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THE US ARMY WAR COLLEGE QUARTERLY PARAMETERS

Contemporary Strategy & Landpower

On Military Interventions

*David H. Ucko and Robert C. Egnell
Stephen Watts and Stephanie Pezard*

Challenges for Pacific Command

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Reserve Components: Point-Counterpoint

*James D. Campbell
James "Rick" Morrison*

Special Commentary: The New Cold War

Michael G. Roskin



Carlisle Barracks, PA

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From the Editor

The Spring 2014 issue of the *US Army War College Quarterly* opens with a special commentary by Michael G. Roskin, “The New Cold War.” Whether we accept his premise that we are now in a new Cold War with Russia and China, his recommendations for how to avoid some pitfalls of the “old” Cold War warrant consideration.

Our first forum, *On Military Interventions*, features two articles on ways to make interventions both more effective and more efficient. In “Options for Avoiding Counterinsurgencies,” David H. Ucko and Robert C. Egnell examine counterinsurgency missteps in Afghanistan, and discuss the merits of three alternative models. Regardless of the model, the authors remind us there are no easy solutions: military interventions require clarity of purpose and strategic commitment. Stephen Watts’s and Stephanie Pezard’s “Rethinking Small-Footprint Interventions” explores the utility of Thomas Shelling’s concept of “Tipping Points,” which indicate when conflict might shift decisively in one direction or the other. Such information can help policymakers decide whether and how to intervene in crisis situations.

The second forum, *Challenges for Pacific Command*, discusses recent developments in Pakistan and North Korea and their policy implications. In “Pakistan’s Changing Counterterrorism Strategy: A Window of Opportunity?” Michael Spangler suggests the United States can leverage changes in Pakistan’s counterterrorism focus to achieve stronger bilateral cooperation. Andrew Scobell and Mark Cozad shed useful light on the dynamic relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang in “China’s North Korea Policy: Rethink or Recharge?” One thing is clear—Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un do not share the same vision for the future of the Asia-Pacific region; this relationship thus bears watching.

Our third forum, *Reconsidering Future War*, offers two perspectives on how defense departments and professional militaries should prepare themselves for future conflict. Robert A. Johnson’s “Predicting Future War” examines the factors that make prediction difficult, but maintains that historical understanding combined with cautious trends’ analysis can make for actionable, if tentative, forecasts. In “Forking Paths: War After Afghanistan,” Michael Evans takes on the cognitive challenge of thinking clearly about the future. He analyzes the track record of “futures studies,” and suggests that the fog of uncertainty surrounding the future is not impenetrable.

Our final forum, *Reserve Components: Point-Counterpoint*, contributes to the current debate over the optimal balance between Army Active and Reserve Components. James D. Campbell’s “The National Guard as a Strategic Hedge,” makes the case that US militia (National Guard) and other reserve components have long been indispensable and cost-effective partners for America’s regulars. However, Rick Morrison’s “Reserve Component Costs” argues that the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Costing Model shows the cost-differential between Active and Reserve units is much smaller than one might think. ~ AJE

The New Cold War

Michael G. Roskin

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ABSTRACT: Russian and Chinese hostility toward the United States creates a New Cold War, but treating the two adversaries differently can make things break our way. US strategists should pick the bigger long-term threat, Russia or China, and treat it firmly and the smaller one flexibly, avoiding the rigid diplomatic and military policies that prolonged the old Cold War.

The New Cold War will be long and deep only if the current Sino-Russian entente turns into an alliance. A hostile Russia alone can cause mischief but, compared to the old Soviet Union, is weak and sufferable. Russia and China together are a much tougher challenge. The Sino-Soviet split—Nixon must be given credit for utilizing it—marked the beginning of the end of the original Cold War. By avoiding rigid diplomatic and military policies that push Russia and China together, we can make the New Cold War shorter and less dangerous.

The original Cold War ended not with a nuclear bang but with an economic whimper. Starting under Brezhnev's long reign, the inefficient Soviet economy fell further behind until Gorbachev, in desperation, attempted a clumsy *perestroika* that achieved little but inflation. Capitalism, it turns out, really is better than socialism, something any good American capitalist should know. Marxists, misled by their ideology, bet that the US economy would collapse, and lost. (The United States is not immune to economic collapse; we got a whiff of it in 2008.) Panicked US responses did not win us the Cold War—economics and patience did.

After 1991, the United States was marked less by triumphal strutting than by satisfied indifference. But during this time, little noticed by Americans and well before the Crimea Crisis, a New Cold War percolated. Even under Yeltsin in the 1990s, Russian foreign policy showed nationalistic hardening. In 1996, Russia, China, and three Central Asian states signed the Shanghai Five agreement and turned it into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 to oppose "US hegemony." SCO members occasionally practice amphibious operations, a warning to Taiwan. The SCO is not, however, a formal military alliance.

Russian President Putin called the 1991 Soviet breakup "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century" and does not hide his aim to reassemble the Soviet Union by incorporating the "near abroad" into his Eurasian Economic Union, first signed in 2011 and due to begin in 2015. Putin's 2008 invasion of Georgia to "protect" the South Ossetians was really Moscow's warning to Tbilisi not to join NATO. His 2014 occupation of Crimea to protect ethnic Russians (and the Russian Black Sea fleet) also warned Ukraine not to join NATO, an improvised heavy-handed move that may push Kiev to do precisely that. Bad as Crimea is, it is not another 1938 Sudetenland crisis, and we should stop painting it as such.

Michael Roskin taught in the US Army War College (DNSS) and was a professor of political science at Lycoming College in Pennsylvania. His latest textbook is *IR: The New World of International Relations* (10th ed.) His latest teaching position was a Fulbright at the University of Macau 2008-09 and Shandong University, China, 2010.

China's commonality with Russia: how to recover from weakness and humiliation. In 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed China's "century of humiliation" over, and the term is standard today. (Nationalist Chiang Kai-shek felt the same, writing daily in his diary, "avenge humiliation.") Soon after Nixon took office in 1969, Chinese and Soviet forces skirmished on their Manchurian border. What was really at stake was leadership of the world communist movement and an independent Chinese nuclear force. Territorial questions, ostensibly settled, still lurk in Siberia.

China, for a few years after Nixon's 1972 visit, looked like a reasonable partner to balance Soviet power. Americans supposed that we had "opened" China and set it on the path to capitalist democracy—an unrealistic thought. Deng Xiaoping decreed the ancient wisdom of "hide your strength and bide your time," a policy that received little publicity or US notice. We were living in a bit of a dream world. China still claims Taiwan and could seize it. The 1999 "accidental" US bombing of a Chinese embassy building in Belgrade—used as a communications relay by the Serbian military for fighting in Bosnia—demonstrated China-US hostility.

As China's strength grew, it asserted absurd claims in the South and East China Seas (and, to a lesser extent, toward India's Arunachal Pradesh). Beijing defines its 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as a security zone with a right to exclude naval and air forces deemed prejudicial to its security. In 2001, a Chinese jet fighter sliced off the nose of a United States Navy EP-3 surveillance aircraft, which was operating some 70 miles off Hainan over what most of the world (but not Beijing) defines as international waters. Shooting over the Daiyu/Senkaku Islands could start with Japan any time.

The 2008 financial meltdown—which seemed to show the United States as economically weak, politically paralyzed, and strategically foolish in Iraq and Afghanistan—emboldened both Russia and China. China especially saw itself in the ascendancy and took 2008, when it grandly hosted the Olympics, as time to abandon hide-and-bide. Putin tried to showcase a modern, confident Russia with \$51 billion spent on the 2014 Winter Olympics, but it was soon overshadowed by human rights and Ukrainian political problems. Beijing's and Moscow's perceptions are premature, as the United States is far from washed up, and Russia and China face serious economic, political, ethnic, and strategic challenges.

In sum, post-Cold War US relations with Russia and China have never been simple or smooth. They appeared tolerable but have been deteriorating for years. Moscow and Beijing never abandoned the "inherent bad faith" model of the Cold War. They always suspected US motives and still do. Moscow and Beijing harshly criticized their recent United States ambassadors, Michael McFaul and Gary Locke respectively, something rare in diplomacy that indicates deep hostility and cannot be resolved by reset buttons.

The Limits of Sino-Russian Alliance

The Sino-Soviet relationship during the Cold War was never smooth sailing. We tended to see the two as more unified than they were. Stalin—who knew little of the outside world, and what he knew

was wrong—continually misadvised the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Mao received practically no instructions or approval from Stalin and won power in 1949 by ignoring Stalin.

Khrushchev's 1956 anti-Stalin speech triggered the Sino-Soviet split. Mao denounced Khrushchev as a "revisionist" and in 1958 launched his destructive Great Leap Forward, wherein some 36-45 million Chinese starved to death. Exasperated at Mao's rejection of the Soviet economic path, Moscow withdrew its extensive aid, technicians, and plans from China in 1960, bringing the Sino-Soviet split into the open. The situation got worse with China's first nuke in 1964. The Sino-Soviet alliance really lasted only ten years, 1950-60. We reified a "Sino-Soviet bloc" that had many cracks. This time, let us look more closely.

The former Soviet republics of Central Asia—the five "stans"—now do more business with China than with Russia. The Kremlin cannot like the economic reorientation of what had been part of tsarist Russia since the nineteenth century, taken to block China from expanding west of the Pamir Mountains. Now Putin faces this problem.

Siberia—actually, Russia as a whole—is depopulating.¹ Many settlers to Siberia (including the adjacent Far Eastern District that fronts the Pacific) have retreated back to European Russia. The timber and minerals of Siberia and the Far East are irresistible raw materials for resource-hungry China. Lacking sufficient Russian manpower, Russia lets Chinese enterprises exploit these resources.

Sino-Russian rivalry over southern portions of Siberia, especially the maritime region, began in the seventeenth century as tsarist expeditions filled in the empire to the Pacific. In the nineteenth century, tsarist Russia fantasized that the Amur, a large river flowing into the Pacific, could become Russia's Mississippi, a corridor for Siberian products to the outside world. China had claims to the region, but the Manchus lacked military power and gave up nearly a quarter million square miles to Russia in the 1858 Treaty of Aigun, one of what Beijing still bitterly calls the "unequal treaties."

A shrinking Russian population and growing Chinese presence may awaken thoughts in Beijing that Aigun might be altered. Russia's seizure of Crimea in 2014 may prompt China to ask if they cannot do the same. Primorsky Krai (capital: Vladivostok) is the finger of Russian territory that separates China's Heilongjiang from the Sea of Japan. A Chinese shipping corridor through Primorsky Krai would boost the economic development of northeast China.

Moscow will not gladly become a mere resource provider and junior partner to China, but their different growth rates point that way. China's economy in 2013 grew at 7.6 percent a year, Russia's at 1.3 percent.² Already China's is the world's second largest economy, soon to

1 Russia's population declined alarmingly in the 1990s and 2000s, but turned around by 2012 as births increased and ethnic Russians immigrated from the newly independent former Soviet republics. *UN Development Report 2013*, 194, estimates annual decline at 0.4 percent from 2000 to 2005, but improving to an estimated annual decline of 0.1 percent from 2010 to 2015. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 added 2 million people to Russia's 142.5 million.

2 *CIA World Factbook*, March 11, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html>

overtake the United States. Russia—behind Germany and barely ahead of Brazil—will likely slip further behind.

Corruption: The Achilles Heel

Corruption in most Communist lands was pervasive but minor, limited by the statist system to a few rubles or yuan. With the means of production in state hands, industries could not be hijacked. With currencies unconvertible, few funds could be hidden abroad. The shift to market economies opened the gates to corruption, which grows at the interface of the public and private sectors. Businesses need permits, licenses, and loans from officials who demand kickbacks. Russians and Chinese stash billions of dollars, many of them ill-gained, in accounts and properties abroad through Cyprus banks, Hong Kong corporations, and Macau casinos.

Capital flight indicates corrupt governments that seize or unfairly tax and jail capitalists. Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index ranges from 100 for squeaky clean to 1 for totally dirty. The Scandinavian countries rank at the top, at around 90; the United States, Japan, and France in the 70s; and Afghanistan, North Korea, and Somalia at the bottom, below 10. In 2013, TI awarded China 40, Russia 28, and Ukraine 25.³

Major corruption and capital flight indicate low legitimacy. Another indicator: huge police forces, as in both Russia and China. Corruption has sparked the overthrow of several governments, including Tunisia, Egypt, and Ukraine. The Kremlin and Zhongnanhai know and fear this, but corruption is hard to uproot because they need the corrupt officials to run the country. If you jail all your helpers, you will be helpless. The CCP's Central Committee for Discipline Inspection busts a few crooked cadres, seldom at the highest levels. Russia pays no attention to corruption among its Putin-appointed *siloviki* (strong men), who have become very wealthy running state-connected enterprises. Corruption breeds a cynical political culture in which citizens obey but with little enthusiasm. This plays to our long-term advantage.

A New Strategy for a New Cold War

- Suspend loose talk of military confrontation, which leads to push back and rigid positions.
- Evaluate which is the bigger long-term threat, Russia or China. Treat the lesser with some forbearance, emphasizing diplomacy, and the greater with firmness, emphasizing economics and military preparedness.
- Do not attempt to revive NATO and to pivot to Asia; pick one. First, the US budget will not support both. More importantly, leaning on both adversaries simultaneously pushes them together. If we get tough on China, go lighter on Russia, and vice-versa.
- Prepare intellectually but quietly for the possibility that in a few years this emphasis could reverse. Eventually, Russia could turn from China

³ Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2013*, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2013/results>

to us.

- Do not build expensive new weapons systems for fighting the old Cold War. Instead, maintain compact but trained, ready, and agile armed forces to respond to current threats.
- Do not occupy another country. Getting bogged down weakens us and allows our adversaries to portray us as global hegemonists. American public opinion and the federal budget will not sustain long overseas deployments.
- Refrain from unilateral actions; they isolate us. Allies are politically necessary, even if we carry the heaviest military burdens.
- Try to revitalize NATO but do not be too disappointed if Europe stays divided and negative.
- Seek energy self-sufficiency so that we import little oil but export liquid natural gas to Europe to offset Russian threats to cut deliveries. The readiness of non-Russian natural-gas exporters to expand into the lucrative European market could persuade Russia to maintain its gas exports.

In sum, US strategists must avoid the diplomatic and military rigidity we fell into during the Cold War. Patience and economics tipped the balance in our favor and will do so again.

Options for Avoiding Counterinsurgencies

David H. Ucko and Robert C. Egnell

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ABSTRACT: How can the West continue to shape international order without over-committing itself to ruinous and ambiguous operations on the scale of Iraq and Afghanistan? This article addresses this question by examining the failures of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, and by outlining three alternatives for future engagements: the Libya model, the indirect approach, and contingency operations in support of multilateral organizations. Each presents unique possibilities, but the imperative for strategic clarity and commitment is consistent.

By December 2014, the large-scale Western military effort in Afghanistan will be over, ending more than a decade of direct intervention in that country and Iraq. A page is being turned in the history of warfare and, as most recognize, there is a need to take stock of the diverse but often painful experiences of the past, and to translate these into appropriate lessons for future interventions.

That the recent campaigns, despite substantial investment, have yielded such limited results is difficult to accept. Yet denial will not prepare us for the future. Indeed, if the West is to remain in the business of shaping global affairs, sometimes by force of arms, it must resolve the contradictions raised by its recent campaigns.¹ Most pressingly, it seems, the West wants the rights that go along with global leadership, but not the responsibilities and costs. How can we bridge this gap? How can the West sustain its contribution to a very particular international order, without falling into the pitfalls that characterized the last decade? Creative solutions are urgently needed.

