 28 June 1993, Section A, Page 7.

2. "Excerpts From U.N. Speech: The Case For Clinton's Strike," *The New York Times*, 28 June 1993, Section A, Page 7.

3. *Ibid.*

4. "Clinton's First Strike," *The Economist*, 3 July 1993, p. 16.

5. It is necessary to distinguish self-defense from self-help. A nation may act in self-defense to protect essential national rights from irreparable harm when no reasonable, alternate means of protection is available. Its purpose is the deterrence of aggression and the preservation or restoration of the legal status quo. Self-help, on the other hand, is remedial or repressive in character. It is a punitive or retributive action in response to either some past unlawful act or as a sanction to enforce legal rights. Common forms of self-help are reprisal or intervention.

6. James Francis Gravelle, "The Falkland (Malvinas) Islands: An International Law Analysis of the Dispute Between Argentina and Great Britain," *Military Law Review*, 107 (1985), 56.

7. D. W. Bowett, *Self-Defense In International Law* (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1958), p. 20.

8. D. P. O'Connell, *International Law* (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1965), p. 339.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Myres S. McDougal, "The Soviet-Cuban Quarantine and Self-defense," *The American Law Journal of International Law*, 57 (No. 3, 1963), 597-98.

11. Brunson MacChesney, "Some Comments on the 'Quarantine' of Cuba," *The American Journal of International Law*, 57 (No. 3, 1963), 595.

12. McDougal, "The Soviet-Cuban Quarantine and Self-Defense," p. 598.

13. O'Connell, 343.

14. Sir Robert Jennings, and Sir Arthur Watts, eds., *Oppenheim's International Law* (9th ed.; London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1993), p. 420. See also O'Connell, p. 343.

15. Uri Shoham, "The Israeli Aerial Raid Upon the Iraqi Nuclear Reactor and the Right of Self-Defense," *Military Law Review*, 109 (Summer 1985), 193.
16. McDougal, "The Soviet-Cuban Quarantine and Self-Defense," p. 598.
17. Myres McDougal and Florentino Feliciano, *Law and Minimum World Public Order* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1961), p. 242.
18. McDougal, "The Soviet-Cuban Quarantine and Self-Defense," p. 598.
19. Bowett, p. 9.
20. Department of the Army, *Operational Law Handbook*, 2d ed. (Draft, 1992), pp. 38-39. See also Bowett, p. 270.
21. Bowett, p. 270.
22. *Ibid.*
23. MacChesney, p. 593.
24. John Norton Moore, *Law and the Indo-China War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 170-71.
25. Gravelle, p. 57.
26. Lung-Chu Chen, *An Introduction to Contemporary International Law: A Policy Perspective* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1989), p. 122.
27. For example, see Moore, p. 363.
28. Kathryn S. Elliott, "The New World Order and the Right of Self-Defense in the United Nations Charter," *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*, 15 (Fall 1991), 67.
29. See generally: Elliott, pp. 55-81; and Isaak I. Dore, "The United States, Self-Defense and the U.N. Charter: A Comment on Principle and Expediency in Legal Reasoning," *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 24 (Fall 1987), 1-19.
30. Bowett, pp. 188-89. See also M. McDougal, *Law and Minimum World Order*, p. 219.
31. Richard J. Erickson, *Legitimate Use of Military Force Against State-Sponsored International Terrorism* (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Univ. Press, 1989), p. 136.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
33. Wolfgang Friedman, *The Changing Structure of International Law* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1964), p. 259.
34. Erickson, p. 138.
35. Examples of the United States following the "Expansivist" view would include the Cuban blockade in 1962 and the 1986 raid on Libya.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Elliott, p. 67, n. 64.
38. Sir Claud Humphrey Meredith Waldock, "The Regulation of the Use of Force by Individual States in International Law," 81 *Hague Recueil* 45 (1952), p. 498.
39. Shoham, p. 198.
40. O'Connell, p. 341.
41. Report of Rapporteur of Committee I to Commission I, 6 U.N.C.I.O. Docs. 446, 459.
42. Bowett, p. 188.
43. Jennings, p. 423, n. 22. These reports are not a precondition to the lawfulness of the use of force. The absence of such a report, however, may be construed by the international community as an indication the state was not convinced it was legitimately acting in self-defense.
44. Elliott, p. 70.
45. Jennings, p. 423, n. 22.
46. Oscar Schachter, "United Nations Law in the Gulf Conflict," *American Journal of International Law*, 85 (July 1991), 488.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*, p. 193. See also Gravelle, pp. 60-61.
49. McDougal, "The Soviet-Cuban Quarantine and Self-Defense," p. 599.
50. Erickson, p. 163.
51. Jennings, p. 422.
52. *Operational Law Handbook*, p. D-39.
53. *Ibid.*, p. D-40.
54. Elliott, p. 56, n. 6.
55. See generally: Bowett, p. 269; Dore, p. 2; Erickson, pp. 217-26; Jennings, p. 422; Shoham, p. 204; *Operational Law Handbook*, pp. D-39 - D-40.

# A Lesson in Battle Tempo: The Union Pursuit After Gettysburg

WILLIAM TERPELUK

The concept of battle tempo is an ephemeral one in the conduct of offensive military operations. Difficult to gain but easily lost, the ability to maintain momentum throughout a battle or campaign often has been the difference between victory and defeat. The battlefield commander who is both decisive *and intuitive* will seize opportunities to gain or regain the initiative and ultimately will defeat his opponent. While many military operations in history underscore the importance of battle tempo, perhaps none is so poignant as the Union pursuit of the Confederate army after the Battle of Gettysburg.

During the battle itself on the first three days of July 1863, the Union Army of the Potomac under Major General George G. Meade fought on the operational defensive. The Army of Northern Virginia under Robert E. Lee had been in the midst of its campaign through Pennsylvania when it engaged the Union army during that pivotal battle. Meade, in command of his army for less than a week, decisively countered the moves of his seasoned opponent. Lee's army was defeated, and Meade's thoughts turned to his next move.

Besides the friction normally associated with sustained combat operations, other factors were to influence the actions of both sides subsequent to Gettysburg. From the perspective of the Confederate commander, heavy rains would force a stand with his back against a very formidable river. From the perspective of the Union commander, Meade would not only be hampered by mountainous terrain and the same rainy weather, he would also be strongly influenced by political considerations. Given the importance of Washington, D.C., and its proximity to hostile territory, the protection of the capital had been a prime consideration in military planning since the start of the Civil War.

### *Meade Shifts to the Offense*

As decisive as the results of the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg were, the Confederate army remained an effective fighting force. General Meade was acutely aware of this and carefully planned future operations for the Army of the Potomac with that in mind. He could not have known it then, but his newly won luster was about to fade in the eyes of President Abraham Lincoln and General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck. With their expectation of a complete defeat of Lee, Meade was hard-pressed to deliver the *coup de grace* that his superiors considered to be just within his grasp.

After the defeat of Pickett's Charge, the disastrous Confederate attack that marked the end of the Gettysburg battle, Meade's thoughts immediately turned to the offense. As he told the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War on 5 March 1864:

As soon as the assault was repulsed, I went immediately to the extreme left of my line, with the determination of advancing the left and making an assault upon the enemy's lines. . . . The great length of the line, and the time required to carry these orders out to the front, and the movement subsequently made, before the report given to me of the condition of the forces in the front and left, caused it to be so late in the evening as to induce me to abandon the assault which I had contemplated.<sup>1</sup>

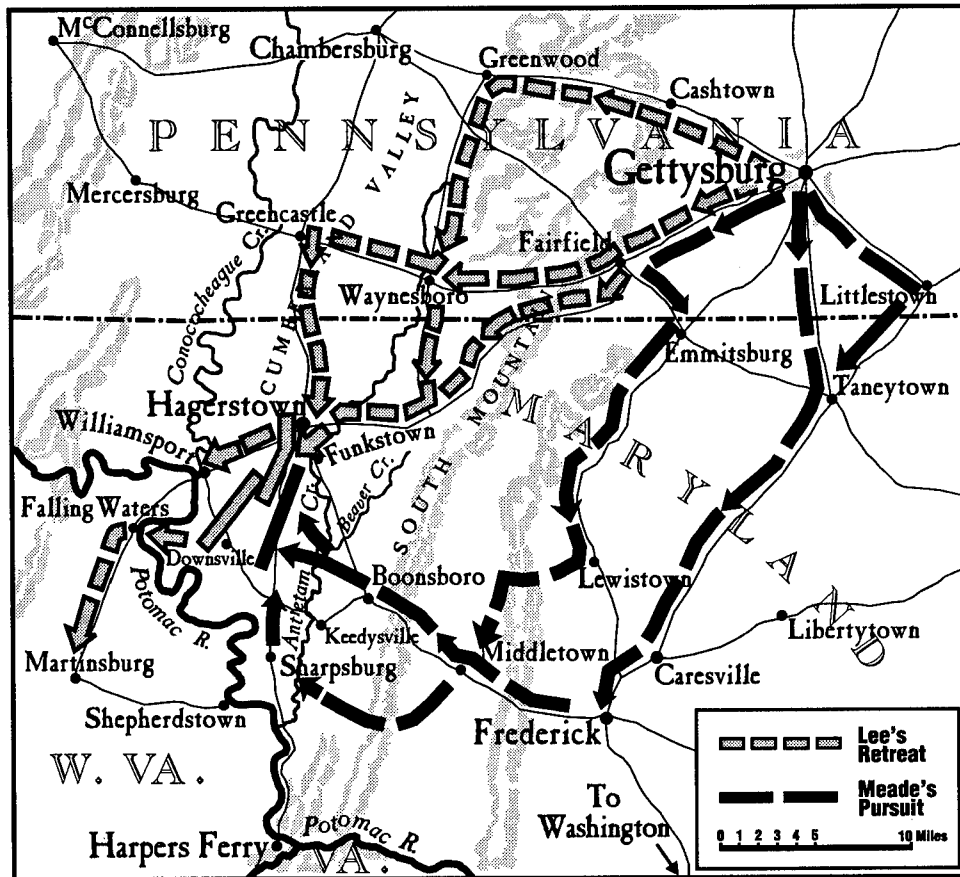
Although the unscathed Union VI Corps was available as a counterattack force against Lee's right flank, it represented Meade's only usable reserve. Considering that fact, as well as the overall condition of the Union army, he subsequently decided in favor of a larger maneuver through Middletown, Maryland, across South Mountain, and to Williamsport, Maryland, along the Potomac River. As shown on Map 1 on the next page, Meade's intent was to intercept Lee along his anticipated line of retreat back into Virginia.

This represented Meade's only sensible option for the pursuit of Lee. A main attack to the immediate front through South Mountain at Fairfield Gap would have been as time-consuming as it would have been foolish. Based upon the original instructions Meade had received from Halleck on 27 June to stay between the Confederate army and Washington,<sup>2</sup> a movement to his right, possibly through Cashtown Pass and then south through the Cumberland Valley, also would have to be quickly dismissed. Such a maneuver, worthy of a Stonewall Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, or Lee himself, would have entailed a large degree of risk and would have required almost complete surprise if it

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Map 1. Area of Operations.

were to *destroy* (as opposed to *defeat*) the Army of Northern Virginia. When this constraint pertaining to the protection of Washington was removed a year later, the maneuver possibilities for the Union army increased. It was U. S. Grant, not Meade, who would benefit from subsequent opportunities to take advantage of the operational potential of those possibilities.

Meade's planned movement could not begin without confirmation that Lee was indeed in retreat. Using VI Corps to maintain pressure on the Confederate force around the Fairfield Gap, Meade verified the general retreat of the Army of Northern Virginia on 5 July.<sup>3</sup> When satisfied that the Confederate rear guard in Fairfield Gap posed no threat, Meade issued orders on 6 July to set the Army of the Potomac in motion. With Cashtown Pass northwest of Gettysburg covered by a Union cavalry force, Meade's own right flank was secured. He could safely carry out his intended plan.<sup>4</sup>

Two days' movement may have been lost by Meade's decision to verify that Lee had indeed retreated south, but a careful analysis reveals the sound rationale for his prudence. He was preparing to pursue an enemy army

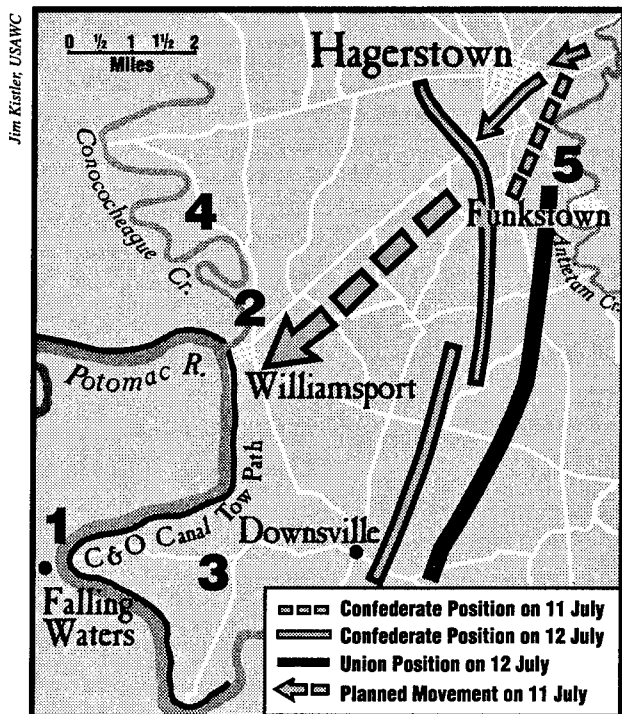
that he believed at the time still to be superior in strength to that of his own.<sup>5</sup> He displayed no appreciable trepidation about going on the offense under these conditions, but he was determined not to give up the hard-won gains of the Battle of Gettysburg. Had Meade prematurely commenced his overall flanking movement with Lee still remaining in strength in the vicinity of Gettysburg, that position could yet have fallen to the Confederates. Not only would this have been a tremendous military setback to the Union, the psychological and political consequences would have been unfathomable. Considering that Meade would need his entire army for decisive action once he reestablished contact with Lee, dividing his force to both protect his rear and continue his flanking maneuver would not have been practical in any military sense.

### *The Pursuit Begins in Earnest*

Meade's route of march may seem somewhat circuitous, but the nature of the north-south Catoctin and South Mountain ranges between him and Lee gave him little real choice. With the route through Fairfield Gap too easily defended, the next series of passes through South Mountain are found directly west of Frederick, Maryland, about 35 miles south of Gettysburg. Although opposed by the rebel cavalry under a rejuvenated J.E.B. Stuart, the main force of the Union cavalry quickly secured the South Mountain passes and screened the movement of the Army of the Potomac. While Meade correctly anticipated

the river crossings at Falling Waters (site #1 on Map 2) and Williamsport (#2) as potential locations for his next confrontation with the enemy main body, this still did not mitigate Lee's two biggest inherent advantages, favorable positioning and terrain.

In the truest Jomian sense, Lee was operating on interior lines throughout the retreat from Gettysburg. He followed the most direct and obvious route to the Williamsport area and made it virtually impossible, even under the most fortuitous of circumstances, for Meade to "steal a march" on the Confeder-



Map 2. Situation, 12 July 1863.

ate army. Further, the topography in the Williamsport-Falling Waters area made it a natural defensive position should Lee need to turn and face the Union army.

The Falling Waters site is protected on three sides by a series of right-angle turns along the Potomac River; a north-south ridge line dominates the one exposed side of a defensive box (#3 on the map). Williamsport itself is protected from the north and west by the Conococheague Creek (#4). Once safely across the Potomac, the Confederates would be relatively secure from a Union attempt to outflank them, since such a maneuver would require Meade to force a crossing of the river. Consequently both commanders sought the advantage—Meade to deny Lee the opportunity to improve his position, Lee to engage the Union army on his own terms.

The pursuit by the Union army was severely hampered by the same rain that made the Potomac River unfordable for the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>6</sup> The difficulty of the Confederate situation was compounded by a cavalry raid conducted by a Union force from Harpers Ferry which destroyed a pontoon bridge at Falling Waters.<sup>7</sup> On balance, this turn of events provided Meade with the chance to decisively close with the enemy force, but it also gave Lee a chance to more fully prepare his defensive line. As early as 8 July, Halleck began exhorting Meade to move more rapidly and to attack Lee when the Confederate army would become divided during its crossing of the Potomac River. Halleck did, however, urge some caution if the bulk of Lee's army had to be engaged north of the river.<sup>8</sup>

By 9 July, Meade began the movement to the west of South Mountain, which he described as being "on a line from Boonsboro towards the centre of the line from Hagerstown to Williamsport, my left flank looking to the river, and my right towards the mountains."<sup>9</sup> Although he had surmised Lee's next objective, Meade was still unsure of his opponent's exact whereabouts and could not exclude the possibility of being attacked by the Confederate army. As he conveyed to Halleck, "It is with the greatest difficulty that I can obtain any reliable intelligence of the enemy."<sup>10</sup>

By 10 July, however, Meade had received preliminary locations on the enemy line which ran "from the Potomac, near Falling Waters, through Downsville to Funkstown and to the northeast of Hagerstown."<sup>11</sup> Meade informed Halleck that he wanted to further develop the situation before committing to a particular course of action. Halleck, for his part, reiterated his earlier advice that Meade should not attack until all available friendly forces could be concentrated.<sup>12</sup>

The Army of the Potomac had concentrated by 10 July in a defensive posture along the Antietam and Beaver creeks. It was reinforced that day with four brigades from the Harpers Ferry command of Major General William H. French. A cavalry force of two divisions had already secured the Funkstown area (#5 on Map 2), four miles northwest of the main army.<sup>13</sup>

### *Meade Ponders His Options*

The Union battle line stretched a dozen miles. During the movement-to-contact, Meade indeed made the proper disposition with his forces to maintain tactical flexibility. He informed Halleck on 9 July that he intended to “keep as concentrated as the roads by which I can move will admit, so that should the enemy attack, I can mass to meet him, and if he assumes the defensive, I can deploy as I think proper.”<sup>14</sup> Meade was rapidly approaching his most critical decision in this phase of the Gettysburg Campaign, where both the nature and timing of his future operations had to be carefully weighed.

As focused as Meade may have been on the crossing sites at Williamsport and Falling Waters, he was unable to move his center toward those objectives on a narrow front without courting complete disaster on his flanks. With the existing disposition of Lee’s army, any Union maneuver directly along the Potomac to cut Lee off would have dangerously exposed Meade’s right flank and rear. Indeed, any Union success in this regard might not even have been a setback to Lee if he used the opportunity to pin the Union army against the Potomac long enough to launch another invasion of the North through the Cumberland Valley. Meade then would have been in the embarrassing position of trying to catch the Confederate force. An attempt by the Union army during this period to defeat Lee by moving to the south side of the Potomac River could have had similar consequences, and in the process uncovered Washington.

For a massive Union assault to succeed, two principal planning factors had to be considered. First, from a psychological standpoint, Meade needed to realize that Lee considered him to be cautious. A plan of operation for the Army of the Potomac that could defeat Lee would have to appear to be out of character for the Union general.

To counter that expectation, Meade had to take some advantage of the limited flexibility that Halleck gave him concerning responsibility for the protection of Washington. While this requirement was stated fairly explicitly in his original instructions, Halleck did allow Meade to deviate from the directive “as far as circumstances will admit.”<sup>15</sup> Lee no doubt considered an assault on his right, near Downsville, as the most likely Union course of action. This was true if for no other reasons than it was the most conservative approach and also would keep the Union army directly between his army and Washington.

The second planning factor related to the nature of the terrain in the area of operations. While the sharp bends in the Potomac River in the Williamsport-Falling Waters area were inherently advantageous to the defender, they also could be turned against the Confederates. If a sizable Union force could penetrate Lee’s lines and secure the high ground directly between the fording site at Williamsport and the pontoon bridge at Falling Waters, it could in effect split the Army of Northern Virginia on the north side of the river. Further, the terrain south of Hagerstown, on Lee’s left, would offer advantages to a Union



force attacking west from the Funkstown area toward Williamsport. Devoid of natural obstacles such as ridge lines and creeks, this avenue of approach would permit an assault on the portion of Lee's line that could be reinforced least effectively. When considering that the Confederate defensive line had a length approaching eight miles, this was a significant planning factor for the Union general.<sup>16</sup>

### *The Window of Opportunity Opens — and Closes*

Meade's only chance for a decisive engagement with the Army of Northern Virginia was tenuous at best. As the Confederate army was essentially conducting a phased withdrawal, it would no longer pose an offensive threat to Meade when its left flank had been pulled back to the area around Williamsport. Therefore, Meade's "window of opportunity" would be *after* the Confederate left flank had been withdrawn but *before* an extensive line of entrenchments could be established to protect Lee's troops as they forded the river at Williamsport. The Downsview position confronting the Union left had been the most static during this period and would be the most prepared. As events would soon prove, Meade's best chance would entail a concentrated assault on his right, along the Funkstown-Williamsport axis, as the retrograde movement of the Confederate left was actually being conducted.

Meade was well aware of his opponents' predicament with the rain-swollen Potomac River; nevertheless, he showed signs of being unduly awed by Lee's capacity for offensive action despite indications that the "Gray Fox" had become much more defensive-minded. As Meade described in his 10 July letter to his wife, Lee "has been compelled to make a stand, and will of course make a desperate one."<sup>17</sup> Meade, still moving deliberately, continually emphasized caution in his dispatches to Halleck.<sup>18</sup>

Meade eventually would decide on the Funkstown-Williamsport approach for his main attack, but undue caution may have gotten the best of him at this point. After concentrating the army on 10 July, he chose to maintain the bulk of his force in those positions for an additional day as the Union cavalry continued its aggressive screening to the northwest.<sup>19</sup> As he stated to Halleck late on 11 July, "Upon advancing my right flank across the Antietam this morning, the enemy abandoned Funkstown and Hagerstown."<sup>20</sup> "The enemy" in this case was the Confederate II Corps under General Richard S. Ewell. The brief window of opportunity quickly closed, as Ewell reported that his corps soon "began fortifying, and, in a short time my men were well protected. Their spirit was never better than at this time, and the wish was universal that the enemy should attack."<sup>21</sup>

Meade set his I, VI, and XI Corps in motion to Funkstown on 12 July, but was almost certainly aware that time was now working very much against him. Despite his belief in the superior numbers of the Confederate army, he could not help but conclude that his chance for decisive victory under such

circumstances would require massing an overwhelming force against the weakest point in Lee's overextended line at the proper time. In a 12 July message to Halleck, Meade committed to an attack the next day "unless something intervenes to prevent it."<sup>22</sup>

In an action for which he would be criticized later, Meade convened a Council of War on the evening of 12 July. A consensus of his generals urged a delay for a "more careful examination of the enemy's position, strength, and defensive works."<sup>23</sup> Based on the improved status of the Confederate defenses by then, this was undoubtedly the correct decision. Meade personally made a reconnaissance in the rain on 13 July.<sup>24</sup> When the attack finally went forward yet another day later, on 14 July, it was done as a general movement to "feel [Lee's] position and seek for a weak point."<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately for the Union commander, the main body of Lee's army already had crossed the river during the previous night.<sup>26</sup>

Meade suspected that he would be severely chastised as a result of his delay, and, indeed, the most biting criticism was delivered by his superiors. Through Halleck, Lincoln expressed "his dissatisfaction" with Meade's inability to decisively engage Lee before his escape back to Virginia.<sup>27</sup> Adding insult to injury in Meade's eyes, Halleck mentioned that these comments were intended to serve as "a stimulus to an active pursuit" of Lee.<sup>28</sup> Meade deeply resented the implication that he would have to be motivated by his Commander in Chief before he would begin an energetic pursuit of the Confederate army.<sup>29</sup>

### ***"What If . . . ?" — The Plan That Might Have Succeeded***

Could Meade have attacked successfully without risking catastrophic loss to his army? With our knowledge of Meade's concept for the upcoming battle, a plausible scenario for Union success can be envisioned if the Army of the Potomac had moved to its right a day earlier, as opposed to the actual movement on 12 July.

