Preparing Potential Senior Army Leaders for the Future

An Assessment of Leader Development Efforts in the Post–Cold War Era

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This issue paper is an exploratory effort to assess how well the Army prepares its senior leaders for future missions involving joint, coalition, and “full spectrum” operations. The paper examines the Army’s recent experiences in Somalia and Bosnia to identify areas in which Army leaders were not fully prepared with respect to doctrine, training, and experience—areas that could prove problematic in future missions. The paper then describes the current institutional training most relevant to developing competencies for such missions and notes its limited attention to the nondoctrinal, other-than-war missions that have occurred since the end of the Cold War. The paper also analyzes the operational experience and professional military education of combat arms officers who are the Army’s potential future senior leaders: officers selected to command tactical brigades, for promotion to brigadier general, and for promotion to major general.

Army personnel data indicate that most of the officers assessed in this study have had careers focused mainly on Army assignments and that few have had experience in post–Cold War operations other than war. Only 28 percent of these officers have held more than one joint assignment, and only 21 percent have multinational staff experience. Additionally, only 17 percent of these officers have experience in other-than-war contingencies (e.g., Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, or Kosovo). From a joint educational perspective, less than one-third (31 percent) of the officers analyzed have Joint Professional Military Education Level II credit. The paper concludes that the Army should provide greater emphasis to joint operational experience and modify officer education to enhance joint and full spectrum operational competencies. To do so, however, the Army will need to make tradeoffs against existing leader development practices and assess potential benefits and liabilities as compared to current approaches.
Officers are concerned that the officer education system (OES) does not provide them with the skills for success in full spectrum operations.

_The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to The Army_¹

Although technical interoperability is essential, it is not sufficient to ensure effective operations. There must be a suitable focus on procedural and organizational elements, and decision makers at all levels must understand each other’s capabilities and constraints. Training and education, experience and exercises, cooperative planning, and skilled liaison at all levels of the joint force will not only overcome the barriers of organizational culture and differing priorities, but will teach members of the joint team to appreciate the full range of Service capabilities available to them.

_Joint Vision 2020_²

_How well is the Army preparing its senior leaders for a future whose dimensions are known to be largely unbounded and to involve the complexities of “full spectrum operations” executed in a joint and/or coalition context? This essay is an exploratory effort whose purpose is to scope the dimensions of a potential problem facing the Army’s current leader development process as it prepares senior officers to meet the demands of future missions. And, as recent history has shown, the demands of the current and probable future security environments are significant, and the spectrum of possible security challenges is broad._

Clearly, as in the past, senior Army leaders must remain proficient in the core competency of America’s Army—fighting and winning wars. Nevertheless, if the past is any prologue to the future, senior Army leaders could also at any time be expected to deal with the complexities of stability and support operations (SASO), peacetime engagement, deployments in support of unplanned contingencies, or a host of other missions. Additionally, Army forces will almost certainly be
employed as part of a joint or combined joint task force—that will often be ad hoc. Finally, the increasing probability that future conflicts will involve military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) further complicates the challenges that leaders will face. Again, how well is the Army preparing its current and future leaders to operate in the complex operational environment of the 21st century?

The research approach used in this study to get at this question was to:

• Examine selected post–Cold War operations to determine recent Army experiences in meeting the challenges of these operations.

• Assess the Army leader development process and its ability to prepare senior officers for future demands.

• Analyze a small sample of officers that the Army has put on the track to senior leadership to assess their training and experience.3

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

Against any contention that the Army might have a leader development problem, a reasonable counter is that the Army has consistently demonstrated its ability to operate in the new security environment. The Army’s performance in a wide range of operations—from Panama to Kuwait to Bosnia—has demonstrated the inherent competence of senior Army leaders and the soldiers they lead. Even on short-notice contingencies like Somalia and Kosovo, the Army was able to task organize Army forces from disparate locations and units, deploy them to the theater of operations, and accomplish assigned missions. But do these apparent successes also mask inherent problems that required senior leaders to operate in realms for which the Army had not adequately prepared them?
An Army Operating Across the Full Spectrum

The Army remains organized for war in accordance with a construct that enables it to support a national security strategy that requires the capability to “defeat large-scale, cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in overlapping time frames.” Thus, the Army has organized, trained, and equipped its forces for warfighting. These forces are led by senior Army officers whose professional lives have focused on developing and sharpening their warfighting skills—skills that brought success in Operation Just Cause and Operation Desert Storm.

While maintaining readiness to fight two major theater wars (MTWs) is challenging in and of itself for the Army, this mission is complicated by the simultaneous requirement to provide forces to support a national strategy of global engagement. Engagement activities have markedly increased the pace of deployments in the post–Cold War era and have placed heavy demands on the Army to support contingencies short of MTWs along the operational spectrum, e.g., humanitarian assistance, peace operations, smaller-scale contingencies (SSCs), etc. Army senior leaders have been called upon to meet these other-than-MTW requirements by adapting and leading forces in operations that are largely outside their personal experiences and usually without definitive Army doctrine as a guide.

Further complicating the issue of supporting other-than-MTW missions is the fact that these operations often result in ad hoc task organizations that push command down to lower levels than would be the norm in a MTW and that assemble forces in nondoctrinal ways. To meet the requirements of these missions, the Army has relied heavily on its senior leaders to improvise and adapt to the operational realities of the environments in which they and their forces find themselves.
Thus, several issues face senior Army leaders who deploy to support other-than-MTW operations. First, Army senior leaders thrust into these environments find that their warfighting skills must be complemented by other attributes, e.g., political and diplomatic skills. Second, they cannot count on the presence of staff officers with joint and/or combined experience or training—such qualifications are normally not an assignment consideration for duty in Army units. Third, organizations have to be adapted to the operational and political realities of the situation to which they are deploying—often on the fly. This frequently results in units being tasked to assume missions for which they were not designed, equipped, or organized. Two other-than-MTW contingency operations in the past decade, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia, illustrate the challenges these types of operations have posed for senior Army leaders.