This article examines three such solutions in light of the failures of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. These alternate approaches provide more limited applications of force and more modest roles. Recent history suggests that—within key contexts and preconditions—such approaches can be successful.

The Challenges in Afghanistan

An important first step to understanding the challenges faced in Afghanistan is to broaden the scope of analysis beyond the mere conduct of operations. Many of the mistakes in Afghanistan were strategic and, therefore, had little to do with counterinsurgency. These include the creation of a highly centralized form of governance, the wasted opportunities provided by the fall of the Taliban, the massive diversion caused by the war in Iraq, and the decision to expand the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF's) area of operations beyond Kabul without committing a fraction of the resources necessary for security

¹ For a cogent list of areas of enquiry, see Francis G. Hoffman, "Learning Large Lessons from Small Wars," *War on the Rocks*, February 5, 2014, <http://warontherocks.com/2014/02/learning-large-lessons-from-small-wars/>.

and stability. Underlying these missteps was the inability of international allies to establish common political and strategic aims.

The campaign was defined by three separate and poorly coordinated efforts: the US-led counterterrorism effort of Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led ISAF effort to provide security and to enable the third mission, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), a UN effort devoted to political and economic development. On one side of the spectrum, Afghanistan was a narrow exercise in counterterrorism; on the other, it was statebuilding aimed at establishing democracy, gender equality, and human rights. Rather than a propitious division of labor, the broad spectrum of aims provided the West with the false comfort of “doing it all,” all at once, and with little need for prioritization. Tensions between competing interests were glossed over, but became strikingly apparent with NATO’s expansion beyond Kabul and the steady deterioration of security thereafter. The bloodshed deepened strategic divisions, both between and within individual governments.

In a context where victory was not really a relevant concept, the lack of political and strategic direction had serious consequences. Most importantly, it thwarted the essential process of balancing ends, ways, and means, and the mismatches therein which became increasingly obvious. Security worsened and the United States, having “discovered counterinsurgency” in Iraq, was called upon to rescue the effort. Counterinsurgency was seen as the solution to a strategic problem.² However, as an operational approach, it could not possibly provide the answer. The fact that the launch of the “Surge” and the switch to population-centric counterinsurgency coincided with the first talk of withdrawal from Afghanistan clearly did not help.

Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan

Theories and concepts should be used to make sense of a complex reality and to support the dynamic process of analysis, decisionmaking, and implementation. This is not just an intellectual exercise; the concepts we use have an impact on how we interpret the conflict, prioritize our resources, and conduct operations. Selecting a concept, or a term (like counterinsurgency), requires great care: ideally, it should help us understand the true nature of the problem, and how best to deal with it.

How does counterinsurgency measure up? The concept has been useful in moving many armed forces from an exclusive focus on conventional warfare, yet in itself, the idea of counterinsurgency has served better as an antithesis to past pathologies than as a prescriptive guide for ongoing campaigns. In Afghanistan, for several reasons, the introduction of a counterinsurgency framework did not help us understand the true nature of the problem or how to reach our aims.

The first reason stems from the misinterpretation and overgeneralization of lessons from past counterinsurgency campaigns. Historians and military thinkers often stress the limited generalizability of operational approaches from one context to the next. One would, therefore, assume that when a colonial policing approach was revived to support

² Hew Strachan, “Strategy or Alibi? Obama, McChrystal and the Operational Level of War,” *Survival* 52, no. 5 (2010): 168.

the state-building campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, care would be taken to appreciate the differences separating these two worlds. Yet such analysis was all too rare.

One result of this rather problematic reading of history was the exaggeration of the “hearts and minds” aspect of operations, and the neglect of often equally important coercive components.³ Much of the emerging wisdom was based on polished historical accounts of past campaigns that were never critically examined. Instead, a liberal 21st century filter was applied that simply reinforced preexisting biases. In fact, collective punishment, executions, and forced population movements are but a few examples of past tactics, employed even in the most revered yet academically abused campaign—Malaya. Much of this scholarship and pop history was benignly intended to reverse the prior over-reliance on military force. Since then, the pendulum has swung from one extreme to the other and it will continue to do so lest greater historical rigor is applied.⁴

There are also key contextual differences to grapple with. Past counterinsurgency operations took place as “internal” challenges within empires.⁵ Today, the West engages these challenges as part of a coalition and in support of weak yet legally sovereign and fully independent states. Despite some room for divergence, contemporary counterinsurgency doctrine still presumes a sufficient harmony of interests between intervening and host-nation governments, or at least an ability to push the latter toward the “correct” course of action. Actual practice provides a more sobering perspective. In Iraq, institutions either collapsed through war or were dismantled through coalition decree, leading to the infiltration of sectarian elements into positions of central power and a government whose interests often ran counter to those of the intervening coalition. In Afghanistan, the counterinsurgency campaign confronted a deeply dysfunctional state bureaucracy and a NATO headquarters that lacked the capacity and resources to run anything but the security aspects of operations. In both campaigns, difficulties with host-nation governments were compounded by differences among coalition partners regarding approach, commitment, and contributions.

A further change has already been hinted at: the availability and competence of civilian means. The strategic intent in Iraq and Afghanistan required substantial civilian participation, large and capable enough to compensate for in-state weaknesses. This resource was at the disposal of past empires in the form of colonial administrations with local experience and understanding, and local police forces that could maintain order.⁶ Today, the political and civilian components of counterinsurgency are tremendously under-developed, despite efforts like the Stabilization Unit in the United Kingdom and the ill-fated Office of the

3 Paul Dixon, “‘Hearts and Minds?’ British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (June 2009).

4 For an elaboration of this point, see David H. Ucko and Robert Egnell, *Counterinsurgency in Crisis: Britain and the Challenges of Modern Warfare* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 19–44.

5 John Mackinlay made this point already in 1997. See John Mackinlay, “War lords,” *RUSI Journal* 143, no. 2 (1998): 25. It does not follow that historical counterinsurgency campaigns are entirely irrelevant, as David French notes, the discontinuity can also be exaggerated. See David French, *The British Way in Counter-Insurgency 1945–1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 252–253.

6 See for example I.A. Rigden, *The British Approach to Counter-Insurgency: Myths, Realities and Strategic Challenges*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2008), 13; Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping* (London: Frank Cass, 1971).

Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) within the United States. This deficiency has caused a distinct mismatch between ambitions and resources.

Attempting to transplant past counterinsurgency approaches onto contemporary state-building efforts also risks neglecting the essentially conservative nature of counterinsurgency. The concept of counterinsurgency presumes that the problem at hand is an insurgency that challenges the status quo. While successful counterinsurgency campaigns have often involved certain political concessions, counterinsurgency operations are predicated on the survival of the state or preemption of violent change through peaceful liberalization. However, this description hardly fits the role played by the Kabul regime. Nor is it clear that the defeat of the Taliban and other groups would really meet Western strategic aims or even lead to stability. The question is whether “the insurgency” was the issue? Or, was it a symptom of more profound problems in the establishment of the Afghan state, its evolution, and the shortcomings of Western intervention in the regional context in which all this has played out?

Given the fact that external coalitions toppled the existing regimes and instigated revolutionary societal changes in both Iraq and Afghanistan, it is a stretch to argue we were merely protecting or even reforming the status quo. Instead, the international community was the true revolutionary agent of change, and branding its efforts as counterinsurgency led us to misunderstand the actual roles of different actors within those respective societies, not least our own. Most critically, it reveals an all-too militaristic and optimistic view of what it takes to transform societies.⁷

The Way Ahead

Whether or not counterinsurgency ever provided an appropriate lens through which to understand the security challenges presented by failing states, it has proved too costly—politically, financially, and in blood. Reaction to this realization has, to date, been far from impressive. Much of it has been dominated by slogans—“no more Iraqs,” “no more Afghanistans,” “counterinsurgency is dead”—none of which is particularly helpful so long as global interests are the rule. For sure, no one wants to repeat such campaigns, but neither the Iraq war nor the Afghan war began as counterinsurgencies. Instead, it was precisely our refusal to anticipate and prepare for the complexity of war and the enemy’s ability to adapt that produced these problems. Nothing here condemns us to endless encores of similar campaigns, but neither can we return to the military thinking that dominated before them: a vision of war as an apolitical, militarily decisive, and technologically driven phenomenon, unfolding on an isolated battlefield. To do better in the future, we must think more creatively about how to engage with war’s complexity and political essence, in order to shape global security affairs yet *without* repeating the traumas of the last decade. Recent history suggests three options for future interventions: the Libya model, the indirect approach, and contingency operations in support of regional and international

⁷ For a longer version of this argument, see Robert Egnell, “A Western Insurgency in Afghanistan,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2013): 8-14.

organizations. These three models in turn point to obvious areas of investment, both intellectually and in terms of resources; yet, while helpful, all are also reliant on key conditions and capabilities. Most critically, each requires far greater clarity about the nature and demands of expeditionary operations, their typical duration, and the challenges of operating as one member of a larger team.

The Libya Model

Following weeks of civil war in Libya in 2011, NATO's North Atlantic Council decided that some sort of military intervention was needed. On 19 March, NATO commenced its Operation Unified Protector by launching Tomahawk missiles and air sorties at government targets. The aims of the operation, set by the UN Security Council, included the establishment of a no-fly zone, the protection of civilians, and the enforcement of an arms embargo. The unofficial aim, it was speculated, was regime change in favor of the National Transitional Council (NTC)—the Libyan resistance movement established during the war.

Operating in coordination with NTC but without ever deploying regular ground forces, NATO and coalition partners assisted in the gradual defeat of the Libyan government. Most of the support came from the air, with aircraft targeting vital government forces and installations. The war raged until 20 October 2011, when, during the battle of Sirte, NTC forces located Qaddafi and beat him to death. Despite NTC requests that NATO stay until the end of the year, the operation was formally terminated the following week. In the campaign's aftermath, NTC set up a new government, paved the way for elections, and sought to establish and maintain a level of relative security.

Western intervention in Libya in 2011 has been portrayed as a useful contrast to the costly and drawn-out campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Airpower expert Christina Goulter argued:

[A]fter nearly a decade of counter-insurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, . . . OUP proved that an air campaign, focused and driven by ISR [intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance], can win a war when combined effectively with irregular ground forces.⁸

Yet, in a sense, the Libya campaign simply repeated the so-called Afghan Model, applied during the initial combat phase of Operation Enduring Freedom and lauded then, too, as a uniquely effective means of applying Western military might.⁹ Then as now, the model saw Western powers ply their advanced combat capabilities—precision-guided munitions in particular—in support of local ground forces, reinforced by a small number of special operations forces to ensure proper coordination. Going back further, the prototype for the approach was tested in the Balkan campaigns of the 1990s, in which NATO aircraft bombed targets from a risk-free altitude and let local allies (the Croat forces in Bosnia and the Kosovo Liberation Army in Kosovo) conduct ground operations.

8 Christina Goulter, "Ellamy: The UK Air Power Contribution to Operation Unified Protector." Draft paper in RAND study on Operation Unified Protector, Santa Monica, Calif (Forthcoming 2014), 139

9 See Stephen Biddle, "Allies, Airpower, and Modern Warfare: The Afghan Model in Afghanistan and Iraq," *International Security* 30, no. 3 (Winter 2005–06): 161–76.

The Libya model presents undeniable advantages. First, the approach kept costs to a fraction of those accrued in Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, as in the NATO-led air campaign over Kosovo, coalition and civilian casualties were minimal; again, NATO intervened without incurring a single fatality. Third, although some ambiguity surrounded the actual aims in Libya, the results of the intervention appeared—at first blush at least—far more promising than those expected from Afghanistan following NATO’s withdrawal.

These advantages notwithstanding, it is critical to acknowledge the preconditions that allowed the Libya model to be effective. Indeed, the campaign was in many ways exceptional, undermining its potential as a precedent. First, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi’s lack of subtlety, in combination with the backdrop of democratic revolutions in Northern Africa, provided the campaign with unprecedented international support—a sense of urgency to “do something.” From then on, much of the war was fought in the desert, greatly facilitating aerial bombardment. There was also a clear opposition to Gaddafi in the NTC and the rebel troops that served as proxies. Moreover, the geographic location, at the very borders of Europe, facilitated both basing and logistics. These conditions will not always obtain.

Going further, and risking a cliché, the enemy has a vote. Even in Libya, government forces sought to exploit NATO’s strategic and tactical preferences. Having initially operated in large regular units across the desert, government forces adapted following the initial air attacks. As Brigadier Ben Barry explains, Gaddafi’s forces “dispersed heavy weapons in populated areas and made extensive use of armed 4x4 vehicles, similar to those used by the rebels,” something that “greatly complicated NATO’s ability to identify and attack them.”¹⁰ Clearly, such adaptation came too late, yet future adversaries are likely to be more wily, severely limiting the viability of winning wars from the skies.

Finally, it is worth considering the political consequences of the limited ownership inherent in this approach. The model inevitably empowers a local proxy. The key question, therefore, is what happens after the aerial bombardment has stopped, when the model is put back on the shelf, and it is time to establish a new political accommodation that is both desirable and stable. These days, the Afghan war is hardly remembered for the initial successes of the “Afghan Model”—indeed it was precisely the political fall-out of the Taliban’s toppling that bedeviled subsequent efforts at stabilization. Similarly, although successful in toppling the Gaddafi regime, the Libyan intervention unleashed destabilizing forces within Libya and regionally. In Libya, “factional, regional, tribal and ideological divisions” have marked the three years since the revolution: the “central government, far outgunned by powerful local militias, holds little sway beyond its offices.”¹¹ Regionally, fighters and weapons have spread as far as Mali and Syria, destabilizing the already fragile states in the region.¹² The implication is not that NATO should have used ground troops in Libya, but rather that the Libya model must not be mistaken for more than it is: it does not render intervention easy,

10 Ben Barry, “Libya’s Lessons,” *Survival* 53, no. 5 (2011): 6.

11 “Little to celebrate,” *The Economist*, February 22, 2014.

12 UN Security Council’s Group of Experts, “Final report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) concerning Libya,” S/2013/99, March 20, 2012, 24–38.

but simply offloads the responsibility for political consolidation onto others, with whom we must learn to work far more effectively.

The Indirect Approach

In the last eight years, the US military has experienced a revolution in its understanding of counterinsurgency. When the US Army and Marine Corps published their counterinsurgency manual in December 2006, the term denoted, almost exclusively, the deployment of large armed formations to provide security for the host-nation population and assume responsibility for various military and civilian tasks.¹³ As the doctrine was written while 144,000 US troops were actively involved in an insurgency in Iraq, this focus on the “direct” approach to counterinsurgency was appropriate. Even then, the manual was criticized for not acknowledging alternative approaches and this criticism has become far more vocal with the perceived failure of the direct approach in Afghanistan. The dominant argument now is that for strategic, political, and financial reasons, outcomes must be achieved “indirectly,” by relying on the structures and capabilities of the host-nation and thereby do more with less. A key precedent for this approach is the US advisory mission in El Salvador in the 1980s, which is credited with the defeat of the Farabundi Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The British campaign in Dhofar, from 1962 to 1976, provides a second, increasingly cited, precedent, since Britain relied on the armed forces of the host-nation government along with sub-state militias to achieve its aims there. A more recent case is the US military’s assistance of Colombia in its campaign against the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). This case provides the perfect foil for the direct interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan: they overlapped in time, but whereas the direct engagements were ruinously expensive, politically costly, and ambiguous in their outcome, the weakening of FARC under President Alvaro Uribe is a counterinsurgency success story.¹⁴ Similarly, the US special operations forces-led efforts to assist the Philippines government against the Abu Sayaff Group stands out as a low-cost, low-profile yet fairly successful intervention, at least in comparative terms.¹⁵

Proponents commonly point to five key advantages. First, the indirect approach puts local forces in the lead and thereby avoids many of the linguistic and cultural hurdles encountered by foreign troops. Second, by keeping the response local, the counterinsurgency campaign remains untarnished by the stigma of foreign occupation. Third, putting local forces in the lead also reduces the political costs for the intervening government. Fourth, these interventions are also commonly less costly financially—a corollary of the smaller footprint.¹⁶ Fifth, and most fundamentally, the indirect approach puts the local government in charge

13 U.S. Department of the Army and United States Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24 MCWP 3-33.5 (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, December 2006).