Had Meade initiated his next planned movement on 11 July instead of choosing to stay in position, he would have been able to take full advantage of Ewell's withdrawal from the Funkstown area. A Union movement at that time would *not* have been premature and would have entailed entirely *acceptable risk* based on Meade's knowledge of enemy positions and intentions. Should Lee sortie from his prepared positions near Downsville, a weakened Union left or center could still effectively use the series of north-south ridges and creeks to defend or delay. With a river to restrict Lee's movement to his right and the Union-held South Mountain to his eventual front, the Confederate commander would put his army at great risk with very little chance to gain by such a maneuver.

In this scenario, the operation would begin by occupying attack positions in the Funkstown area on the morning of 11 July. The main attack, ideally reinforced with a fourth corps, would begin on 11 July or, at the latest,



**“I did not fail to attack Lee . . . because I could not do so safely: I simply delayed the attack until . . . I could do so with some reasonable degree of probability that the attack would be successful.”**

**— George G. Meade**

the morning of 12 July. An additional corps would be held in reserve. A division-sized cavalry force would simultaneously conduct a demonstration or probing attack on the south bank of the Potomac. The cavalry raid would be similar to that which was actually launched from Harpers Ferry on 14 July by Brigadier General David McM. Gregg’s division,<sup>30</sup> but with the intent to distract and confuse Lee.

A feint against the Downsville position would be made with two corps on 11 July to serve as a further deception. These corps would eventually assume a local defense on the Union left and center with the northernmost corps poised to support the main effort. This feint and the cavalry demonstration would be intended to instill a belief in Lee that the Union main attack was actually being made on his right flank. The bulk of the Union cavalry would be placed in the defensible terrain on Meade’s extreme right (south and southwest of Hagerstown) to protect against the inevitable counterattack from J.E.B. Stuart.<sup>31</sup>

After rapid concentration of the attacking force, the main Union attack from Funkstown would have to be pursued vigorously. Should the Union attack lose momentum, Confederate forces could rapidly shift along the interior lines in a manner similar to that at the Battle of Antietam. Nevertheless, a Union attack that would capture Williamsport and its fording site would force Confederates into the Downsville salient and allow the possibility of further Union operations across the Potomac River.

In all likelihood, of course, other factors might have prevented the success of this hypothetical scenario. It would have required an almost impeccable sense of timing and coordination. Meade had lost two of his most depend-

able senior leaders at Gettysburg. Further, the collective expertise of the Confederate leadership was just too great to permit itself to be caught in such a trap. This combination of factors, which justified to some degree Meade's caution, was not sufficiently appreciated by Lincoln. Despite Meade's cautious nature, the chances of destroying the Army of Northern Virginia as it retreated across the Potomac after Gettysburg would have been relatively low even under the best of circumstances.

### *Aftermath*

Meade was victorious at the Battle of Gettysburg, but his performance during the pursuit of Lee began to cast doubt on his abilities. As part of his message traffic on 14 July, he went so far as to tender his resignation, an action that was quickly rejected in a dispatch from Halleck.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, Meade's star was on the decline.

As noble as Meade's intentions may have been, he had done considerable harm to himself by the tentativeness expressed in the tone of his dispatches. The fact that he had consulted with his generals brought a rebuke from Halleck: "It is proverbial that councils of war never fight."<sup>33</sup> The disclaimer in Meade's message of his intent to attack on 13 July, "unless something intervenes to prevent it," can almost be seen as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Further, the attack on 14 July took on more the form of a reconnaissance-in-force than an assault designed to dislodge a determined enemy.<sup>34</sup>

Halleck later attempted to mollify the Commanding General of the Army of the Potomac. He wrote to Meade on 28 July:

You should not have been surprised or vexed at the President's disappointment at the escape of Lee's Army. He had examined into all the details of sending you reinforcements, to satisfy himself that every man who could possibly be spared from other places had been sent to your army. He thought that Lee's defeat was so certain that he felt no little impatience at his unexpected escape.<sup>35</sup>

This statement conveys a great deal about civil-military relations during this period of the American Civil War and also provides insight into Lincoln's style of managing the war effort. Meade still felt compelled to justify his actions and seemingly questioned the President's helpfulness in a message to Halleck on 30 July:

I have been acting under the belief, from your telegrams, that it was [Lincoln's] and your wish that I should pursue Lee and bring him to a general engagement, if practicable. The President, however, labors under two misapprehensions: First, I did not fail to attack Lee at Williamsport because I could not do so safely: I simply delayed the attack until, by examination of his position, I could do so with some reasonable degree of probability that the attack would be successful. He withdrew before that information could be obtained. Secondly, my army at this moment is about equal in strength to what it was at Williamsport, . . . being

about equal to the discharge of the nine months' men. By nine months' men, I mean those that were with the army at Gettysburg and before, and do not refer to several regiments that reported at Hagerstown, but from their disorganization were never brought to the front.<sup>36</sup>

Meade's style of competent but low-key aggressiveness did not seem to appeal to a President who needed quick and complete victories. To Meade, his own reputation meant far less than his sense of duty. He also considered himself completely above politics and self-aggrandizement,<sup>37</sup> running the ultimate risk of being overshadowed by a different breed of general by the end of the Civil War.

The results of the Gettysburg Campaign, both military and political, have been debated for the past 130 years. Somewhat more problematic, however, is the change in the strategic balance that might have arisen had Meade been able to inflict more damage upon the Confederate army. Shortly after the Gettysburg Campaign, the Confederate I Corps under Lieutenant General James Longstreet was sent to reinforce the Confederate Army of Tennessee. While Longstreet's Corps would play a key role in the Southern victory at Chickamauga Creek in September 1863, the overall failure of the Confederate effort in the Chattanooga Campaign negated the strategic advantage of the reinforcement from the Virginia theater.

When Meade next confronted Lee, the Confederate army would indeed be smaller, but the Army of the Potomac also would be hampered by the detachment of Meade's XI and XII Corps to Chattanooga as well as troops to quell the draft riots in the North.<sup>38</sup> In a strategic sense, had the Army of the Potomac sustained large casualties during an attack on 13 July, the inability to divert these two corps to the Chattanooga Campaign would have altered the balance of forces in the West. Raising the possibility of an eventual Union defeat in that theater, this could have drastically altered the course of the Civil War.

Finally, General George Meade should be judged on what he was able to accomplish while in command of an army for such a short period of time. Even if his intuitive skills largely failed him at the most critical point in the pursuit after Gettysburg, he had certainly proven his prowess at the operational level of war. As described later by the Artillery Chief of the Army of the Potomac, General Henry J. Hunt:

[Meade] was . . . right in pushing up to Gettysburg after the battle commenced, right in remaining there, right in making his battle a purely defensive one, right therefore in taking the line he did, right in not attempting a counter-attack at any stage of the battle, right as to his pursuit of Lee. Rarely has more skill, vigor, or wisdom been shown in any such circumstances.<sup>39</sup>

When put in the context of the entire Gettysburg Campaign, Meade's inability to fully maintain the momentum of his pursuit can be understood, if not

forgiven. After all, his adversary, Robert E. Lee, already had proven himself to be the master of initiative under desperate conditions. Lee's own battle tempo had been lost only by an act of nature, the flooding of the Potomac River. Still, the pursuit of Lee demonstrates the importance of the subtleties in battle command where one delay in movement can have an irreversible effect. As far as Meade's generalship is concerned, it can be objectively determined only after reviewing his performance in subsequent campaigns and battles. While Gettysburg began the legacy of George Meade, his real fame would be gained or lost along Mine Run, in the Wilderness, and around Petersburg.

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# The Art of Naming Operations

GREGORY C. SIEMINSKI

Shortly after word spread among key military leaders that President Bush had ordered the invasion of Panama, Lieutenant General Thomas Kelly, Operations Officer on the Joint Staff, received a call from General James Lindsay, Commander-in-Chief (CINC), Special Operations Command. His call did not concern some last-minute change in the invasion plan; rather, it concerned a seemingly insignificant detail of the operation: its name. "Do you want your grandchildren to say you were in Blue Spoon?" he asked.<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant General Kelly agreed that the name should be changed. After hanging up the phone, General Kelly discussed alternatives with his deputy for current operations, Brigadier General Joe Lopez.

"How about Just Action?" Kelly offered.

"How about Just Cause?" Lopez shot back.<sup>2</sup>

So was born the recent trend in nicknaming operations. Since 1989, major US military operations have been nicknamed with an eye toward shaping domestic and international perceptions about the activities they describe.<sup>3</sup> Operation Just Cause is only the most obvious example of this phenomenon. From names that stress an operation's humanitarian focus, like Operation Provide Comfort in Turkey, to ones that stress an operation's restoration of democratic authority, like Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, it is evident that the military has begun to recognize the power of names in waging a public relations campaign, and the significance of winning that campaign to the overall effort. As Major General Charles McClain, Chief of Public Affairs for the Army, has recently written, "the perception of an operation can be as important to success as the execution of that operation."<sup>4</sup> Professor Ray Eldon Hiebert, in a piece titled, "Public Relations as a Weapon of Modern War," elaborates on that view: "The effective use of words and media today . . . is just as important as the effective use of bullets and bombs. In the end, it is no longer enough just to be strong. Now it is necessary to communicate. To win a war today government not only has to win on the battlefield, it must also win the minds of its public."<sup>5</sup>

Like any aspect of operational planning, the job of naming operations initially falls to mid-level staff officers in Defense Department components, agencies, and unified and specified commands, to which the Joint Chiefs of Staff have delegated considerable freedom in the naming of operations. Because nicknames help determine the way operations are perceived, joint staff officers must develop not only their skill as operational artists but also their art as operation namers.

An appreciation for the art of doing anything is best gained from practitioners, both good and bad. By way of offering a sort of historical apprenticeship, this article reviews the origins and development of the practice of naming operations, with particular emphasis upon the American tradition which emerged from World War II. This heretofore unchronicled story contains useful lessons for officers who must recommend or approve an operation name.

### *Operations in the World Wars*

Naming operations seems to have originated with the German General Staff during the last two years of World War I. The Germans used code names primarily to preserve operational security, though the names were also a convenient way of referring to subordinate and successive operations. Thus, it is probably no accident that operational names came into use at the same time as the rise of operational art. It was simply easier to get a handle on the complexities of operational sequencing and synchronization by naming each operation something that the staff could remember. The Germans chose names that were not only memorable but also inspiring. Plans for the great Western Front offensive in the spring of 1918, which saw the most extensive use of operational code names, borrowed from religious, medieval, and mythological sources: Archangel, St. Michael, St. George, Roland, Mars, Achilles, Castor, Pollux, and Valkyrie.<sup>6</sup> The selection of these names was perhaps an adjunct to Ludendorff's patriotic education program, designed to stir a demoralized and weary army into making one final push.<sup>7</sup> The original, stirring vision conjured by these names was lost, however, when several of the planned operations had to be scaled back. St. George, for example, devolved to the uninspiring diminutive Georgette.<sup>8</sup>

The American military adopted code names during the World War II era, primarily for security reasons.<sup>9</sup> Its use of code names for operations grew

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out of the practice of color-coding war plans during the interwar period.<sup>10</sup> Even before America entered the war, the War Department had executed Operation Indigo,<sup>11</sup> the reinforcement of Iceland, and had dubbed plans to occupy the Azores and Dakar as Operations Gray<sup>12</sup> and Black<sup>13</sup> respectively.

With the outbreak of the war, the practice of using colors as code names was overcome by the need to code-name not only a growing number of operations, but also numerous locations and projects. The War Department adopted a code word list similar in principle to one already in use by the British. In early 1942, members of the War Plans Division culled words from an unabridged dictionary to come up with a list of 10,000 common nouns and adjectives that were not suggestive of operational activities or locations. They avoided proper nouns, geographical terms, and names of ships.<sup>14</sup> Since so many operations would involve the British, they made sure the list did not conflict with the one developed and managed by their counterparts on the British Inter-Services Security Board.<sup>15</sup> In March 1942, the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the classified Inter-Services Code-Word Index<sup>16</sup> and gave the War Plans Division the duty of assigning code words.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, the War Plans Division (shortly afterward renamed the Operations Division)<sup>18</sup> assigned blocks of code words to each theater; the European Theater got such names as Market and Garden, while the Pacific Theater got names like Olympic and Flintlock.<sup>19</sup>

Although the words listed in the British and American code indexes were randomly chosen, the names of significant operations were thoughtfully selected from the lists, at least those Winston Churchill had anything to do with. Churchill was fascinated with code names and personally selected them for all major operations.<sup>20</sup> He had clear ideas about what constituted appropriate names. After coming across several that he considered inappropriate, he went so far as to instruct an aide to submit all future code names to him for approval; he dropped his demand when he learned the magnitude of the task,<sup>21</sup> but he did take the precaution of writing down some principles to guide his subordinates:

[1.] Operations in which large numbers of men may lose their lives ought not to be described by code words which imply a boastful or overconfident sentiment, . . . or, conversely, which are calculated to invest the plan with an air of despondency. . . . They ought not to be names of a frivolous character. . . . They should not be ordinary words often used in other connections. . . . Names of living people—Ministers and Commanders—should be avoided. . . .

2. After all, the world is wide, and intelligent thought will readily supply an unlimited number of well-sounding names which do not suggest the character of the operation or disparage it in any way and do not enable some widow or mother to say that her son was killed in an operation called "Bunnyhug" or "Ballyhoo."<sup>22</sup>

Borrowing a page from the Germans of World War I, whose code-naming practices he knew well from writing his four-volume history of that war,<sup>23</sup> Churchill saw the names of culturally significant figures as useful sources of operational code words:

3. Proper names are good in this field. The heroes of antiquity, figures from Greek and Roman mythology, the constellations and stars, famous racehorses, names of British and American war heroes, could be used, provided they fall within the rules above.<sup>24</sup>

Churchill's commonsense principles for naming operations influenced American as well as British practice. For example, he objected to the code name for the American bomber raid on the Romanian oil fields in Ploesti because he thought the name "Soapsuds" was "inappropriate for an operation in which so many brave Americans would risk or lose their lives."<sup>25</sup> He aired his objections through the British Chiefs of Staff, who persuaded the Joint Chiefs of Staff to change the name to the more appropriate and inspirational Tidal Wave.<sup>26</sup> Churchill's hand also is evident in the naming of many combined US-British operations, including the American-led invasion of Normandy. The plan for the 1944 invasion was originally Roundhammer, a combination of the code names for invasions planned for previous years, Sledgehammer (1942) and Roundup (1943).<sup>27</sup> While Churchill's personal response to the name Roundhammer is not recorded, the British official history of the war calls the name a "revolting neologism."<sup>28</sup> Whether this strong reaction was shared by Churchill or not, he changed the name to Overlord,<sup>29</sup> deservedly the best-known operational code name to emerge from World War II.<sup>30</sup> The name suggests, as David Kahn has noted, "a sense of majesty and patriarchal vengeance and irresistible power."<sup>31</sup> Whether or not Churchill violated his own advice about avoiding names which imply overconfidence, the name Overlord may well have strengthened the resolve of those who planned the assault on fortress Europe.

The Axis powers also recognized the inspirational value of code names. Although the Japanese typically numbered or alphabetically designated their operations,<sup>32</sup> they resorted to inspirational names as their strategic situation worsened, not unlike the Germans during World War I. The Japanese offensive designed to thwart the Allied landings at Leyte Gulf, for example, was optimistically dubbed Operation Victory.<sup>33</sup>

The Germans made extensive use of code names for plans and operations and usually chose names at random; however, major operations often got special consideration by the German leadership.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps the most well-known example of this is the code name for the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. Initially, the operation was christened Fritz, after the son of the plan's author, Colonel Bernhard Von Lossberg.<sup>35</sup> But Hitler would not have his grand project named something so pedestrian, Lossberg's sentimental attachment

notwithstanding. On 11 December 1940 he renamed the operation Barbarossa, the folk name of the 12th-century Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I, who had extended German authority over the Slavs in the east and who, legend said, would rise again to establish a new German Empire.<sup>36</sup> In selecting a name with these inspirational associations, Hitler risked revealing his intentions—the very thing code names are designed to conceal. In the case of Barbarossa, Hitler seems to have been lucky; in the case of Operation Sealion, his planned invasion of Britain, he was not. British intelligence divined Sealion's target from its telltale name.<sup>37</sup>

### *Using Nicknames to Shape Perceptions*

The efforts of Hitler and Churchill notwithstanding, World War II operation names had limited effect on shaping attitudes because they were classified until after the war ended.<sup>38</sup> Thus, their effect on troop morale was limited to those with clearances, and their effect on public perception was delayed until after the war, at which point the names were merely historical curiosities.

But in America, shortly after the war ended, the War Department decided to use operation names for public information purposes in connection with atomic bomb testing. To this end, the War Department created a new category of unclassified operation names, which are known as nicknames to distinguish them from classified code words. Code words are assigned a classified meaning and are used to safeguard classified plans and operations, while nicknames are assigned unclassified meanings and are used for administrative, morale, and public information purposes.<sup>39</sup>

Nicknames offered new possibilities for shaping attitudes about operations, and the first person to make use of one took full advantage of the potential. Vice Admiral W. H. P. Blandy, the commander of the joint task force conducting the 1946 atomic bomb tests on Bikini Atoll, selected the nickname Operation Crossroads with great care. He chose it, he told a Senate committee, because of the test's possible significance—"that seapower, airpower, and perhaps humanity itself . . . were at the crossroads."<sup>40</sup> Admiral Blandy was especially proud of the name, and when he discovered that the word was already assigned to another activity, he pulled strings to get it assigned to the Bikini tests.<sup>41</sup>

The press publicized not only the name, but also Blandy's rationale for selecting it, and did so with general approbation.<sup>42</sup> Commenting on Blandy's public relations savvy, one historian wrote: "The choice of names was brilliant, implying to some that the military was unsure of its direction and was truly in awe of the atomic bomb."<sup>43</sup> However, some in the press were not so enamored with Blandy or his choice of name. In an article lampooning Blandy, *The New Yorker* commented with unmistakable sarcasm that the name "has been greatly admired in literary and non-violent circles."<sup>44</sup> The sarcasm

seems to suggest that while the general public might admire the name, literary and non-violent audiences were not taken in by Blandy's public relations methods. This would not be the last time members of the media would resent the military's success in popularizing a carefully chosen nickname.

### *Operations in Korea*

Although the military had learned the value of well-chosen nicknames during the peacetime atomic bomb tests, it continued to use meaningless code names during wartime to protect operational security. At least this was true early in the Korean War. In planning the Inchon landing, General Douglas MacArthur and his subordinates followed the World War II practice of selecting operation names from an established code word list. The earliest plan was dubbed Operation Bluehearts, and the one actually executed was Operation Chromite.<sup>45</sup>

MacArthur did depart from World War II practice in one important respect: he permitted code names to be declassified and disseminated to the press once operations had begun, rather than waiting until the end of the war.<sup>46</sup> Thus, combat operation names were, for the first time, public knowledge as operations unfolded. Curiously, MacArthur, with all his public relations savvy, failed to see the opportunities this offered for shaping perceptions.

China's intervention in the Korean War helped Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgway see what MacArthur had not. Ridgway took command of the Eighth Army as it was reeling southward under relentless Chinese attack. His first task, he realized, was to restore the fighting spirit of his badly demoralized command.<sup>47</sup> One way he did this was by giving decidedly aggressive nicknames to the series of counteroffensives undertaken from February to April 1951: Thunderbolt, Roundup, Killer, Ripper, Courageous, Audacious, and Dauntless. Because these names were not classified once operations began, they were widely disseminated among Eighth Army soldiers to boost morale.<sup>48</sup> Ridgway's unprecedented use of meaningful combat operation names set the tone for one of the most remarkable transformations of any military organization in history. The reinvigorated Eighth Army pushed the Chinese back to the 38th parallel.

If Ridgway's names contributed to success on the battlefield, they were not nearly so successful on the home front. Ridgway had publicly announced not only the start of his first major counteroffensive, but also its nickname: Operation Killer.<sup>49</sup> In doing so, he may have imagined that he could boost the morale of the public in the same way he hoped to inspire his troops. After all, the news from the front had been bad for months—so bad, in fact, that the US Far East Command had suspended communique dealing with operational matters the previous fall.<sup>50</sup> It was probably no coincidence that the communique resumed the day after the start of Operation Killer.<sup>51</sup> Certainly

some of Ridgway's troops thought that Killer and other names had been chosen with the media in mind.<sup>52</sup>

In any event, more than a few observers objected to Ridgway's operation name, which was prominently displayed in many newspaper and magazine articles.<sup>53</sup> One critic was the Army Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins, who informed Ridgway that "the word 'killer' . . . struck an unpleasant note as far as public relations was concerned."<sup>54</sup> Certainly public relations suffered: several writers criticized the name directly or implicitly in letters to *The New York Times*;<sup>55</sup> the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union issued a report in which the name served as the rubric for the entire conflict, which it called a "phony" war emergency;<sup>56</sup> Republicans pointed to the term as evidence that the Truman Administration had no other aim in Korea but to kill Chinese;<sup>57</sup> and the State Department objected that the name had soured negotiations with the People's Republic of China.<sup>58</sup>

While the incident taught Ridgway "how varied . . . the political pressures [can be in waging] . . . a major war,"<sup>59</sup> he remained unrepentant about his selection of the name: "I am not convinced that the country should not be told that war means killing. I am by nature opposed to any effort to 'sell' war to people as an only mildly unpleasant business that requires very little in the way of blood."<sup>60</sup> However opposed his nature may have been to soft-pedaling the realities of war, operations after Killer and its immediate successor, Ripper, were given less bloody names.

### *Operations in Vietnam*

Early in the Vietnam War, operations were often given nicknames descriptive of the missions they designated. For example, a combined US Marine and South Vietnamese operation designed to increase the area of control of the Marine enclave at Da Nang was dubbed Blastout.<sup>61</sup> The names of air operations in early 1966 suggest the widening of the air war against North Vietnam. The two retaliatory air strikes against carefully selected North Vietnamese installations were known as Flaming Dart I and II, while the gradually escalating strategic bombing effort begun shortly thereafter was known as Rolling Thunder.<sup>62</sup>

The penchant for giving descriptive names to operations in Vietnam caused the military to relearn the lesson of Operation Killer. On 25 January 1966, the 1st Cavalry Division began a sweep operation through the Bong Son Plain which it had dubbed Masher,<sup>63</sup> presumably because the operation envisioned the enemy being mashed against a second force comprised of Marines.<sup>64</sup> Owing to the media's free access to military units and the lack of censorship during the war, nicknames like Masher were frequently reported by the media as operations progressed. And because Masher was a major operation conducted by the novel "airmobile cavalry" division, it attracted a fair degree of media attention, causing the name to be widely circulated on television and in

the print media.<sup>65</sup> When President Johnson heard it, he angrily protested that it did not reflect “pacification emphasis.”<sup>66</sup> General William Westmoreland put it more bluntly when he speculated that “President Johnson . . . objected . . . because the connotation of violence provided a focus for carping war critics.”<sup>67</sup> To remove their focus, the division commander quickly renamed the operation White Wing.<sup>68</sup>

The lesson of the Masher incident was not lost on Westmoreland: “We later used names of American cities, battles, or historic figures [for operations].”<sup>69</sup> Indeed, reading the names of operations mounted in Vietnam after February 1966 is like reading a cross between a gazetteer and a history book.<sup>70</sup> Names such as Junction City, Bastogne, and Nathan Hale were imbued with American associations and values, and thus were politically safe, as well as potentially inspirational.