**Somalia**

On 3 December 1992, the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued a warning order to Central Command to execute Operation Restore Hope. Within a week, elements of Major General Steven L. Arnold’s 10th Mountain Division began deploying to Somalia. The 10th Mountain Division was also tasked to serve as the Army forces (ARFOR) headquarters in a Combined Joint Task Force under the command of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, eventually designated United Task Force (UNITAF) Somalia. The mission was, in General Arnold’s words, “to secure relief operations in our assigned Humanitarian Relief Sectors (HRS) and break the cycle of starvation.” General Arnold faced several daunting challenges in executing the ARFOR mission.

First, a division is not normally an ARFOR headquarters in a joint task force (JTF)—this role is usually assumed by a
corps or higher-level headquarters. Adapting the 10th Mountain Division to the requirements of an ARFOR presented General Arnold with a number of challenges:

- Division staffs tend to focus on tactics, while an ARFOR must have an operational perspective.
- Divisions do not usually become involved in relationships with commands and organizations at echelons above corps and are not adept at them. For an ARFOR, interaction at these echelons is routine and vital.
- Divisions are not joint headquarters and do not routinely practice operating in a joint environment. Thus, division staffs are generally not competent in joint operational or reporting procedures. Shortfalls are particularly apparent in the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES) and in the building and maintaining of time phased force deployment data (TPFDD).\(^6\)

The difficulty of the ARFOR mission was further complicated by the combined and interagency nature of the operation, where—in addition to U.S. forces and agencies—UN agencies, forces from 20 nations, and 49 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were involved.\(^7\) Thus General Arnold was faced with a requirement for liaison, coordination, and cooperation with the many organizations on the scene in Somalia. He also came to realize that “coordination would not be easy and cooperation would not be automatic,” particularly among the NGOs, because, in Arnold’s words, “Each of these organizations had a different view toward the use of military forces.”\(^8\)

Second, given the dimensions of the 21,000-square-mile area of operations—where ARFOR units were as much as 200 miles apart and the infrastructure was abysmal—the division required significant signal, engineer, and logistical augmentation to accomplish its mission. This arrangement was very ad hoc, with units from across the United States and
Europe joining the 10th Mountain Division in Somalia. In most cases, these units had never worked with the division. Complicating matters was the fact that General Arnold faced a troop ceiling of 10,200 persons for the ARFOR, “based not on mission analysis, but on political decisions.”

Third, although “operations at the company level and below” were “right out of tactical field and drill manuals, with some rules of engagement constraints,” the more senior leaders of the 10th Mountain Division found themselves in an environment for which they were largely untrained. General Arnold noted that “battalion commanders and higher tend to be ‘stretched’ a little beyond conventional operations due to the complexities and the many ‘players’ involved in operations other than war.” His description of what ARFOR leaders were called upon to accomplish shows the parameters of this stretch, as “mission creep” expanded the original scope of the mission:

Our initial operation was to provide security. As the operation developed, we assisted in standing up councils and governments, rebuilt schools and orphanages, conducted disarmament of warring factions, taught English in schools, repaired and built roads and provided assistance in many other ways. Some of this mission creep was directed, some was self-initiated. We found that our soldiers needed to see the effects of what they were doing. Getting them to assist in orphanages, schools, feeding centers and in other projects was one way of helping them see the importance of their mission. Additionally, to have any credibility with local leaders, we needed the flexibility to address the problems of their respective communities.

Finally, the 10th Mountain Division was operating in many cases in an urban environment. Army doctrine for MOUT, little revised since World War II, provided scant guidance for General Arnold.

The results of the 10th Mountain Division’s performance as the ARFOR for UNITAF were mixed. The division had continual problems serving as an ARFOR, mainly because of
equipment and procedural interoperability issues within the JTF, a paucity of Army joint-qualified staff personnel, and the command and control difficulties inherent in operating in such an expansive area of operations. The 10th Mountain Division faced a situation where “Infantry units commonly operate 50 miles from their headquarters, while transportation and engineer units were often hundreds of miles from their bases.” These communications problems were never fully resolved and had a significant impact on mission accomplishment in some cases.

The technical problems were exacerbated by the fact that Army senior leaders were in a process of “on-the-job training” for the mission in Somalia—few of them had any experience in operations like those they encountered in Somalia, much less any training for them. In the aftermath of UNITAF, General Arnold wrote:

> We have come very close to establishing the right environment to enable the Somalis to arrive at a “Somali solution.” The majority of Somalis have welcomed coalition forces, under UNITAF and now under UNOSOM II, as their protectors and salvation while Somalia is on the road to recovery.

The warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed eventually corrected General Arnold’s misreading of the true situation in Somalia.

**Bosnia**

In December 1995, elements of the U.S. Army 1st Armored Division deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of Operation Joint Endeavor to implement the Dayton Peace Accords. As Secretary of Defense William Perry noted at the time, “We are going in with a well-armed and well-trained force and with robust rules of engagement. . . . Nobody should doubt that the 1st Armored Division is capable of taking care of itself. The 1st AD’s Abrams tanks, Bradley
fighting vehicles, artillery and Apache helicopters will be sufficient to take on any opposition in the region.”

The 1st Armored Division, commanded by Major General William Nash, was part of a larger multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) charged with overseeing the military aspects of the Dayton agreement. Nash commanded Multi-National Division North/Task Force Eagle, which contained forces from twelve nations. IFOR’s mission, although it clearly required warfighting competence, also presented Army senior leaders with a multitude of non doctrinal challenges, including enforcing the cease-fire, supervising the marking of boundaries and the zone of separation between the former warring factions, enforcing the withdrawal of the combatants to their barracks, and moving heavy weapons to designated storage sites. In short, Army senior leaders found themselves in an environment that required them “to deal effectively with complex, politically dominated, multidimensional, multiorganizational, multinational, and multicultural peace and stability operations.”