14 Thomas Marks, *Colombian Army Adaptation to FARC* (Carlisle, PA: The Strategic Studies Institute, 2002).

15 Gregory Wilson, “Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation: OEF-Philippines and The Indirect Approach,” *Military Review* 86, no. 6 (Nov-Dec 2006): 2-12.

16 As Fernando Luján points out, “since the approval of Plan Colombia in 1999, the cost to run the entire program – including all military and civilian assistance – has roughly equaled the cost of running the Iraq or Afghanistan war for a single month during the surge.” See Major Fernando Luján, “Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention,” *Voices from the Field* (Center for a New American Security, March 2013), 8.

for solving what is, after all, its problem: it puts the onus of the solution on local ownership and responsibility.

The indirect approach rightly recognizes the limits on what external powers can achieve by themselves in a foreign land, particularly one they scarcely understand. The focus on partnerships also touches on the essence of expeditionary counterinsurgency: the need to maintain host-nation legitimacy, build capacity, and engage in a manner that is sustainable. While the notion that “small is beautiful”—that indirect deployments make more sense—is largely correct, it is dangerous to stop the analysis at this point. Indeed, the indirect approach, like counterinsurgency or interventions of any type, comprises severe challenges that must be fully understood.

Three caveats stand out as critical. First, recent experience indicates that advising local security forces is an art in itself. There is a common misconception that because the advisory approach puts the local government and its security forces in the lead, the intervening power is somehow shielded from the complexity otherwise typical of counterinsurgency. However, as experience shows, advisory work is, in fact, highly challenging, requiring specific skills and capacities. Two problems are historically consistent: ensuring the professionalization of the host-nation security force and that it uses what it learns in ways that are accountable and in keeping with mission objectives. In El Salvador, the cap on deploying a maximum of 55 US advisors and the ban against joint operations with the El Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) undermined these goals. Specifically, US advisers lacked both leverage and oversight and relied on ESAF being willing and able to follow the guidance provided. Neither of these conditions obtained. Although the advisory campaign was vital for regime survival in the early phase of the war, the transition for peace a decade later had more to do with the passing of the Cold War and other domestic factors than the marvels of the indirect approach.¹⁷

The problems of oversight and leverage resurfaced when US troops sought to establish security forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. A consistent finding from these theaters is that the effectiveness of advisory missions is best guaranteed by “partnering” with local security forces: living and operating with them, day and night, from the same base and streets. Yet the implications of this requirement are significant: they call for specific and extensive preparation, including language training and cultural awareness. Notwithstanding various efforts to boost regional expertise, it is uncertain whether Western troops are adequately prepared for this task. Pointing to special operations forces as a solution, given their specialized skills, is insufficient. Fewer in number and not easily mass produced, they lack the capacity to undertake large-scale advisory missions. To be sure, successful advisory efforts are rarely light in troop numbers: a mere 55 advisers may have deployed to El Salvador, but it is a very small country, in close proximity to the United States where additional training was provided and, even then, the personnel cap and other restrictions actually undermined the proper prosecution of the campaign. To do better, sufficient advisors are required to accompany each unit being trained.

17 David H. Ucko, “Counterinsurgency in El Salvador: The Lessons and Limits of the Indirect Approach,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 24, no. 4 (2013).

Therefore, the indirect approach cannot, must not, be seen as “counterinsurgency on the cheap.” If partnering is indeed required, advisory missions will in all cases require sustained buy-in—institutionally to create the capabilities, and politically to allow troops to operate from the front line over protracted periods. As seen in Afghanistan, it is often the advisors themselves who become the target so as to sever the critical link that partnering provides.

Another consideration for the application of the indirect approach is the need for a partner. In Colombia, the Philippines, and most other settings where the indirect approach is said to have worked, the advisors operated alongside an established government and military. Colombia, for example, has a long record of elected civilian governance and a strong military. By contrast, it is questionable whether the indirect approach would have worked in Afghanistan in 2001, in Iraq in 2003, or in similar settings. This uncertainty clearly restricts the applicability of this approach.

Even where the central state is extant and somewhat competent, thorny issues of legitimacy and strategy loom large. In the quest to defeat an insurgency, the professionalization of a country’s armed forces or security sector is but one part of a broader puzzle. David Galula’s admonition that counterinsurgency is 80 percent political and only 20 percent military is now a cliché, but its implications have not been grasped.¹⁸ While professional security forces are critical, they are not in themselves strategically decisive: much depends on the *political objectives* their operations serve. Where this strategy is misguided or altogether absent, security operations have little or no meaning. By analogy, it serves no purpose sharpening the scalpel if the surgeon operating is drunk.

This point is critical, as it is typically at the *political* level that the host-nation partnership will fray. Partners are more willing to accept military aid and assistance than to undergo the political or social reforms deemed necessary for success. Governments facing an insurgency almost by definition suffer from some legitimacy deficit—hence the armed resistance. It is not uncommon that they are more concerned with retaining power and privilege than with undercutting dissent through effective reform. The resultant dilemma for counterinsurgency advisers is formidable. In Dhofar, the solution to Said bin Taimur’s refusal to reform was a military coup carried out by his own son and with the support of the British government. Within 24 hours, various liberalizing measures were passed, giving political meaning to the armed forces’ security operations and producing the happy outcome for which the campaign is known.¹⁹ Yet, for a less happy precedent, consider the advisory years in Vietnam (1950–65) and the US decision to remove the recalcitrant Ngo Dinh Diem, a desperate measure that opened the door to sending more US ground troops in 1965. In other words, nothing within the indirect approach removes the need for suasion and compulsion—diplomatic tasks where the West under-performs. This requirement once again limits what we can expect to achieve from the indirect approach. Much like any other

18 David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (London: Pall Mall, 1964), 89.

19 Ian F.W. Beckett, “The British Counterinsurgency Campaign in Dhofar 1965–1975,” in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, ed. Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008), 175–190.

model of intervention, it must be tailored to specific circumstances and support a sound strategy.

Contingency Operations

Another means of burden sharing is by limiting the role of Western forces and ensuring residual tasks are carried out by international, regional, or local partners. The role played here might entail the provision of quick-reaction forces to assist a peace operation or protect it from a sudden crisis. Such a “contingency operation” would in principle be similar to that played by the British military during its intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000 or by the French-led coalition force in Operation Artemis in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2003. The benefit here is that in assisting a preexisting mission, the intervening power is allowed to focus on just one phase of the campaign, thereby limiting its exposure and risk. Yet by the same token the effectiveness of these interventions also relies on the ability to transfer demanding follow-on tasks to competent actors with greater staying power.

Operation Artemis is a cautionary tale. In response to the destabilization of eastern DRC, a French-led Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF) deployed to Bunia to help strengthen security and rescue the local UN peacekeeping mission. Per the conditions tied to its deployment, IEMF spent three months in Bunia, during which time it expelled militia elements and reestablished security. It then handed over responsibility to the newly created UN “Ituri Brigade,” a 5,000-strong unit. On these merits, the operation was a success. Yet the IEMF’s limited mandate, temporally and geographically, meant that its effects were transient. As a later UN report found, “The strict insistence on the very limited area of operations—Bunia—merely pushed the problem of violent aggression against civilians beyond the environs of the town, where atrocities continued.”²⁰ Moreover, despite the UN force’s expansion, it remained undermanned and ill-equipped to sustain the gains of the intervention, greatly undermining its longer-term significance.²¹

The British military has enjoyed successes with “contingency operations,” illustrating the value of these types of interventions but also what they typically require. Initially deployed in Sierra Leone in 2000 to evacuate Westerners from the war-torn country, General David Richards saw an opportunity to side directly with the Freetown government against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). British forces were involved in a number of confrontations against the RUF and maintained a presence off-shore to demonstrate resolve. The combat phase ended quickly but, notably, the British force then supported, trained, and reinforced Sierra Leone’s army and the local UN peacekeeping mission, so the country’s newfound stability could be sustained. Even after, Britain maintained a 140-strong force in Sierra Leone to advise the army and has remained one of the country’s greatest bilateral donors of aid.²²

20 Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (Military Division), “Operation Artemis: The Lessons of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force” (New York: UN Department for Peace Keeping Operations, October 2004), 14.

21 Mats Berdal, *Building Peace After War* (Abingdon: Routledge for International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009), 112.

22 *Ibid.*, 120.

Here, too, the results are far from incontestable. Nonetheless, the point is clear: the effectiveness of military force depended on, *inter alia*, coordinated and properly resourced follow-up actions. Civil–military cooperation and the ability to raise the competence of local and international forces to enable a smooth transition were also key. In that sense, the use of Western troops on contingency operations calls for many of the same capabilities as those needed for the indirect approach, which again highlights this area as requiring more urgent attention.

Conclusion

A major factor behind the relative success in Sierra Leone was the auspicious timing of the intervention. The role of Guinea and local defense forces, the expansion of the UN mission, and general war weariness were all critical in achieving peace.²³ These factors do not devalue the British effort in Sierra Leone but raise an important point about knowing when to intervene. Such knowledge is a requirement for all modes of engagement discussed here. Simply put, interagency coordination, advisory skills, or carefully honed military capabilities will never suffice if the strategy underlying their use is unworkable or no conducive entry points have been found (or exist) for effective intervention.

What is needed, in part, is finer strategic thinking—the art of using what we have in ways to meet our desired goals at an acceptable cost. Yet at a deeper level, what is necessary is also a more sincere interest—across the relevant arms of government—in the lands, peoples, and contexts in which military operations are to be launched. Only by understanding the environment (its politics, history, terrain, and population) will outsiders ever discern the opportunities for more effective intervention: the potential partnerships, the contextual enablers, and the strengths and weaknesses of both friend and foe. In Sierra Leone, much came down to the initiative of the in-country commander. It would be hopeful to rely on similar improvisation in future engagements.

Another common thread is the emphasis on broader, multinational frameworks in which Western forces play but one part. At best, such cooperation brings legitimacy, shared capabilities, and greater capacity. Yet fighting with allies is not easy. Separate “partners” enter the fray with greatly varying levels of commitment and for disparate (sometimes entirely wrong-headed) reasons. This is a challenge for even the strongest of contributors. Indeed, it is necessary to ask, before we consider any of the options outlined above, why it is that we intervene in the first place and how convincingly such efforts are tied to our national interest. Limited investment in the relevant instruments and the lack of clear thinking going into these endeavors certainly suggest a low overall priority. So, in our search for viable models of intervention, we must ensure that we select our approach on the basis of strategic soundness, not because it presents the dubious promise of an “easy war.” These interventions are never easy, and will only be made much harder if we mistake them as such.

²³ David Keen, *Conflict and collusion in Sierra Leone* (New York: James Currey/Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 267–73.

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Rethinking Small-Footprint Interventions

Stephen Watts and Stephanie Pezard

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ABSTRACT: This article reexamines the practices of small-footprint military interventions in light of the concept of “tipping points” as conceived by Thomas C. Schelling. If the concept is accurate, it can improve how we conduct such interventions.

Popular accounts of civil wars and insurgencies are filled with references to “windows of opportunity” and “tipping points”—moments in time when the dynamics of a conflict are supposedly shifting in ways that may portend a decisive change in a war’s trajectory. These concepts have been used in mainstream media accounts, professional journals, and special reports to explain recent events in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Syria, and elsewhere.

If windows of opportunity and tipping points accurately describe critical junctures in conflicts and can be identified either ahead of time or as they occur (rather than solely through the benefit of hindsight), the policy implications are substantial. After the painful experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States is committed to avoiding large-scale entanglements in other nations’ internal conflicts, seeking instead to “develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives.”¹ Unfortunately, US military doctrine and numerous other sources make clear that decisive intervention in civil wars and insurgencies typically is a manpower-intensive and costly endeavor.² If there are particular moments in time when a conflict is at a critical turning point, it may be possible for small-scale interjections of external forces to have disproportionately large effects. Conversely, if there are only short-lived opportunities in which the course of a conflict might be turned without a massive commitment of resources, then that knowledge might help the United States better identify when it should avoid intervention.

Despite the widespread appeal of concepts like windows of opportunity and tipping points to explain the trajectories of civil wars around the globe, there have been few attempts to apply them in a systematic way and even fewer efforts to explain their implications for foreign military intervention.³ As they are typically used, the terms do not distinguish between simple changes in a conflict’s trajectory—potentially fleeting and insignificant—and more meaningful junctures.

1 US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, January 2012), 3.

2 US Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual (FM) 3-24 (December 2006); James T. Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” *Parameters* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 59–69.

3 For exceptions, see Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, MG-965-MCIA, 2010); Gordon H. McCormick, Steven B. Horton, and Lauren A. Harrison, “Things Fall Apart: The Endgame Dynamics of Internal Wars,” *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 321–367; and I. William Zartman, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond,” in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, eds. Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2000).

This article explores the concept of a tipping point and its implications for America's reliance on low-cost, small-footprint approaches to stabilizing embattled partner governments. More specifically, the article asks two questions: Are there identifiable opportunities in the course of an insurgency in which even relatively small actions could help tilt the conflict decisively in favor of the government? And if so, how can the United States best take advantage of these opportunities?⁴

Tipping Points

The concept of tipping was first formalized by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Thomas Schelling.⁵ Tipping points are a subset of "critical mass" or "threshold" dynamics in which the behavior of a certain proportion of the population—a proportion that is different in every circumstance—causes others to behave in a similar manner, leading to cascading effects. Tipping point dynamics typically occur as an iterated process. In the first step, a "critical mass" or "threshold" number of people makes a particular decision—for instance, to participate in a protest against a regime. Their behavior, in turn, provides information that causes other people to act in a similar fashion. After witnesses of an anti-regime demonstration observe that the regime did not engage in violent repression, they may become emboldened to participate themselves.⁶ As more and more people make the same decision, pressures continue to mount on those who had initially opposed such behavior. Loyalists, for instance, might have preferred that a regime stay in place, but once most of their neighbors change loyalties, they may feel uncomfortable, or even unsafe, engaging in public support of the regime. This description of tipping points assumes that relatively small events can have disproportionately large consequences if they lead to the crossing of certain thresholds.⁷ The crossing of such a threshold may not be *necessary* to achieve a particular outcome (for example, the overthrow of a regime, which might collapse due to foreign invasion or other causes unrelated to tipping point dynamics), but it should be *sufficient*.

The concept of a "window of opportunity" has already been applied extensively to internal conflicts, particularly in the form of William Zartman's arguments about the "ripeness" of conflicts for negotiated settlements. Tipping points, on the other hand, have not seen a similarly sustained discussion, despite the fact that journalists, experts, and practitioners frequently invoke the concept to explain conflicts or argue for or against intervening in them.⁸ If tipping points truly are sufficient to propel a conflict toward one outcome or another, being

4 This discussion is entirely focused on efforts to secure an end to conflict *on terms favorable to the partner government*, rather than on efforts to topple foreign governments. Tipping point dynamics are likely to be very different in the case of efforts to overthrow other governments; see Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2002).