Like Ridgway, Westmoreland tried his own hand at the art of operational naming. Also like Ridgway, he did so to inspire demoralized soldiers. In early 1968, the garrison of 6000 US and South Vietnamese troops at Khe Sanh found itself surrounded by an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 North Vietnamese regulars. Many critics saw a Dien Bien Phu in the making, and the beleaguered troops could not but be infected by the prevailing sense of doom. To combat their dispiriting mood, Westmoreland named the round-the-clock bombing and shelling of enemy positions Operation Niagara. He selected the name, he said, “to invoke an image of cascading shells and bombs,” an image obviously designed to reassure the Khe Sanh garrison.<sup>71</sup>

As the Vietnam War drew to a close, the Department of Defense for the first time issued guidelines concerning nicknaming operations.<sup>72</sup> It is clear from reading the guidelines—which remain in force today<sup>73</sup>—that its authors learned well the lessons of Operations Killer and Masher. Noting that improperly selected nicknames “can be counterproductive,” the regulation specifies that nicknames must not: “express a degree of bellicosity inconsistent with traditional American ideals or current foreign policy”; “convey connotations offensive to good taste or derogatory to a particular group, sect, or creed”; “convey connotations offensive to [US] allies or other Free World nations”; or employ “exotic words, trite expressions, or well-known commercial trademarks.”<sup>74</sup> The regulation further stipulates that a nickname must consist of two words (which helps distinguish it from a code word, which consists of only one) and requires the JCS to establish procedures for DOD components to nominate and report nicknames.<sup>75</sup>

### ***Post-Vietnam Automation***

In 1975, the JCS implemented these guidelines by establishing a computer system to fully automate the maintenance and reconciliation of nicknames, code words, and exercise terms.<sup>76</sup> The computer system, called the Code Word, Nickname, and Exercise Term System (an unwieldy name short-

ened to NICKA), is still in operation today and can be accessed through the Worldwide Military Command and Control System. The NICKA system is not, as some assume, a random word generator for nicknames; it is, in fact, merely an automated means for submitting, validating, and storing them. The authority to create nicknames rests not with those who manage the NICKA system, but with 24 DOD components, agencies, and unified and specified commands.<sup>77</sup> JCS assigns each of these organizations a series of two-letter alphabetic sequences and requires that the first word of each two-word nickname begin with a letter pair from one of the sequences.<sup>78</sup> For example, the US Atlantic Command (USACOM) is assigned six two-letter alphabetic sequences: AG-AL, ES-EZ, JG-JL, QA-QF, SM-SR, and UM-UR.<sup>79</sup> Selecting the letter pair UR from the last of these sequences, a staff officer recommended the nickname Urgent Fury for the 1983 invasion of Grenada.

Clearly, staff officers in DOD components, agencies, and unified and specified commands have considerable freedom in creating nicknames, certainly far more than their Vietnam-era predecessors. There is, and has been for 20 years, plenty of room for artistry in naming operations.

In the first 15 years of the new system's existence, however, there was little attempt to exploit the power of nicknaming to improve either troop morale or public and international relations. Nicknames used from 1975 through 1988 were generally meaningless word pairs similar to the operation names used during World War II: Eldorado Canyon (the 1986 Libya raid), Praying Mantis (the 1988 air strikes targeting Iranian naval vessels and oil platforms), and Golden Pheasant (a 1988 show of force to deter Nicaraguan violations of Honduran territory). When nicknames were chosen purposefully, as in the case of Urgent Fury, the effect was overdone.<sup>80</sup> Undoubtedly, the staff officer who came up with "Urgent Fury" was intent on inspiring the troops executing the mission, but he failed to consider the reaction of the media and general public. The name, which was divulged to the press shortly after the invasion,<sup>81</sup> only fueled the arguments of critics who accused the military of excess in committing so much combat power to the operation<sup>82</sup>—which, one wag suggested, "the New York Police Department could have won."<sup>83</sup> Another critic implied that the name belied the rationale for the invasion. Urgent Fury sounded "too militant," he suggested; if we had really been provoked into invading the tiny island nation, then why not "Reluctant Necessity"?<sup>84</sup>

Undoubtedly one reason for the military's failure to use operation names to improve public relations was the strained relationship that existed between the military and the media during this 15-year period. Many in the military blamed the loss of the Vietnam War on the media's critical reporting, which, it was argued, soured the American public's will to continue the fight. Nowhere is this attitude toward the media more evident than in Urgent Fury, where Vice Admiral Metcalf initially refused to allow the media access to the combat zone. The motive for this restriction was transparent:

Shutting the press out of Grenada was . . . based on a fear that an unrestrained press might muck things up again as many senior leaders believed they had done in Vietnam. If the press [was] not present, then there [was] no need to be concerned about . . . media spin.<sup>85</sup>

Given such prevailing attitudes, it is small wonder that the staff officer who came up with the name Urgent Fury failed to consider the media's response to the nickname, much less use a name calculated to create a positive response to the event. That the media could be used to develop public support for operations was a notion foreign to many in the military at the time.

### *Just Cause—or High Hokum?*

Just Cause was the first US combat operation since the Korean War whose nickname was designed to shape domestic and international perceptions about the mission it designated. And it is perhaps unsurprising that the man who helped formulate the name, Lieutenant General Kelly, held an undergraduate degree in journalism.<sup>86</sup> His background equipped him to appreciate what others could not: that naming an operation is tantamount to seizing the high ground in waging a public relations campaign. By declaring the Panama invasion a just cause, the nickname sought to contrast US motives with the injustices of the Noriega regime, which included election fraud, drug trafficking, harassment of US service members and their dependents, and the murder of a Marine officer. The gambit largely succeeded. The name, prominently mentioned in Pentagon press releases, was widely circulated by the media, which generally accepted the term without protest.

Network news anchors adopted the phrase "Operation Just Cause" to refer to the invasion as if they had invented the phrase. In less than an hour after the Bush administration started using the phrase "Operation Just Cause," the network news anchors were asking questions like "How is Operation Just Cause going?"<sup>87</sup>

At least two editorials adopted the phrase by way of endorsing the invasion.<sup>88</sup>

Naming the operation Just Cause was risky, however, not only because it was an obvious public relations ploy, but also because it apparently sought to preempt judgment about whether, in fact, the invasion really was moral, legal, and righteous. Some saw this as overreaching. A *New York Times* editorial entitled "Operation High Hokum" noted how different the nickname was from previous nonsense names and criticized it as an "overreach of sentiment."<sup>89</sup> Several years later, a more spirited critic wrote:

It was an extremely cynical gambit to name a blatantly unjust invasion Operation Just Cause. It betrayed the administration's insecurity about an illegal invasion of a sovereign country. The label was, therefore, very important . . . in creating the impression among the general population that the US government was pursuing a morally righteous cause. [It was] blatant propaganda.<sup>90</sup>



“Just Cause” illustrates both the power and the limits of nicknames in shaping perceptions about military operations. Few would object to the Defense Department engaging in what some have called “public diplomacy”<sup>91</sup>—the attempt to portray its activities in a positive light to bolster troop morale and to garner domestic and international support. Commercial firms carefully consider product names to ensure success in the marketplace; why should the government’s approach to naming military operations be any different? But there is a point at which aggressive marketing turns public relations into propaganda. Going beyond this point breeds cynicism rather than support. Precisely where this point is may be ill-defined, but the nickname Just Cause probably came close to it.

Operation Just Cause ushered in a new era in the nicknaming of US military operations, one in which operations are given names carefully selected to shape perceptions about them. To fully understand what spawned this new era, one must look beyond the immediate influence of Operation Just Cause. While the Panama invasion certainly helped military leaders recognize how powerful nicknames could be in shaping attitudes, two other important trends were at work.

The first trend was the growing recognition among the military leadership that the media could be an ally rather than an opponent in the public relations effort. Articles arguing for cooperation with the media abound in professional military journals after 1989.<sup>92</sup> If nicknames were to contain a message, then the media would be a useful means of communicating it.

The second trend was the growing relative importance of nicknames in relation to the shrinking scale of military action. During previous wars like Korea and Vietnam, individual operations were but a small piece of a much larger effort, so operation nicknames attracted relatively little attention. In recent times, when wars are fought with unprecedented speed and when circumscribed peacekeeping, humanitarian, and relief missions proliferate, a single operation usually encompasses the entire event. The Persian Gulf War is an exception, but even in that case the confrontation consisted of only two operations. Nicknames have become synonyms for entire conflicts; “Desert Storm,” for example, is frequently used in place of “Gulf War.”<sup>93</sup>

### *Desert Shield to Sea Angel*

In August 1990, the Central Command (CENTCOM) staff expended considerable effort in selecting the best name for the operation designed to defend Saudi Arabia from Iraqi invasion. The fact that so much effort went into naming Desert Shield suggests the radical change in attitude which had occurred in the nine months since the invasion of Panama, when the transformation of the name Blue Spoon into Just Cause occurred as an afterthought shortly before the operation began. The naming of Operation Desert Shield and its successor, Desert Storm, also illustrates the critical role of artistry in the process.

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***“The military has begun to recognize the power of names in waging a public relations campaign, and the significance of winning that campaign to the overall effort.”***

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During the hectic days of planning the deployment to the Gulf, CENTCOM staff officers managed to compile a list of candidate nicknames three pages long,<sup>94</sup> from which General H. Norman Schwarzkopf initially selected the name Peninsula Shield. The first two letters of the first word, PE, are not assigned to CENTCOM, so it is clear that CENTCOM felt that selecting the right name was more important than sticking to its assigned alphabetic sequences. However, the JCS rejected the name,<sup>95</sup> perhaps because the mission called for defending only portions rather than the entirety of the Arabian Peninsula, or because “peninsula” was not thought to be characteristic enough of the region. Other names were considered, including Crescent Shield—a name intended to appeal to the Saudis and other Arab allies—but this too was rejected.<sup>96</sup> In the end, CENTCOM proposed and JCS accepted Desert Shield,<sup>97</sup> a name which suggested both the region’s characteristic geography and CENTCOM’s defensive mission.<sup>98</sup> The metaphor of the shield was well chosen because it emphasized not only US deterrence but also Iraqi aggression, for a shield is only necessary when a sword has been unsheathed. In the context of the metaphor, the deployment of US troops was necessary to deter an Iraqi sword that had already bloodied itself in Kuwait. Such careful and effective wordsmithing played well with domestic and international observers, setting a context conducive to garnering support for the operation.

The naming of the offensive phase of the Gulf campaign was no less effective. Recognizing the success of the nickname Desert Shield, General Schwarzkopf played off the name in coming up with Desert Storm,<sup>99</sup> establishing a thematic linkage which would later be employed in subsequent and subordinate operations as well: the name of the ground offensive was Desert Saber; the redeployment was called Desert Farewell; the distribution of left-over food to the US poor was Desert Share. This family of operation names drew grudging admiration from *The Nation*: “You have to admire the Defense Department P.R. people who thought up the names for the various phases of the war, each carefully calibrated to send the correct propaganda message.”<sup>100</sup> Characterizing the names as propaganda is a cynical label which could be applied to any government-sponsored public relations effort, but, for all its

cynicism, the comment does suggest how successful CENTCOM's operation names were in developing public support for its various missions.

General Schwarzkopf was probably inspired to use the storm metaphor by the name of the air operation, which Air Force planners had dubbed Instant Thunder.<sup>101</sup> The storm metaphor associated the offensive with the unleashing of overwhelming natural forces, an association which was as politically astute as it was inspirational, cloaking the military offensive in the garb of natural phenomena. When the long-awaited offensive began, General Schwarzkopf played upon the metaphor's inspirational power in his message to his troops: "You must be the thunder and lightning of Desert Storm," he told them.<sup>102</sup> The General's statement was widely publicized and admired; one writer commented that Schwarzkopf's rhetoric "sounded positively Churchillian."<sup>103</sup> Thus, the name served to inspire the nation as well as the troops.

Not all post-Just Cause nicknames have been as successful as Desert Shield and Desert Storm. For example, the name for the US Marine operation to aid victims of the 1991 typhoon which devastated Bangladesh was originally Operation Productive Effort, a name that General Colin Powell admitted he never liked and which neither he nor his staff could remember. "After a day of struggling with Productive Effort, I said to my staff, 'We've just got to get a better name.'" When the following day's newspaper reported that the Bangladeshis who saw the Marines coming in from the sea by helicopter and landing craft said, "Look! Look! Angels! From the sea!" the operation was rechristened Sea Angel.<sup>104</sup>

### ***Guidelines for Naming Operations***

The Productive Effort incident demonstrates that the military still has some learning to do about the art of naming operations. Rules for helping staff officers through the process would be of little value because nicknaming is an art rather than a science. Yet four general suggestions emerge from the last 45 years of nicknaming operations: make it meaningful, target the key audiences, be wary of fashions, and make it memorable. These suggestions and the prudent guidelines already published in DOD Regulation 5200.1-R may prevent another "(non)Productive Effort."

- *First, make it meaningful.* Don't waste a public relations opportunity, particularly where highly visible operations are involved. If the Gulf War has taught us anything, it has shown us how powerful words and images can be in shaping perceptions. But in the pursuit of a meaningful name, avoid those that border on the propagandistic. It is one thing to name an operation with a view to gaining public support first; it is quite another to put a label on an operation that insists upon its morality. However righteous an operation might appear to be, a name like Just Cause can be distasteful to the media and general public, not necessarily because they disagree with the justness of the cause,

but because they resent having such words put (literally) in their mouths. The more prudent course is to find names that reinforce policy objectives by emphasizing the mission and its rationale. Such an approach is likely to satisfy all critics except those who view *any* government public relations effort as propaganda.

- *Second, identify and target the critical audiences.* While it has been pointed out that “in the global media environment, the information provided to one audience must be considered available to all audiences,”<sup>105</sup> it is seldom possible to effectively target all potential audiences using a two-word nickname. Thus, one must choose one’s target carefully. The first impulse might be to consider only the morale of the troops and the support of the American public, but two other audiences should be considered as well: the international community, including allies and coalition partners; and the enemy.

The importance of these audiences varies with the situation. Where an operation poses safety concerns to a foreign population, the operation name should be designed to allay those concerns. For example, the operation to remove chemical weapons from Europe was named Steel Box, “a solid, positive name” which “implied leakproof execution, thus reassuring our allies.”<sup>106</sup> Where US forces operate with coalition partners or allies, the operation may benefit from a name that emphasizes solidarity. We routinely use such a strategy in naming combined exercises like Team Spirit, and we sometimes elect to downplay US participation by employing the language of the partner nations, like Fuertes Unitas (United Forces).

In certain situations, even the enemy can be the critical audience, since operation and exercise names can send clear signals of US intentions. For example, Earnest Will was the name of the operation to escort reflagged oil tankers through the Persian Gulf, a name which conveyed to the Iranians the firmness of US resolve in defending the vessels. An amphibious exercise mounted before the Gulf War was dubbed Imminent Thunder, a name clearly designed to intimidate the Iraqis.

- *Third, be cautious of fashions.* Operation nicknames enjoy periods of popularity just like personal names. The current fashion in nicknaming operations is to make the names sound like mission statements by using a verb-noun sequence: Promote Liberty, Restore Hope, Uphold Democracy, Provide Promise. (“Provide” is the most popular verb, having been used in the names of six different operations during the 1989-1993 period.<sup>107</sup>) There is value in this approach because it tends to keep the mission foremost in the minds of the troops executing it, and it reminds domestic and international audiences why the mission was undertaken. But there is also a certain formulaic monotony about such names which makes them less memorable than they might otherwise be. Like having a 1950s classroom full of Dicks and Janes, it’s hard to tell the Provide Hopes and Comforts apart.

• *Finally, make it memorable.* To shape perceptions, nicknames must gain currency, something that can happen only if they cling to the cobwebs of the mind. This was one failing of the name Productive Effort; if the Joint Staff couldn't even remember it, how would it affect the general public? The name had three strikes against it: it lacked uniqueness (all operations are efforts, and one hopes that all are productive); it was abstract (what is a productive effort anyway?); and it was too long (five syllables).

To avoid these failings, start by identifying unique attributes of the operation. Try to capture those characteristics in specific terms with a metaphor or with words that evoke an image. Try to keep each word to two syllables or less. Sea Angel, the name that replaced Productive Effort, has all the traits of a memorable name: it is unique and specific; it evokes a clear image in more than one culture; and it has only three syllables. Desert Shield and Desert Storm share those traits. It is no accident that the latter name is so frequently substituted for the name Gulf War. People remember it.

Applying the four guidelines will result in an effectively nicknamed operation, an outcome that can help win the war of images. In that war, the operation name is the first—and quite possibly the decisive—bullet to be fired. Mold and aim it with care.

#### NOTES

1. I have discarded the American typographic convention of capitalizing operation names in their entirety on the assumption that this would be distracting in a paper full of such names. (As a general rule, it is likewise the typographic house style of *Parameters* to capitalize only the first letter of operation names. In addition to being "distracting," the practice of setting operation names in all capitals—while historically accurate—can be confusing, making them appear as acronyms. Our choice in this matter has been for clarity over strict historical accuracy, despite the objection of some of our historian advisors.—Editor)

2. Bob Woodward, *The Commanders* (New York: Pocket Star Books, 1991), pp. 149-50.

3. For a comprehensive listing of nicknamed operations over the five-year period starting in 1989, see Francis M. Doyle, Karen J. Lewis, and Leslie A. Williams, *Named Military Operations from January 1989 to December 1993* (Fort Monroe, Va.: TRADOC Technical Library, 1994). Nicknames and code words are not the same. As noted later in this article, code words are assigned a classified meaning and are used to safeguard classified plans and operations, while nicknames are assigned unclassified meanings and are used for administrative, morale, and public information purposes.

4. Charles W. McClain, Jr., and Garry D. Levin, "Public Affairs in America's 21st Century," *Military Review*, 74 (November 1994), 11.

5. Ray Elon Hiebert, "Public Relations as a Weapon of Modern Warfare," in *Desert Storm and the Mass Media*, ed. Bradley S. Greenberg and Walter Gantz (Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton Press, 1993), p. 36.

6. Barrie Pitt, *1918: The Last Act* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), pp. 47-50.

7. Robert B. Asprey, *The German High Command at War: Hindenburg and Ludendorff Conduct World War I* (New York: William Morrow, 1991), pp. 340-41.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 392-93.

9. Memorandum from Dwight D. Eisenhower to the Adjutant General, Subject: Code Words to Designate Plans, Projects, Localities, etc., 10 March 1942, National Archives Record Group Number 407, p. 1.

10. Ray S. Cline, *United States Army in World War II: Vol. IV, The War Department: Part 2, Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington: GPO, 1951), p. 65, n. 59.

11. Mark Skinner Watson, *United States Army in World War II: Vol. IV, The War Department: Part 1, Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington: GPO, 1950), pp. 487-90.

12. Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *United States Army in World War II: Vol. IV, The War Department: Part 3, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942* (Washington: GPO, 1953), p. 50, n. 67.

13. Ibid., p. 103, n. 22.
14. Bill Hines, "Operation CODENAME," *Infantry Journal*, March 1947, p. 42.
15. Ibid.; on the code-naming functions of the Inter-Services Security Board, see the following sources: Ewen Montagu, *Beyond Top Secret Ultra* (New York: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, 1978), p. 52; F. H. Hinsley and C. A. G. Simkins, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Vol. IV, Security and Counter-Intelligence* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press), p. 247.
16. Minutes of the Sixth JCS Meeting, 18 March 1942, p. 3; available on microfilm, *Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1942-45* (Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1983).
17. Eisenhower.
18. When the War Plans Division was renamed the Operations Division on 23 March 1942, the newly reconstituted Current Section was assigned code management responsibilities, a function it performed for the duration of the war; see Ray S. Cline, *United States Army in World War II: Vol. IV, The War Department: Part 2, Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington: GPO, 1951), pp. 106, 131.
19. Hines, p. 42.
20. Warren F. Kimball, ed., *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence: Vol. I, Alliance Emerging, October 1933-November 1942* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1984), p. 280; also *Vol. II, Alliance Forged, November 1942-February 1944*, pp. 491-92.
21. Ibid.
22. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Vol. V, Closing the Ring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), p. 662.
23. Churchill, *The World Crisis: 1916-1918* (New York: Scribners, 1927), I, 279; also II, 125ff.
24. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 662.
25. Kimball, I, 280.
26. Ibid.
27. Michael Howard, *History of the Second World War: United Kingdom Military Series: Vol. IV, Grand Strategy, August 1942-September 1943* (London: HMSO, 1972), p. 430.
28. Ibid.
29. W. G. F. Jackson, "Overlord": *Normandy 1944* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1978), p. 89; Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Henry Holt, 1951), p. 172.
30. Churchill may have sought an alternative to Roundhammer as much for security reasons as aesthetics. This name, in conjunction with the name of the planned invasion of southern France, dubbed Anvil, gave a pretty clear hint as to the Allies' hammer-and-anvil strategy. While the foregoing is my own speculation, it is known that Anvil was renamed Dragoon precisely because the Allies feared that "the enemy might finally light on the significance of the word." See Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall, Vol. II, Organizer of Victory* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), p. 413.
31. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), p. 503.
32. Hines, p. 43.
33. E. B. Potter, *Sea Power: A Naval History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960), p. 777.
34. Barton Whaley, *Codeword Barbarossa* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1973), p. 16, note.
35. David Irving, *Hitler's War* (New York: Viking Press, 1977), p. 142.
36. Whaley, p. 18.
37. Montagu, p. 53.
38. The first World War II operation names were made public on 10 October 1945, upon release of: US War Dept., General Staff, *Biennial Report of the Chief of the United States Army, July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1945, to the Secretary of War* (Washington: GPO, 1945). See "Code Names of Big Operations Revealed; Invasion of Kyushu Was to Be 'Olympic,'" *The New York Times*, 10 October 1945, p. 13.
39. US Dept. of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington: GPO, 23 March 1994), pp. 72, 261.
40. David Sidney Shalett, "Test Atomic Bombs to Blast 100 Ships at Marshalls Atoll," *The New York Times*, 25 January 1946, p. 1.
41. Jonathan M. Weisgall, *Operation Crossroads: The Atomic Tests at Bikini Atoll* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994), p. 32.
42. See, for example, "Operation Crossroads," *The New York Times Magazine*, 17 February 1946, p. 8.
43. Weisgall, p. 32.
44. "Notes and Comment," *The New Yorker*, 27 July 1946, p. 12.
45. D. Clayton James, *The Years of MacArthur: Vol. III, Triumph and Disaster, 1945-1964* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985), p. 465.

46. For example, the name Operation Chromite appeared in *Time* only ten days after the landing took place. Because the name was meaningless, it received only passing attention. See "Battle of Korea," *Time*, 25 September 1950, p. 26.

47. Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War: How We Met the Challenge* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 85ff.

48. For one Marine's reaction to the name Ripper, see Henry Berry, *Hey, Mac, Where Ya Been? Living Memories of the U.S. Marines in the Korean War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), p. 209.

49. Ridgway actually told reporters about Operation Killer before it commenced but requested that they not report the information until the attack had begun. See James F. Schnabel, *United States Army in the Korean War: Vol. III, Policy and Direction: The First Year* (Washington: GPO, 1972), p. 340.

50. Lindsay Parrott, "U.N. Units Advance More Than 8 Miles in Drive in Center," *The New York Times*, 22 February 1951, p. 1.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Berry, pp. 26, 209.