A 1999 report by the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) assessed how well the Army had prepared its senior leaders for the complexities of the Bosnia mission:

In Bosnia, U.S. Army doctrines were largely inadequate in an environment that forced American commanders to wrestle with the political, diplomatic, and military demands of stability operations. Almost from the inception of the IFOR operation, U.S. commanders found themselves in uncharted territory. Maj. Gen. William Nash noted that this was an “inner ear problem.” Having trained for thirty years to read a battlefield, Nash observed that the general officers were now asked to read a “peace field.”

General William Crouch, U.S. Army Europe Commander at the beginning of the IFOR deployment, and the eventual commander of IFOR and the successor Stabilization Force (SFOR), echoed Nash’s views: “I was on my own. I’d certainly never trained for something like this.” Crouch initi-
ated a program to educate senior officers for the demands of Bosnia that evolved over time as lessons were learned. Unfortunately, this program was not an Armywide initiative. When the 1st Cavalry Division was alerted to replace Europe-based divisions in the SFOR mission in 1998, III Corps and the Joint Readiness Training Center assumed responsibility for preparing deploying units, taking advantage of lessons learned from Bosnia and U.S. Army Europe programs. Major General Kevin Byrnes (1st Cavalry Division commander), however, was largely left on his own to develop a senior-level training program. Byrnes noted:

I had an individual reading program. I read *Bridge on the Drina*, *Short History of Bosnia*, and Susan Woodward’s *Balkan Tragedy*. We had negotiations skills training and [then spent] one day on culture. We flew many of the senior leaders to Europe for on-the-ground training; that was very useful. It was too short, but it was the best we could get at the time.

The USIP report also noted that other senior officers shared the frustrations voiced by General Nash and General Crouch over their absence of preparation for command in Bosnia. General Eric Shinseki and General Montgomery Meigs succeeded Crouch in turn as commanders of SFOR. Shinseki believed that in the absence of a coherent Army doctrine for large-scale stability operations, commanders found themselves in a “roll-your-own situation.” Meigs was also very candid: “I got nothing . . . for this mission. I visited a lot of folks, but the [A]rmy didn’t sit me down and say, ‘Listen, here is what you need to know.’” Consequently, senior Army leaders were largely on their own to devise workable solutions to the complexities of the situation they confronted in Bosnia.

As with Somalia, the Army’s results in Bosnia are mixed. There were systemic problems in the initial phases of the operation and, as one author has noted, it appears that there was a propensity for “ad hoc problem solving” that resulted
in “convoluted strategic planning and coordination.” An after-action review report by the U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute noted that this “ad hoc-ery” was the result of a “lack of institutionalized, hierarchical multi-national strategic planning and a disconnected sequence of plan development [that] caused a lack of synchronization and organizational confusion.” Additionally, the report stated that “deployment planning processes were stove-piped among services, other militaries, and agencies; and compartmentalized at various headquarters which stymied parallel planning and reduced unity of effort.”

Additionally, as in Somalia, interoperability problems continued to plague Army forces. These problems manifested themselves in: C4ISR systems and services (military and civil systems); intelligence operations; doctrine, concepts of operations, and tactics, techniques, and procedures; language differences; cultural differences; and nongovernmental organizations and international organization interfaces.

Finally, although the military aspects of the Dayton Accords have largely been met and the Army’s role considered a success in this regard, there is continuing concern with the slow progress in the political and civil areas. As a comment by a senior member of the UN Office of the High Representative demonstrates, some believe that this is the result of an Army failure: “had more thought been given to matching [U.S. Army general] officers who had peacekeeping experience to the requirements of the operation in Bosnia, the gap between the military and civilian implementation might not have been so wide.”

**Recurring Issues**

What is clear from the Army’s experiences in the initial deployments to Somalia and Bosnia is that Army leaders and units trained, equipped, and organized for warfighting
were expected to do something quite different. Other operations in Rwanda, Haiti, and Kosovo, and the post-September 11 war on terrorism only serve to underscore the diversity and complexity of the operational environments the Army has confronted in the past decade—and is likely to confront in the future. Organizations being assigned to execute contingency missions are generally not designed or trained to operate in the roles they are being assigned, e.g., a division as an ARFOR headquarters in a Combined Joint Task Force. Consequently, ad hoc task forces are formed that throw together units that are not individually trained for the mission at hand and that may never have worked as a team. Additionally, commanders cannot count on having staffs experienced in joint operations, much less in operations with other U.S. agencies, multinational forces, the UN, or NGOs. Nor are Army senior leaders themselves necessarily trained for or experienced in these types of operations. Consequently, interoperability issues and steep learning curves appear to be consistent challenges in other-than-MTW operations.

Doctrine is also an issue. Army doctrine is focused on warfighting, with the assumption that effective combat units can adapt to any challenge. General Henry H. Shelton, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reinforced this view: “professional soldiers, trained for combat operations, clearly provide the best type of manpower for peace operations.”³⁴ General Shelton’s comments echo those made by General Arnold after his tour in Somalia, when he wrote, “well-trained, combat-ready, disciplined soldiers can easily adapt to peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions. Train them for war; they adapt quickly and easily to Somalia-type situations.”³⁵ Furthermore, current Army doctrine is explicit in this regard.