5 Thomas C. Schelling, *Micromotives and Macrobehavior* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), 99–102. This concept was popularized in Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2000).

6 Timur Kuran, "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics* 44, no. 1 (October 1991): 7–48.

7 Economists describe this situation as "increasing returns to scale." For a closely related discussion of increasing returns, see Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (June 2000): 251–267.

8 For partial exceptions see Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, and McCormick, Horton, and Harrison, "Things Fall Apart: The Endgame Dynamics of Internal Wars."

able to identify them reliably and to understand their implications for foreign intervention is perhaps even more important than understanding windows of opportunity. Conflicts may tip in a variety of ways: toward resolution (an end to large-scale violence), toward qualitative differences in the nature of a conflict (such as from political to more criminal forms of violence, or from predominantly ideological to ethnic or other communal ends), toward a new equilibrium at a higher or lower intensity of violence, or toward a change in geographic expanse (such as from cities into rural hinterlands or from containment within a single country to spillover throughout a region). Each of these changes has implications for American strategic interests. Those interests may be secured by tipping a conflict toward one outcome or another, such as by confining it to rural peripheries or by containing it within a single country. Of particular importance is the relationship between tipping points and conflict termination.

When Do Tipping Points Occur?

If tipping points can only be identified after the fact, when hindsight has made a particular course of events appear inevitable, then they are of little use to policymakers. While it is impossible to specify tipping points across a broad range of conflicts, previous work on the dynamics of war termination suggest several broad categories of events in which tipping points would most likely occur.

Belligerents will continue to fight so long as the expected returns (based on each party's perceptions of the balance of power) exceed the anticipated returns from negotiation. Consequently, tipping points should emerge from one of three sources: a change in the balance of power, a similar change in the expected benefits of peace, or new developments that significantly alter the parties' perceptions of either of the sources just discussed. The list of events provided below is only intended as a summary of the most commonly cited *potential* tipping points.

Changes in the Balance of Power

In order to fight, a belligerent requires people to take up arms and to provide support to the fighters, resources with which to fight (weapons, money, and so on), and an organization and leadership to connect the various elements of the struggle and give them purpose. Sufficient degradation of any of these factors might induce a tipping point in a conflict. More typically, a tipping point evolves when several of these factors interact with one another.

- **Resources.** One of the strongest predictors of a decisive turn in a war is the loss of foreign state sponsorship to one or more of the parties to the conflict, particularly if easily lootable natural resources are not readily available to compensate for the shortfall.⁹ Especially in those cases where an insurgency gained much of its support through material incentives (for example, cash payments, opportunities for looting), the loss of revenues may touch off a cascade of defections.¹⁰ At least

9 Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*; Stephen Watts, "Enforcing Democracy? Assessing the Linkages between Peace Operations and Post-Conflict Democratization," paper presented at Columbia University's International Politics Seminar, March 2009.

10 Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

a half-dozen cases of wars that terminated decisively in the post-Cold War era were tied either directly (for example, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, and Nicaragua) or indirectly (for example, Guatemala and South Africa) to the end of the Cold War and the elimination of the resources both superpowers had been directing to their proxies. The loss of markets for contraband can significantly weaken a faction, but it seldom is as decisive as the loss of state sponsorship due to the presence of alternative markets and the existence of other criminal opportunities (for example, kidnapping for ransom).¹¹

- **Organization and Leadership.** Without leaders and structures in place to guide fighters, an insurgency is no more than widespread mob violence. Disrupting a faction's organization can, therefore, have potentially decisive effects. Two of the most powerful means to disrupt an insurgency are attacks on the group's leadership and the creation of splits among different factions within an insurgency.¹² The capture of the leaders of the Shining Path movement in Peru (Abimeal Guzmán), the Kurdistan People's Party in Turkey (Abdullah Ocalan), and UNITA in Angola (Jonas Savimbi) are often cited as examples of successful "decapitation" that led to a rapid disintegration of movements that had previously been strong.¹³ Although evidence suggests that successful leadership targeting produces important short- to medium-term effects, the longer-term effects are less clear, particularly if the government fails to build on the opportunity.¹⁴
- **Recruitment.** Damage to an insurgency's resource base or organization may harm its recruitment efforts—either because they demonstrate the insurgency's weakness or limit its ability to reward and protect supporters. But other events may directly affect rebel recruitment. Particularly for insurgencies in which revolutionary or religious fervor or communal solidarity play a greater role in motivating insurgent participation than do immediate material incentives, major shifts in popular perception of "the narrative" of the conflict might have significant effects on recruitment. If a government is able to enact significant reforms, or it is able to protect authoritative figures who challenge the legitimacy of "warlords," the popular appeal of rebel leaders may erode. Attrition strategies may also represent a means to reach such a tipping point, but they usually require large-scale—and protracted—interventions and are likely to fail if the opposing side

11 The divergent trajectories of Mozambique and Angola in the 1990s are revealing. After the end of the Cold War, both countries lost superpower sponsorship for their warring factions. The ready availability of oil and so-called "conflict diamonds" in Angola, however, helped to substitute for superpower subsidies and permitted that conflict to continue for over a decade longer.

12 On the "decapitation" of insurgencies, see Patrick B. Johnston, "Does Decapitation Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Targeting in Counterinsurgency Campaigns," *International Security* 36, no. 4 (Spring 2012): 47–79. On offering incentives to split insurgencies, see Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (1966; reprint, Saint Petersburg, FL: Hailer Publishing, 2005).

13 Johnston, "Does Decapitation Work?" Michael Tiernay, "Killing Kony: Leadership Change and Civil War Termination," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2013).

14 See, for instance, Michael L. Burgoyne, "The Allure of Quick Victory: Lessons from Peru's Fight against Sendero Luminoso," *Military Review* (September–October 2010): 68–73.

shows exceptional cohesion and commitment.¹⁵

Changes in the Benefits of Peace

Changes in the costs of continued fighting are not the only way in which a war might take a decisive turn. Tipping points in a conflict might also arise from changes in the anticipated benefits of peace. Credible international peace operations to monitor and potentially enforce the implementation of a peace deal provide one of the most important means to make peace appear more attractive.¹⁶ The promise of economic assistance to make peace “pay” can also play an important role.¹⁷ Moreover, by inducing moderate factions to support peace, they may also facilitate military victory over the more extremist or criminal factions within an insurgency who are unwilling to accept a peace founded on compromise. Combining peace operations with offensive military operations designed to defeat “spoilers” can pose difficult challenges, but such a balancing act has been performed by international forces in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere.

Changes in Perceptions

Ultimately, what matters less than the costs of war or the benefits of peace is the parties’ *perceptions* of them. Systematically assessing the ways in which perceptions diverge from underlying realities is beyond the scope of this article. Numerous observers, however, emphasize two points in time at which perceptions of wars’ costs and benefits may shift in important ways.

First, the onset of war offers important information to the leadership of all sides. Wars are typically caused by misjudgments of other parties’ capabilities or intentions. Once violence escalates, leaders may quickly adjust their expectations. Wars may begin, for instance, when one party—either the government or insurgents—resorts to violence based on the expectation of a quick victory due to either the element of surprise or the expectation that the opposition will be unable to overcome internal divisions and quickly organize resistance. In such cases, if the initial onslaught is thwarted, the attacker may seek to defuse tensions rapidly rather than committing to a lengthy conflict. In cases of foreign military intervention, the initial days and months of a conflict may indelibly shape a population’s perception of the invader’s intentions, as in the concept of the “golden hour” used to explain the escalating violence in the months after the 2003 US intervention in Iraq.¹⁸

If a war is not defused in its very early stages, it will typically endure for an extended period as the warring parties accumulate information on the others’ capabilities and willingness to endure prolonged bloodshed. When neither side is able to defeat the other, the parties may eventually come to a common understanding of the costs of continued fighting

15 John E. Mueller, “The Search for the ‘Breaking Point’ in Vietnam: The Statistics of a Deadly Quarrel,” *International Studies Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (December 1980): 497–519.

16 Barbara F. Walter, “The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,” *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (Summer, 1997).

17 Carrie Manning and Monica Malbrough, “Bilateral Donors and Aid Conditionality in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: The Case of Mozambique,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, no. 1 (March, 2010): 143–169.

18 James Stephenson, *Losing the Golden Hour: An Insider’s View of Iraq’s Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007).

and the probabilities of success on the battlefield. At this point, William Zartman's "mutually hurting stalemate" is reached, potentially representing another juncture in the conflict at which events may turn decisively.

It is important to note that not all conflicts have clear tipping points. Identifiable tipping points on the path toward durable conflict termination are relatively uncommon in part because truly decisive outcomes in wars are rare. Many if not most conflicts do not end decisively. Approximately half or less of politically inclusive countries with weak state institutions, for instance, return to war within five years of the end of a conflict.¹⁹ Since insurgencies so frequently draw on existing social networks for recruiting, they retain a strong ability to reconstitute themselves even after suffering substantial setbacks.²⁰ Even conflicts that end decisively may have no identifiable tipping point; instead, they tend to come to an end through a gradual process of stalemate (as in the Northern Ireland conflict or Mali's civil war in the 1990s) or attrition (as in post-Soviet Russia's second Chechen war).

Small-Scale Interventions and Tipping the Balance

From a policy perspective, more interesting than the examples previously mentioned concerning wars in which tipping points are clearly identifiable, are cases that may have had potential tipping points but failed to "tip" in the government's favor. Is it possible for outsiders to influence outcomes at these critical moments? And if so, what might such policies look like?

The previous discussion suggests at least six mechanisms through which external interveners might use "small footprint" interventions to induce decisive changes in an internal conflict:

- **Early intervention.** Early intervention—seizing advantage of the so-called golden hour—may help tip conflict dynamics in at least a couple of ways. First, counterinsurgents can attempt to disrupt rebel organizations before they grow robust and resilient. Second, counterinsurgents can help to set both popular and insurgent perceptions of the government's will and ability to fight in the early days of the war, while expectations are still relatively fluid.
- **Resource interdiction.** As discussed previously, the end of state financing has often played a decisive role in conflicts. In most cases state support for insurgents has ended either due to diplomatic efforts or to factors internal to the state sponsor, but military operations can also play a role. NATO airstrikes, for instance, were one of the factors that led Serbia to threaten to eliminate support for Serbian militias in Bosnia, thus bringing the ethnic Serbs to the negotiating table.²¹ Military operations to interdict criminal trafficking are sub-

19 Stephen Watts et al., *Countering Others' Insurgencies: Understanding U.S. Small-Footprint Interventions in Local Context* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, RR-513-SRF, 2014).

20 For one revealing case study, see Maya M. Christensen and Mats Utas, "Mercenaries of Democracy: The 'Politricks' of Remobilized Combatants in the 2007 General Elections, Sierra Leone," *African Affairs* 107, no. 429 (2008): 515–539.

21 Although these airstrikes were one of the factors that led to the Dayton Accords, they were clearly only one factor among many, and they likely were not the most important one. For a skeptical view of the effectiveness of the airstrikes, see Office of Russian and European Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995*, Vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2002).

stantially more difficult, as the counternarcotics efforts in Colombia and Afghanistan have demonstrated. Typically, there are too many channels for contraband for military interdiction efforts to be decisive; however, there may be some exceptions. While contraband is highly mobile, markets are not. Cutting off insurgents from access to critical markets—as the United States did in the Battle of Sadr City and the Kenyans did by denying al Shabaab the markets and ports of Mogadishu and Kismayo in Somalia—can play important, if seldom truly decisive, roles.²² Where rebels are dependent on heavy weapons and armored vehicles—such as the Serbian militias in Bosnia—military operations may deny them the fuel they need to remain mobile.

- **Decapitation.** As discussed above, successfully targeting top insurgent leadership can also be effective, particularly in the short to medium term. Intervention by technologically sophisticated powers like the United States may offer significant technical advantages in targeting rebel leadership.²³
- **Splitting strategies.** Interveners may either help induce splits among rebel groups or take advantage of pre-existing ones. Providing resources to the government may help the government offer more incentives to defecting rebels, and external military assistance may help the government protect rebel defectors who might otherwise fear reprisals from their former brothers-in-arms. Policies designed to induce splits among rebel groups are a two-edged sword, however. Inducements such as the promise of amnesty and redress of certain grievances (for example, land reform) have been used to pry rebels away from an insurgency and to provide intelligence on remaining insurgents, thus leading to the cascading effects typical of a tipping point. On the other hand, fracturing an insurgency into multiple factions may make a conflict harder to terminate through a negotiated settlement because no single leadership can speak for the rebels.²⁴ If the government is too weak to offer meaningful inducements to rebel defectors or to protect them, splitting strategies may create greater incoherence among rebels without any corresponding strategic gains.
- **Strengthening pro-peace constituencies.** Warring factions often have a material interest in the criminal economies that form during wartime and may even seek to perpetuate conflict as a means to profit. Consequently, one of the most powerful means of drawing away support from insurgents may be by strengthening those portions of society—such as the licit business community—that have a vested interest in peace. Some religious leaders may also have an interest in peace, particularly since periods of conflict often draw power away from traditional sources of authority (such as religious leaders and elders) and concentrate it in the hands of military leaders and warlords. To the extent that outside interveners can protect and strengthen these pro-peace constituencies, they may be able to undermine the recruiting

22 David E. Johnson, M. Wade Markel, and Brian Shannon, *The 2008 Battle of Sadr City* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, RR-160-A, 2011).

23 Sean D. Naylor, “Years of Detective Work Led to al-Qaida Target,” *Army Times*, November 21, 2011; and David Spencer, “The Sword of Honor Campaign in the Cauca Valley: 2011-2013 Colombian Conflict Focus of Effort,” *Small Wars Journal*, May 31, 2013.

24 David E. Cunningham, “Veto Players and Civil War Duration,” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (October, 2006): 875–892.

potential of rebel leaders. Providing protection and support to such a large, dispersed group of actors, however, is extremely difficult to do through “light footprint” military operations unless the major parties to the conflict have already accepted a negotiated settlement (as in consensual peace operations).

- **“Playing for the breaks.”** Finally, in many cases, small-scale foreign interventions will neither create tipping points nor take advantage of them to bring a conflict to an end. Rather, they will simply prevent the defeat of a partner government.²⁵ Given sufficient time, either the international environment may shift in favorable ways, or the insurgents may make mistakes that the government can capitalize on. Both the intervener and the partner government, in other words, are “playing for the breaks.”²⁶ Such an approach minimizes the risk of over-reach by either the intervening state or the partner government. On the other hand, it is not clear that countries like the United States can sustain foreign military interventions indefinitely, and there are significant spillover costs associated with long-running conflicts.²⁷

This brief overview of the mechanisms by which external interveners may seek to capitalize on tipping points suggests many of the difficulties of successfully implementing such a policy. To fully understand the challenges the United States may face in attempting to tip conflicts in favor of partner regimes through small-footprint operations, it is helpful to examine a number of recent cases.

Recent Small-Footprint Interventions: A Complex Record

Analysts have frequently invoked the examples of recent US operations in the Philippines and Colombia to argue in favor of small-footprint interventions. This article instead examines a variety of lesser-known cases, in part because the Philippines and Colombia have been so thoroughly analyzed elsewhere and in part because these interventions remain ongoing, with the final outcome still to be determined.

Russian Intervention in Tajikistan

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and Tajikistan’s emergence as an independent state, a civil war rapidly evolved between the country’s Communists and supporters of the democratic and Islamist opposition. Although initially reluctant to become involved in the conflict, growing concern over Islamic radicalism and narcotics trafficking ultimately prompted Russia to intervene.