53. Parrott; "Operation Killer," *The New York Times*, 25 February 1951, sec. IV, p. 1; Lindsay Parrott, "U.S. Forces Launch 2 Attacks on Reds; Main Push Goes On," *The New York Times*, 1 March 1951, p. 1; "Gen. Matt and Gen. Mud: Waterlogged Marines Join U.N.'s Operation Killer," *Life*, 12 March 1951, p. 39. The writer of a letter published in *The New York Times* noted that he had seen "frequent references in the newspapers, including *The Times*, to 'Operation Killer'"; see Hugh Gallaher, letter to the editor, printed as "Military Designation Criticized," *The New York Times*, 6 March 1951, p. 26.

54. The words are Ridgway's, paraphrasing Collins; see Ridgway, p. 110.

55. Gallaher; Jacob Herzfeld, letter to the editor, 28 February 1951, printed as "Korea's Holocaust," *The New York Times*, 3 March 1951, p. 12.

56. "Union Gains Cited by Harry Bridges," *The New York Times*, 3 April 1951, p. 55.

57. Ridgway, p. 110.

58. Harry G. Summers, *Korean War Almanac* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), p. 156.

59. Ridgway, p. 110.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

61. Gregory R. Clark, *Words of the Vietnam War: The Slang, Jargon, etc.* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1990), p. 365.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 369, 379.

63. Shelby L. Stanton, *Anatomy of a Division: The 1st Cavalry in Vietnam* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1987), p. 70.

64. Clark, p. 374.

65. Daniel C. Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), p. 145; see also the series of stories in *The New York Times* written by R. W. Apple, Jr., which appeared 28 January (p. 12), 31 January (p. 12), 2 February (p. 15), and 3 February (p. 15) 1966.

66. Stanton, p. 72.

67. William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), p. 164.

68. *Ibid.*; Stanton, p. 72.

69. Westmoreland, p. 164.

70. For a comprehensive listing of operation names used during the Vietnam War, see Clark, pp. 363-83.

71. Westmoreland, p. 164.

72. "DoD Information Security Program," DOD Directive 5200.1, 1 June 1972; reprinted in *Federal Register*, 3 August 1972, Vol. 37, No. 150, pp. 15655-15686. The guidelines concerning nicknames which appear on page 15685 do not appear in the previous version of DOD Directive 5200.1, entitled "Safeguarding Official Information in the Interests of the Defense of the United States," 8 July 1957; rpt. in US Dept. of Defense, *Implementation of Recommendations of Coolidge Committee on Classified Information* (Washington: July 1957), Pt. 2, App. 4, Encl. 1, p. 1.

73. The same guidelines appear in the newest version of this regulation: US Dept. of Defense, *Information Security Program Regulation*, 5200.1-R (Washington: June 1986), p. C-2.

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.*, pp. C-1 to C-3.

76. US Dept. of Defense, *Code Name, Nickname, and Exercise Term (NICKA) WWMCCS System: Project Manual* (Washington: 20 February 1975), p. 1.

77. US Dept. of Defense, *Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Reporting Structure: Vol. II, Joint Reports: Part 14, General Use/Miscellaneous: Chapter 4, Code Word, Nickname, and Exercise Term Report, Change 11*, JCS Pub 1-03.19 (Washington: 13 March 1990), p. 14-4-9.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 14-4-6.

79. Ibid., pp. 14-4-14 and 14-4-16.

80. The one exception to the poorly named operations of the period was Operation Eagle Claw, the effort to free US hostages held in Iran. But the name never gained currency because the mission was aborted. Instead, the mission has become known as the "Iranian hostage rescue attempt" or simply as Desert One, the designation of the staging area where the mission was scrubbed.

81. David Hoffman and Fred Hiatt, "Weinberger Says U.S. May Stay for Weeks," *The Washington Post*, 4 November 1983, p. B2.

82. Representative Byron raised this criticism in a congressional post-mortem of Urgent Fury when she questioned whether the military hadn't "[gone] to overkill" in the operation; see US Congress, House, Committee on the Armed Services, *Lessons Learned as a Result of the U.S. Military Operations in Grenada, Hearings* (Washington: GPO, 1984), p. 45.

83. William S. Lind, quoted in Robert J. Beck, *The Grenada Invasion: Politics, Law, and Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1993), p. 17.

84. Jack Eisen, "'Lede of the Week' Award," *The Washington Post*, 4 November 1983, p. B2.

85. Marc D. Felman, *The Military/Media Clash and the New Principle of War: Media Spin* (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Univ. Press, June 1993), p. 15.

86. Hiebert, p. 32.

87. Christina Jacqueline Johns and P. Ward Johnson, *State Crime, the Media, and the Invasion of Panama* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994), p. 64.

88. See *Houston Post* editorial, 21 December 1989; rpt. in *Editorials on File* (16-31 December 1989), Vol. 20, No. 24, p. 1487; and *Daily Oklahoman* editorial, 22 December 1989; rpt. in the same edition of *Editorials on File*, p. 1483.

89. "Operation High Hokum," *The New York Times*, 23 December 1989, p. 30.

90. Johns and Johnson, p. 64.

91. Jonathan Alter et al., "The Propaganda War," *Newsweek*, 25 February 1991, p. 38.

92. See for example: McClain and Levin, pp. 6-15; Felman; Brent Baker, "Desert Shield/Storm: The War of Words and Images," *Naval War College Review*, 44 (Autumn 1991), 59-65; William M. Hammond, "The Army and Public Affairs: Enduring Principles," *Parameters*, 19 (June 1989), 57-74.

93. A LEXIS/NEXIS word search of major newspapers and magazines for the three-year period January 1990 to December 1994 revealed that the name "Desert Storm" appeared in 8276 newspaper and 4466 magazine articles, while the name "Gulf War"—or a variant, like "Persian Gulf War"—appeared in 86,652 newspaper and 13,642 magazine articles. Clearly Gulf War and its variants are more popular than Desert Storm, but the frequency with which Desert Storm appears (roughly 10 percent of the newspaper citations and one-third of the magazine articles) is significant.

94. "Military Makes Every Word Count, Picking Code Names, Like Desert Shield, A Matter of Pride," *Orlando Sentinel Tribune*, 19 August 1990, p. A17.

95. H. Norman Schwarzkopf and Peter Petre, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), p. 309.

96. Telephone conversation with Dr. Ronald Cole, Historian, Joint Office of History, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., 12 January 1995.

97. Like the first two letters of "peninsula," the first two letters of "desert" do not fall into the alphabetic sequences assigned to CENTCOM.

98. Schwarzkopf, pp. 309-10.

99. On the CINC's personal role in naming Desert Storm, see Schwarzkopf, p. 320.

100. "Words of War," *The Nation*, 12 August 1991, p. 177.

101. Instant Thunder was a deliberate allusion to Rolling Thunder, the name of the two-and-one-half-year bombing operation over North Vietnam, which many Air Force officers believed failed because of its gradual strategy. See Rick Atkinson, *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993), p. 59. Instant Thunder seems to be the first instance where a nickname purposefully (and critically) alluded to a previously named operation.

102. Schwarzkopf, p. 413.

103. Joshua Hammer et al., "You Must Be the Thunder and the Lightning," *Newsweek*, 28 January 1991, p. 31.

104. Donna Miles and Patrick Swan, "What's in a Name?" *Soldiers*, February 1992, p. 40.

105. McClain and Levin, p. 11.

106. Miles and Swan, p. 48.

107. Doyle et al., p. 2.



## Commentary & Reply

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### THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

#### To the Editor:

An author such as myself could hardly hope for a fairer and more understanding review than the one which my book, *The Transformation of War*, received at the hands of Professor Steven Metz along with those of the two Tofflers and John Keegan (*Parameters*, Winter 1994-95, pp. 126-32).

Nevertheless, there remains an important point on which we differ. Apparently thinking of the end of decolonization, Professor Metz feels that the impact of low-intensity war has decreased since the 1960s (in fact since 1975, when the last colonies went free). I disagree; such warfare, defined as a struggle between or against organizations other than states, is even now tearing to pieces any number of countries all over the globe. Though most continue to take place in what used to be known as the Third World, this is by no means true of all.

Over the years since I wrote in 1989-90, the role of low-intensity warfare has, if anything, grown. Not only did it lead to several million dead in countries ranging from Yugoslavia through Somalia and Rwanda to Angola, but it has caused the number of states represented at the United Nations to increase by leaps and bounds—surely as good a measure of their importance as may be used, regardless of whether it counts as “strategic” or not. In other words, to consider only those wars that make a difference to global affairs as seen from Washington D.C. as significant is hardly fair. Nor, I would suggest, is it a proper way to get a handle on the future of war.

Martin van Creveld  
Mevaseret Zion, Israel

#### The Author Replies:

Professor Van Creveld and I will have to agree to disagree on the issue of strategic significance. My position is that the *human* significance of a type of conflict is determined by the suffering it causes globally. *Strategic* significance is determined by the impact a conflict has on the great powers and its ability to draw them into direct confrontation or war.

The future global system, like all those before it, will consist of a core and a periphery. What made low-intensity or peripheral conflict strategically significant during the Cold War was its ability to draw in the core powers. Because of the zero-sum nature of the Cold War system, nearly every low-intensity conflict had this potential. In what must still be called the post-Cold War system, not all do. In fact, there are currently two distinct types of low-intensity or peripheral conflict. Those such as Rwanda, Somalia, or Sudan may entail great human significance, but little strategic

significance. Conflicts in the Balkans, Chiapas, or most of the Middle East, by contrast, can affect the great powers because of their location, their potential for setting great powers against each other, or because of the ability and willingness of the antagonists to bring the conflict directly to the core powers through terrorism. This makes them strategically significant and, in the long term, more dangerous.

As morally devastating as the consequence may be, the United States will eventually have to minimize its role in conflicts that are significant in human but not strategic terms. While I passionately wish that we could focus our political, economic, and military power on those world problems that cause the greatest suffering, we simply must concentrate on the most dangerous. Perhaps some day human significance and strategic significance will become coterminous. Today, they are not. Professor Van Creveld is exactly right that low-intensity conflict will become more common and involve more people than in the past, but future historians will consider post-Cold War low-intensity conflict less of a danger to the global system than its immediate predecessor.

Steven Metz

#### LEE'S STATUS AND STATE OF MIND

##### To the Editor:

I enjoyed "Aging Successfully: The Example of Robert E. Lee," by Parker, Achenbaum, Fuller, and Fay (*Parameters*, Winter 1994-95). They err, however, in identifying Lee as "the senior retired military officer of the defeated South" (p. 102). That honor goes to Samuel Cooper (USMA 1815), who was the highest ranking general in the Confederate service. Cooper, who held the position of Adjutant and Inspector General, retired following the war to a farm near Alexandria, Virginia, where he died in 1876. (See Ezra Warner, *Generals in Gray* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959], pp. 62-63.)

Also, the authors' statement that after the war Lee "would seek to avoid feelings, activities, and interest in war-related matters" (p. 106) needs to be modified. On 31 July 1865, less than two months after the surrender of the last organized body of Confederates, Lee issued a circular letter to his former comrades-in-arms, soliciting official papers and documents to assist him in writing a history of the Army of Northern Virginia. He intended this to be a tribute to the soldiers. Lee was assisted by his former staff officer, Colonel Charles Marshall, but he never put pen to paper. He felt limited by the paucity of available Confederate documents and abandoned the project in mid-1868. (See Robert E. Lee to "Dear General," 31 July 1865; Lee to P. G. T. Beauregard, 31 July 1865, 3 October 1865; Lee to Jubal A. Early, 22 November 1865; Charles Marshall to Lee, 1 October, 28 November 1865; James Longstreet to Lee, 9 March 1866; all in the papers of Robert E. Lee, Washington and Lee University Library, Lexington, Virginia.)

William Garrett Piston  
Springfield, Missouri

### **The Authors Reply:**

We appreciate Mr. Piston's correction regarding Lee's rank status following the war. We should have indicated his position of leadership at the time of the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. Our primary point was that Lee held a unique position of influence following the war, a position he used for benevolent purposes.

However, we remain unconvinced regarding the point that General Lee maintained an active interest in war-related matters after the war. His overall pattern toward these concerns was one of avoidance (evidenced, for example, by his reluctance to engage in conversations about the war, to visit war-torn areas, and his reference to himself as a "soldier no more"). The point that Lee sought to write a history of the Army of Northern Virginia as evidence to the contrary could be equally offered as further evidence for our position. It may have been that the "unavailability of supporting documentation" was not the only reason this project was never completed. Just as Lee sought to avoid attending his son's wedding because it meant a confrontation with memories of the war, so it seems plausible that this task was, in part, not completed for similar reasons.

Michael W. Parker  
W. Andrew Achenbaum  
George Fuller  
William P. Fay

### **DO WE GO TO WAR FOR OIL?**

#### **To the Editor:**

I read with interest Colonel Norvell DeAtkine's review essay "The Middle East and US Interests" (*Parameters*, Winter 1994-95). There I again found repeated the fallacy that the US economy depends on Mideast oil absolutely. On this false premise, the US military appears to design strategy and plan readiness to prosecute large regional war like Desert Storm. If the premise is false, as I hold, then the United States could expend substantial resources and lives defending nothing.

During the early 1980s, I worked in a financial analysis group of a midsized petroleum exploration and development company. World oil prices and supplies were of great commercial interest to us. At that time, OPEC withholdings of oil enabled that organization to briefly hold a world price of about \$30/bbl. At that price level, several important phenomena occurred. Alternative fluid fuels including alcohol and natural gas were competitive with oil. Windmills and solar cells could also provide energy at competitive prices. The OPEC cartel weakened and leaked oil as its participants cheated on their agreed production limits. Further, production from even small physical oil reserves became economically attractive. Oil supplies became a glut, and the price of oil crashed to around \$20/bbl in less than a year.

Any blockage of Mideast oil supplies that caused prices to rise to \$30/bbl today would have similar results. At that price, ample supplies and substitutes exist worldwide, and abundantly within the boundaries of the United States. At that

price, the cost of gasoline at the pump might double from today's prices (an extreme estimate). While Americans would have to rearrange their budgets and lives a bit and cancel the least essential joy rides, the cost to the United States is far less than the expense (including lives lost) of a war such as Desert Storm.

Indeed, Desert Storm itself offers plain proof that the United States does not depend on Mideast oil. The war disabled Kuwaiti oil fields for more than a year, and the rest of the world boycotted Iraqi production. The world and the United States did without these major oil supplies for that extended period.

The United States may have interests in punishing international aggression, in defending the governments of peaceful nations such as Kuwait, or in protecting the existence of Israel. But it does not have and never has had a national interest in Mideast oil warranting military commitment.

Daniel Brockman  
San Francisco, California

#### **The Author Replies:**

Mr. Brockman may be right. There does not seem to be any consensus among the experts. The problem seems to be one of specific definitions. By absolutely dependent do we mean that life as we know it will cease to exist in the United States without Mideast oil? I don't believe the authors of the reviewed books meant that. There seems to be a theme that given the lack of political will to curb oil consumption and the inflexibility of the oil market, any major disruption of Middle Eastern oil would have a severe effect on less-than-robust economies. Are the premises upon which this conclusion is based valid? I don't know.

I do not believe, however, that the Gulf expedition was launched to preserve cheap oil. At issue was whether or not we could live with an irredentist state controlling half the world's oil supply—not because of our need for the oil, but because of the effects of an immensely more powerful Iraq on the stability of not only the Middle East but the world. How many other puffed-up dictators are there with designs on their weaker neighbors? How many Mussolinis and Ethiopias do we need before we learn the lesson?

Norvell B. DeAtkine

#### **ON "CASTRO AND CUBA"**

##### **To the Editor:**

Contrary to what Colonel Russell Ramsey says in his review essay "On Castro and Cuba: Rethinking the Three Gs" (*Parameters*, Winter 1994-95), Dino A. Brugioni was an employee of CIA (not NSA) since March 1948 (Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball*, p. 21) and during the Cuban missile crisis was an official at the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC), where he ran errands for those who worked with "information derived from an analysis of aerial photography" (p. ix), not with signals intelligence.

More important, Mr. Brugioni never “unmasked” the Soviet nuclear warheads either on their way to Cuba *or while they were in Cuba*.

They were not “unmasked” en route. Brugioni quotes McNamara stating, at a press briefing on 22 October in response to a question as to whether there are nuclear warheads in Cuba, “We don’t know” (p. 544). Brugioni himself gives evidence that they were there before that press briefing; see page 546 for good evidence that they were there by 14 October.

They were not “unmasked” while they were in Cuba either. Discussing this point Brugioni comes up with an “intelligence speak” tour de force, a gem really, that simultaneously: 1. Says that NPIC never located the warheads while they were in Cuba; and 2., says that anyone who says so is a liar. His point is worth quoting in part:

Statements by responsible US officials during that [Cuban missile crisis] period, and articles written subsequent to the crisis, maintaining that nuclear weapons were never seen in Cuba simply weren’t true. The fact [another bagatelle] was that they [just] weren’t discovered until the post-crisis review of aerial . . . photography taken during the crisis period [page 548].

John Berezin  
Madison, Wisconsin

#### **The Author Replies:**

Mr. Berezin provides worthwhile correction to my essay “On Castro and Cuba: Rethinking the Three Gs.” On page 139, in discussing Mr. Dino Brugioni’s memoir *Eyeball to Eyeball: The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (1991), I identified Mr. Brugioni with the National Security Agency (NSA). The dust jacket of his book clearly states that he was with the Central Intelligence Agency, and a founding figure in the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC). At five points in the text, I found discussions of NSA actions which led me to the lamentable conclusion that Mr. Brugioni was working with or for that agency. I was wrong, and I appreciate Mr. Berezin’s clarification.

I continue to think that Mr. Brugioni is a person who should be credited for “unmasking” the Soviet Union’s missile scam in Cuba during 1962, and for giving the world a unique insider view of what really went on. Again, thanks to Mr. Berezin for showing that such a conclusion could have several meanings, which is why people should read Mr. Brugioni’s excellent book. My hope in reviewing this literature is to get the scholarly community and the national security, intelligence, and strategy communities to achieve a better dialogue.

Russell W. Ramsey

## Review Essays

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### Reading Up On the Drug War

RUSSELL W. RAMSEY

Readers can profit from a spate of books and articles about the world's struggle against narcotics. This literature can be grouped topically into investigative reporting, ideological cannon shots, and policy critiques. Some of the investigative reporting is so realistic that the reader feels drawn into the nether world of the narcotics culture. Some of the ideologically driven authors disguise their rapier thrusts with footnotes, quotations, and other scholarly apparatus, thereby giving the impression of an objective policy critique. And the more scientifically written policy studies pull the reader into columns of data and pithy little annotations about what CHI<sup>2</sup> really means in this case. One needs to be very focused to assess these books, for among them there is fascinating reading on a morbid, gripping, and sadly enduring topic.

Maria Jimena Duzan is a journalist with *El Espectador* (*The Spectator*) of Bogota, a splendid newspaper aligned generally with the Liberal Party. Her *Death Beat*, translated from the Spanish in 1994 by Peter Eisner, is simply the best book of our times on crime reporting. With hair follicles tingling, the reader wonders how an attractive, well-educated woman got close enough to the murderous subjects she investigated—Colombia's infamous cartel lords—with her objectivity and her life intact. In 1989, Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leon of the *Miami Herald* staff produced the still relevant *Kings of Cocaine: Inside the Medellin Cartel*, focusing upon druglord Carlos Lehder. Again, the odor of exploding dynamite, the grins of the payoff goons, and the screams of the syndicate's torture victims all come alive, with lots of facts that stand up to later discovery. Max Mermelstein was the evil brain behind the Medellin cartel during that era. He spilled his guts about the infamous Ochoa brothers, Juan David and Fabio, to adventure author Robin Moore, who published the tale in 1990 as *The Man Who Made It Snow*. Arturo Carrillo Strong was a narcotics agent in the southwestern United States during the 1970s, when hard drugs of Latin American origin were becoming a plague. His memoir, *Corrido de Cocaina: Inside Stories of Hard Drugs, Big Money, and Short Lives*, appeared in 1990 and gives the reader a chilling longitudinal awareness of the street drug culture in the United States.

The value of reading these accounts lies in comprehending the milieu and the strength of the challenge before plunging into the policy critiques, where the clinical language somehow bypasses the wretched lives that are under discussion. And, let it be said, there are many other bestseller paperback gut spillers by drug culture participants of dubious veracity. The volumes mentioned above are marked by plausibility and good writing.

Jaime Malamud-Goti produced *Smoke and Mirrors: The Paradox of the Drug Wars* in 1992. While the US Drug Enforcement Administration indeed made

mistakes during its pioneer Andean operations, both the DEA and the Bolivian armed forces and National Police learned from their mistakes. Malamud-Goti became so emotionally involved in defaming the supply side anti-drug policy of President George Bush that his account is unbalanced. Kevin Jack Riley, a scholar of demonstrated talent, also lost perspective while indicting the Colombian armed forces and police in his 1993 volume called *The Implications of Colombian Drug Industry and Death Squad Political Violence for U.S. Counternarcotics Policy*. He was partially duped by the syndicate propaganda machines: some of his villains are actually heroes of the anti-narcotics war.

Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall, an English professor and a newspaper staff financial analyst, wrote *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* in 1991. Already convinced that the 1980s conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador were contrived mercenary struggles initiated by President Ronald Reagan, these two apologists for the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and the El Salvadoran FMLN communist guerrillas indicted the drug war on similar lines. They discovered that there actually were no drug cartels in Latin America, nor even significant drug traffic save that being done by Reagan's "Contra" mercenaries in Nicaragua, General Manuel Noriega's Panamanian Defense Force, and the pro-US armies of Honduras and El Salvador. When this reviewer was a doctoral student in Latin American history, the University of California Press at Berkeley produced the leading scholarly works in the field. But their editorial decision to float this volume suggests a triumph of crudely ideological spin doctoring. Scott B. MacDonald's 1988 book, *Dancing on a Volcano*, for example, names most hemispheric druglords and is quite critical of US Andean drug policy; but it also shows clearly that Fidel Castro and his Sandinista allies in Nicaragua were selling drugs for cash to support their regimes in the 1980s.

There is plenty of room for scholarly writing that concludes US Andean drug enforcement policy to be a failure. The best short item on this theme is Bruce M. Bagley and Juan G. Tokatlian, "Dope and Dogma: Explaining the Failure of U.S.-Latin American Drug Policies," in Jonathan Hartlyn, Lars Schoultz, and Augusto Varas's 1992 edited volume, *The United States and Latin America in the 1990s: Beyond the Cold War*. The weak spot in Professor Bagley's thesis—that enforcement on the supply side is ineffective—is that no alternative is presented beyond a generic plea for a coordinated approach. Michael Kennedy, Peter Reuter, and Kevin Jack Riley show statistically in their 1994 study, *A Simple Economic Model of Cocaine Production*, that alternative cropping, often recommended as a better choice than crop eradication among traditional Andean cocaine growers, is economically unfeasible. Kevin Jack Riley's 1993 RAND Corporation study, *Snow Job? The Efficiency of Source Country Cocaine Politics*, shows convincingly that in-country interdiction alone cannot win.

Alfred W. McCoy and Alan A. Block draw upon worldwide examples from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America in their 1992 volume of essays, *War on Drugs: Studies in the Failure of U.S. Policy*. But they offer no specific alternative, and their definition of failure is not always consistent. In 1993, veteran Pentagon policy analyst Carl H. Builder found in his book *Measuring the Leverage: Assessing Military Contributions to Drug Interdiction* that the problems of precise measurement and assessment were virtually insurmountable. Michael Childress would disagree, for he did a series of RAND Corporation studies which measure the drug trade with

apparent precision. His 1994 work, *A System Description of the Cocaine Trade*, plus his 1993 studies with similar titles on heroin and marijuana should be read in conjunction with Builder's analysis. What emerges is the late Professor Hans Zetterbourg's oft-forgotten theory of the mid-range value in the social sciences. Global measurement yields statistical futility, and micro measurement produces precision about nothing that matters, so one picks the theory of the mid-range value. Childress's measurement parameters appear to be a healthy compromise between policy relevance and statistical precision.