Training and preparation for peace operations should not detract from a unit’s primary mission of training soldiers to
fight and win in combat. The first and foremost requirement for success in peace operations is the successful application of warfighting skills.36

The Army is developing new doctrine that takes into account stability and support operations, the adaptation to a division required to enable it to function as an ARFOR, and other areas—but that doctrine still appears to operate from the organic assumption that general-purpose warfighting forces can quickly and effectively adapt to other demands.37 The Army vision is also instructive in this regard: “We will design into our organizational structures, forces which will, with minimal adjustment and in minimum time, generate formations which can dominate at any point on the spectrum of operations.”38 Nevertheless, few of these new doctrinal manuals have been published. And even when they are fielded, they may not adequately address “the inconsistencies in peace operations doctrine between Joint, Army, NATO, and UN publications.”39

Given the complexities of the current and future security environments, however, one should not expect much more from doctrine—although there is clearly much to be done in specific areas—than that it provide a general framework for action and a common understanding that can be applied to specific operations. As always, the judgment of senior leaders on the ground will be the critical ingredient in future operations that involve the Army.

A recent publication by the U.S. Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute seems to imply that the Army will have to rely on some innate excellence of the institution’s officers to deal with the vagaries of other-than-MTW operations, noting: “We have an incredibly talented military at present, capable of doing what seems impossible with little warning and limited guidance.”40 The “warning” and “guidance” aspects of this assessment certainly pertain to the senior leaders the Army has thrust into other-than-MTW
operations in the post–Cold War era. Nevertheless, although “warning” will probably always be an issue in contingency operations, “guidance” should be less problematic given the Army’s wealth of experience in peacetime operations.41

Therefore, one would logically assume that the Army’s leader development process is consciously accounting for the lessons of the recent past in preparing its potential senior leaders for the future. As the next section of this paper will show, this is not necessarily the case.

THE ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Army employs a progressive leader development process based on three components—institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development—that in combination prepare officers for service at increasing levels of responsibility.42 Two of these areas—institutional training and operational assignments—are amenable to analysis from the perspective of how well the Army is preparing its senior leaders.

Institutional Training

For senior leaders, the institutional training that is perhaps most relevant to developing operational competencies is what they undergo at a command and staff college (military education level 4 or MEL 4) and at a senior service college (military education level 1 or MEL 1). Since the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, service command and staff colleges and senior service colleges have also been required to include joint education in their curricula. Consequently, Army officers attending service command and staff and senior service colleges receive Joint Professional Military Education Level I (JPME I) credit.

Officers going to joint duty assignments must complete Joint Professional Military Education Level II (JPME II)
instruction. This can be accomplished in three ways: attendance at JPME II after command and staff college; attendance at JPME II after senior service college; or attendance at the National War College or the Industrial College of the Armed Forces instead of a senior service college. Senior service college attendance, normally occurring when an officer is a lieutenant colonel after battalion command, is the last substantive military educational experience in an Army officer’s career.

The vast majority of Army officers attend the U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, for their MEL 4 education and the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, for their MEL 1 education. Army officers are the clear majority in the classes at CGSOC and the Army War College, although other services, agencies, and nations are represented. A brief examination of the curricula of these colleges provides a number of interesting insights about how they prepare officers for the realities of the post–Cold War era.

U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officer Course and the U.S. Army War College Course

The CGSOC mission is “to educate officers in the values and attitudes of the profession of arms and in the conduct of military operations during peace, conflict, and war with emphasis at corps and division levels.” The course prepares students “for duty as field grade commanders and principal staff officers at division and higher echelons.”

The emphasis in CGSOC is on teaching students the intricacies of Army operational warfighting at the corps level and below, albeit in a joint context. Army and joint doctrine and organizations provide the framework for the course. Operational planning for other-than-MTW roles is included
in the curriculum, but this area receives secondary emphasis given the warfighting focus of the course. Analysis of post–Cold War other-than-MTW operations is included in the core military history course (The Evolution of Modern Warfare), but only to a limited degree.

The educational mission of the Army War College is to “prepare selected military, civilian, and international leaders to assume strategic leadership responsibilities in military and national security organizations, and to educate students about the employment of the U.S. Army as part of a unified, joint, or multinational force in support of the national military strategy.” Like CGSOC, the instruction at the Army War College is based in current service and joint doctrine, although the orientation is more at the strategic than the operational level. The focus is on the strategic employment of the Army in joint and combined operations, both in military operations other than war (MOOTW) and MTWs.

What appears to be missing from both the CGSOC and Army War College core curricula are any in-depth examinations of actual post–Cold War other-than-MTW experiences to provide students an understanding of the nondoctrinal realities these operations imposed on Army senior leaders. The emphasis seems to be on doctrinal solutions. Furthermore, the MOOTW sections of the curricula appear to be focused principally on understanding the role of Army forces in these operations, with consideration of jointness, other services and agencies, allies, and NGOs being a secondary issue.

The report published by the recent Army Training and Leader Development Officer Study Panel confirms the shortcomings of the officer education system (OES) in preparing leaders for the present and the future. The panel report notes that the OES has been “largely untouched since the end of the Cold War” and that it “is out of synch with Army needs.” The report’s conclusions regarding OES are unambiguous:
OES does not satisfactorily train officers in combined arms skills or support the bonding, cohesion, and rapid teaming required in full spectrum operations. With the increasing emphasis the Army places on battle command in war, it must add stability operations, and support operations to OES. The increasing importance of self-aware and adaptive leaders in full spectrum operations requires OES to educate officers on these qualities.52

JPME II Schools

The two senior-level JPME II schools, the National War College (NWC) and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), are focused at the strategic level. The mission of the National War College “is to prepare future leaders of the Armed Forces, State Department, and other civilian agencies for high-level policy, command, and staff responsibilities.”53 The curriculum emphasizes joint and interagency perspectives and focuses on national security policy and strategy.54 The mission of the Industrial College “is to prepare selected military officers and civilians for senior leadership and staff positions by conducting postgraduate, executive-level courses of study and associated research dealing with the resource component of national power, with special emphasis on materiel acquisition and joint logistics, and their integration into national security strategy for peace and war.”55

These two JPME II colleges focus on the strategic military and national policy levels, rather than the operational level. The value they offer to Army officers over the Army War College is the opportunity to associate with officers from other services and agencies, because of the high degree of representation of other than Army officers in the courses.56 Army officers at the two colleges are also immersed in curricula that emphasize a joint/interagency approach to national security issues, rather than focusing
on the role of Army forces in a joint/interagency context. In short, a joint/interagency acculturation process takes place during the academic year at these two institutions.

The Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) conducts two twelve-week JPME II courses. The mission of the Joint Forces Staff College is “to educate staff officers and other leaders in joint operational-level planning and warfighting in order to instill a primary commitment to joint, multinational, and interagency teamwork, attitudes, and perspectives.” As mentioned earlier, these courses complement the service JPME I, MEL 4, and MEL 1 programs for officers going to joint duty assignments. The Joint and Combined Staff Officers School (JCSOS) is the MEL 4 follow-on course; the Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) is the MEL 1 program. The emphasis of the curricula at JFSC is on joint, interagency, and combined operations, with a particular focus on operations other than war. The JFSC courses appear to be the only ones available to Army officers that actually teach joint operations and procedures (rather than the Army role in joint operations).

Army officers who have attended the JPME II courses at JFSC value the experience, as noted by the Army Training and Leader Development Officer Study Panel Report to The Army: “Army officers graduating from JPME II and serving in joint billets agree the education effectively prepared them for joint and multinational assignments. They believe attendance at JPME is important for their job success.”

Finally, a limited review of the curricula at the various professional military education institutions available to develop future senior Army leaders indicates that officers are receiving instruction on how service and joint organizations operate within doctrinal parameters. At the strategic level, there is also instruction on the interagency process and combined strategy, and there has been some adaptation of the curricula in light of post–Cold War other-than-MTW operations.
All the curricula provide some instruction on these types of operations; the question is whether or not these changes have gone far enough. Nevertheless, it is apparent from an assessment of the curricula of the professional military education programs available to Army officers during their careers that none focus on preparing officers for nondoctrinal or ad hoc organizational situations. These are the situations that Army senior leaders are facing every day in the post–Cold War era.

In short, there appears to be little in the way of vicarious learning from the actual post–Cold War other-than-MTW operations. The situation is somewhat analogous to that at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff School in 1937. In April of that year, future Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall wrote that he was concerned that the instruction at Fort Leavenworth was not preparing officers for the realities of the kind of war they would likely fight:

[T]o base most of the instruction on well-trained units, of full strength and complete as to corps troops, materiel, etc., is to qualify officers for something they will never find during the first years of an American war. . . . we must be experts in the technique—and special tactics—of handling hastily raised, partially trained troops, seriously deficient in corps and army establishments and heavy materiel.

Regardless of the shortcomings of professional military education curricula, for purposes of argument one would assume that to best prepare its future senior leaders for duty in joint and combined operations, the Army would want to afford these officers the opportunity to complete instruction at the JPME II level. Again, there are several options to accomplish this end: attending the National War College or the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, or attending one of the two JPME II courses conducted at the Joint Forces Staff College after a staff or senior service college.
Operational Experience

The old cliché “experience is the best teacher” is central to the Army’s leader development process, and the Army largely prepares its officers for future responsibilities through a progressive series of assignments. Command is preeminent in the hierarchy of importance of assignments, evidenced by the centralized board selection process the Army uses to pick battalion and brigade commanders. Additionally, Goldwater-Nichols requires officers to complete a joint assignment before they can be selected for promotion to brigadier general.

Similar to joint education, one could logically assume that if the Army believed it is important that its future senior leaders be well-grounded in joint and combined operations, it would assign them to positions where they could gain such experience. In the past, such assignment patterns appear not to have been the norm. General Wesley Clark, former Supreme Allied Commander Europe, noted that “the Army’s assignment system prepares army general officers very well for internal Army jobs”—he was less confident that the Army was preparing its generals for joint and multinational assignments.62 The report by the United States Institutes for Peace seems to substantiate General Clark’s assessment: “Of the twenty-five general officers who have served in Bosnia, only two were assigned for their prior experience. Most generals were assigned to Bosnia because their units had been selected for deployment there.”63

There are senior officers, however, who believe that the experience deficit will soon be “corrected as the next generation of senior officers makes their way up the developmental ladder.”64 Intuitively, this makes sense. It has, after all, been fifteen years since the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, and the Army has been almost continuously involved in other-than-MTW operations for nearly ten years. The next
section of this paper will assess whether or not the experience
deficit has been addressed—educationally and operationally—
for a group of potential future Army senior leaders.

**HOW PREPARED ARE FUTURE ARMY SENIOR LEADERS?**

Who are the future leaders of the Army? If the past is any guide,
they will mostly be combat arms officers, who have proved their
potential for service at the highest levels. One of the most
important initial gates for combat arms officers in demonstrating
their potential for eventual Army senior leadership is selection
for tactical brigade command, because successful tactical
brigade commanders are the officers most likely to be selected
for brigadier general. Selection for brigadier general and
major general are the next two gates on the path to senior Army
leadership. Therefore, for the purposes of this exploratory
study, the educational and operational assignment histories of
five groups of officers selected by the Department of the Army
centralized selection board system were analyzed. These five
groups were: fiscal year 2001 (FY01) combat arms officers
selected for tactical brigade command; FY00 combat arms
officers selected for promotion to brigadier general; FY00
combat arms officers selected for promotion to major general;
FY01 combat arms officers selected for promotion to brigadier
general; and FY01 combat arms officers selected for promotion
to major general.

**Education**

Table 1 depicts the professional military education of the
officers analyzed. From the perspective of answering the
question of the degree to which these future senior leaders
have been prepared for future joint assignments by comple-
tion of JPME II education, the story is mixed.
The table shows that less than one-third of the officers in the five categories being analyzed had completed JPME II education (40 of 127 or 31 percent), while fewer than one-fifth (19 of 127 or 15 percent) had participated in the MEL 1 and MEL 4 follow-on JPME II programs at the Joint Forces Staff College. Additionally, a significant number of the officers (42 of 127 or 33 percent) attended neither the Army War College nor a JPME II senior service college (Industrial College of the Armed Forces [ICAF] or National War College [NWC]). These officers attended either the senior service college of another service (19), or were senior service college fellows (23) at a civilian institution (the Atlantic Council, Georgetown University, Harvard University, etc.).