Russia possessed by far the largest and most capable fighting force in Tajikistan, the 201st Motorized Rifle Division, and it largely controlled the Border Forces along the border with Afghanistan. These forces were present in Tajikistan from the beginning of the war and began to act on behalf of the pro-Russian leader Emomali Rakhmon after he seized control of the government in December 1992 and relegated the Islamists

25 Stephen Watts et al., *The Uses and Limits of Small-Scale Military Interventions* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, MG-1226-RC, 2012).

26 Lincoln B. Krause, “Playing for the Breaks: Insurgent Mistakes,” *Parameters* 39, no. 3 (Autumn 2009): 48–64.

27 For spillover costs, see Paul Collier et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2003), Chapter 2.

and others to the role of an armed opposition movement, the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). Russia, therefore, had the opportunity to tip the conflict in a favorable direction due to its early intervention and its potential to interdict the UTO's supply routes from Afghanistan.²⁸

Despite these opportunities, the war raged for five years. Rather than tipping the conflict toward a decisive outcome, Russian support did little more than keep the Rakhmon regime from disintegrating. The Border Forces were incapable of interdicting the UTO's supply routes from Afghanistan, in part because of the inherent difficulty of policing a long and mountainous border and in part because Russian and government forces were themselves complicit in the smuggling.²⁹

In 1997, Moscow helped broker a peace deal between the Rakhmon government and the UTO featuring numerous power-sharing mechanisms. Within the first few years after the treaty was signed, however, Rakhmon engineered the removal of many opposition figures from the governmental positions they won as a result of the peace accords, and a number of prominent opposition politicians were assassinated. In 1999, the president won reelection with 97 percent of the vote. In part as a consequence, much political power in the country has remained concentrated in informal institutions beyond the control of the state. In most cases the various warlords of the civil war period retained the loyalty and capabilities of their paramilitaries, allowing them to remain the de facto political authorities of much of Tajikistan.

Both narcotics trafficking and Islamic radicalism have flourished in this environment. Through its intervention, in other words, Russia was able to keep its preferred leader in power, helped to end the country's civil war, and helped to keep the country at peace afterward. But its intervention did little to ameliorate the main factors driving its intervention in the first place.³⁰

French Intervention in the Central African Republic

The Central African Republic (CAR) has historically been an extremely weak state with small security forces and little penetration into the regions beyond the capital of Bangui. From the time of its independence it has been subject to repeated coups and governed for more than half of its existence as a modern, independent state by rulers who seized power by force.³¹

France had played a significant role in the country's politics since its independence, maintaining a military base in the country and subsidizing the CAR's armed forces, the *Forces armées centrafricaines* (FACA). In

28 Lena Jonson, *The Tajik War: A Challenge to Russian Policy*, Discussion Paper 74 (London: Royal Institute for International Affairs, 1998); and Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia, and Tajikistan* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

29 Sergei Gretzky, *Russia's Policy Toward Central Asia* (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center, 1997); Barnett R. Rubin, "Russian Hegemony and State Breakdown in the Periphery: Causes and Consequences of the Civil War in Tajikistan," in *Post-Soviet Political Order: Conflict and State Building*, eds. Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder (London: Routledge, 1998).

30 Nasrin Dadmehr, "Tajikistan: Regionalism and Weakness," in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003); International Crisis Group, *Tajikistan: The Changing Insurgent Threats*, Asia Report No. 205 (May 24, 2011); International Crisis Group, *Tajikistan: An Uncertain Peace*, Asia Report No. 30 (December 24, 2001).

31 Andreas Mehler, "Why Security Forces Do Not Deliver Security: Evidence from Liberia and the Central African Republic," *Armed Forces & Society* 38, no. 1 (2012): 49–69.

part as a result of the end of these subsidies in 1993, government payments of FACA wages fell deeply into arrears, ultimately leading several hundred soldiers to mutiny in 1996.³²

France was well-positioned to intervene at the beginning of the conflict, when it had the opportunity to impress upon the mutineers the costs of fighting and to disrupt their nascent organization. In Operations Almadin I and Almadin II, French forces put down two coup attempts in a matter of days in April and May 1996. France helped broker a series of peace deals involving the payment of back wages (by France), an amnesty for the mutineers, and ultimately a broader power-sharing deal (the Bangui Accords) monitored first by the African peacekeeping mission MISAB and later by the UN mission MINURCA. Thus, France seized on many of the strategies that might be expected to tip a conflict decisively in favor of the government. It acted at the very beginning of the crisis. By paying back wages to FACA soldiers, France could potentially split those mutineers with limited and legitimate grievances (wage arrears) from those with broader ambitions. And by helping to create a power-sharing agreement buttressed by external peacekeepers, France hoped to strengthen constituencies for peace.

Despite these efforts, another major coup attempt was launched a year after the foreign peacekeeping presence finally withdrew. Three years after the end of MINURCA and seven years after France had intervened, the government France had helped to prop up was overthrown.³³ That government, in turn, was itself overthrown within a decade. The conflict, in other words, failed to tip decisively.

African Interventions in Somalia

A wide variety of observers—ranging from the Secretary General of the United Nations to reporters and academics—have suggested that Somalia may have reached or passed a tipping point in the past couple of years.³⁴ Thanks to a conjunction of events: the end of the country's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and inauguration of the internationally recognized Somali Federal Government (SFG) in 2012; the fracturing among the various factions of al Shabaab and its loss of popular support; and the military successes of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) against al Shabaab—Somalia seemed finally close to a possible victory against insurgent Islamist groups and to a functional government in Mogadishu.

Somalia has experienced four foreign military interventions since 2006: by Ethiopia (in 2006–09 and again since 2012); by AMISOM (since 2008); and by Kenya (since 2011). Although the first Ethiopian intervention was widely considered a disaster and resulted in larger

32 Fiona McFarlane and Mark Malan, "Crisis and Response in the Central African Republic: A New Trend in African Peacekeeping?" *African Security Review* 7, no. 2 (1998): 48–58; Watts et al., *The Uses and Limits of Small-Scale Military Interventions*, 77–83.

33 Watts et al., *The Uses and Limits of Small-Scale Military Interventions*, 77–83; Gabriella Ingerstad, *Willing and Able? Challenges to Security Sector Reform in Weak Post-war States: Insights from the Central African Republic* (Stockholm: Ministry of Defense, October 2012).

34 United Nations Security Council, "Special Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia," S/2012/74 (January 31, 2012), 9; veteran Somalia observer Ken Menkhaus offered a more measured judgment—see Ken Menkhaus, "Somalia at the Tipping Point?" *Current History* (May 2012): 169–174.

support for al Shabaab, interventions by AMISOM and Kenya have had very different results, in part because these countries were not perceived as negatively as Ethiopia. In these interventions, Kenya, AMISOM, the Somali government, and other external players such as the United States attempted to use several of the mechanisms described herein to ensure their interventions would lead to decisive changes. Kenya and AMISOM contributed to cutting al Shabaab's revenue by taking control of Mogadishu, whose markets and businesses represented an important source of revenue for the group, and Kismayo, which is a major port and a hub for the charcoal trade that sustained al Shabaab. Decapitation was also employed: US-targeted killings of top operatives, such as Aden Hashi Ayro in 2008, have played a disruptive role and may have compelled the group to rely on leaders of lesser quality.³⁵ AMISOM and the KDF have also taken advantage of ideological splits within al Shabaab. The relative peace that Mogadishu was experiencing as of late 2013 has led many in the Somali diaspora to return; this population represents a pro-peace constituency that has everything to gain from a lasting stabilization of the country. Their increasing presence and investments in Mogadishu may eventually act as a tipping point by creating incentives for more groups to invest in licit business opportunities rather than profiting from wartime economies.

There are limits, however, to what has been achieved in Somalia. It is unclear whether the loss of Mogadishu and Kismayo represents a tipping point for al Shabaab, which has proven highly capable of diversifying its sources of revenue from taxation of populations to weapons trafficking and piracy. The group is still reaping considerable benefits from the charcoal business of Kismayo, which a recent UN report claimed had been revived and even expanded, in part with the complicity of Kenyan forces.³⁶ It is also worth noting that many of the setbacks experienced by al Shabaab were brought about by the group's own misguided policies, such as the mishandling of the 2010–12 famine and the resulting loss of popular support and recruits. External interveners benefitted from these mistakes, which may make their achievements difficult to replicate in the future; insurgents, after all, are as capable of learning from their mistakes as are counterinsurgents. Perhaps most importantly, the optimism that accompanied the SFG's creation only a year ago has already started to fade. Thus far the SFG has proven itself nearly as corrupt and weak as its predecessors.³⁷ Without a capable and inclusive government to attract potential defectors from among rebel populations and to protect and reward pro-peace constituencies, even potential tipping points are highly unlikely to tip.

Somalia, however, may have tipped toward a change in the nature of its conflict. It is still unclear the extent to which al Shabaab has morphed from a Somalia-centered group that seeks to control large swathes of territory and could aim to take over the central government to a mainly terrorist group that operates indifferently between Somalia and other

35 Eric Schmitt and Jeffrey Gettleman, "Qaeda Leader Reported Killed in Somalia," *The New York Times*, May 2, 2008; Interview by authors with subject matter expert, Washington DC, October 2013.

36 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (July 12, 2013), paragraph 152.

37 See, for instance, Matt Bryden, *Somalia Redux? Assessing the New Somali Federal Government* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2013).

countries in the region. A series of events affecting al Shabaab over the past few years has certainly pushed it toward the latter direction. Sheikh Ahmed Abdi Godane's rejection of humanitarian aid during the 2010–12 famine that killed an estimated quarter million people created a rift between al Shabaab and the population and within the group itself.³⁸ This happened at a time when the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops took away one of al Shabaab's main rallying causes, the resistance to the Ethiopian "invasion." Popular support had been the backbone of al Shabaab's rise during the Ethiopian intervention (2006–09). It provided the group with recruits and facilitated the acceptance of its presence in entire regions of Somalia. This territorial control, in turn, represented an important source of revenue. Although much about al Shabaab's internal dynamics is still unknown, there are indications that the group's loss of popular support, combined with improved military performance on the part of AMISOM, may have had a cumulative effect. Groups that cannot recruit easily often turn to coercive methods; this further antagonizes populations, which in turn are less likely to join the group voluntarily. Imposing taxation on a smaller population base may have the same effect. The combination of al Shabaab missteps with improved AMISOM capabilities, in other words, does not appear to have tipped Somalia toward an end to its violence, but it may well have tipped the conflict to a phase in which forces hostile to the current government are unable to pose an existential threat. Even this result, however, is likely dependent on the continued presence of international forces for the foreseeable future.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Tipping points are seldom defined, and seem to signify little more than an important change—or possible change—in a conflict. We have argued that "tipping points" should be seen as a conjunction of conditions *sufficient* (or usually sufficient) to achieve an end of the conflict or a transformation of its character. The purpose of this article has been to flesh out this concept and its implications for small-footprint military interventions in support of partner governments. The very short descriptions of the post-Cold War conflicts in Tajikistan, the Central African Republic, and Somalia, as well as the even briefer mentions of other conflicts, have not been intended as rigorous empirical tests. Rather, they were intended to serve as illustrations of conflict and intervention dynamics at particular points in time that had the potential to be tipping points. Although we cannot draw any definitive conclusions from the illustrative cases, they do nonetheless offer a number of insights.

First, the term tipping point is almost certainly overused. The term is invoked by analysts far more frequently than they actually occur. If this question were only one of semantics, then playing fast-and-loose with the term would be harmless. But the term implies something substantive about a conflict: that its dynamics are likely to change in ways that fundamentally alter the course of the war. Seeing tipping points where none exist thus overstates the likelihood that conflicts can be decisively

38 Mary Hope Schwoebel, "Déjà Vu: Famine and Crisis in Somalia," (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace (USIP), September 12, 2011); United Nations Food and Agricultural Program (UN FAO) and Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), *Mortality Among Populations of Southern and Central Somalia Affected by Severe Food Insecurity and Famine During 2010–2012* (Rome and Washington, May 2, 2013), 53.

resolved—and, as a corollary, the likelihood that military interventions can take advantage of these opportunities to secure durable changes that favor the strategic interests of the United States. In the cases of Tajikistan, the Central African Republic, and Somalia, external forces intervened at points in time and in ways that could be expected to be particularly favorable. Yet in neither Tajikistan nor the Central African Republic did interventions tip the course of a conflict toward a decisive conclusion. In the CAR, France secured a temporary peace that was quickly reversed once French forces and peacekeepers withdrew. In Tajikistan, Russia secured an enduring end to the civil war, but the post-conflict state that emerged was so weak that it was unable to make significant gains against either radical Islam or illegal narcotics trafficking—the primary interests that prompted Russian intervention. In Somalia, it is too early to say if the events of the past two years have created the basis for conflict termination or enduring gains in the strength of the Somali state. Recent events suggest that a decisive end to the conflict is unlikely, although the conflict may have entered a lengthy phase characterized more by transnational terrorism and lower-intensity violence than full civil war. Even this result, however, is almost certainly dependent on the continued willingness of AMISOM troop-contributing countries (especially Uganda and Kenya) to maintain a substantial presence in Somalia.

Tipping points do occur in some cases. The elimination of state support for an insurgency has often led to a decisive end to a conflict, particularly when the conflict-affected state does not have ready alternatives to support insurgency on a large scale (such as “conflict diamonds” or oil deposits readily controlled by rebels). Decapitation of insurgent groups has sometimes had decisive effects, particularly when the government is capable of exploiting the opportunity by offering reconcilable insurgent groups credible positive inducements (such as amnesty and an economic stake in peace).

The evidence in favor of many other potential tipping points is much weaker. Early interventions, for instance, did not help Russia, France, or Ethiopia. Although support for a partner government might be particularly effective if provided before a conflict escalates to the point of war, once a conflict does escalate, golden hours seldom appear to represent true tipping points. Similarly, if a government is not strong enough to act decisively, “wedge strategies” designed to split insurgent groups can lead simply to a more fractious opposition incapable of negotiating an end to conflict. Somalia’s TFG, for instance, did not secure any lasting gain from its co-optation of moderate Islamist opposition. Efforts to cut insurgents off from their black market revenues are seldom as decisive as ending state support to insurgents. Illicit trafficking is extremely difficult to interdict fully, and often the intervening forces of poorer states become captured by the criminal economies they are trying to police—an outcome observed in the Tajikistan and Somalia cases examined in this article and in many other instances. Finally, strengthening constituencies for peace is ultimately necessary to bring a decisive end to conflict, but without a large-scale stability operation of the sort the United States currently seeks to avoid, the empowerment of pro-peace constituencies is usually the *outcome* of conflict rather than a tipping point itself.

Small-footprint interventions may help the United States secure at least partial successes by weakening dangerous adversaries or by providing partner regimes a temporary reprieve in which to reform themselves. The examples offered here and many others, however, suggest their effects will usually not be decisive. Most conflicts, in other words, fail to tip decisively, even at particularly opportune junctures.

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Pakistan's Changing Counterterrorism Strategy: A Window of Opportunity?

Michael Spangler

ABSTRACT: In spite of growing US uncertainty about Pakistani intentions, a window of opportunity may be opening for the United States to put in place new counterterrorism measures with Pakistan.