Since a number of the studies concentrate heavily on the futility of fighting the drug war militarily in the Andes, through surrogate armies and police, one searches hopefully for some kind of study suggesting that the balanced approach—supply side interdiction at all levels, full court press against demand—may be working. The best exposition for the balanced attack is by Professor William O. Walker III, in a 1989 volume called *Drug Control in the Americas*. The Ohio Wesleyan University historian draws upon his research on little-known drug enforcement programs during the 1930s to make parallels with events in the 1980s. Professor Rensselaer W. Lee III argues in his 1991 book, *The White Labyrinth*, for the long-term, balanced approach. He examines bravely the case for legalization of addictive narcotics, concluding that such a policy would relieve some short-term problems at the expense of creating long-term social disasters.

Raphael F. Perl's 1994 study, *Drugs and Foreign Policy: A Critical Review*, may be the best single volume on how the illegal narcotics trade affects the US role in the world. It is complete, balanced, and much more objective than the earlier policy-bashing books, some of which are reviewed here. C. Peter Rydell and Susan S. Everingham carefully examined both supply side and demand side programs in their 1994 analysis, *Controlling Cocaine: Supply Versus Demand Programs*. A good analysis of US Andean drug strategy appeared in Peter H. Smith's 1992 collection of essays, *Drug Policy in the Americas*. Professor Smith shows clearly the policy conflicts that occur when the United States, a global military power whose own citizens are a major cause of the drug problem, attempts to fight a supply side war through a foreign army and police apparatus. But his essays also show signs of progress, and, more important, ways to form regional anti-narcotics partnerships.

Readers who find the drug policy literature depressing will want to check out the annual *National Drug Control Strategy* of the United States. Public Law 100-690 has required the production of this statement by the Office of National Drug Control Policy annually since 1989. Concise yet comprehensive, this document reduces the labyrinth of statistics, government agencies, legal jurisdictions, human rights in conflict, public health challenges, and the rest of the drug war maze to understandable detail. Drug strategies involve many issues which people simply do not want to face. Some of these are curtailment of civil liberties, acknowledging drug abuse in one's own family, hiring foreign armies and police to kill their own citizens, charges of moral hypocrisy by hemispheric neighbors, raising taxes to fund an unpopular program in a era of runaway national deficit, and dragging the armed forces into law enforcement just when the *posse comitatus* principle—armies for foreign defense only—is coming into acceptance worldwide.

In 1990, the word "coke" meant white addictive powder to some, and a crispy brown drink in a familiar bottle to others. In 1990, US citizens spent \$1.2 billion



for "coke" (cocaine) produced in Colombia; the Coca-Cola Corporation International earned \$1.2 billion worldwide for its soft drink. The Colombian army and National Police have lost more personnel in the drug war since 1983 than the United States has lost in all combat operations since 1973. The challenges to national security in the post-Cold War era are, according to most experts, financial deficit and ethnic war in remote areas. Both of these challenges link strongly to the narcotics plague. Military professionals will find the 22 books, studies, and essays reviewed here of considerable value in understanding the reality that the armed forces are deeply involved in fighting the world's seemingly insatiable habit.

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The Reviewer: Russell W. Ramsey is a civilian professor at the US Army School of the Americas. He holds the Ph.D. degree in Latin American history from the University of Florida and has written many articles and books on Latin American military topics.

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*Review Essay*

## Special Operations Forces and Small Wars

RYAN J. McCOMBIE

The first priority of the US military is to preserve the American way of life. A corollary interest is to preserve our interests throughout the world. In small, brushfire, inter- and intra-regional wars, the forces correctly called upon to maintain our interests are often our Special Operations Forces. Many books have been written about these forces since Goldwater-Nichols brought them into the national limelight. Four recent ones address a range of topics: the role of Special Forces in American history, their training and employment, a case study of SOF operations, and a first-person account of SF operations from the earliest days of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos through the beginnings of high-altitude, low-opening (HALO) parachuting and Special Atomic Demolition Munition (SADM) delivery training and operations.

In *The Commandos: The Inside Story of America's Secret Soldiers*, Douglas C. Waller has written a creditable and timely account of the training and employment of the nation's Special Operations Forces. With a few exceptions, he describes their training and employment accurately without resorting to sensationalism or anecdotes. The book reveals the professionalism and national pride of the men and women in the SOF units.

After describing the 5th Special Forces Group's strategic reconnaissance during Desert Storm, Waller recounts the initial training of each service's Special Operations Forces. He devotes individual chapters to the Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, 20th Special Operations Squadron, and the Delta Force.

The chapter on the Army Special Forces' basic training describes the culmination exercise for the Special Forces Qualification Course, "Robin Sage." Having accompanied the trainees throughout the exercise, carrying his own rucksack, Waller succeeds in understanding and portraying the stamina required in any Special Forces operation and, more important, the character of the Special Forces soldier. In an age of TQM, he characterizes all the soldiers as intelligent and flexible, with mature judgment and a willingness to learn from their mistakes.

Waller does an excellent job of relating the training to the men and their future missions. He may leave the reader with a few minor false impressions, however. The Army Special Forces, much like the Navy SEALs, recruit from the entire service force, not only from Rangers and infantry. This recruiting is required to meet the varying skill requirements of Special Forces, as well as the need to infuse new perspectives and flexibility into the force. In addition, the opportunity to withdraw voluntarily, without recrimination, allows any candidate, whether commissioned officer or not, to retain the respect due a soldier who was willing to try with no assurance of success. Overall, Hooah!

After the spate of recent books and films about Navy SEALs, the author's treatment of these forces is refreshing and factual. He followed a SEAL boat crew through Hell Week, the rite of passage, describing their trials and discomforts well enough to give someone who has endured it a sense of *déjà vu*. To his credit, Waller slept only a few more hours than the men enduring this grueling week. His matter-of-fact account of the training gives the reader a view of the SEALs' character and bond of loyalty to one another.

While this chapter is the most accurate, evenhanded account I have read on SEAL training, it is incomplete in that it describes only Hell Week. Readers may be left wondering how the SEALs learn to dive, free-fall, navigate, pilot high-speed boats, employ demolitions, and do all those other things SEALs do. The material does give the reader a unique and accurate insight into the development of the character of Navy SEALs. Overall, Bravo Zulu!

Waller's treatment of the 20th Special Operations Squadron is also accurate, as he captures the character of the men by observing the training of the pilots and crews at Kirtland Air Force Base. He also describes the electronics systems of the machines surprisingly well. He recognizes the shortfalls of the CH 53s, such as being underpowered for dropping into tight landing zones and having a restricted view of the ground from the cockpit. Overall, Sierra Hotel!

Similarly, his analysis of psychological operations (PSYOPS) gives a candid view of the government's reticence to use this powerful capability. The 4th Psychological Operations Group, which has made enormous strides in recent years, is capable of having much greater effects on its targets than the uninitiated might realize. Its area experts and PhDs design sophisticated campaigns to apply our mastery of the information age and state-of-the-art communications to defeat an adversary. The 4th POG has matured and evolved into a proven combat unit.

Waller admirably points out the bureaucratic entanglements and disregard for this form of warfare throughout the government. It is time for psyops to be integrated into a streamlined, interagency decisionmaking body that allows psyops themes and campaigns to be used well before the introduction of force. Waller does a service to decisionmakers by reporting the psyops successes of Desert Storm. Psyops is an effective, cost-efficient capability that is well worth our attention. Overall, well done!

The author looks at SOF's operational record in several ways, discussing the resistance movement inside Iraq and Kuwait as well as the issues related to SOF organizations that carried out the operations. It is useful to note that Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT), rather than the Joint Special Operations Command, was the key element in planning and executing SOF activities.

The future of SOF is covered from the perspective of the likely challenges and the people and equipment that will be needed to meet them. Much of the work being done by the Concepts and Studies Division of the Army's Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg is, at a minimum, worth consideration. Waller notes that some of the new equipment will significantly enhance operations while cautioning against the tendency to rely too much on technology. His premise is that Desert Storm was the last great war. He describes future SOF engagements as revolving around peacetime operations, including counterterrorism, counterdrugs, nation-building, and other regional threats. He subscribes to Bill Lind's theory of a fourth-generation, nonlinear battlefield where warfare has evolved to the point that "the battlefield will include

the whole of the enemy's society." Collapsing an enemy's social structure internally will be the goal, rather than just destroying him physically.

Waller has given us a credible book about the nation's Special Operations Forces. He has a solid grip on their training, character, mentality, and capabilities. His book depicts Special Operations Forces as mature, trained, and dedicated forces that can be relied upon to do the nation's bidding and contribute to success in peace or conflict. It is, overall, the best of the works under consideration here.

Sam C. Sarkesian's *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era, Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* is a scholarly, well-researched work. Sarkesian offers an excellent analysis of the topic to readers who have some background in Vietnam studies or unconventional warfare. For both Malaya and Vietnam, Sarkesian provides a historical framework of both the protagonist and the country at war. He then walks the reader through the two conflicts in a logical, understandable sequence, making an excellent case for his conclusions without forcing them on the reader.

The account of British operations in Malaya is well researched, though some might suggest that his reliance on source documents originating in the British government results in a narrow view of the status of the country. While some might quibble about exact dates and interpretations of isolated events, Sarkesian's conclusions are supported by modern events in Malaysia.

The analysis of Vietnam is skeletal but outlines the war quite clearly. He assesses accurately the role of special operations and the shortcomings suffered as a result of unenlightened leadership misutilizing assets which had the best potential for success. He describes the US effort in South Vietnam as "divided responsibility, decentralization of command, diffused efforts, and differing strategies." Our failings in Vietnam also included a lack of attention in integrating nonmilitary efforts, and coordination problems with the South Vietnamese military. Despite its brevity, this section of Sarkesian's book allows the reader to see easily the contrasting styles, successes, and failures of the two wars.

The most valuable part of Sarkesian's book is assuredly the last chapter, titled "The United States and the Emerging Security Agenda," in which the author provides a scholarly analysis of the nature of future wars and the ability of US forces to conduct them efficiently. He recognizes the interdependence of the world's nations and the inability of the United States to go it alone in all conflicts. He acknowledges the requirement for our strategy to support indigenous systems, with all that suggests regarding civilian administration, police, political, and socioeconomic issues. "Strategies must be implemented so as to avoid damage to the innate character of the indigenous government," he says. "The notions of selective engagement, honest broker, and soft power are just as appropriate strategies in dealing with states' internal conflicts as they are at the international policy level. The American mindset and way of war must include serious consideration of different cultures."

The author looks carefully at strategy, doctrine, and required force structure, exhorting the government to "integrate the civilian and military components into a truly effective sixth service; to allow primacy for unconventional conflicts to rest with the Special Operations Forces, combined with traditional aid and assistance; and [to] establish a clear distinction in the US special operations command between the two major components of unconventional conflict, special operations and special forces."

Sarkesian's final chapter touches on an increasingly troubling aspect of SOF. Whereas unconventional operations are historically seen as low-visibility economy of force and resource operations, normally using indigenous counterparts, more and more emphasis in recent years has been placed on strike operations. Direct action, counterterrorism, and special reconnaissance operations have an important role, but they should not be the focus of all SOF training and planning. As Sarkesian states, "Care must be taken not to refashion the Special Forces into a Spetsnatz-type organization aimed primarily at direct support of theater tactical operations." He observes that in times of relative peace, unconventional operations consisting of foreign internal defense, humanitarian assistance, nation-building, counterdrug assistance, and security assistance programs can achieve our political objectives at low risk with high potential for success. In time of conflict, unconventional operations are primarily warfare operations—forming, training, and equipping indigenous forces; evasion and escape; subversion and sabotage; and other operations of low visibility, covert, or clandestine nature.

The direct action missions of counterterrorism and personnel recovery are, as far as possible, best executed by forces specifically designed, equipped, and trained to execute them. These units train to perform their missions in an efficient manner through stealth, speed, and violence. The missions require an inordinate amount of emphasis for the units training to do them. The result is that the units designed to perform these missions are much better trained, organized, and resourced to execute them than are other special forces. Emphasizing these missions throughout the SOF would result in a duplication of effort and would sacrifice competence in other important operations.

In a view from ground level, Sergeant Major Joe R. Garner's *Copperhead* describes the early days of the modern Special Forces soldier. This book has the ring of truth throughout; revered special operations soldiers like retired Colonel Stanley Olchovik and retired Major Dick Meadows would not have endorsed the book were it not accurate.

The author chronicles the background and exploits of a Special Forces soldier during a time when the Special Forces were doing unconventional warfare and unconventional operations, when more was not better, and when a soldier in faraway, foreign places depended on his training and his wits to conduct difficult missions in the national interest. He depicts well the individualism of the early Special Forces era and the willingness of SF soldiers to attempt and usually accomplish arduous, sometimes near-impossible missions. This work is written from the viewpoint of the soldier in the field. Consequently it sometimes suffers from the author's inability to distance himself from details; the book does, however, provide clearly the perspective of those executing the missions. This view often is quite different from that of the politicians and pundits who ultimately control and profit from mission success.

The author examines "White Star" in Laos; the Bay of Pigs in Cuba; early high-altitude, low-opening parachute jumping; training; and near-operations in Panama. He complains about the use of Special Forces in direct action missions in Vietnam, asserting that these missions were "costing us a lot of SF who had spent many years in guerrilla warfare." He opens a small window into the operations of MACVSOG, a covert, clandestine organization initially run by the Central Intelligence Agency that conducted operations considered "officially disavowable."

This book of personal high adventure rings true. It is a fun read, especially for someone who participated even on the periphery of the operations. The value of

the book is that it documents (albeit without substantiation) the success of small bands of audacious men accomplishing the nigh-impossible. The British special forces motto "Not through strength but through guile" provides an appropriate description of this era of Special Operations.

Unfortunately, not all recent books on SOF offer similar rewards. In *Low-Intensity Conflict in American History*, Claude C. Sturgill attempts to integrate wide-ranging conflicts under the name of low-intensity conflict. He quotes various authors on lesser-known early conflicts such as "Bleeding Kansas" and John J. Pershing's expedition into Mexico. His technique is to ask questions at the end of each passage, offering amateurish, superficial analysis of what others have written.

Sturgill confuses insurgency with counterinsurgency, kidnapping with terrorism, and the statutory roles of counterterrorism forces with those of the FBI and other law enforcement agencies. He doesn't understand the legalities in psychological operations or the difference between "black" and "white" psychological operations. He makes unsubstantiated, unsupportable statements such as this:

As late as the early part of 1970, psychological operations by the US Army were still at or close to the clean and white level. The black and dirty level operations were still performed by other units, usually sponsored by the CIA. It is questionable whether the US forces are any more astute at the more glamorous and bloody psychological warfare operations even now in 1993. This will bear watching by all of us.

Nor does Sturgill hesitate to give ill-conceived advice to the operators. For example, while writing about the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, he writes, "They should have closed the road around the Marine barracks and mined it. Those Marines should have been patrolling with full loaded weapons, and the safety switches should have been in the 'on' position; instead, the reverse was true." Sturgill mixes psychological operations, sabotage, unconventional warfare, and even direct action missions into one large cauldron and calls them all psychological operations, demonstrating how little he understands about any of them.

The book displays a general lack of a basic understanding of Special Operations Forces and their operations; its style and sensationalism make it of little value to either professionals or casual observers of special operations. Sturgill is so far off base it is hard to know where to stop criticizing his work.

Our SOF forces today are as good and in many ways better than any we have ever had. They deserve the best equipment the country has to offer. An attitude of equipment dependency, however, is frightening. Some SOF missions do require highly sophisticated equipment, but all SOF missions require the unique, finely honed skills of the individual operator. An attitude of "Who has the most toys wins" can be expensive, may require extra and often excessive training, and can engender an attitude of dependency on technology as opposed to self-reliance. We must know the difference between taking care of the SOF operator and overindulging him.

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## *Review Essay*

# Did Nazis Fight Better Than Democrats? Historical Writing on the Combat Performance of the Allied Soldier in Normandy

COLIN F. BAXTER

It is appropriate, in the afterglow of the 50th anniversary of the Normandy invasion, to examine the historical literature relating to the combat performance of the Allied soldiers who fought in what historian Stephen Ambrose has called "the climactic battle of World War II." After D-Day, great battles were still to come, and six weeks after the invasion, Allied soldiers had taken only as much ground as the Overlord planners had expected to occupy in the first five days. There was no immediate breakout from the beachhead and no quick advance toward Paris and the German frontier. The resulting stalemate in Normandy has produced many disputes, not least of which has been the controversy surrounding the combat performance of Allied soldiers in Normandy, which has come under heavy fire from a variety of sources.

In his popular 40th-anniversary account, *Overlord: D-Day and the Battle of Normandy* (1984), Max Hastings asked, "How was it possible that German troops facing overwhelming firepower and air power, often outnumbered . . . could mount such a formidable resistance against the flower of the British and American armies?" For examples of endurance and sacrifice, Hastings claimed that it was necessary to look to the example of the German army, and to "the extraordinary defence" that German soldiers conducted in Normandy when, he writes, "all the odds were against them." In a *Washington Post* article headlined, "Their Wehrmacht Was Better Than Our Army," published in 1985, Hastings underscored his conclusion that Allied soldiers had shown "too little initiative," "too little determination," and "stopped after trifling casualties" in the Battle of Normandy. Hastings' judgment that in the

hour of crisis the democratic soldiers of the West were found wanting has become almost commonplace.

Hastings' poor opinion of the Allied soldiers' performance in Normandy echoed and repeated to a new generation and wider audience the criticisms made by earlier scholars such as S. L. A. Marshall (*Men Against Fire*, 1947), Trevor N. Dupuy, (*A Genius for War*, 1977), and Martin van Creveld (*Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance, 1939-45*, 1982). Despite important replies to these critics by John Sloan Brown ("Colonel Trevor N. Dupuy and the mythos of Wehrmacht superiority: A Reconsideration," *Military Affairs*, 1986), and Fredric Smoler ("The Secret of the Soldiers Who Didn't Shoot," *American Heritage*, 1989), the allegedly poor fighting ability of the Allied soldier assumed the status of dogma through repetition, while the German soldier became almost mythical as the best fighting man in World War II.

Taking up where the earlier critics of Allied combat effectiveness left off, many recent scholars have emphasized morale and find it lacking among the ordinary American, British, or Canadian soldier, while the German soldier was allegedly well motivated. In their study, *The Battle of Normandy: The Falaise Gap* (1978), military historians James Lucas and James Barker present a widely held view of an outgunned and outnumbered German army in Normandy, a virtual Biblical David, heroically resisting the Allied Goliath. "There stands illuminated [in the Battle of Normandy]," write Lucas and Barker, "the ordinary German soldier." In his book *Brute Force: Allied Strategy and Tactics in the Second World War* (1990), a "radical reappraisal" of World War II, John Ellis repeats the view of Field Marshal Rommel that Allied materiel superiority was responsible for his defeat. Pontificating on the incompetence of Allied commanders and their troops, Ellis asserts that any comparison between the Allied armies and the German army can be only "invidious." In *The Lonely Leader: Monty 1944-1945* (1994), Alistair Horne repeats the criticisms of the Allied soldiers' combat ability while extolling the fighting ability of "Rommel's 'Trojans'" in Normandy, a battle which, Horne declares, "remains one of the miracles of military history."

The oft-repeated assertion concerning Allied combat inferiority is also echoed by Allan R. Millett in his essay "The United States Armed Forces in the Second World War," which appeared in volume three of *Military Effectiveness* (1988). The author concluded that with few notable exceptions the fighting quality of American troops "did not match the Germans." Focusing on the British army, Carlo D'Este's *Decision in Normandy* (1983) blamed war-weariness in the veteran Desert War divisions for some of the difficulty experienced by the British in Normandy. With far less selectivity, Stephen Badsey echoes the charge in his essay for *The D-Day Encyclopedia* (1994).

The revisionist interpretation owes perhaps its largest debt to, and has drunk most deeply from, the B. H. Liddell Hart well of Wehrmacht adulation. Virtually every critic of the Allied soldier's fighting performance in Normandy has quoted approvingly from Liddell Hart's postwar essay "Lessons of Normandy." In a famous sentence, Liddell Hart wrote, "There has been too much glorification of the campaign and too little objective investigation." Unfortunately, however, Liddell Hart had already concluded that the Allied performance in Normandy was "disturbing and depressing." He claimed that despite having odds of ten to one and more in their favor, the Allies had failed repeatedly to defeat the Germans. In reality, the American, British, and Canadian advantage in infantry was much less than that claimed by Liddell Hart and other critics: the British Second Army in Normandy had a superiority



of about two-to-one in infantry, a number not sufficient for rapid offensive success on a narrow front with little room for maneuver.

After World War II, the memoirs of German generals contributed to the illusion of Normandy as a David versus Goliath contest, with the Wehrmacht in the role of David. In *The Rommel Papers* (1953) edited by Liddell Hart, the former Desert Fox constantly emphasized Allied numerical superiority to explain his defeat in Normandy. The same picture of an unfair contest between an exhausted German army facing an Allied juggernaut is found in the memoir of Hans Speidel, *Invasion 1944: Rommel and the Normandy Campaign* (1950).

German generals were not alone in contributing to the myth that Allied soldiers fought poorly in Normandy. Both at the time and in his postwar memoir *With Prejudice* (1966), Air Marshal Arthur Tedder criticized what he considered to be the poor fighting ability and lack of aggressiveness among ground troops. Tedder's view reflected a not uncommon attitude among air commanders, particularly the "bomber barons," that direct support of the ground forces would only demoralize and undermine the infantry's fighting spirit, not to mention divert the air forces from their strategic bombing mission. American air commander Carl "Tooy" Spaatz wrote in his Normandy journal that the Allies had been stopped by what he called "fourteen half-baked German divisions." The extreme pro-air anti-army position is repeated by John Terraine in his book, *A Time for Courage* (1985). For Terraine, the main feature of the Normandy battle was "the magnificent courage, determination and skill of the German Army."

Criticism of the Allied soldier, however has not been unanimous. In his balanced study, *Normandy Bridgehead* (1970), Hubert Essame, who served as a British brigade commander in Normandy, wrote that many of the critics of the Allied soldier knew "as little of the facts of life at the sharp end of the battle as most university professors know of life on the factory floor." The suggestion made by Tedder and some other air commanders that the Army was demoralized was rejected by Essame, who called the accusation "as offensive as it was untrue." According to Essame, Allied soldiers knew that they were fighting to rid the world of the moral disease of Nazism.

Peter Duignan and L. H. Gann in *The Rebirth of the West* (1993) are highly critical of what they term "a spate of revisionist works that find fault with both the British and American soldier." The authors contend that democratic society produced superior morale. Even in the worst of times, argue Duignan and Gann, the democratic soldiers of the Western Allies never imagined ultimate defeat, and if they lacked enthusiasm, they possessed a much more valuable quality, an unshakable steadiness. H. P. Willmott, in *The Great Crusade* (1990), also takes issue with those historians whom he considers are "obsessed with the pernicious myth of German military excellence, of which the defense of Normandy is held to be an example." In Willmott's view, the Allied performance in Normandy compares very favorably with the German campaign of 1940. An important corrective to the revisionist interpretation of the supposedly poor fighting quality of the Allied soldier remains Martin Blumenson's *Breakout and Pursuit* (1961), a volume in the classic US Army "Green Book" series. Blumenson noted that the Allies fought in almost impassable terrain, ideal for defensive warfare. Unlike Blumenson, Albert Seaton in his study *The Fall of Fortress Europe, 1943-1945* (1981) makes the astonishing statement that the terrain in Normandy was not particularly favorable for defense and did not provide the German

troops much cover from Allied air attack. Seaton's Normandy terrain is not Blumenon's. The latter described thick hedgerows, abundant vegetation, and ubiquitous trees providing effective camouflage and obstructing Allied observation from both ground and air. Blumenon further observed that the Germans were concerned by the decline in aggressiveness among their troops. The increasing reluctance of panzer divisions to make a wholehearted attack seemed particularly serious.