### Operational Assignments

Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of the operational assignments of the same group of officers. Here, the story is somewhat more complex than with joint education. What
the analysis tried to get at is the degree to which the Army is preparing its future senior leaders through joint and multinational staff assignments and the extent to which they have had experience operating in other-than-MTW operations.

What the data indicate is that few officers on the track to senior Army leadership have more than one joint assignment (36 of 127 or 28 percent) or multinational staff experience (27 of 127 or 21 percent). Additionally, many of the officers being selected for promotion to brigadier general and major general have as their only joint assignment service on an other than operational staff, i.e., the Joint Staff or Department of Defense Staff. This is not to imply that these assignments are not joint or important—they are—but they do not provide joint operational experience. Furthermore, one-third (31 of 91 or 34 percent) of the brigadier general and major general selectees assessed in this study had their first joint assignment after brigade command, and of these several had already been selected for promotion to brigadier general. Finally, Table 2 shows that few of the officers in the sample have experience in post–Cold War other-than-MTW operations (21 of 127 or 17 percent).

Table 2
Operational Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>No Joint Assignment</th>
<th>In 1st Joint Assignment</th>
<th>1st Joint After Brigade Command</th>
<th>One Joint Assignment</th>
<th>Two or More Joint Assignments</th>
<th>Multinational Assignment</th>
<th>Other-than-MTW Post–Cold War Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY01 combat arms Tactical brigade command</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY00 combat arms Brigadier general</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY00 combat arms Major general</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY01 combat arms Brigadier general</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY01 combat arms Major general</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINDINGS, FRAMING ALTERNATIVES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Clearly, neither the Army nor the joint community can develop organizations or doctrines for every situation. As in the past, senior leaders on the ground will be counted on to apply their best judgment to the situation at hand. The question this study has tried to address is whether or not the Army is using its current leader development process to best advantage to prepare its future senior leaders for the demands of the national security environment.

Findings

Our analysis of a limited number of potential Army senior leaders in this study indicates that the Army’s success in preparing potential senior leaders for the future is mixed. Less than one-third of the officers had completed JPME II education (40 of 127 or 31 percent), while fewer than one-fifth (19 of 127 or 15 percent) had participated in the MEL 1 and MEL 4 follow-on JPME II programs at the Joint Forces Staff College—the only institution with curricula focused on joint task force operations. Additionally, there seems to be little substantive military training or education for Army officers after their MEL 1 experience as a lieutenant colonel or colonel.68

From the perspective of operational experience, the data in this study seem to indicate that the way to the top for combat arms officers is to focus on Army assignments. Only roughly one-third (36 of 127 or 28 percent) of the officers assessed have had more than one joint assignment, and many of these assignments have not been in operational billets. Joint assignments appear to be a one-time phenomenon (or “ticket punch”), perhaps to meet the promotion requirements of Goldwater-Nichols. Fully one-third (31 of 91 or 34 percent) of the brigadier general and major general selectees
assessed in this study had their first joint assignment after brigade command, and of these several had already been selected for promotion to brigadier general. Additionally, many of the officers analyzed in this study do not have joint or combined operational staff experience, because their sole joint assignment has been to the Joint Staff or to an executive agency. Finally, few of the officers (21 of 127 or 17 percent) in the sample have experience in post–Cold War other-than-MTW operations.

**Framing Alternatives**

What are the alternatives available to the Army to better prepare its future senior officers for leadership roles in post–Cold War operations? The recently published report, *The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army*, is a good initial step in the direction of assessing what the issues are for the Army officer corps as a whole. But are there nuances for developing future senior leaders that might need special consideration?

What might the new model focus on in the area of officer education of future senior leaders? One alternative would be to concentrate on developing in potential future senior leaders the full spectrum operational competencies that the post–Cold War operational environment seems to be demanding. From the perspective of education and training, the first step in this process would be to define these competencies. A thorough assessment of recent operations would seem to be a good starting point in the process, with a view to how actual lessons learned from them could be incorporated into curricula at Army schools and in the emerging distance-education domain. Furthermore, it would seem that the Army would want as many of its future senior leaders as possible to have JPME II educational opportunities (for both joint/interagency education and
acculturation), given the reality that future operations will almost certainly be joint.\textsuperscript{69}

The Army should also address an apparent gap in senior officer education. As noted earlier in this paper, the last substantive educational opportunity for Army officers likely to be senior leaders is the senior service school education they receive as a lieutenant colonel or colonel. It has been on average almost nine years since the nineteen FY00 major general selectees graduated from a senior service college or fellowship. Almost all of these officers—who may soon command Army forces in joint or combined joint task forces—had their last professional military educational opportunity before the operations in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, or Kosovo occurred. Quite simply, the operational environments that the professional military education system prepared these officers for has changed radically.