Over the past decade, Pakistan has been increasingly viewed in US foreign policy circles as a reluctant, almost recalcitrant, partner in efforts to end the long Afghan war and to combat global terrorism. While steadfastly India-centric in its defense posture, Pakistan's regional role in South Central Asia is widely viewed as indispensable. To help the United States engage more effectively on counterterrorism, American analysts advocate a wide range of policy options. Some scholars such as Ambassador Peter Tomsen argue that "Washington should stop praising Pakistan's generals for their cooperation on counterterrorism, stop showering them with unconditioned military aid, and stop embracing them with benign diplomacy sprinkled with ambiguous warnings that current conditions are not acceptable."¹ Others, like former Pakistani Ambassador Hussain Haqqani, seem to agree, "since 1947, dependence, deception and defiance have characterized US-Pakistan relations. We sought US aid in return for promises we did not keep. Although even strong allies do not have 100 percent congruent interests, in the case of Pakistan and the United States, the divergence far exceeded the similarities."²

In spite of growing US uncertainty about Pakistani intentions, most observers, and Washington, hew to a middle course. US-Pakistan relations became tense after the killing of Osama Bin Laden in northwestern Pakistan in May 2011; since then, policymakers sought greater continuity and cooperation with Pakistan. On the eve of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Washington in October 2013, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney noted, "We want to find ways for our two countries to cooperate even as we have differences on some issues, and we want to make sure the trajectory of this relationship is a positive one."³ Despite the need for improved US-Pakistan relations, however, so-called "transformational" steps needed to reinvigorate Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts along its 1,640-mile border with Afghanistan and to forge more preemptive measures against global terrorism have been avoided in favor of risk-averse business-as-usual. Pakistan's evolving security interests may be converging with the Coalition's counterterrorism efforts; these

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1 Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 694-95.

2 Hussain Haqqani, *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding* (New York: Public Affairs, 2013).

3 United Press International, "Obama-Sharif Meeting Described as Important" *UPI*, October 22, 2013.

new developments may open a window for stronger engagement with Pakistan on the joint Afghanistan and global terrorism fronts.

A New Window?

A window of opportunity may be opening for the United States to put in place a new set of counterterrorism measures with Pakistan, coupled with badly needed visibility on future financial assistance to the country, if the US Congress buys into a confidence-building approach. This new approach requires nesting Afghanistan's transition, US counterterrorism policies, the intra-Afghan peace process, and endorsement by Coalition states and other allies. While such a future course is complex, its promise of better traction on counterterrorism results in Afghanistan may outweigh the risks of the current open-ended US policy that seems to be "playing not to lose" rather than achieving clear goals permitting a permanent drawdown of Coalition forces in Afghanistan.

This policy opening cannot be described as transformative, however, because it remains uncertain if Pakistan's complex civilian-military authority structure can and will agree on identifying specific terrorist groups as internal security threats. Pakistan's civilian and military leaders are not unified in their perceptions of national priorities and interests. As a result, the central thesis argued here is that the United States needs to engage with those officials who are supportive of broader counterterrorism engagement while using aid more explicitly to bring other quarters on board.

The first part of this article will outline three key objections to the explicit linkage of US counterterrorism assistance to Pakistan. The second part will describe recent developments that appear to provide a new policy opening for broader US-Pakistan counterterrorism talks. The final part will propose four steps that could be taken in such talks.

Part One

First Objection: Losing US Leverage

US policymakers appear concerned that linking military assistance to counterterrorism results could be counterproductive, eroding US influence within the Pakistan Army. The Army might view the linkage as a coercive "stick" and reject its application. In this scenario, the United States may find its use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) curtailed in Pakistan's tribal areas as well as losing influence over other potential issues such as discouraging (1) a military takeover of a civilian-led government, (2) its use of terrorist proxies to challenge India's control of Kashmiri territory, and (3) any newly emerging nuclear proliferation opportunities. Taking into account these realpolitik issues, however, the United States should acknowledge that it has little influence to lose. Thus, it should focus on establishing stronger cooperative mechanisms with Pakistan to prevent and deter such developments while also permitting the United States to reduce its counterterrorism efforts in the region.

Second Objection: Pakistani Response to Terrorism is Sufficient

Even though many Western analysts contend Pakistan is playing a two-faced game with Taliban groups, since 9/11, the Pakistan Army

has sustained over 50,000 casualties in its effort to dismantle, disrupt, and destroy al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other terrorist groups operating in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) adjacent to Afghanistan. Concomitantly, Pakistan's economy has likely suffered approximately \$100 billion in lost revenue, as foreign investors steered clear of what they saw as a relatively unstable country among emerging market countries.⁴

Pakistani government and Army leaders nonetheless insist they remain committed to the counterterrorism effort. Their standard response to US requests is, "Tell us where they are and we will take action. Seek our covert permission to launch UAVs but do not otherwise operate in our country."⁵ Since Pakistan has "done all it has been asked to do" and maintains Coalition supply lines into Afghanistan, there is no need to seek additional cooperation through explicit aid linkage. Moreover, the Pakistan Army may not be able to deliver on new steps in light of its India-dominated focus and might even disagree with its civilian leadership over key counterterrorism measures, contributing to political instability.

The Pakistan Army is India-Centric⁶

Having unsuccessfully fought four wars with India, Pakistan remains vigilant on her eastern border, facing the world's third largest Army, after China and the United States; its military forces overall rank eighth after North Korea, Russia, Turkey, and South Korea. Pakistan's military annually lavishes about 10 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on the Army budget and its nuclear arsenal. As a result of growing US military assistance after 9/11, Pakistan agreed to station roughly 150,000 troops along the Afghan border beginning in early 2002, while keeping 100,000 troops oriented towards India and Kashmir.⁷

Given this background, it is not surprising to find that in May 2010, when Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Leon Panetta sought then Pakistan Army Chief of Staff Ashfaq Kayani's help following the arrest of Pakistani-American Faisal Shahzad for attempting to bomb Times Square, Kayani replied, "I'll be the first to admit, I'm India-centric."⁸ Even after Shahzad revealed that he had been trained by the Haqqani Network, a Pakistani Taliban group in North Waziristan, US officials failed to budge Kayani beyond permitting more UAV strikes in North Waziristan.⁹ This objection is primarily based on accepting the

4 Ashan Guirez, "Pakistan Briefing," lecture, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, January 13, 2014.

5 Jon Boone and Peter Beaumont, "Pervez Musharraf Admits Permitting 'a Few' Drone Strikes in Pakistan," *The Guardian*, April 12, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/12/musharraf-admits-permitting-drone-strikes>.

6 The Pakistan Army's defense posture has been India-centric since its inception in 1947, largely shaped by its aim to win disputed Kashmiri territory from India. Former Ambassador Haqqani emphasizes, "In the case of Pakistan and the U.S., Pakistan's primary interest, as defined by its elite, is to become India's military equal and to wrest control of Kashmir. Those two interests are not in America's interests. And yet America has built up Pakistan's military potential over the years and continues to arm Pakistan, assuming that Pakistan will eventually use those arms for agendas the Americans set for them. That is not going to happen. That has not happened in the last 66 years." Hussain Haqqani, "Pakistan-U.S.: Doubtful Friends," *Lahore Times*, December 1, 2013, 1.

7 Ahsan Guirez, "Pakistan Briefing."

8 Robert Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 366.

9 Ibid.

Pakistan Army's India-focused threat posture, which we will return to below.¹⁰

Third Objection: Pakistan Sees Terrorist Groups Differently

Our current relationship with Pakistan contrasts starkly with the one defined by the George H. W. Bush administration. In January 1993, Secretary of State James Baker sent a letter to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif warning that Pakistan could be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism, chiefly because of terrorist activity in Kashmir and the Indian Punjab.¹¹ This step was not pursued by President Clinton. A decade later, Pakistan was listed as a Major Non-NATO Ally of the United States in 2004, following the post-9/11 decision taken by President Pervez Musharraf to increase Pakistan Army operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. This *volte-face* in our relationship reflects the fact that we need to work with Pakistan even if it remains more committed to opposing its historic antagonist, India.

Pakistan apparently calculates that by fighting the Tehrik-e-Taliban but providing tacit support to other groups such as the Haqqani Network, Pakistan (1) stays close to a bloc that could emerge as a key power-broker in Afghanistan; (2) sustains asymmetric proxies harassing an Indian presence in Afghanistan and Kashmir; and (3) secures Pakistan's north-western border by restraining some Taliban groups from coalescing with others to oppose Pakistan's secular authorities. Accepting this objection, however, boxes the United States into maintaining a middle-of-the-road foreign policy with Pakistan that neither accomplishes nor risks much.

Pakistan's Role in the AF-PAK War

As the nascent Barack Obama administration began positioning itself during the 2008 US presidential election campaign, the Afghan conflict was widely portrayed as an ongoing war of necessity and Pakistan as key to its conclusion. The acronym, AF-PAK, was introduced to indicate that both countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan, should be considered a unified theater of operations requiring a joint policy.¹² In tandem with this term, an Iraq-inspired military surge strategy was launched in mid-2009 to protect Afghan population centers and give the fledgling Afghan state time to train its security forces and deliver basic services to its people.

At present, more work needs to be done on the NATO coalition's missions of stability and transition; and the future remains cloudy for Afghanistan, despite over 3,000 Coalition casualties and about \$700

10 The United States designated the Haqqani Network as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) in September 2012. This group joined the already designated Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan rooted in South Waziristan, both supporting the Afghan Taliban mainly fighting in Afghanistan's South and East. The so-called Quetta Shura, representing the former Afghan Taliban leadership led by Mullah Mohammed Omar, constitutes a moral center of gravity for the Afghan Taliban in Pakistan's Baluchistan province. In light of Pakistan's harboring of these and other Taliban groups operating on the Afghan side, the United States has routinely called for stronger Pakistani actions to close down sanctuaries and training camps used by these terrorist groups, particularly as the Taliban began to regroup and fight more effectively in Afghanistan beginning in 2005.

11 Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, 513.

12 The inventor of the term was, perhaps, Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke. Richard C. Holbrooke, *Hampton Roads International Security Quarterly*, March 22, 2009.

billion in US costs alone.¹³ A key pillar of the Coalition strategy was the hammer-and-anvil approach launched with the Pakistan Army to deny (to the Taliban and other extremist groups) sanctuaries along the AF-PAK border to regroup and continue the conflict within Afghanistan. As the surge wound down in mid-2010, US policymakers stopped making references to AF-PAK, despite the fact that Pakistan was receiving significant military aid to serve as the anvil to the Coalition's hammer.

Coalition and Pakistan Army operations sustained a high operational tempo throughout 2009-12 before slowing down in 2013. This slower tempo coincides with newly trained Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) leading military operations on the Afghan side and stop-go efforts to start peace talks with Taliban groups. As international actors wait to see if the US-Afghan Bilateral Security Agreement can be concluded in 2014, Afghanistan's future remains uncertain.

Part Two

At a Crossroads?

Despite more than three decades of war and an Indian presence in Afghanistan, Pakistan Army strategists reportedly still regard Afghanistan as their country's "strategic depth" a rear engagement area in case India invades Pakistan.¹⁴ According to this construct originating in the 1980s, Afghan territory would permit Pakistan to disperse assets (including nuclear weapons) across the border, thereby increasing its ability to absorb an Indian attack and to strike back.¹⁵ Just as importantly, the Pashtun area lying on both sides of the Durand Line defining the AF-PAK border constitutes a prime recruitment ground for dual-use religious madrassa and training camps that have fueled Afghan and Kashmiri insurgencies for more than three decades. Indeed, terrorist groups in Pakistan represent a key asymmetric offensive capability against India and reportedly carried out the coordinated Mumbai attacks of 2008.¹⁶ Since these geopolitical realities seem deeply rooted in Pakistani strategic calculus, why would they suddenly be open to critical reexamination and change within Pakistan?

First Development: A New Chapter

In early 2013, the Pakistan Army doctrine incorporated a new chapter entitled "Sub-conventional Warfare," spelling out military operational preparedness, capacities, and objectives.¹⁷ According to this new doctrine, guerilla actions stemming from the tribal areas along the Afghan border and improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on the Army and civilians have been identified for the first time as the "great-

13 Anthony H. Cordesman, "The US Cost of the Afghan War: FY2002-2013," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, May 15, 2012, <https://csis.org/publication/us-cost-afghan-war-fy2002-fy2013>; National Priorities Project, "Cost of War in Afghanistan since 2001," <http://nationalpriorities.org/cost-of/>.

14 George Garner, "The Afghan Taliban and Pakistan's Strategic Depth," *Stanford Review: Bellum Project*, May 17, 2010, <http://bellum.stanfordreview.org/?p=2184>.

15 Ibid.

16 Pamela Constable, "Mumbai Attacks in 2008 Still Divide India and Pakistan," *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/mumbai-attacks-in-2008-still-divide-india-and-pakistan/2011/04/03/AFJjDUoC_story.html.

17 "Pakistan Army sees 'Internal Threats' as Greatest Security Risk," *Dawn.com*, Islamabad, Pakistan, January 2, 2013.

est threat” to Pakistan’s national security.¹⁸ While doctrine is merely guidance and not an operational order, this chapter may have staked out common ground for the United States and Pakistan to cooperate more effectively on counterterrorism. It is premature to declare the chapter as a game changer, but it does afford an opportunity to broaden bilateral counterterrorism consultations. At the same time, the concept of “strategic depth” is no longer cited as a basic assumption.

Second Development: The Punjabi Taliban

Concerned by the spread of terrorism from Pakistan’s hinterland, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif established an anti-terrorism force to counter emerging terrorist groups in Punjab in October 2013. Sharif committed to give the Force higher salaries and advanced equipment but keep it separate from Pakistan police and army units. At the same time, the Northwest Pakistan provincial government established a special counterterrorism task force headed by the province’s police chief. Provincial leaders asked the federal government to return frontier constabulary platoons to the province to be deployed in sensitive areas.¹⁹ Apparently, the possible emergence of a Punjabi Taliban group that could increasingly link with similar groups to launch coordinated attacks warrants a new approach and considerably more resources than have been devoted so far.

Third Development: Pursuing Taliban Peace Talks with a Stick

In October 2013, several Quetta Shura leaders met in Islamabad at the behest of Prime Minister Sharif to discuss their participation in future peace talks in the wake of Afghan elections and a US withdrawal.²⁰ Sharif gained an all-party endorsement for peace talks with the Taliban shortly after he took office in June 2013. He appears to be offering an olive branch to Pakistani Taliban groups backed up by military force. As Sharif told Pakistan’s Parliament in January 2014, Taliban groups have continued killing innocent civilians and soldiers. While “the government is doing what it can to stop drone attacks,” which have bolstered extremism and anti-Americanism, “we can no longer allow the massacre of innocent civilians” by terrorists, and “the situation is no longer tolerable.” Sharif emphasized that “the whole nation will stand behind” a military offensive against the extremists if peace efforts fail.²¹

Before resorting to military means, Prime Minister Sharif appears committed to fostering a credible peace process in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The former talks face formidable obstacles since the Tehrik-e-Taliban demand the immediate withdrawal of the Pakistan Army from tribal areas.²² The latter talks—currently being pursued

18 Ibid.

19 Moshin Ali, “Anti-Terrorist Force for Punjab Approved,” *Gulf News*, October 18, 2013, (<http://gulfnews.com/news/world/pakistan/anti-terrorist-force-for-punjab-approved-1.1244553>)

20 Ron Moreau, “Taliban’s Quetta Shura Meet in Islamabad to Press for Peace,” *The Daily Beast*, November 1, 2013.

21 Karen DeYoung and Greg Miller, “U.S. said to curtail drone strikes in Pakistan as officials there seek peace talks with Taliban,” *The Washington Post*, February 4, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-curtails-drone-strikes-in-pakistan-as-officials-there-seek-peace-talks-with-taliban/2014/02/04/1d63f52a-8dd8-11e3-833c-33098f9e5267_story.html?wpisrc=emailtofriend.