From the beginning, the Allies were constantly on the attack, while the enemy was fighting on the defensive behind well-prepared positions. Canadian soldier-historian John English, in his study, *The Canadian Army in the Normandy Campaign* (1991), observes that German troops were well dug-in and camouflaged, with good fields of fire. Noting that all the Canadian divisions were new to battle and had to learn their business as they fought, English observes that gaining battlefield experience while on the attack is much harder than learning on the defensive.

A divisional history that provides a useful comparison between American and German infantry is Joseph Balkoski's book *Beyond the Beachhead: The 29th Infantry in Normandy* (1989). According to Balkoski, although the 29th Infantry Division outnumbered the enemy on its front, the odds were by no means overwhelming in favor of the 29th. Balkoski argues that American infantrymen were simply not given enough firepower. Each American rifle company had only two machine guns compared to the 15 machine guns in a German infantry company. Just as troublesome as German machine guns and anti-tank weapons were their mortars, *nebelwerfers*, and tanks: Panthers and Tigers were qualitatively superior to Shermans and Cromwells.

In the best study of the American Army in World War II, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants: The Campaigns of France and Germany, 1944-1945* (1981) by Russell Weigley, the author appraised the American performance in Normandy most candidly, as in this example:

Major Hansen, speaking for Bradley's headquarters, said, "Hedgerow fighting has been far more difficult than we anticipated." It was too bad that these revelations had to wait upon experience. Tactics and weapons for coping with the Bocage were only now being improvised; hammering them out by trial and error in combat cost time and lives.

Although the Americans faced fewer panzers than did the British and Canadians on the eastern flank, writes Weigley, they confronted "the best defensive country in France, the hedgerows. No forebears of the First Army fighting Indians in the North American forest has ever grappled in a country so conducive to ambush." After D-Day, an American division in Europe could expect about 85 percent casualties among its riflemen for every six weeks of combat. In an article that appeared in *The Journal of Military History* (October 1993), Weigley argued that the American Army was "a decidedly small army for a superpower," and barely adequate for its campaign in Europe. And if some enemy units in Normandy were padded out with old men, boys, and conscripted non-Germans who surrendered in droves, there were also crack German units led by men who had fought on virtually every battlefield from Alamein to Moscow.

In *Six Armies in Normandy*, published at the time of the 40th anniversary of D-Day, John Keegan described the Normandy battle as "the greatest military disaster Hitler had yet suffered in the field." Normandy cost the German army half a million casualties, which was almost twice as many men as they had lost at Stalingrad. While critics of the Allied soldier have pointed to the spectacular gains made by the Russians

in their 1944 summer offensive, Keegan notes that 140 Soviet divisions attacked 28 divisions along a 350-mile front, whereas in Normandy the Allies committed only 34 divisions in all. In Normandy, one million men were engaged in a battlefield of less than 100 miles. The German front that the Allied soldiers had to break through in Normandy was tremendously strong and relatively short. For American soldiers, the casualties experienced in Normandy were comparable to Civil War battles, while British losses sometimes equalled or exceeded those of World War I. Allied soldiers would have wholeheartedly agreed with Rommel's description of Normandy as "one terrible blood-letting."

Distance from an event often produces more evenhanded analyses than those written soon after the action. But not always, and in the case of too many revisionist accounts of the fighting in Normandy, an accurate and true perception of what happened has been lost. Fortunately, the antidote to revisionist extremism is scholarship. If the time has come to revise the revisionist interpretation of the Allied soldier in Normandy, Stephen E. Ambrose does just that in his counter-revisionist 50th anniversary account, *D-Day June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II* (1994). Ambrose calls his book, which is based on 1400 oral histories of men who were there, "a love song to democracy." As for the widely accepted perception that the German soldier was far superior to the democratic soldier, Ambrose proclaims unequivocally, "The judgment is wrong."

Many contributions remain to be made to the literature on the Normandy battle, yet it would seem that against an opponent motivated by Nazi ideology and nationalism, ordinary Allied soldiers did much better than critics and theorists give them credit for.

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## Review Essay

# Air War in Europe: Airpower on Display

WAYNE A. SILKETT

One of the most critical features of World War II aviation, for the participating generation as well as subsequent ones, has been cognitive dissonance—stubbornly clinging to a version of reality seriously at odds with the facts. Thus, the true picture of strategic airpower in World War II has been long in developing.

During World War II, allied leaders confused the results of strategic bombing with its actual effectiveness, especially against Germany. After flying tens of thousands of bombing missions, dropping hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs, and enduring ferocious battles with fighters and flak, participants in the air war hardly longed to have their efforts diminished.

As a result, destruction caused by strategic bombing was considered substantial even if German war production, up until May 1944, was at most slowed down, if hampered at all. One must not forget that while 85 percent of the allied bombs dropped on Germany were let loose after 1 June 1944, more than a third (44,000) of all German aircraft produced during the war were produced in 1944, and more were built during the second six months than the first.

Yet after the war no airpower advocate wanted to accept a reduced role for airpower in the future. Small wonder, then, that official postwar studies such as the Strategic Bombing Survey were ignored. When Allied accounts of losses and successes were compared with German records, especially claims by bomber crews of enemy fighters damaged and destroyed, the claims were sometimes off by many thousand percent. Such disparities also were often ignored. In many circles, the shaky strategic conclusions of the aviators prevail today.

True strategic bombing—strategic nuclear bombing—has so far had limited application, while the effectiveness of conventional strategic bombing has dogged the staunchest airpower champions. Supporters usually have been outnumbered by opponents—normally ground power advocates—who dismiss the effectiveness of conventional strategic bombing as overstated at best and a waste of assets at worst.

Bombing can help, but by itself it has yet to win a war. In the wake of the Gulf War, the debate continues.

Tactical airpower, however, is another matter, even when masquerading as strategic airpower. And strategic or tactical, airpower had its first real test during World War II.

Although few readers will need all of them, the books in the assortment considered here offer something for everyone: airplanes, technology, strategy, people, and valor. While each book in this group deals directly or indirectly with a formidable Luftwaffe, no modern judgment can surpass that of the American airman quoted by Martin Caidin a generation ago, describing German fighter pilots flying through their own flak to get at Allied bombers: "You've got to hand it to Jerry—he's a beautiful flyer and boy, has he got guts." At least in some way, each of the books in this group shows why that wasn't enough for Germany and almost wasn't enough for the Allies.

Joachim Dressel and Manfred Griehl's *Bombers of the Luftwaffe* is a collection of largely excellent photographs less than excellently reproduced. Many of its subjects are the venerable, splendid, highly versatile German World War II standards, the Dornier 17, Heinkel 111, and Junkers 88, although these aircraft and their variants hardly dominate the pages. Curiously, the most readily identifiable German bomber of the war, the Junkers 87 Stuka dive bomber, is omitted.

Much of this book deals with the extensive German research and development effort, which produced design after design but never managed to mesh potential with production. Of particular interest are German efforts in jet aircraft, notably the Arado 234 and the Messerschmitt 262, both designs considerably ahead of comparable American and British jet endeavors.

Although much purely technical data is available in the text, *Bombers of the Luftwaffe* lacks the standard arraying of this information in a single location for each aircraft, thus making comparisons between aircraft difficult.

Earlier long-range German aviation advances had been copied but not surpassed—the Gotha bomber and bomb-carrying dirigibles in World War I and the

eight-engine Dornier seaplane between the wars. However, except for notable World War II experiments such as the four-engine Heinkel 274, six-engine Junkers 390, and modified series production reconnaissance/transport aircraft such as the four-engine Focke-Wulf 200, German attempts at serious long-range bomber production seldom got out of the wind tunnel. *Bombers of the Luftwaffe* hints at this, while *The Luftwaffe War Diaries* and *Clash of Wings* deal with it at much greater length.

Cajus Bekker's reprinted 1964 *The Luftwaffe War Diaries* (English translation in 1968) remains a landmark work. The first comprehensive treatment of the Luftwaffe from the German perspective, it contributed nothing particularly new (its 19 exceptional appendices have probably been quoted more frequently than the text), although it did confirm much that the Allies had already concluded. Part of that confirmation deals with the critical interwar German decision to abandon truly strategic aviation goals—huge fleets of long-range bombers—in favor of more tactical considerations, exacerbated once war began by increasing resource and production demands which put Germany decisively behind industrial giants such as Britain and especially the United States.

Tactical airpower enthusiasts will appreciate *The Luftwaffe War Diaries* for its portrayal of a splendid tactical air force. And if the greatest applications of Luftwaffe air-ground cooperation occurred on the Eastern Front, they nevertheless demonstrate the kinds of results this type of airpower can achieve. As Walter Boyne points out in *Clash of Wings*, the Luftwaffe's greatest air-ground legacy was in forcing a Soviet response in kind. Soviet awareness of the criticality of tactical airpower, of course, continued long after the war.

Bekker and Boyne both highlight the fact that World War II opened with a precise German Stuka attack against Polish detonator wires leading to the approaches to the Dirschau bridges spanning the Vistula. This remarkable success has been seldom if ever repeated, but the feat became part of the myth of Blitzkrieg in general and the hope of tactical airpower in particular.

Boyne, a retired Air Force colonel, former director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, and prolific aviation author, has provided in one volume a splendid, highly readable overview of the leaders, aircraft, technology, tactics, and strategy of aviation in World War II. A huge topic to be sure, it is nonetheless spectacularly handled.

Frequently dealing with exquisite detail, *Clash of Wings* never loses sight of the developing, often groping, often unrealized role of airpower in a global land and sea war of unsurpassed dimensions. Only the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union truly realized, early enough to do anything about it, the huge scale of effort necessary to wield airpower strategically. By the time Germany and Japan reached similar conclusions, it was simply too late.

The Germans during World War I had envisioned the possibilities of large-scale strategic airpower while the British clung to more tactical doctrines. During the interwar period these considerations—and planning and industrial preparation—were reversed. Wishful “no more war” thinking aside, the interwar years were troublesome for all the powers that would play major roles in World War II. For Britain and the United States, where significant strategic thinking did occur, tight budgets and institutional prejudice combined to see airpower advance only incrementally—except in the critical area of theory. Germany, on the other hand, forbidden by the Treaty of

Versailles even to have an air force, secretly conspired with erstwhile foe Russia to develop improved aircraft designs and doctrine, although of almost exclusively tactical dimensions. Wraps came off the Luftwaffe only in 1935.

The Soviets, recovering from the back-to-back devastation of World War I and the civil war and held in great suspicion worldwide, wrestled with every aspect of airpower. Nevertheless, internal obstacles of Olympian proportions, including competing industrial priorities, the institutional handicaps of totalitarian society (which Germany, Italy, and Japan shared, if to a lesser degree), and the great purges, prevented the Soviets from developing large-scale, long-range airpower. They did, however, after a slow, brutal start, excel at tactical aviation.

Boyne contends that World War II strategic airpower was "generally characterized by wasted effort and false starts." Despite high hopes from all quarters, airpower simply did not provide the range, accuracy, or bomb loads necessary to realize the prophecies of Giulio Douhet, Billy Mitchell, and others. Long-held theoretical constructs regarding the effectiveness of bombing—72 deaths per ton of bombs dropped—were never attained until the atomic bomb, although conventional B-29 bombing came close.

*Clash of Wings* emphasizes the narrow margin of RAF victory during the Battle of Britain, presenting a marvelous account of aircraft, technology, personalities, and plans. The book also highlights the superficial and short-lived excellence of early Japanese air successes and the slow allied approach to attaining air superiority through a combination of industrial capacity and more innovative tactics and strategy.

Readers looking for nonstop anecdotes will be particularly pleased: the twin-engined Junkers 86 was originally produced with diesel engines; the Norwegians used 3000 reindeer to trample snow on an airfield near Trondheim during the German invasion so air operations could continue; the Luftwaffe had a higher accident rate than other air forces; shortages were so severe by war's end, horses towed Me-262 jets into takeoff positions to save taxiing fuel; Antwerp received 20 percent more V-2 hits than London; peak Luftwaffe strength was 6000 aircraft, in June 1943.

But Boyne does far more than simply supply a few high-level declarations bolstered by dozens of bewitching details and countless "snapshots of rampant heroism." Besides providing in-depth treatment of American, British, German, and Japanese airpower, he devotes considerable attention to Soviet and Italian airpower, largely neglected if not dismissed outright in other "comprehensive" treatments.

Only the United States produced more aircraft than the Soviet Union during World War II. And if rigid tactics and leadership generally characterized the Soviet air force, close air support advocates will applaud Soviet realization of its criticality and warm to the Ilyushin Il-2 Sturmovik ground support aircraft, more of which were built during World War II—31,163—than any other aircraft in history (the Messerschmitt Bf 109's slightly larger production run, 33,000 from 1935 through 1957, included 2500 built outside Germany after the war, mostly in Spain).

Whatever caricatures rightly or wrongly apply to the Italian army in World War II, the Italian air force was a formidable if small and geographically isolated force. It flew many good aircraft and boasted brave, capable leadership and air crews at the lower levels confounded by "corrupt incompetence" at the top.

Imposing as *Clash of Wings* is, it needs more maps and photographs, especially of less-commonly recognized Italian, Japanese, and Soviet aircraft. And

like so many military books, it could also use a good proofreading by a literate graduate of one of the service staff colleges.

By far the most eclectic book in this group is Alfred Price's *Sky Warriors*, an unusual treatment in 176 pages of 74 years of air war vignettes, from Zeppelin L 59 in 1917 to high-tech Gulf War wizardry in 1991. *Sky Warriors* opens with a fascinating account of the longest air combat mission in history, the 95-hour abortive attempt in November 1917 to resupply forces in German East Africa (now Tanzania) by Zeppelin. It devotes ten chapters to World War II, ranging from contests as singular as the Battle of Britain to those of almost footnote nature, such as the first jet reconnaissance in history, an Arado 234 over Normandy 2 August 1944. It includes one chapter on the air war over North Vietnam, one on the aerial refueling of the 1982 single-aircraft Britain-to-the-Falklands bombing mission, and two on the Gulf War. Air actions in the Korean War, Arab-Israeli wars, and India-Pakistan wars are not addressed at all. *Sky Warriors* assumes a high degree of familiarity with military aviation history, lack of which will find the more casual reader concluding that Price's snapshots of "scrappy actions" actually compose a disjointed array of aviation non sequiturs.

Eric Hammel's *Air War Europa* is a day-by-day account of the American air war against Germany. Less effective than *Clash of Wings* in addressing the comprehensive picture of Allied and Axis airpower in Europe, Hammel's work nevertheless provides a wealth of detailed, engrossing information, from a USAAF sergeant pilot's air-to-air victories to thousand-bomber raids. And although a chronology, *Air War Europa* still provides the sense, however pedestrian and unsupported by charts or tables, of growing Allied and ebbing Axis strength.

Richard Davis's *Carl A. Spaatz and the Air War in Europe*, a dissertation converted to a biography, is by far the most scholarly of these books. Well-researched, clearly written, and filled with excellent photos, organizational charts, and maps, it is a special gem. More than just a thorough, insightful handling of Spaatz, an officer whom General Eisenhower rated in 1945 as equal to Omar Bradley in terms of value to the war in Europe, Davis's work is an excellent treatment of points of strategic agreement and disagreement between the USAAF and RAF in the European theater.

This book is not for the faint at heart. At 808 pages, including 30 appendices and 57 pages of notes, it is no thumbnail sketch of man, mission, or era. Because Spaatz and the history of Army aviation are so inseparable—indeed, Spaatz did not merely live through the development of doctrine, strategy, tactics, aircraft, and crew training but was intimately involved in every facet of them—neither can be examined without full treatment of the other.

Thus, Davis presents Carl "Toey" Spaatz (the nickname was from a resemblance to West Point upperclassman Francis Toohey) against the splendidly recalled backdrop of the American Army in general and Army aviation in particular from 1910 through the opening of World War II. Spaatz's aviation experience began with watching Glenn Curtiss fly over West Point in 1910. He joined the Signal Corps Air Service in 1915 after a year in the infantry, shot down three German planes during World War I, switched to bombers between the wars, and flew assorted experimental aircraft including the famous "?" during its 1929 record-breaking endurance flight. Carl Spaatz and US Army airpower are inseparable.

As Davis covers in detail, the first of Spaatz's two great contributions to Allied victory in Europe was his extensive counter-air campaign against the Luftwaffe



from January to May 1944. This not only “emasculated” German Fighter Command by the time of the Normandy invasion but provided the added benefit of reducing Luftwaffe ability to defend German industry from American daylight bombing raids.

Following a long policy struggle, Spaatz then launched a determined campaign against the German oil industry, depriving both Luftwaffe and Wehrmacht of fuel. Skeptics, particularly the British, favored attacking the German transportation network instead, which was vigorously assaulted after the oil industry was devastated. Here was the near vindication of modern airpower’s long-theorized but hitherto unrealized potential—having a decisive effect on a war’s outcome.

Although earlier bombing efforts had correctly sought critical German targets—ball bearing production and Rumanian oil refineries in 1943, for example—they were relatively small, involving 200 to 300 aircraft, and damage assessments were woefully overestimated. The latter surely influenced decisions not to follow up the early raids.

Spaatz, however, was more than just an ardent, skilled airpower advocate (before Pearl Harbor, he was Chief of Air Corps Plans and later Chief of the Air Staff). As Commander of US Strategic Air Forces in Europe (USSTAF) comprising the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces, Spaatz not only had to manage enormous quantities of airpower but function effectively in theater-level deliberations with other Allied air and ground commanders. He got along well with and enjoyed the confidence of RAF Air Marshals Portal and Tedder. Late in the war, he proved himself particularly adept at defusing tensions with Switzerland over accidental but repeated US bombings of Swiss cities.

Still, brilliant and prescient that he was, one wonders, based on his appearance and demeanor alone, whether a Carl Spaatz would make major today, let alone go on to command the largest American air forces in history.

Unlike the Luftwaffe, and to a lesser degree, the Italian air force, the British Royal Air Force and US Army Air Corps (later US Army Air Forces) were blessed with service chiefs who not only believed passionately in airpower but who were skilled in their approaches to developing and wielding it. The Luftwaffe, however, with eight chiefs of staff in 12 years and presided over by the mercurial mediocrity Hermann Goering, never had anyone able to put everything together—strategy, doctrine, aircraft types, planning, and production. Bekker, Boyne, Davis, and Hammel reveal how and why Germany never developed strategic airpower and how and why the United States in particular did.

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*Review Essay*

## Vietnam: The Fighting Flares Again

PAUL F. BRAIM

The recent publication of an apologium, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, by former US Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, has renewed the verbal barrages over Vietnam, bringing to the surface again emotions that have never entirely subsided. McNamara's thesis is that prosecution of the limited war in Vietnam by the leadership of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations was "wrong, terribly wrong," and "we owe it to future generations to explain why" the decisions on the war were made. McNamara is correct on two counts: "Incremental Escalation" was a terribly inadequate strategy, and yes, we should learn from this war.

Certainly McNamara shoulders a significant part of the blame for our failure in Vietnam. This memoir, after a self-congratulatory summary of McNamara's rise to national prominence, centers on his participation in directing the war in Vietnam—on the proposals, discussions, arguments, and decisions that initiated and escalated US military support of the Republic of Vietnam. McNamara describes well the activism and naïveté of the Kennedy Administration as it launched a crusade to establish a democratic nation in Vietnam, in part to offset earlier failures in international affairs. During the Johnson Administration, McNamara and his associates became more professional in their handling of the war, but they were constrained by a President who gave greater priority to the domestic "War on Poverty" than to the real war in Vietnam. The author makes the cogent point that the crowding of multiple crises into the daily workload of the cabinet officers often made their recommendations on Vietnam palliative rather than proactive. He describes candidly his leadership in the buildup, his doubts about the commitment as early as 1965, and his conclusion by 1967 that the United States should withdraw. As to why he did not act on his convictions, McNamara responds that he was a team player, making the best of the decisions of Presidents who were trying to achieve victory.

These intimate details—the personal McNamara notes heretofore unavailable to researchers—constitute a valuable addition to the historical record of this conflict. The author deserves credit for providing this memoir (although hardly the encomium provided by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., on the dust jacket). He is certainly "bright" enough to have known that he would draw more criticism than praise for this book, and reviews from both the political left and right have been sharply critical.

McNamara says he failed, and he convinces this reviewer, whose four tours of duty in Vietnam made convincing him rather easy. McNamara believes "we" failed because we underestimated the enormity of the challenge, we backed an unpopular, undemocratic government, and we failed to gain the approval of the American people for the commitment. However, the author cannot bring himself to the realization that

he and his staff of technocrats failed primarily because they sought a mathematical formula to end the war under favorable circumstances. The lessons McNamara believes we should have learned are these: US leadership should plan better in the future, should insure that future military commitments are in our interests, should make future commitments as part of a multinational force, preferably under the United Nations, and should spend more for foreign aid and less for defense. McNamara's conclusions are unsurprising; however, after a careful re-reading of his book, this reviewer could find little evidence supporting these conclusions.

Why did McNamara choose to write this book at this time? Perhaps the memoir is in the nature of a catharsis. If it is an attempt at expiation, however, the author will receive no absolution from this reviewer. He would do better to make his apology in person at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, although it is unlikely that many of the disabled, the missing, the former POWs, or the still-grieving families of the dead would be sympathetic. McNamara's departure from the Pentagon in 1968 was concomitant with the rupture of the Democratic Party, when "protest liberals" seized control of that party from the "internationalists." Protestors took to the streets, and McNamara removed himself from the scene; he has seemingly been trying to regain credibility within the liberal elite ever since. When President Clinton was asked by a reporter whether, having protested against the war, he felt "vindicated" by McNamara's book, he said that he did. In that light, perhaps this book at this time may be an attempt to aid a national political party in some distress.

Although comments by warriors and protestors alike have focused attention upon McNamara's book for the present, it is important to note the recent works of scholars who are producing more dispassionate, balanced analyses on Vietnam.

In the light of post-Cold War realities, some writers have suggested that the war in Vietnam should be considered as one long and bitter campaign in the war for containment of communism, which the Free World ultimately won. This is the theme of the measured analysis by Dr. William J. Duiker in his book *U.S. Containment Policy and the Conflict in Indochina*. Duiker, Professor of East Asian History at Penn State University, clearly establishes President Kennedy as the agent of irrevokable commitment of the United States to the security of the Republic of Vietnam. Fearful of being charged with losing Asia to communism, Kennedy committed this nation to fighting a war that ultimately required a greater degree of sacrifice than our people were willing to make. Kennedy and his associates directed the war in an ad-hoc fashion, tying US prestige to victory under circumstances where victory was doubtful from the start, according to Duiker. They entered upon the war in ignorance, shortsightedness, a degree of hubris, and a tendency to see the United States as representing truth and goodness. Duiker finds no evidence that Kennedy was considering withdrawal from Vietnam at the time of his death. (McNamara, conversely, believes it is "highly probable that, had President Kennedy lived, he would have pulled us out of Vietnam.") Duiker concludes with an admonition against trying to apply the lessons of Vietnam to future wars.