In the area of developing operational experience, the Army should assess what the appropriate career model is for future senior officers who will most likely be expected to be prepared to operate in nondoctrinal, ad hoc, joint/interagency/multi-national environments across the full spectrum of operations. As with education, the assessment of what might be the optimal experiences in an officer’s career to prepare them for senior leadership would probably best be done by analyzing the experiences necessary to enable the officer to operate effectively in the new security environment. One possible alternative to evaluate would be to afford middle-grade officers with high potential the opportunity to serve in joint and/or multinational operational commands, rather than in other nonoperational assignments. Furthermore, multiple joint assignments might be a reasonable alternative for officers who will be expected to operate as senior leaders in a joint environment. Again, such an approach would require modifications to existing career patterns and a redefinition of which assignments the Army values most in the leader development process for its future senior officers.
Almost certainly, any alternatives to the existing leader development process will have to be made as tradeoffs against existing practices. To increase instruction in other-than-MTW operations, something in existing educational curricula will have to be displaced, or more time in an officer’s career will have to be devoted to education. Similarly, to increase the time officers have in joint operational assignments, other Army assignments would have to be curtailed.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

As noted at the beginning of this essay, this has been an exploratory effort to gain insights about the Army’s development of its future senior leaders. Consequently, the study was purposely limited in the number of operations assessed, the depth of analysis of the curricula of the various professional military education institutions, and the numbers of officers whose careers were examined. Nevertheless, given the data presented by this study, it is arguable that the Army is doing a less than comprehensive job of preparing its future senior leaders for the challenges posed by the new security environment. Clearly, a more thorough analysis is needed that evaluates alternatives and potential tradeoffs. Listed below are several areas where further detailed analysis might initially focus.

- Analyze a broader population of Army officers to glean statistically significant data on senior leader development (institutional and operational) patterns for the Army as a whole. Include analysis of combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS), as well as combat arms officers.
- Conduct an analysis of the specific leader demands being placed on Army officers (combat, CS, CSS) in contingency operations (including MOOTW) to isolate trends and needed competencies. Crosswalk these demands against Army and joint doctrine and service school curricula to see
which are not being addressed by the institutional development system. This would require a much fuller examination of post–Cold War contingencies, joint and Army doctrine, and service school curricula.70

- Examine alternative assignment patterns for developing potential senior Army leaders, with a specific view toward preparing them for high-level positions in joint, combined, and interagency settings. This should also include a trade-off analysis.

- Determine the post–MEL 1 developmental requirements for senior leaders and examine alternatives for post-SSC lifelong learning options.

- Finally, and perhaps most important to the Army as an institution, undertake an assessment of the opportunity costs of enhancing the joint, coalition, and OOTW assignments, education, and training for the potential future senior leaders of the Army.

To paraphrase a comment made in the United States Institutes for Peace report cited frequently in this study, it is probably no longer valid for the Army to assume that its senior leaders have the skills and experiences required to perform effectively.71 A remark made by General Montgomery Meigs to the authors of the report is instructive in this regard: “The [A]rmy has a wonderful ability to adapt to a crisis, but we have to be better than that and adapt to the environment before the crisis hits, because in the 21st century, the crisis may be so different that you will not be able to adapt quickly enough. Just having good soldiers isn’t going to cut it.”72
Notes


3. Given the exploratory nature of this paper, only a limited number of post–Cold War operations were examined. Additionally, the paper assesses only Army senior leader development and makes no attempt to determine how well the other services prepare their senior leaders.

4. White House, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington: 1999), p. 19. See also Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report, September 30, 2001* (Washington: 2001), pp. 17–18. This report advocates a force-sizing construct that is capabilities-based, rather than the threat-based approach of the 1999 national security strategy. It delineates four priorities for shaping future U.S. forces: “defend the United States; deter aggression and coercion forward in critical regions; swiftly defeat aggression in overlapping major conflicts while preserving for the President the option to call for a decisive victory in one of those conflicts—including the possibility of regime change or occupation; and conduct a limited number of smaller-scale contingency operations.” The document further notes that “the new construct serves as a bridge from today’s force, developed around the threat-based, two-MTW construct, to a future, transformed force. The United States will continue to meet its commitments around the world, including in Southwest and Northeast Asia, by maintaining the ability to defeat aggression in two critical areas in overlapping time-frames.” Emphasis added.


Lessons Learned Report, 3 December 1992–4 May 1993 (For Official Use Only), (Fort Leavenworth: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 1993). This publication documents in detail many of the challenges faced by the 10th Mountain Division.

7. Arnold.

8. Ibid.


10. Joint Warfighting Center, *Joint Task Force Commander’s Handbook for Peace Operations* (Fort Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 1997), p. I-6. Arnold took infantry, aviation, and artillery units from his division, plus a division slice for C4ISR and support—about 4,000 soldiers. The remainder of the forces that deployed with the 10th Mountain Division were drawn from posts around the country and outnumbered Arnold’s divisional personnel roughly two to one.

11. Arnold.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.


15. Allard; and McNaugher, Johnson, and Sollinger, *Agility by a Different Measure*. For a broader examination of the C4ISR interoperability issues in several post–Cold War operations, see Russell W. Glenn, Sean Edwards, David Johnson, Jay Bruder, Mike Sheiern, Elwyn D. Harris, Jody Jacobs, Iris Kameny, and John Pinder, *Getting the Musicians of Mars on the Same Sheet of Music: Army Joint, Multinational, and Interagency C4ISR Interoperability* (For Official Use Only) (Santa Monica: RAND, DB-288-A, 2000).

16. Allard, pp. 78–79. Allard discusses command and control issues encountered in Somalia, ranging from different word-processing software being used in the Marine-centered JTF
headquarters and the ARFOR, radio compatibility problems between Marine and Army units, and the serious problem that for “the first 3 weeks the Navy was offshore, the Army hospital in Mogadishu could not talk to the ships, nor were Army MEDEVAC helicopter pilots cleared to land on them” (pp. 80–83).

17. See *Operation Restore Hope Lessons Learned Report* for a detailed description of mission-related constraints imposed on JTF operations by inadequate communications.

18. Arnold.


20. General Nash was also the first commanding general of Multi-National Division North/Task Force Eagle, of which the 1st Armored Division was a part.


24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., p. 4.