22 Mohsin Ali, “Pakistan Taliban Gives ‘Positive’ Response to Talks,” *Gulf News*, February 10, 2014.

by President Hamid Karzai—face similar hurdles even though the Coalition is withdrawing from Afghanistan.²³ Pakistan's promotion of Afghan peace talks appears designed to ensure a future Taliban role in the Afghan government and to prevent a gradual Afghan tilt towards India and Iran, two neighboring countries that offer greater aid and trade potential. However, it is too early to tell if the entire Pakistani government is convinced of the efficacy of talks or the potential need to roll up Taliban terrorist groups. In particular, any new decisive Pakistan Army action appears to require linkage with military assistance to give them the resources to conduct this new campaign. At the same time, some quarters of the Pakistan government must be enjoined to give up their apparent gamble that the current ANSF, mainly led by a non-Pashtun officer corps, will fail to stabilize Afghanistan, especially its South and East.

Fourth Development: Calling for an End to UAV Strikes

Prime Minister Sharif issued a high-profile appeal to President Obama during his October 2013 visit to end UAV strikes on Pakistani territory. His request received widespread press attention and dovetails with President Obama's own policy objective recorded in his May 2013 speech:

In the Afghan war theater, we must support our troops until the transition is complete at the end of 2014. However, by the end of 2014, we will no longer have the same need for force protection, and the progress we have made against core al Qaeda will reduce the need for unmanned strikes... and I will not sign laws designed to expand this mandate further. Our systematic effort to dismantle terrorist organizations must continue. But this war, like all wars, must end. That's what history advises. That's what our democracy demands.²⁴

These words may apply even more to Pakistan. At present, a majority of the Pakistani people objects to UAV strikes and believes their leaders should halt them.²⁵ In the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas alone, an earlier United Kingdom (UK) poll indicated that negative opinion rose from 59 percent in 2010 to 63 percent in 2011, peak years for unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) strikes.²⁶ Accordingly, the most compelling reason for Pakistan's stronger commitment to counterterrorism and Afghan stability lies in Pakistan's own security. The more Pakistan proves unable to combat internal threats posed by its own terrorist actors, the more public opinion is likely to gravitate against its elected leaders. At present, Taliban and other extremist groups in Pakistan threaten internal order more than they provide security insurance policies against Afghanistan and India.

23 Azam Ahmed and Matthew Rosenberg, "Karzai Arranged Secret Contacts with the Taliban," *The New York Times*, February 3, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/04/world/asia/karzai-has-held-secret-contacts-with-the-taliban.html?hpw&rref=world&r=0>.

24 President Barack Obama, *On the Future of the War on Terror* (Washington DC: Office of the Press Secretary, May 23, 2013), 5, 14.

25 "Drones Increasingly Opposed: Poll." *Express Tribune*, July 19, 2013, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/579054/drones-increasingly-opposed-poll/>.

26 Jamie Doward, "UK Funds Poll in Pakistan on U.S. Drone Attacks," *The Guardian*, May 18, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/18/poll-drone-attacks-pakistan>.

Rethinking UAV Strikes

UAV strikes remain one of the most scrutinized and controversial military activities attributed to the United States. Is it conceivable that such strikes can be reduced without seeing a corresponding increase in terrorist activities, particularly in areas beyond the rule of law in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere in the world?

A 2010 National Bureau of Economic Research study found that for every Afghan civilian killed by Coalition forces, anti-Coalition violence increased significantly over the next six months.²⁷ This finding appears to militate against the use of UAV strikes in the absence of greater precision.

In 2010, 118 UAV strikes were reportedly launched in Pakistan, of which 14 were successful.²⁸ (Success may have been too narrowly defined as a strike in which a militant “leader” was killed.) The bulk of studies, to date, contradict this finding and detail the erosion of core al Qaeda and Tehrik-e-Taliban leaders. UAV strikes are designed to deplete or incapacitate enemy ranks and deter future attacks. However, they produce a “vengeance effect,” where targeted groups are spurred to commit further acts of violence. In general, at least one study concluded there is little or no [statistically significant] effect of drone strikes on Taliban violence in Afghanistan but “only on Taliban violence in Pakistan.”²⁹

However, it may well be the case in Pakistan that UAV strikes are facing better countermeasures while creating more terrorists than they have eliminated. In October 2010, Osama bin Laden himself recognized the need for better countermeasures, writing in a memo that his men should abandon Pakistan’s tribal regions where UAV strikes were concentrated.³⁰ Concomitantly, Pakistani opinion condemning the United States for these attacks remains virulent, promoting the perception that the United States is waging a war against Islam and spurring recruitment into terrorist ranks. When do the advantages of UAV strikes (mainly, preventing al Qaeda from reconstituting itself in Afghanistan or Pakistan’s tribal regions) outweigh its costs (such as spurring new recruitment to related groups)? It is impossible to say with certainty if the UAV tactic advances the US strategy of combating terrorism, although it has demonstrably eroded al Qaeda. Just as importantly, the potential loss of UAV basing rights in Afghanistan at the end of 2014 calls for reassessing the UAV tactic.

Part Three*Four Steps Forward*

The year 2014 is unfolding as one of critical transition for Afghanistan. Pakistan authorities may be recognizing that a Coalition

27 Luke N. Condra et al., “The Effect of Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq,” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 16152*, July 2010, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16152>.

28 Christopher Olver, “Are drone strikes effective in Afghanistan and Pakistan? On the dynamics of violence between the United States and the Taliban.” Harvard Kennedy School, Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, February 12, 2013.

29 Ibid.

30 Peter Bergen, “Bin Laden’s Final Days: Big Plans, Deep Fears,” *CNN Opinion*, March 19, 2012, http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/16/opinion/bergen-bin-laden-final-writings/index.html?_s=PM:OPINION.

withdrawal from Afghanistan provides a larger front for the Tehrik-e-Taliban, the Haqqani Network, the Baluchistan Liberation Army, and other groups to operate against the Pakistan Army. Accordingly, the United States and Pakistan—too often characterized as uneasy, disenchanted, or suspicious allies—appear to have converging national interests that call for new cooperative measures to combat terrorism and to define specific terrorist threats. The United States needs to discard its accusatory belief that Pakistan has prolonged and diverted US military assistance to counter India. Pakistan also needs to set aside its paranoid concern that the United States will abandon it over the long haul. In short, both countries should consider taking four steps that will attract stronger public support to deal with evolving terrorist threats. This process will need support from AF-PAK's neighbors, Coalition states, other key allies, and international organizations.

Step One: Condition US Military Aid to Rolling Up the Haqqani Network

The Haqqani Network is one of the most lethal and resilient threats facing ANSF and NATO forces. Reportedly viewed as “good Taliban” by the Pakistan Army because the group eschews violence against it, the Network remains an unreconstructed enemy fighting for the NATO Coalition's withdrawal from Afghanistan and the imposition of Sharia Law in Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal areas.³¹ The United States continues to offer a \$5-million reward for information leading to the capture of the Network's operational leader, Sirajuddin Haqqani, whose group was reportedly instrumental in the escape of Osama bin Laden from Tora Bora, the detention of US Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl, the training of the would-be Times Square bomber, and the September 2011 coordinated attack on the US Embassy in Kabul. Despite the group's hostility, Pakistani, Afghan, and US officials have periodically reached out to the Haqqani group to gauge its interest in renouncing violence in Afghanistan, to no avail.³²

US policymakers should consider linking a major portion of its military assistance and sales to the Pakistan Army's actions to roll up the Haqqani Network in Waziristan. Decisive action against the Haqqani Network, if taken, would constitute a resolute signal that 2014 will close on a substantially reduced threat from Pakistan's border areas and send a strong message to other Taliban groups to begin discussing a cease-fire or face similar action. Are there any recent signs that Pakistan's leaders might agree to take on the Haqqani Network in return for military aid? Indeed, why would the Pakistan Army renege on any agreement, however informal, to “live and let live” with the Haqqani Network in the tribal areas?

The main reason might be that the Army's strategic costs of tacit support for the Haqqani Network could quickly outweigh its benefits. The Pakistan Army must assess the possibility of a nightmare scenario in which the Haqqani Network and other terrorist groups cooperate more effectively to attack Pakistan's secular authorities in a joint

31 Bill Roggio, “Good Taliban leader Fazal Saeed Haqqani kills 39 civilians in Kurram suicide attack,” *Threat Matrix: A Blog of the Long War Journal*, February 17, 2012, 1, http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2012/02/good_taliban_leader_fazal_saeed.php#ixzz2rExQgI8y

32 Patrick Goodenough, “Notorious Haqqani Network to be Represented at Taliban-US Talks,” *CNS News*, June 19, 2013.

effort to impose Sharia Law throughout the tribal areas, Afghanistan, and Punjab. Such a scenario requires rethinking the assumption that Pakistan authorities can ride the Haqqani “tiger” without falling off it. In keeping with such a reexamination, a Pakistani official recently stated that an upcoming Pakistan Army operation in North Waziristan would “not discriminate” among militant groups and therefore include the Haqqani Network as an adversary.³³ It is also important to note that Nasiruddin Haqqani, Siraj’s brother and the reputed fundraiser of the Network, was gunned down in Islamabad in November 2013. A fine Arabic speaker, Nasiruddin was a key outreach to Gulf nations and long sheltered by Pakistani authorities. While his death may reflect an internal tribal dispute, it could also indicate that his group is no longer perceived by Pakistani authorities as a reliable chip to be kept on the geopolitical table vis-a-vis Afghanistan and India.

Depending upon the effectiveness of Pakistan Army action against the Haqqani Network, US policymakers could subsequently consider an unannounced halt to UAV strikes in North Waziristan. This move would be widely welcomed in Pakistan, once publicly recognized, and give both the Pakistani government and Army a boost in terms of their commitment to protect their people and their country’s sovereignty. Such a cessation would be consistent with the Obama administration’s stated goal of cutting back strikes in the Afghan theater and reducing our dependence on Afghanistan for basing rights. The UAV capability, if it remains an option, should be clearly tied to Pakistan’s progress in combating terrorist groups. In other words, UAV strikes can and should be replaced by more effective Pakistan Army actions.

Step Two: New Afghan Leaders Should Consider a Cease-Fire after the Haqqani Roll-Up

Perhaps more is at stake for the Afghan people in rolling up the Haqqani Network than in Afghanistan’s upcoming spring election or its signing of a Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States. After all, if the Haqqani group is seriously degraded and its moral leadership eliminated with Pakistan’s help, Afghan leaders will finally be able to negotiate from a position of strength with remaining Taliban groups. In the absence of such strength, however, it is difficult to believe undecided Taliban groups would respect the fledgling ANSF or recognize the need to come to terms with Afghanistan’s elected leaders. In concert with announcing a cease-fire, new Afghan leaders may also wish to consider inviting the United Nations to take a lead in organizing a neutral venue for renewed intra-Afghan peace talks with Taliban parties that observe the cease fire. The UN role would boost credibility in the peace process and actively solicit the support of neighboring countries and other international actors.

For its part, Pakistani leadership should welcome the key role it could play in shaping a more peaceful Afghanistan. Serving as a positive force for peace and stability in Afghanistan, Pakistan could more effectively approach other issues with its neighbors, including India,

33 Karen DeYoung, “Pakistan plans military operation in North Waziristan, targeting extremist groups,” *The Washington Post*, February 25, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/pakistan-poised-for-offensive-in-north-waziristan/2014/02/25/10db127c-9e6b-11e3-878c-65222df220eb_story.html

rather than struggling with international doubt and suspicion over its use of terrorist proxies. Indeed, why should Pakistan think it can make any progress on the Kashmir issue without a clear signal that it has abandoned the use of terrorism?

Step Three: Designate Afghan Taliban as Foreign Terrorist Organizations

The United States should consider listing Afghan Taliban groups as Foreign Terrorist Organizations in the event they do not observe the cease fire and resort to terrorist means. The US designation of certain Afghan Taliban groups would carry the implicit threat of continued action against those who use terrorism to help attain political ends. President Hamid Karzai is currently following up on Prime Minister Sharif's efforts to sound out Taliban groups on peace talks, and Sharif's initiative reflects the ongoing debate within Afghan Taliban ranks concerning the need for political accommodation with the Afghan government once Coalition forces withdraw.³⁴ While this third step may be dismissed by some Taliban, it would have greater credibility if the United States, Afghanistan, and Pakistan created a joint security and intelligence-sharing organization committed to preempting terrorist attacks in preparation on their territory. This cooperative and scalable mechanism—a step not taken in the past thirteen years—would improve unity of effort, demonstrate international resolve, and move our trilateral relationship forward at key working levels.

Step Four: Establish Trip-Wires

To deal more effectively with the threat posed by the potential loss of nuclear weapons to terrorist groups, US policymakers should consider initiating weapons of mass destruction (WMD) security talks with Pakistan under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Ongoing terrorist attacks against Pakistan Army Headquarters in Rawalpindi, coupled with the emergence of a Punjabi Taliban, underscore the growing need for better WMD dialogue between our two countries. While periodically discussing the issue with Pakistan, the United States, so far, appears unable to exchange detailed information on WMD security, including the persistent rumor that Pakistan may have tapped Saudi Arabia as its weapons repository in case of widespread Pakistani instability.³⁵ The lack of such exchanges hinders potential dialogue on civilian nuclear cooperation similar to that enacted by the United States with India in 2008. New talks exploring joint protocols and assistance to strengthen WMD protection are in the clear interest of both sides.

The incentive for such talks would be the promise of a multi-year commitment of military aid and sales to the Pakistan Army subject to Congressional concurrence. The stick for such talks would be placing Pakistan on review for possible designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, if Army units were involved in the loss of WMD control or in nuclear proliferation efforts with North Korea and other rogue states. Since these talks may admittedly be a long shot for the United States, we should consider exploring China's willingness to sponsor talks with

34 Ahmed and Rosenberg, "Karzai Arranged Secret Contacts?"

35 See a full discussion in Bruce Riedel, "Enduring Allies: Pakistan's Partnership with Saudi Arabia Runs Deeper," *Force* (New Delhi: December 2011).

Pakistan. Establishing stronger WMD safety protocols appears consistent with China's own efforts to assist Pakistan's nuclear development.³⁶ China's potential leadership in WMD talks also offers the United States a chance to restart the first and second steps if Pakistan were to rebuff our initial requests and China were to agree to more decisive Pakistani action to stabilize Afghanistan.

Diplomatic and Military Partners

The execution of each step outlined above will require a US whole-of-government approach under the leadership of the National Security Council and Departments of State and Defense. The first step entailing a request to "roll up" the Haqqani Network will depend on prior Afghan concurrence and carefully crafted and virtually simultaneous outreach to three Pakistan counterparts: the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Pakistan Army Chief of Staff's Office. Once a policy decision is reached, the International Security Assistance Force Commander should engage Afghan and Pakistan Army counterparts to put in place a multinational military operation, relying on land power, to round up and detain Haqqani Network leaders and fighters located in some of the most difficult terrain in the world.