Dr. Richard A. Hunt, a historian in the US Army's Center of Military History, has written *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*, a comprehensive history of the US-led struggle for the loyalty of the people of South Vietnam. Defining pacification as programs of social and economic reform accompanied by security, Hunt states that applying this politico-military program to Vietnam was the greatest challenge for the United States, and the greatest failure.

President Kennedy was fascinated by the US Army's Special Forces, whom he saw as uniquely qualified to conduct pacification, or "counterinsurgency." The activism of the Kennedy team enforced an optimism throughout the chain of command of the various programs, which in turn denied Kennedy and later Presidents reports of failure. Advisors to the Vietnamese leaders were increasingly pressed to report details of success in security and social change. Denied the command authority required to create the conditions that would effect change, the advisors were in an impossible situation. The succession of pacification programs—Agrovilles, Strategic Hamlets, Revolutionary Development, and related efforts—were consequently poorly coordinated bureaucratic struggles to accomplish an esoteric social change.

President Johnson described pacification as the "gut issue in this war." President Nixon emphasized pacification as the means to allow the United States to withdraw from Vietnam. Hunt concludes that, despite partial and temporary successes, pacification failed to reach any of its goals. Could pacification in Vietnam have succeeded if given more time? Hunt responds in the negative, adding that the question is moot because the American people were in no mood to allow more time to prosecute an already extended war.

Arguably the most successful of the US pacification efforts in Vietnam was the Combined Action Program (CAP) of the US Marines, described by Al Hemingway in his book *Our War Was Different: Marine Combined Action Platoons in Vietnam*. Hemingway, a Marine veteran of the war and a senior editor of *Vietnam* magazine, describes the tasks given to squads of relatively junior Marines selected for this duty: Live in the hamlets with the people, and train and conduct operations with the Self Defense Forces to secure the hamlets. American advisors to the Vietnamese paramilitary forces also trained village defense forces, but the CAP teams remained in the hamlets, while most advisors—and most of the Vietnamese leaders they advised—operated out of relatively secure headquarters. The main reason for the unique success of the CAP program was the reason the other programs failed: security of the people in the far hamlets at night. Hemingway believes the CAP disrupted the operations of the Viet Cong but did not destroy their infrastructure. The CAP operated with Popular Forces who were inadequately trained, poorly armed, poorly and irregularly paid, and poorly supported by corrupt government officials. Weaknesses of the CAP Marines were the language barrier and inadequate training for the job. As the war in Vietnam became more conventional after Tet 1968, the Marine command reluctantly turned to the more demanding task of defeating the regular forces of North Vietnam. The legacy of CAP, as with that of civic action conducted by other forces, is a record of limited, fragile success in "winning the hearts and minds" by the close association of Americans with the Vietnamese peasantry.

Frustrated by their failure to win the loyalty of the Vietnamese to their programs for saving South Vietnam from communism, American leaders tried to win with US conventional forces and tactics. Among the operational histories of American organizations fighting in Vietnam, Dr. Eric Bergerud's *Red Thunder, Tropic Lightning* is a recent example. Portraying the "world of a combat division in Vietnam" through the story of the 25th Infantry Division (the Tropic Lightning), Bergerud creates a revealing picture of their grueling experience. The soldiers tell of "thrashing the bush," suffering the heat, the insects, and the ambushes of an enemy who could seldom be seen. Offsetting these travails are descriptions of organizational effectiveness in

swift airmobile maneuver—and a certain pride in unit membership and shared experience which distinguishes veterans of ground combat from other mortals. The division's soldiers were contemptuous of the performance of their allies in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam; they were equally critical of those in Washington controlling and limiting the war, of the media, and of protestors back home. Like soldiers in other American wars, the GIs admired the toughness of their main enemy, the North Vietnamese soldier. As the war extended into 1969, problems related to declining morale and indiscipline increased. The soldiers acknowledged drug use, but—and this is worthy of note—they stated that such use was confined to the rear, to the areas where boredom was the biggest enemy. Although the soldiers expressed a cynicism about their experience and its value, most were defensively proud that they had served their country, and their anger was directed at those who denigrated that service.

Dr. George C. Herring's *LBJ and Vietnam: A Different Kind of War* continues the theme of frustration with an incisive examination of President Johnson's direction of the war. Herring, Alumni Professor of History at the University of Kentucky, has published previous best-selling histories on the Vietnam War. In this volume, he encapsulates the drives, the moods, and the motivations of Johnson, a President who was increasingly frustrated by entrapment in a war with a "little fourth-rate country" half-a-world away from Washington. Herring reveals Johnson's passion for secrecy, for loyalty, and for enforcing consensus among his senior advisors. A consummate politician and a highly successful leader of legislatures, Johnson was uncomfortable in his role as the commander of the US armed forces, and he mistrusted his military subordinates more than he did his civil aides. According to Herring, Johnson never formulated a strategy for winning in Vietnam, nor even for controlling the major commitment of American combat power which he initiated. He politicized the military chain of command, yet refused to take the advice of his military leaders when their recommendations ran contrary to his gut feelings. He hoped to crown his years in public life by winning the War on Poverty. In the end, the war in Vietnam, which Johnson tried to keep on the back burner, destroyed his presidency.

The military leader most responsible for Vietnam during the Johnson years is the subject of *Westmoreland: A Biography of General William C. Westmoreland*, by Samuel Zaffiri. This lightweight biography reveals considerable new information about and by Westmoreland. It shows him at the apogee of his service, appearing before a cheering joint session of the Congress; it carries the story through to the nadir of Westmoreland's life, the libel suit against CBS. Zaffiri, who obviously admires the general (as do many who served under him, including this reviewer), displays Westmoreland as more perspicacious about the problems of Vietnam than heretofore revealed. The Westmoreland in this book is too often right on matters about which the record shows everybody who was anybody to have been wrong. The book includes too many castigations of Westmoreland's colleagues, and it shows him to be more narrow than most of us know him to be. Loosely written and poorly edited, this book does no credit to its subject. Westmoreland is a tragic figure in American military history. He deserves great credit for slowing the sweep of communism in Vietnam, gaining time for the other free nations of Southeast Asia to build their defenses. That is his major contribution.

Autobiographies abound on service in Vietnam. Many reveal acts of heroism, some defying the logic of that battlefield. Stories of the "I was there" category

appear to be declining in number. One waits with unabated breath for the capstone book: *I Was the Last Postal Clerk in Saigon*.

One of the more interesting autobiographies is Howard R. Simpson's *Tiger in the Barbed Wire: An American in Vietnam, 1952-1991*. A foreign service officer and journalist, Simpson's book covers Vietnam from the fall of the French to the recent opening of communist Vietnam to the outside world. Like "Pug" Henry in *Winds of War*, Simpson dropped in upon many decisive actions spread over considerable time and space. He saw and appreciated the end of French colonialism in Southeast Asia; he watched the United States, struggling to support a corrupt South Vietnamese government, try to turn the conflict into a conventional war. He watched from afar as the United States turned the war over to a Vietnamese army disinclined to fight. Returning to a communist Vietnam in 1991, he saw it reemerging into world trade and association. The story is instructive, but in the "I told you so" vein.

It is appropriate to mention also the genre of biographies of women who served in Vietnam. Among the newest is *American Daughter Gone to War: On the Front Lines with an Army Nurse in Vietnam*, by Winnie Smith. The author, who served as a nurse in hospitals that treated recently wounded servicemen, was too young and idealistic to accept easily the disfigurement and death of young soldiers whom she treated and befriended. The emotional trauma that resulted for Smith, and the scars that she continues to bear, led her into activism for veterans rights and into tearful associations with veterans who had been denied government medical treatment and financial support. It is no discredit to her service and personal sacrifice to opine that some of her fellow activists appear, 20-plus years after the war, to have achieved the status of "professional veterans."

As the Vietnam generation passes into late middle age, a consensus appears to be developing on the history and legacy of the war in Vietnam. The great opus on this conflict, however, remains to be written.

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## *Book Reviews*

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**Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping.** By John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, with a foreword by Chester A. Crocker. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1995. 256 pages. \$19.95. **Reviewed by Ambassador Marc Baas,** Deputy Commandant for International Affairs, US Army War College.

Today's US Army War College graduates are much more likely to participate in a peacekeeping operation than to fight a major conflict with an "equal" power such as the former Soviet Union. The operations in Somalia, which were widely viewed as the international community's first attempt to engage in peacekeeping and nation-building in the post-Cold War era, have been called a failure by many in the media. This extremely useful book by Bob Oakley, former Ambassador to Somalia and the President's special envoy twice during this period, and John Hirsch, the deputy at the US liaison office (Embassy) during UNITAF and UNOSOM, sets the record straight by pointing out what was accomplished by the US and international community in Somalia without glossing over the mistakes.

But more important than setting the record straight, the authors raise a large number of difficult issues that require thought before, and better implementation during, future (inevitable) peacekeeping operations. This makes the book must reading for any policymaker or citizen interested in peacekeeping, and for any military officer who may participate in such future deployments.

What are these issues? Perhaps most important is the question of when to intervene. The authors' clear preference (which I share) is that going in sooner is better than later; lives and resources will most likely be saved by earlier intervention. The problem is that there are always problems with intervention: resources, political will, and competing issues. And when the crisis is still small, there is always the hope that it may resolve itself.

A second key issue is the purpose of intervention. Should it be to solve the problem, or to give the locals a chance to solve their own problems? The authors clearly believe the latter: the thrust of UNITAF was to do so through active diplomacy and no-nonsense military action, while the "failure" of initial UNOSOM II efforts was caused by UN attempts to rebuild the country without adequate regard to local desires, opinions, and resources. After the redirection of US policy following the bloody engagement of 3 October 1993, UNOSOM II reverted to a policy of getting the locals to solve their problems, albeit less proactively than under UNITAF. A sub-issue here is the importance of local knowledge on the part of those directing and advising any international effort.

The authors also raise a third key issue, that of the conduct of coalition warfare under the authority and control of the United Nations. They examine the relations between headquarters and the field (at both the political and military level); the interrelations between the coalition partners, when some, including the United States, may look first to their capitals rather than the coalition commander; the importance of keeping Non-Governmental Organizations informed, given their key

role in reconstruction; the role of personalities (for example, Boutros Ghali and therefore the United Nations were distrusted by some Somalis because of his previous role in Somali issues, while Oakley was generally respected for the same reasons); and the extremely important issue of command and control (the Rangers were looked upon by some as an independent posse out to "get" Aideed). Coalitions may also affect the psychology of the situation: the Somali warlords believed that UNITAF would act forcefully and consistently and so were more restrained, but with the UNOSOM coalition, they believed there was less unity of purpose and thus more scope for their own agendas.

The authors also discuss several strategies used for dealing with the Somali humanitarian crises that have general application. It is almost a given that the military (read US) will probably be the only force capable of dealing with the immense logistical problems involved. But how should convoys and food supplies be protected? Should the market be flooded with food to make hoarding unprofitable? And should assistance be given only to areas where security has been reestablished, thus giving everyone a stake in helping with security?

The book also deals with other important questions in somewhat less detail. Should disarmament be a goal, and if so, should it be done forcefully, or with the cooperation of the local leaders? In order to remain neutral in the domestic situation, do you have to disarm all sides equally? The importance of helping the locals reestablish their own authority, especially through the early establishment of a professional, neutral police force is stressed. The authors also examine the role of the media before, during, and at the end of such operations. And finally, although it is a given that before going in we must know what end-state will allow us to leave, the authors raise a troubling issue: when the end-state is defined as a stable environment, how does one determine when it has actually been reached?

The authors have done current and future policymakers a great service by raising these questions so that we can build on these lessons in future operations.

**The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy.** Edited by Alexander L. George and William E. Simon. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 310 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Jeffery R. Barnett, USAF,** Military Assistant to the Director of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

This is a marvelous book. While it has some weaknesses (what in life doesn't?), its strengths make the read worthwhile. In essence, this is the primer for coercive diplomacy. It lists various options, gives historical examples of each, and suggests pitfalls to avoid. If the reader is looking for nonmilitary means to coerce an enemy, this "periodic table" of nonmilitary coercive policies is an excellent place to start. It's easy to see why the publishers decided to update and expand the original 1971 version.

The three sections of the book address Theory, Case Studies, and Conclusions. In the Theory section, Alexander George defines coercive diplomacy as "efforts to persuade an opponent to stop or reverse an action." It is a policy short of military confrontation through which a state attempts to persuade an opponent to: (1) stop short of its goal; (2) undo its action; or, (3) make changes in its government. Military action might be part of coercive diplomacy, but only in terms of an exemplary demonstration



of force (i.e., to demonstrate resolution and credibility). In essence, the central task of coercive diplomacy "is to cause the adversary to expect sufficient costs and risks to cause him to stop what he is doing."

This central task is easier said than done. Paul Lauren's survey of coercive diplomacy—from Sun Tzu through Machiavelli to Gorbachev—hardly portrays a string of unbridled successes. Failure seems to be the norm when states try to coerce an opponent to reverse a gain acquired at great cost. Inflexible "take-it-or-leave-it" ultimatums usually result in the target "leaving it."

The best case study is George's treatment of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Short and up-to-date, George's account shows how President Kennedy's flexible conduct of coercive diplomacy was key to success. As opposed to first broaching the matter of missiles with Moscow through low-key diplomatic channels, Kennedy initiated the bargaining by imposing a blockade. He put his opponent (Khrushchev) on the defensive from the beginning of negotiations, and kept him there throughout the crisis. By continually initiating new demonstrations of credibility and offering his opponent alternatives short of capitulation, Kennedy demonstrated coercive diplomacy as a dynamic process.

The chapter on American coercive diplomacy with Japan prior to World War II is also well presented. America first tried to coerce Japan to withdraw from Manchuria. With Japan having immense political capital invested in this invasion and an inflexible American measure of merit (e.g., total withdrawal), this case study supports the book's thesis on the limits of coercive diplomacy. When initial coercive diplomatic efforts failed, America upped the ante by imposing an embargo on oil and scrap metal. This second move overstepped the limits of coercive diplomacy. It left Japan with only two options. The first (withdrawal) it had already rejected. The second option was war. If this case study has a weakness it may be in the lack of primary source Japanese documents. The footnotes indicate the author does not read Japanese. Although a wealth of translated documents is certainly available and the author is expert at the theory of coercive diplomacy, one accepts the author's command of Japanese perceptions with caution. Since perceptions are key to diplomatic coercion, there may be more to this story than the author can relate.

The other case studies deal with Laos (1961-1962), North Vietnam (1965), Nicaragua (early 1980s), Libya (1980s), and Iraq-Kuwait (1990-1991). The overwhelming influence of the Cold War on the first four cases may reduce the value of these cases to contemporary practitioners of coercive forms of diplomacy. The final case study, dealing with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, acknowledges its own limitations. "We do not have any definitive information about the thinking in Baghdad," states the author. "We cannot be entirely sure what the calculations in Washington were, either." Without such basic information, the effects and lessons of coercive diplomacy are suspect.

**Napoleon's Last Victory and the Emergence of Modern War.** By Robert M. Epstein. Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1994. 216 pages. \$29.95. Reviewed by Colonel John R. Elting, USA Ret., author of *Swords Around a Throne*.

This title, of course, is the publisher's come-on. Napoleon later would win a long, grim list of battles. This Wagram campaign of 1809 was, however, his last

victorious war. In this book Robert M. Epstein offers his reasoned explanation why. During 1806-1809 the Archduke Charles had rebuilt the Austrian army in the image of Napoleon's *Grande Armée*, greatly increasing its strength in men and guns and grouping its divisions into corps. While it would never develop commanders and staffs equal to the French, it was a potent weapon, too big and too flexible to be swallowed at one gulp as earlier Austrian armies had been at Ulm and Austerlitz. Unable to dispose of it by one decisive battle, Napoleon was forced to wage a war of attrition over a broad front, eventually winning by superior numbers and firepower. But his other enemies also would copy French organization and tactics. Eventually, he would be overwhelmed.

This 1809 campaign, Epstein maintains, was therefore the beginning of modern warfare. Future wars would differ from it only as technology gradually introduced new weapons, transport, and communications.

Epstein begins with a concentrated review of warfare during 1763-1807 and the Austrian reorganization. His subsequent description of the military operations that followed Austria's 1809 invasion of Bavaria and Italy stress those of Prince Eugene, Napoleon's adopted son and viceroy in Italy. Probably the first American historian to really study this element of the 1809 campaign, Epstein presents a definitive account of its progress and relationship to Napoleon's major campaign down the Danube River valley. (He does introduce a source of confusion by assigning Eugene's four corps numerical designations which do not appear in the routine correspondence and orders of the campaign).

In unhappy contrast, his coverage of the Danube valley campaign sometimes seems little better than a first draft. There are errors in the units involved: Oudinot's division was no longer an elite "grenadier" formation; the "Marines (*sic*) of the Guard" did not man the French gunboat flotilla on the Danube. (They barely arrived for the victory parade!) There are puzzling statements such as his assertion that the Austrians "still controlled the bridge" at Ratisbon after the French had recaptured that city, forcing the French to leave a garrison there "to prevent an Austrian threat to the south bank." Seemingly Epstein has overlooked Napoleon's systematic establishment of north-bank bridgeheads—including one at Ratisbon—all along the Danube. These facilitated its use as his supply line and furnished bases for reconnaissance, foraging, and possible major operations on the north bank.

Similarly, Epstein's version of the battle of Aspern-Essling is debatable. He asserts that Napoleon should have withdrawn after the first day's fighting. Since the Archduke Charles expected Napoleon to do so, had ordered his commanders to be alert for such a movement, and had plenty of fresh troops available, any such action would have been extremely risky—better to chance the luck of another day's battle. Also, the Austrians did not perform as effectively as Epstein claims: Charles's corps commanders displayed their usual ability to trip over their own feet and each other, his infantry was sometimes brittle, and in the battle's last hours, the outnumbered Young Guard, much of it new-caught conscripts, routed Charles's picked grenadier reserve. The French could withdraw leisurely after the second day because—despite facing odds of two to one and being hopelessly out-gunned—they had fought the Austrians into the ground, leaving them unwilling to try one more attack. (By way of evidence there is the generally overlooked fact that the French brought off over 2000 Austrian prisoners.) Though defeated, the French definitely were unwhipped; if the volume of Austrian artillery fire had impressed them, the Austrians hadn't.

Finally, Epstein has been bitten by a deservedly forgotten yarn to the effect that Napoleon was stunned by the defeat and in an indecisive daze for the next 36 hours. A minimum of checking—for example, of the orders and letters Napoleon put out during that alleged period of *non compos mentis*—should have quickly convinced him of his error, which has poisoned portions of the following text. French and Austrian sources agree that Napoleon made the dangerous boat trip back to Vienna, issued a few essential orders, had a quick meal, slept two hours, and then was again in the saddle, getting on with the war—doing more work (said Marbot) in the next 24 hours “than an ordinary general could have done in a week.”

The rest of the book, dealing with the battle of Wagram, Epstein’s judgments on the campaign, and the subsequent changes in the nature of war, is on the whole well done, with several passages of excellent scholarship. Using Eugene as an example, Epstein dissects the popular assumption that Napoleon made no effort to train his subordinates for independent command and shows it false. He disposes of the theory that the combat efficiency of French infantry was declining, tracing it to F. Lorraine Petre’s inability to distinguish between it and the national guardsmen called out to contain the English invasion that had bogged down in the Dutch marshes around Flushing. He similarly disposes of claims that Napoleon’s powers as a general were weakening by showing that it was rather that his enemies were improving. However, his own claim that Napoleon never realized that warfare was changing can be questioned—certainly the Emperor’s preparations for his 1812 invasion of Russia suggest otherwise.

Epstein’s writing is generally clear, once you adjust to “distributed maneuvers,” “symmetrical armies,” and such academic-military patois. The maps cover the campaign completely; their quality is excellent, though a magnifying glass is useful in studying those taken from the USMA History Department’s *A Military History and Atlas of the Napoleonic Wars*, since they have been drastically reduced in size and converted from four-color to black and white.

This is an uneven book, published before it was ripe. Nevertheless, it definitely is worth reading. Epstein’s theory is better than his history; he has new and interesting ideas. Read it—and *then* decide if you want it in your library.

**Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character.** By Jonathan Shay. New York: Atheneum, 1994. 246 pages. \$20.00. Reviewed by Dr. Douglas V. Johnson, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

This is the most important book the reviewer has read in this decade, perhaps in his professional life. It speaks to him as a historian across 3000 years of military history, as a professional military officer whose commission “reposed special trust and confidence,” as a citizen of a bureaucratic democratic state, and as a husband and father. Were it in the reviewer’s power, no officer would be allowed to swear the oath of commission until he had read this book.

The thesis is that doing “what is right” has an everlasting effect on the combat soldier; that in making a man a soldier, if we do not “do right” by him thereafter, we may disqualify him for citizenship. The author, a psychiatrist whose practice is principally Vietnam veterans, examines veterans’ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) against a backdrop of the character of Achilles as depicted in

Homer's *Iliad*. In that classic tale of war Achilles descends from paragon of warrior virtue to blood-lusting murderer. *The Iliad*, Dr. Shay contends, is the story of the destruction of character through a series of events common to men in war and particularly common to veterans of the Vietnam War.

Men must go to war for good reasons or else they never would go. But once engaged and subjected to the inevitable trauma of combat, they are able to maintain their psychological balance only if what they are doing, how they are treated by their own system, commanders, and peers—and particularly how they are allowed to handle the trauma of combat—is viewed by them as right. Herein lies the challenge to the institution, for it is upon this rock that the PTSD veteran has run aground.

The reviewer was a student at the Command and General Staff College the year that General Creighton Abrams somehow sensed that the Army officer corps had suffered a loss of confidence in its senior leaders. He directed that a one-day symposium be conducted on the issue of officer trust and confidence and sent a horde of general officers to Ft. Leavenworth during the 1973-74 academic year to participate. The ratio was about one general officer per 15 students. Following a few presentations, private, non-attribution sessions were conducted. The result was something akin to Mao Tse-tung's "Hundred Flowers" campaign—there was an incredible outpouring of bitterness toward the generals which amounted to a charge of betrayal by the Army's senior leadership of what was "right!" If the reaction was that strong among the professional officer corps, is it any wonder the soldiers felt betrayed?

When this betrayal of "what is right" is followed by severe combat trauma, Shay contends, the disintegration of character begins. This disintegration is undeniable in the case of Achilles and of the Vietnam veteran. The statistics on Vietnam veterans are incontrovertible, incomplete, and ignored. Well over a third of these veterans are social outcasts by suicide, crime, or psychological dysfunction—their character has been destroyed and they are no longer fit to be citizens of a democracy. That, says Shay, is the tragedy that can be avoided and must never be repeated.

In answering the question for the Vietnam vet, "Is healing possible?" Shay responds thrice: (1) Return to "normal" is not possible. (2) We don't really know. (3) Yes. In one of the few weak points of this book, Shay ignores the healing that has taken place through the action of several Christian Veterans' organizations, specifically Point Man Ministries. Given the author's specific distaste for Christian teaching, that is not surprising. What will cause the Christian reader some discomfort is Shay's marginally supportable critique of the role of Christian teaching about combat. It is evident from his selective use of the scriptures that Shay is not as familiar with them as he is with the Homeric epic.