26. Ibid., p. 4.

27. Ibid., p. 2.


30. Ibid.


33. USIP, p. 4.


35. Arnold.


37. The Army published FM 1, The Army, and FM 3-0, Operations, in June 2001; both are available at http://www.army.mil/features/FMI+FM2/FM1FM2.htm. FM 1 stresses the Army’s focus on warfighting: “The Army’s non-negotiable contract with the American people is to fight and win our Nation’s wars” (chapter 3, page 1). Similarly, FM 3 notes: “Although Army forces focus on warfighting, their history and current commitments include many stability operations” (chapter 9, page 1) and “The Army is not specifically organized, trained, or equipped for support operations. Army forces are designed and organized for warfighting” (chapter 10, page 4).


41. See The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to The Army, p. 6. The Army recognizes the complexities and challenges embodied in the term “full spectrum operations.” This May 2001 report on officer training and leader development noted: “Leaders must thrive in a complex environment marked by the challenge of high-intensity combat and the ambiguities inherent in stability
operations and support operations. From the Army’s perspective, no clear-cut line distinguishes ‘war’ and ‘operations other than war.’ Stability operations may explode into firefights without warning, requiring Army forces to interact with local populations and displaced persons while in the midst of decisive operations.”

42. Ibid., pp. 19–20. The report recommends sweeping changes to current Army processes, by proposing a training and leader development model based on Army culture, standards, feedback, operational and educational experience, and self-development.

43. The JPME II follow-on to command and staff college and senior service college is conducted at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia.

44. New brigadier generals attend the six-week Capstone course at the National Defense University. Per a draft study on Joint Professional Military Education, Capstone, although it provides new generals “with a keen appreciation of high level issues . . . [it] should not by itself be viewed as sufficient joint education preparation for joint duty at senior levels.” Although there are other civilian and military educational opportunities available after SSC, they are not routinely incorporated into the officer educational system.


46. CGSC Catalog, p. 3.

47. The CGSC web site (http://www-cgsc.army.mil, accessed 26 December 2001) described the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) 2002 regular course. Of the 28 lessons in the two core operational courses (C300, Fundamentals of Warfighting, and C500, Fundamentals of Operational Warfighting), only 5 were specifically focused on the spectrum of conflict below the warfighting level. For the 2003 CGSOC course, 6 of the 28 lessons in C300 and C500 deal with other-than-warfighting operations (https://cgsc2.Leavenworth.army.mil/ctac/courses/c300/advsht


51. The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report, p. 22.

52. Ibid., p. 11.

53. The mission of the National War College is at http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/nwc/nwchp.html.

54. Ibid.


56. Approximately 75 percent of the student bodies at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the National War College are made up of U.S. military officers, with equal representation from the three services (Marine officers are counted as part of the Navy). The other 25 percent of the U.S. component of the student body is from U.S. government agencies (State Department, CIA, etc.). Finally, there are international fellows in each of the college student bodies. (See the National Defense University web site at http://www.ndu.edu.)

57. The mission of the Joint Forces Staff College is at http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu/mission.htm. As with NWC and ICAF, each of the services is equally represented in the student body.

58. Ibid.

60. The Command and General Staff College and the Army War College offer electives to supplement or complement material not addressed in the core curricula. Per conversations between the author and faculty members at various professional military education institutions, electives are the venue where examinations of nondoctrinal operations are most likely to occur.


62. USIP, p. 8.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid. See also “Pentagon Looks to Broaden Expertise of JSOs,” *Army Times*, April 17, 2000. This article reports a March 2000 proposal by the Pentagon to Congress to modify Goldwater-Nichols. The article discusses two arguments made to Congress. First, there is “a new generation of military professionals who understand the value of joint warfare particularly after protracted military conflict in the Persian Gulf and the former Yugoslavia.” Second, “An overabundance of joint expertise in an officer’s career . . . depreciates the officer’s usefulness to the services and the joint community.”

65. This study defined combat arms officers as those being from the following specialties/branches: infantry/11; armor/12, field artillery/13, air defense artillery/14, aviation/15; and special forces/18. Engineer/21 was not included because the FY01 brigade command list had engineer commands in the “combat support” category. Of the 91 combat arms officers selected for brigadier general or major general on the FY00/01 promotion lists, all but 17 had served in tactical brigade commands and 3 of those 17 had served as commander of JTF-Bravo in USSOUTHCOM.

66. The officers who were advanced operational fellows at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College were not included in the 42, but they are incorporated into the Army War College total, given the Army-focused content of this program.
67. 8 of 21 (38 percent) of the FY01 brigade command selectees had service on a nonoperational staff (the Joint Staff or another executive agency staff) as their only joint assignment; this is the case for 12 of the 23 (52 percent) of the FY00 brigadier general selectees, 6 of 18 (33 percent) of the FY00 major general selectees, 14 of 26 (54 percent) of the FY01 brigadier general selectees, and 4 of 18 (22 percent) of the FY01 major general selectees.

68. The recently published FM 1, *The Army*, notes in chapter 3: “Leadership is the most dynamic element of combat power . . . Our education, training, and development of Army leaders . . . are critical tasks that will become more complex as we move to a future that demands increasing levels of judgment, agility, self-awareness, adaptiveness, and innovation from leaders. This situation requires continuous leader development at all levels of The Army. It also requires leaders to develop and commit to lifelong learning skills” (p. 7). For Army senior leaders, lifelong learning is generally limited to self-development and operational assignments.

69. One recommendation in *The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army* that needs further scrutiny is the recommendation that the Army seek legislative authority to conduct JPME II at the Command and General Staff College and the Army War College. Although the curricula at these institutions might be modified to incorporate JPME II instruction (likely at the expense of some part of the current curricula at these colleges) it will be much more difficult to replicate the joint student and faculty ratios at NWC, ICAF, and JFSC that are key to the acculturation process that occurs at those institutions.

70. One might also want to assess the preparation of Army senior leaders in an even broader historical context, e.g., how well did the Army prepare its senior leaders for other nondoctrinal operations like the Vietnam War?

71. USIP, p. 4.

72. Ibid., p. 9.