Shay's conclusions are mixed. Among them are the following: "Control of stress is a command responsibility," and "Bad leadership is a cause of combat trauma." Who can object to that? But how to train leaders to the appropriate level of sensitivity remains unanswered. "Protect unit cohesion by unit rather than individual rotation." Every study conducted on that subject agrees that units fare better when they are cohesive, but ultimately every replacement is an individual and our Civil War experience demonstrates the limitations of extreme unit focus. "Value griefwork." We could do much better here. "Do not encourage berserking." Revenge is not a good motivator in the long run. "Eliminate intentional injustice as a motivational technique." One hopes we have learned that humiliation is a poor motivator. "Respect the

enemy as human." Ask the Iraqis how well we learned this one. "Acknowledge psychiatric casualties." One would expect the example of George Patton to be enough—but evidently it was not. "War is not an industrial process." When the soldier becomes a "part" rather than a "person," we begin to destroy him.

Most of these conclusions are drawn from the Vietnam experience rather than from that of Achilles, and here lies the final problem with the work. Shay commends to the reader a system somewhat more like that of the ancient Greeks, where "griefwork" and respect of the enemy as a human were better attended to. He is right in his basic thrust, but fails to develop the implications for a fast-paced 20th-century society. Unfortunately, none of it made any difference to Achilles, who was pushed too far over the edge to ever recover—which suggests that preventive and restorative measures need to go hand in hand.

These relatively minor criticisms aside, were I in charge, this book would be required reading throughout the entire Army and Marine Corps, and recommended reading for every leader, supervisor, and father.

**War and Responsibility: Constitutional Lessons of Vietnam and Its Aftermath.** By John Hart Ely. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1993. 244 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Paul Brickner, USAR,** whose reserve assignment is Appellate Judge with the US Army Court of Military Appeals.

John Hart Ely, professor of law and former law school Dean at Stanford University, a prominent figure in academia, is little known by the general public. His 1980 book *Democracy and Dissent* is an important addition to legal literature. In this new book, *War and Responsibility*, the author discusses whether the Vietnam War was legal under the Constitution of the United States, not whether the war violated international law. He addresses statutes and actions of Congress in an attempt to determine whether or not our national legislature authorized the war as required by the Constitution. Although this is an important book and an effort for which the author should be commended, the end product is not entirely satisfactory.

Professor Ely devotes much concern to the fact that we have often deployed the nation's armed forces without declaring war. The Constitution at Article II provides that the President is Commander in Chief of the armed forces of the United States. Article I, Section B, clause 11, grants to Congress the power to declare war. The War Clause, he tells us, means this: that Congress decides whether we go to war and against whom we go to war. The professor expresses a grave concern shared by many Americans that we have failed to follow the Constitution, particularly since the Korean War, which was called a "police action" and fought without a congressional declaration of war.

The central problem here is the big lie that was born in 1950 and has been nurtured by the executive branch fairly consistently ever since, that the decisions whether to go to war, whom to go to war against, and how much to tell the rest of us about what's going on, all rest with the president.

Professor Ely might have produced a better study had he included greater historical perspective in his slender volume. Lieutenant General Richard G. Trefry, USA

Ret., in a review published in the Autumn 1994 issue of this journal, quotes one essayist to say that in the 200 years since 1789, Presidents have deployed armed forces more than 170 times, but Congress has declared war only five times. Professor Ely discusses also the bombing of Cambodia and the "secret war" in Laos. In what might be seen as a double standard, he would have impeached President Nixon for his role in these military undertakings, while he makes no mention of impeaching any members of Congress for their failure to act. Professor Ely tells us that Congress does not want the responsibility to declare war that the Constitution has entrusted to it, that Congress authorized the war in Vietnam but only backhandedly through appropriations, that the situation was a mess, and that Congress engaged in deliberate obfuscation.

Professor Ely proposes a modified War Powers Resolution or War Powers Act and believes we should entrust these questions to the courts through their power of judicial review. He acknowledges that the courts may lack the necessary expertise to decide weighty issues of war and peace, but he reminds us that judges rely on experts and often decide cases about subjects where their own knowledge is scanty. Which experts would be called to testify? The President and members of Congress would be the most important. Could they be compelled to testify? Might they not tell the judge that they, not the courts, have been entrusted by the Constitution with decisions involving war and peace?

Many have expressed concern about the judicial activism that we have seen in recent years. The idea of judges "abandoning their hands-off attitude in this area" will trouble many. In addition, the idea of judicial review of high-level policy and decisionmaking may be wrong. John Marshall, "the Great Chief Justice," established the principle of judicial review in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803). Marshall, who served under George Washington at Valley Forge, laid the foundation for a strong central government in a series of landmark cases. Former Chief Justice Warren Burger has called them "building block" cases and sees Marshall's Revolutionary War experiences as instrumental in developing Marshall's belief that the federal government had to be strong for the nation to survive. Marshall learned that from the suffering and shortages of supplies that he had observed at Valley Forge and elsewhere.

With that historical background, one must question Professor Ely's outlook and wonder whether even John Marshall would have included in the power of judicial review the ability of courts to inquire into weighty issues of declaring war and the actions of the President as Commander in Chief. The counterbalance to judicial review is the principle of judicial restraint, which has been followed by many great American jurists, including Benjamin Nathan Cardozo.

In addition, the timing and facts of a given case can be determinative. The Supreme Court struck down President Truman's order to his Secretary of Commerce that steel mills be seized to protect the nation's effort during the Korean War. We can wonder with Chief Justice William Rehnquist, however, whether the Supreme Court would have ruled the same way had President Roosevelt taken the same action during the Second World War.

Professor Ely's book is highly technical and filled with seemingly unending legal analysis. It is interesting and well written, but not generally suited for most readers. It is a specialist's book. His primary principle, his belief that we should use the courts to compel Congress to fulfill its responsibility to declare war or to vote against such a declaration will be disturbing to many. There may be some areas that

should be left to the executive and legislative branches. The Constitution may envisage war as something for those two branches to work out and an area where the courts should keep out.

**KGB: Death and Rebirth.** By Martin Ebon. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994, 227 pages. \$24.95.

**Operation Anadyr: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis.** By Anatoli I. Gribkov and William Y. Smith. Berlin: Verlags-GmbH, 1994. 252 pages. \$24.95.

**Russian Security After the Cold War: Seven Views From Moscow.** By Teresa Pelton Johnson and Steven E. Miller, eds. McLean, Va.: Brassey's (US), 1994. 208 pages. \$15.50 (paper).

**Reviewed by Stephen Blank,** Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

The common denominators of these three books are, of course, Russian security and civilian control over the means of force (in *Operation Anadyr* that also includes US civilian control). Control by law and in practice of the institutions that give the state a monopoly of legal force is a fundamental hallmark of a democratic or democratizing polity. By that standard Russia in mid-1995 has failed to achieve that objective; signs point to a movement away from civilian control and the rule of law in general, and not just over those institutions. As Ebon points out in *KGB: Death and Rebirth*, the KGB by any other name remains what it was. Its administrative structures have not undergone a fundamental revolution, its archives are still largely sealed by state decree, and it still apparently operates beyond the law. This is especially important given the pervasive corruption and criminality throughout Russia.

Though the KGB has apparently been split up—the new Foreign Intelligence Service sees to foreign intelligence and the MVD oversees the domestic scene—the trend is away from democracy. For instance, Yeltsin's recent decrees on crime bypass legislative processes to allow the police to hold someone without charge for 30 days. They greatly expand police ability to act above the law. At a time when Russian forces allegedly have actively been involved in destabilizing neighboring governments in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova, the fact that neither the FIS, MVD, Border Troops (all parts of the former KGB), nor the regular armed forces are under effective civilian supervision can only heighten our unease about the outcome of Russia's "democratic experiment." Though Ebon does not analyze with sufficient attention the trends he uncovers—narration substitutes for analysis—the facts are discouraging enough.

The issue of civilian control appears in many guises in the outstanding collection edited by Miller and Johnson. The book is noteworthy precisely because it presents seven authoritative discussions by Russian spokesmen of the entire range of security issues, political and military, that confront their country. V. N. Lobov, one of Russia's finest military thinkers, outlines his abortive plans to save the old Soviet army from politicization. His concept would have retained a basis for an army that could have given the former Soviet republics sovereignty and affiliation with Russia in the proposed military-political union. Marshal Shaposhnikov, his rival, presents his arguments for the unified military that won out, which led to the disintegration of the Soviet armed forces.

Deputy Defense Minister Andrei Kokoshin provides a comprehensive and controversial plan for reviving the defense industry and putting defense economic policy on a new footing. His vision of a reborn industry, one that produces high-tech dual-use technology through the organization of super financial-production associations (cartels) candidly discusses the shortcomings of 1992-93 state policy as he sought to save that industry. Kokoshin's policies—he directs military-economic (procurement) policy, the restructuring of the military-industrial complex, and defense economics—are frankly and admittedly based on a model of Francoist Spain or South Korea's Chaebols. But they also evoke the defense industrial policy of the Tsarist government during the Great Reforms of Alexander II 130 years ago. It remains to be seen whether the impetus toward cartellization and close state relationship with industry can promote a democratic ethos and prevent the rebirth of a military-industrial complex like that of the USSR, whose "steel eaters" drove the country to ruin.

Dimitri Ryurikov, who had a ringside seat at the birth of Russian democracy, chronicles Russia's first steps in foreign policy as a republic that began to outgrow its Soviet constraints in 1990-91. Ruslan Khasbulatov, who led the abortive coup against Yeltsin in September-October 1993, makes his case for Parliamentary control over the executive. Like Yeltsin, he, too, was clearly ambivalent about the separation of powers. Both men worked from opposite sides of the political street to abolish the distinction between executive and legislative power. Khasbulatov's aim was to use the legislature as a springboard to his own executive power, while Yeltsin sought to govern with a minimum of parliamentary interference. In the end Yeltsin won, largely because he controlled the army and the state. But the price he paid throughout 1992-93 was a greater turn to the right in foreign policy and a vain effort to buy off the armed forces.

The most interesting and important essays are by Alexei Arbatov and Sergei Rogov, two distinguished and knowledgeable observers. Arbatov is clearly the more independent, and perhaps politically the more isolated, analyst in Russian politics. His essay provides a synoptic overview of all of Russia's security issues and an exceptionally thorough critique of the direction that policy is taking. He is particularly worried about the trend toward lack of civilian control and coherence in policymaking. He obviously fears that once again Russia is overextending itself because it cannot discriminate between what is necessary and what is desirable in security policy. Rogov, on the other hand, confines his discussion to the issues of nuclear weapons. His essay calls for the use of arms control as the political basis for Russo-American cooperation on proliferation, disarmament talks, and related matters. While such partnership is, in principle, desirable, it does not seem to be in the cards, given the uncertainty and increasing belligerence that characterize Russian politics in general and security policy in particular.

What happens when the United States and Russia cannot talk sensibly to each other is graphically displayed in *Operation Anadyr*, basically excerpts from the memoirs of General Gribkov, who was in Cuba with the Soviet forces there, and General Smith, who held a key staff position at the Pentagon. Gribkov's memoir reveals that, despite the alacrity with which the Soviet defense establishment responded to Khrushchev's orders throughout the Cuban affair, even then control over the use of tactical nuclear missiles was imperfect and in the hands of the theater commander. Moscow did not believe that their use was a possible first stage in a



nuclear war, something that the Kennedy Administration decidedly did not agree with. Had we attacked Cuba, the Soviet theater commander, General Pliyev, might well have felt obliged to use those assets—with incalculable consequences.

On the American side we find in General Smith's memoirs confirmation of the high level of insouciance—and it is fair to say recklessness—that characterized American policy, secure in its self-righteousness. While doing everything possible to undermine Castro's rule in Cuba and, as Secretary McNamara and McGeorge Bundy later admitted, giving Moscow and Havana excellent reason to expect an invasion, the Kennedy Administration could not make up its mind to take that step. Not surprisingly this utter lack of strategic appreciation, combined with a disdain for the military, led the country into its greatest crisis since World War II. Admittedly the military throughout this period was marked by its hawkishness, but as Smith argues, it was responding to what it believed was US policy to get rid of Castro.

Even in a robust and functioning democracy like ours, the roots of civilian-military misunderstanding and the strain in that relationship over control of the armed forces started early and went deep during the 1960s, culminating in the Vietnam disaster. Civilian control is always and everywhere a complex one, demanding constant attention and oversight by all concerned. This is as true for such highly controlled relationships as the Soviets under Khrushchev and that of the United States a generation ago or even now. That Russia has institutionalized no basis in law for such control, even after the coups and unrest of the past years, continues to inspire alarm.

**War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century.** By Alvin and Heidi Toffler. New York: Little, Brown, 1993. 302 pages. \$22.95. Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Philip E. Hamilton, Military Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development, and Acquisition.

During the last 25 years, Alvin Toffler has given us several glimpses into the future. In *War and Anti-War*, his wife Heidi joins him to give the reader the same fire-hose treatment of facts and analysis found in two of Toffler's previous books, *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*.

*War and Anti-War* couples the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine and weapon system modernization programs with Toffler's thesis from his previous books. His notion of "wave revolutions" in *The Third Wave* proposes that nations moved through the First Wave agricultural revolution beginning 10,000 years ago, and then through the Second Wave industrial revolution of the past 300 years. Now many nations are in a Third Wave of global change which Toffler calls the "information revolution."

In this Third Wave information revolution, societies are building a new civilization with their economies, family structures, media, and politics based on how they acquire, distribute, and use knowledge. With this assertion as a basis, the Tofflers formulate their *War and Anti-War* thesis by analyzing how the United States executed diplomacy, fighting doctrine, and military operational art during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The Tofflers discuss the use of Third Wave technologies by the Coalition forces—global positioning systems, smart bombs, stealth, advanced tank target acquisition and fire controls, and others—against Iraq's less-sophisticated Second Wave army as an application of their thesis on war. Essentially, the way America made war

against Saddam Hussein was based on the way America makes much of its wealth today—through information management and not merely the application of raw industrial material, mass production, and physical labor. The Tofflers call it the age of “software over steel,” with the effective use of “knowledge strategies” in business, diplomacy, and war.

If making war is to be different, then so must be the ways to prevent or stop war: anti-war. The Tofflers paint a world in economic and cultural conflict where politicians and diplomats are searching for new anti-war strategies because old policies are not producing the successes of the past. *War and Anti-War* posits that while governments recognize the effects of the Third Wave revolution on making wealth and war, they are not adapting these same processes to preventing conflict.

The Tofflers propose that governments recognize the need for flexibility in dealing economically and diplomatically with many nations grounded in different phases of evolution: the agrarian, industrial, and information ages. They say that governments also must understand the dimensional aspects of this new world order. A First Wave agrarian nation can politically elevate itself to Third Wave status through the acquisition of modern weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, in the last pages of *War and Anti-War*, the Tofflers discuss the world’s diplomatic environment. They challenge politicians to define true national interests and apply the appropriate political, economic, and military strategies to world situations. This discussion does not receive the same painstaking treatment as is found earlier in the book during the review of Toffler’s thesis from previous works.

In *War and Anti-War*, the reader vividly relives many newscasts, political discussions, and world events of the last decade in 300 pages of solid observations. The Tofflers’ message is repetitive, but it is very understandable and supported by strong analysis. This book adds definition to our emerging civilization and the challenges for our national leadership. *War and Anti-War* is an excellent read for those who need to understand the logic structure between strategy and national interests and the linkage to knowledge as a resource for preventing conflict, building wealth, waging war, and making peace.

**The Ecology of War: Environmental Impacts of Weaponry and Warfare.** By Susan D. Lanier-Graham. New York: Walker, 1993. 192 pages. \$22.95. Reviewed by Colonel F. M. Lorenz, USMC, Staff Judge Advocate, I Marine Expeditionary Force.

This short book was intended to describe the consequences of warfare on the land, the sea, and the air, and in effect to be a primer on the destructive effects of battle. It was prompted by the author’s desire to understand this aspect of warfare after viewing the televised reports of environmental degradation following the Persian Gulf conflict. In the first two chapters the author provides a thumbnail sketch of the history of warfare, with examples of the resulting environmental damage. At times the account is superficial; for example, George Washington is said to have “directed the colonists . . . to destroy the environment to defeat the Indians fighting on behalf of the British.” We soon learn that “the environment” in this instance was the corn crop of the Iroquois Nation, but this nevertheless is said to have begun the “American tradition of environmental warfare.” Can you accept the subsequent proposition that General

Philip Sheridan was personally responsible for the annihilation of the bison herds on the Great Plains in an effort to destroy the Indian population? Or could there have been other contributing factors, such as loss of habitat and over-hunting?

If you can forgive the author's naiveté in military history in the first chapter, you will find that she makes some sound points in the second and third chapters. The Persian Gulf War was unique in the history of warfare, and it may be the harbinger of a new era of environmental terrorism. The events that caused Ms. Lanier-Graham to write this book should be of great concern to all of us. Indeed, much already has been written on this subject. (See, for example, an excellent and thorough treatment of the international legal aspects of the Gulf War in *The Effective Deterrence of Environmental Damage During Armed Conflict*, by Major Gary Sharp in the Summer 1991 issue of the *Military Law Review*.) Chapter two of *Ecology and War* contains an effective treatment of the advances made in terms of restoration and reclamation after previous wars. Another chapter describes current innovative environmental programs within the Department of Defense.

The author's strength seems to be the collection of reference material; her single previous publication listed is *The Nature Directory: A Guide to Environmental Organizations*. She devotes 30 pages of *Ecology and War* to a detailed appendix and glossary designed to provide a basis for additional research and information. The appendix includes a selection of pertinent laws and treaties, but it has limited usefulness because it fails to provide library citations for the listed works. Lanier-Graham does provide a good bibliography, including a wide range of books, papers, and articles on this important subject.

*Ecology and War* is written at a rudimentary level and provides only a cursory and sometimes simplistic review of a complex subject. Despite these shortcomings, however, the book can guide those wishing to learn more about the effects of warfare on the environment.

**The Icarus Syndrome: The Role of Air Power Theory in the Evolution and Fate of the U.S. Air Force.** By Carl H. Builder. New Brunswick, N.J. and London, Eng.: Transaction Publishers, 1994. 299 pages. \$39.95. Reviewed by Dr. James A. Mowbray, Professor of Aerospace Doctrine and Strategy, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

Carl Builder, a senior staff member at RAND, specializes in strategy formulation and analysis, and is currently studying the implications of the information revolution for American society and its military institutions. Early in 1991 Builder was commissioned by Air University's Air Command and Staff College to develop an essay to "remind incoming students of the obligations of the profession of arms, their heritage in history, and where those obligations might carry them with the future of the Air Force." *The Icarus Syndrome* is the outgrowth of that commission.

Builder's thesis, which he lays before the reader in his preface, is that "many of the Air Force's current institutional problems could be laid at the doorstep of its neglect of air power theory as the basis for its mission or purpose." This theory of air power he defines as "the idea of aviators unified in a cause much larger than themselves" and as one originally conceived around the airplane as a new and unique

means to "broad and important ends," that is, winning wars without the horrors of the World War I trenches.

He pursues his argument that the Air Force built itself into a fighting force and won its independence from the Army by selling this theory of air power, which was attractive to both airmen and civilians, especially the politicians. He then argues the notion that the advent of ballistic missiles provided alternative means to the ends of that theory, a theory which was originally conceived by aviators employing aircraft. This development led the Air Force to largely abandon the original theory in favor of a devotion to "things." While the theory was the basis for an altruistic vision and mission, its abandonment led to institutional losses that became pervasive. The losses eventually affected the Air Force's commitment to the standards of the profession of arms. Builder believes that a return to a theory of air power is the only way to correct those losses of institutional values and direction. In the final analysis, he argues, the Air Force must now redefine the theory as a new basis for its mission, vision, and commitment to the profession of arms.

*The Icarus Syndrome* provides a massive volume of quotations from primary and secondary sources, essentially hooked together to create a text. The author argues his case using this vast array of quotes, with an emphasis upon the thinking of the proponents of air power. The cut and paste approach, with the quotes connected by the author's own brief interpretation of them, produces a serious lack of cohesion. While that's unfortunate for the reader seeking a fast and easy read, the book does assemble a great deal of provocative material.

The quotations include many real gems of insight from air power advocates and air warriors. Worthwhile tidbits are scattered throughout. Footnote 2 in the preface, for example, cites the effects of the shift at CBS from a focus on journalistic professionalism to that of financial profitability. That this is similar to the Air Force abandoning its altruistic theory of air power becomes obvious to the reader.

Former Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill McPeak thought Builder's work important enough that every Air Force officer, noncommissioned officer, enlisted member, and civilian ought to read it and think about it. The same may be said for anyone interested in air power, past or present, particularly those who may someday go to war in the company of the US Air Force. Army, Marine, and Navy aviators should understand the struggle for a unifying theory of air power which the Air Force currently faces. It is all the more important because the Air Force and its vision of war in and from the air is the driving force behind the employment of air power on the future joint battlefield. If only because they are the lead agency on Joint Pub 3.56-1, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, the Air Force will shape the functions of the Joint Force Air Component Commander, especially since joint doctrine is now considered binding once approved. (For more on the Joint Force Air Component Commander, see the article "JFACC: Key to Organizing Your Air Assets for Victory" by Major Jeffrey E. Stambaugh, USAF, in the Summer 1994 issue of *Parameters*.—Editor)

This is an important book which ought to be understood and debated if the Air Force is to establish a vision of the future of air warfare that is comprehensible to and can be supported by the other services. It is regrettable that so important an argument is advanced in such an awkward format. The bottom line nonetheless, is that Builder's book is provocative and, for many, convincing.

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## *From the Archives*

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### Ernie Pyle on Soldiers and Sailors

Traveling aboard a Navy vessel en route from Tunisia to the invasion of Sicily in June 1943, correspondent Ernie Pyle observed a notable difference between sailors and front-line soldiers:

I had lived with the Army so long I actually felt like a soldier; yet it was wonderful to get with the Navy for a change, to sink into the blessedness of a world that was orderly and civilized by comparison . . . .

I got to know a great many of the sailors personally and almost all of them by nodding acquaintance. I found them to be just people, and nice people like the soldiers. They were fundamentally friendly. They all wanted to get home. They were willing to do everything they could to win the war. But I did sense one subtle difference between sailors and soldiers, although many of the former will probably resent it: the sailors weren't hardened and toughened as much as the soldiers. It's understandable.

The front-line soldier I knew lived for months like an animal, and was a veteran in the cruel, fierce world of death. Everything was abnormal and unstable in his life. He was filthy dirty, ate if and when, slept on hard ground without cover. His clothes were greasy and he lived in a constant haze of dust, pestered by flies and heat, moving constantly, deprived of all the things that once meant stability—things such as walls, chairs, floors, windows, faucets, shelves, Coca-Colas, and the little matter of knowing that he would go to bed at night in the same place he had left in the morning.

The front-line soldier has to harden his inside as well as his outside or he would crack under the strain. These sailors weren't sissies—either by tradition or by temperament—but they weren't as rough and tough . . . .

A ship is a home, and the security of home had kept the sailors more like themselves . . . . They had not drifted as far from normal life as the soldiers—for they had world news every morning in mimeographed sheets, radios, movies nearly every night, ice cream. Their clothes, their beds were clean. They had walked through the same doors, up the same steps every day for months. They had slept every night in the same spot.

Of course, when sailors die, death for them is just as horrible . . . but until the enemy comes over the horizon a sailor doesn't have to fight. A front-line soldier has to fight everything all the time. It makes a difference in a man's character. . . .

One night I was talking with a bunch of sailors on the fantail and they spoke thoughts you could never imagine coming from sailors' mouths. One of them said, "Believe me, after seeing these soldiers aboard, my hat's off to the Army, the poor bastards. They really take it and they don't complain about anything. Why, it's pitiful to see how grateful they are just to have a hard deck to sleep on. . . ."

The sailors were dead serious. It brought a lump to my throat to hear them. Everyone by now knows how I feel about the infantry. I'm a rabid one-man movement bent on tracking down and stamping out everybody in the world who doesn't fully appreciate the common front-line soldier.