Up to now, operational coordination on both sides of the Durand Line has been hampered by communication breakdowns and insufficient information sharing. The challenge for both the United States and Pakistan is not only to strengthen battlefield communications but also to break the mold of past hammer-and-anvil measures by crafting a "fishnet" series of enveloping maneuvers. These actions would aim to isolate and capture a highly mobile and dangerous enemy accustomed to hiding in village society. Relying on both coercion and religious motivation to camouflage itself, the Haqqani group will no longer "fade" as effectively into the background if villagers are accorded the same protection from injury and death Americans enjoy at home. A lower standard will spell failure for this difficult operation designed to create the conditions for a cease-fire and an end to terrorist attacks. Finally, the establishment of detention centers for Haqqani fighters should build and rely on the already in-place prison institutions within Pakistan.

Conclusion

The policy steps proposed above are based not only on our mutual security interests but also the need for stronger US-Pakistan relations. Since its founding in 1947, Pakistan has, *inter alia*, joined with the United States in opposing the Soviet bloc, helped us to reach rapprochement with China, and supported Mujahideen forces on the other side of the Khyber Pass. Such a historically great ally should be recognized as indispensable in the effort to promote peace and stability in South and Central Asia. Moreover, if Pakistan can move beyond a mainly transactional relationship with the United States and the West to shoulder greater regional security responsibilities, it would help unleash the vast economic potential of Central South Asia and underpin Pakistan's role as a major gateway to the region. The alternative is stark: terrorism will

36 Saeed Shah, "Pakistan in Talks to Acquire Three Nuclear Plants from China," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 20, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304757004579332460821261146>.

continue to drain Pakistan's resources and keep it mired in relative poverty. As the long war in Afghanistan enters a new phase in 2014, the time to engage with Pakistan is upon us. Once engaged, Pakistani leaders may surprise us with the firmness of their renewed purpose to face down terrorism and contribute to a safer world; they will also expect our fairness, transparency, and resolve to stay the course with them.

China's North Korea Policy: Rethink or Recharge?

Andrew Scobell and Mark Cozad

ABSTRACT: There has been much speculation lately about a Chinese “rethink” on North Korea. Beijing has clearly been exasperated with Pyongyang. What is going on with Beijing’s Pyongyang policy? Has there actually been a reassessment of the PRC’s policy toward the DPRK? Is there a military component to this policy, and what do we know about planning by China’s People’s Liberation Army for a Korea contingency? This article answers those questions.

There has been much speculation lately about a Chinese “rethink” on North Korea.¹ Certainly, Beijing’s exasperation with Pyongyang has been palpable. The degree of debate evident in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) over its policy toward the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in recent years is unprecedented and comes on the heels of a series of particularly provocative acts by Pyongyang.² Since 2006 these acts include a series of missile tests and nuclear tests each conducted apparently without prior notification or consultation with Beijing. Additionally, strains in bilateral relations were triggered by provocations such as the torpedoing of a Republic of Korea (ROK) Navy corvette, the *Cheonan*, and the shelling of Yeongpyong Island in 2010. Further strains in Beijing-Pyongyang ties followed the death of Kim Jong Il in December 2011, and the elevation of his son Kim Jong Un to the position of DPRK supreme leader. Perhaps the most recent provocation from the PRC perspective was the execution of Kim Jong Un’s uncle, Jang Sung Taek, in December 2013. Jang appears to have been China’s key interlocutor with the current North Korean administration and his death came as a great shock to Beijing. Moreover, it raised new questions about Pyongyang’s policy direction and introduced new uncertainties into the DPRK’s relationship with the PRC.³

China, of course, experienced its own leadership transition at the 18th Party Congress in November 2012 and the National People’s Congress in March 2013 with the appointment of a new generation of leaders. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) General Secretary and PRC President Xi Jinping, while maintaining general continuity with the policies of his predecessor Hu Jintao, has sought to put his own imprimatur on the affairs of state, espousing a “China Dream” and proposing a “new type of great power relationship with the United States.” Do these changes include a revamped North Korea policy?

1 The research and writing of this article was made possible by funding from the Tang Institute for U.S.-China Relations.

2 See, for example, Paul Letters, “Beijing Rethinks Its North Korea Policy Priorities,” *South China Morning Post*, April 11, 2013; David Mulrooney, “China’s Changing Calculus on North Korea,” *Asia Times Online*, April 29, 2013, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/KOR-01-290413.html>.

3 Andrew Scobell, “A Death in the Family,” *U.S. News and World Report*, January 21, 2014.

Chinese officials appear to be changing the term they use to label the bloody struggle waged on the Korean Peninsula six decades ago. During Vice President Li Yuanchao's visit to North Korea in July 2013 to commemorate the crucible of the China-North Korea alliance, Li purposely used the simple phrase "Korean War" rather than the title that has been used for five decades, the "War to Resist America and Aid Korea."⁴ This semantic change may be as much about a public relations effort to improve relations with the United States as it is about signaling a change in the PRC's perceptions of Pyongyang or policy toward North Korea. Beijing appears eager not to antagonize the United States unnecessarily. But China may also intend to signal to North Korea not to take its longtime ally for granted.

In any event, a high level of frustration with North Korea endures and this has manifested itself in a remarkable public airing of anger and outrage by Chinese scholars, analysts, and members of the public. One episode in May 2012 triggered a particularly vitriolic reaction from Chinese "netizens": the kidnapping of twenty-eight Chinese fishermen by North Korean naval vessels. The story unleashed a torrent of anti-DPRK sentiment becoming "one of the hottest trending topics in China's microblogging sites."⁵ Although these open displays of deep disaffection with North Korea are genuine, they do not appear to signify a policy shift by Beijing toward Pyongyang.

Indeed, the public airing of ire about China's North Korea problem has yet to translate into a sea change in Beijing's policy towards Pyongyang. Much speculation about Chinese thinking on North Korea is discerned from interviews and conversations with Chinese civilian and military analysts and academics, including Track II dialogues.⁶ However, more concrete evidence is not easy to obtain.

What is going on with Beijing's Pyongyang policy? What are China's goals where North Korea is concerned? Has there actually been a reassessment of the PRC's policy toward the DPRK? Is there a military component to this policy, and what we do we know about planning by the China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) for a Korea contingency?

We contend that Beijing conducted a thorough policy reassessment toward North Korea a decade ago when faced with the 2002-03 nuclear crisis and China has since redoubled its efforts and pursued a course consistent with previous policy.⁷ Beijing's reassessment reaffirmed that critical Chinese interests and goals vis-à-vis North Korea remained unchanged. An examination of the full scope of initiatives China has

4 Xu Fangqing and Yu Xiaodong, "North Korea: The New Normal," *News China*, October 2013, <http://www.newschinamag.com/magazine/the-new-normal>; "Kim Jong Un Meets with Vice President Li Yuanchao," *PRC Foreign Ministry Press Release*, July 26, 2013, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1062374.shtml>.

5 Keith B. Richburg, "Chinese Public Vents Fury at North Korea Over Seizure of Boats," *The Washington Post*, May 24, 2012, 8.

6 See, for example, Bonnie Glaser, Scott Snyder, and John Park, *Keeping an Eye on an Unruly Neighbor: Chinese Views of Economic Reform and Stability in North Korea* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies/United States Institute of Peace, January 3, 2008); and International Crisis Group, *Shades of Red: China's Debate over North Korea* (Asia Report No. 179, November 2, 2009).

7 This is the consensus of a number of respected analysts, but perhaps the best evidence that such a decision was made is the concerted array of initiatives launched by Beijing since that time described by the authors. See, for example, Andrew Scobell, "The View from China," in *Asia at a Tipping Point: Korea, the Rise of China, and the Impact of Leadership Transitions*, ed. Gilbert Rozman (Washington, DC: Korea Economic Institute, 2012), 69-81.

pursued since the early 2000s underscores the extreme seriousness with which Beijing views the Pyongyang situation and highlights the extensive array of resources Chinese leaders allocated to address it. Below we provide context, outline the policy, and then identify the array of components in China's recharged policy initiative with particular attention to military preparation and planning.

Beijing's Greatest Challenge

Perhaps no foreign policy issue poses a greater challenge for China in the 21st century than North Korea.⁸ Relationships with the United States and Japan have each proved to be major tests for China but arguably neither has provided the sustained policy challenge to the same extent as North Korea. The DPRK has proved to be a near constant headache for the PRC since the early 1990s. Unlike relations across the Taiwan Strait with Taipei, which have ameliorated appreciably since 2008, and relations with Washington and Tokyo, the climate of which has tended to fluctuate considerably over time, Beijing's Pyongyang problem has not abated and appears to be chronic.⁹ China's unruly neighbor has conducted a series of nuclear tests (October 2006, May 2009, and February 2012) and missile launches (notably July 2006, July 2009, April 2012, and May 2013). Pyongyang's provocations include, the two aforementioned incidents in 2010 (which killed a total of 48 ROK military personnel and 2 civilians), a declaration that Pyongyang would no longer abide by the 1953 armistice agreement and the severing of its hotline to Seoul (March 2013), and blocking South Korean access to Kaesong Industrial Zone (April 2013). For the PRC there has been no respite where the DPRK is concerned.

Like a variety of foreign policy issues in recent years, North Korea threatens to besmirch China's prestige. Beijing has been accused of consorting with unsavory regimes around the world. For example, in the lead up to the 2008 Olympics, China found itself tarred as the bad guy in a humanitarian tragedy in Darfur because of Beijing's association with a Khartoum regime accused of perpetrating atrocities. China craves the reputation of a responsible global citizen and a force for good in the world.¹⁰ However, Pyongyang is not akin to Khartoum in Beijing's eyes. After all, North Korea is not some far off Third World state like Sudan. Rather, it is a radioactive Darfur on the doorstep—a humanitarian disaster and the subject of enormous international attention with a repressive, distasteful dictatorship made all the more complicated because North Korea is a hyper-militarized state armed with ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Instability immediately across the Yalu River directly threatens domestic stability in China's heartland because of the specter of many hundreds of thousands

8 Scobell, "The View from China," 79.

9 Ibid.

10 See, for example, Yong Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

of refugees flooding into Northeast China. As a result, Beijing is ultra-sensitive to any hint of turmoil on the Korean Peninsula.¹¹

Go Big and Go Strong

China, the available evidence suggests, has not undertaken a serious reexamination of its relationship with North Korea in recent months or years. Rather, Beijing's rethink on Pyongyang appears to have happened much earlier—a decade ago. While the public debate has been—and continues to be—contentious, senior Chinese leaders remain unshaken over the basic thrust and contours of this policy.

Officially, China pursues a policy of peace, stability, and denuclearization. PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Hong Lei told assembled reporters on 8 April 2013 that China remained focused on “unremitting efforts to safeguard peace and stability on the peninsula,” and China seeks to “push forward the denuclearization process.”¹² While Beijing is undoubtedly sincere about desiring a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula, the reality is that denuclearization is a much lower priority than maintaining peace and stability on China's doorstep.

Indeed, the Chinese public discourse on North Korea of recent years appears to be the manifestation of more relaxed censorship rather than any indicator of policy change. And Beijing's earlier reassessment on Pyongyang did not result in a decision to abandon its most truculent and troublesome neighbor. On the contrary, the reassessment concluded that the PRC had no choice but to redouble its efforts to bolster its DPRK buffer. In short, ten years ago, China decided that North Korea could not be allowed to fail. The decision has meant Beijing has decided to go big and go strong in an all-embracing approach toward Pyongyang to strengthen the regime on its doorstep. This initiative includes diplomatic, economic, and security dimensions.

Diplomacy. During the past ten years, North Korea has received two types of diplomatic support from Beijing. First, the PRC has not publicly condemned the DPRK (although there have been some mild tongue lashings) and Beijing has watered down United Nations Security Council resolutions. Second, China has established a multilateral forum with six participants—North Korea, South Korea, China, Russia, Japan, and the United States—to manage the North Korea nuclear issue. In 2003, China launched the Six Party Talks and since then has toiled doggedly to keep them alive. While the talks have been on hiatus since 2007, Beijing has worked tirelessly to resuscitate the dormant multilateral forum and prevent it from collapsing completely. Efforts are currently underway to reconvene a session in the near future. In May 2013, senior North Korean leader Vice Marshal Choe Ryong Hae visited Beijing in what appeared to be an effort to improve China-North Korea relations and signal Pyongyang's readiness to curb its bad behavior. The following

11 Chinese leaders are most alarmed by the prospect of domestic instability. Beijing also worries about upheaval at its borders which threatens to spill over into China. See Andrew J. Nathan and Andrew Scobell, *China's Search for Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 3-7 (on Beijing's perspectives on security vulnerabilities) and 126-137 (on China's strategy on the Korean Peninsula).

12 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The People's Republic of China, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hong Lei's Regular Press Conference on April 9, 2013,” <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/t1030030.shtml>.

month, DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Guan—Pyongyang’s point man on the Six Party Talks—traveled to Beijing apparently to signal North Korea’s willingness to reengage in the multilateral forum. A Chinese initiative to restart the Six Party Talks was clearly underway with a visit by PRC Vice President Li Yuanchao to Pyongyang in July and a follow-up trip by Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei—Beijing’s point man on the Six Party Talks—to the DPRK in August.

Economic. In the early 2000s, China launched a comprehensive effort to bolster North Korea’s economic fundamentals. Repeated attempts to convince the late Kim Jong Il of the benefits of Pyongyang implementing a “reform and opening” policy during his seven visits to China (between May 2000 and May 2011) came to naught. Nevertheless, Beijing has undertaken concerted endeavors to get North Korea’s economy off life support and revitalize a range of economic sectors through a substantial injection of trade, aid, and investment. But China’s frustration at its lack of success in persuading Pyongyang to adopt Chinese-style economic reforms did not deter Beijing.

China has been North Korea’s top trading partner since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Soviet demise ended the significant subsidies from Moscow and triggered a systemic crisis and economic tailspin in North Korea. During the 1990s, China accounted for approximately a quarter of North Korea’s total trade, but China’s percentage rose to one third by 2003 and climbed even higher thereafter.¹³ Today, China accounts for well over half of North Korea’s two-way trade. In both decades North Korea has run a huge trade deficit, and Chinese exports to North Korea have risen at a more rapid rate than North Korea’s exports to China. North Korea’s exports have been overwhelmingly resources such as minerals and marine life.¹⁴ Of course these are only South Korean estimates because actual data is unavailable and smuggling and barter trade along the border is difficult to quantify.

Since the early 2000s, Chinese firms—mainly from neighboring Jilin and Liaoning provinces have invested in North Korea infrastructure, agriculture, mining, and retail sectors. Many of these investments have been encouraged and insured by provincial and national authorities. This trend represents a significant shift from China’s previous focus on solely providing economic assistance. Beijing recognized that Pyongyang will almost certainly never repay loans and that outright aid offers limited leverage and negligible return. Investing in North Korea allows China to benefit from economic opportunities—albeit risky ones. Between 2003 and 2009, Chinese companies reportedly invested a total of US \$98.3 million. This sum is much less than Chinese entrepreneurs invest in other countries on China’s periphery, such as Mongolia, Myanmar, and Vietnam, but it still makes China the second largest investor in North Korea. While South Korea may qualify as the top investor, these funds are solely located in the troubled Kaesong Industrial Complex. In contrast, investments by Chinese companies are spread across North Korea in a range of sectors albeit mostly in extractive (41 percent) and

13 Scott Snyder, *China’s Rise and the Two Koreas: Politics, Economics, Security* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2009), Table 5.2, 112.

14 Balázs Szalontai and Changyong Choi, “China’s Controversial Role in North Korea’s Economic Transformation: The Dilemmas of Dependency,” *Asian Survey* 53, no. 2 (March/April 2013): 269-291.

light industry (38 percent) according to one study.¹⁵ China continues to channel investment into North Korea: in August 2012, for example, Beijing announced the establishment of a fund worth almost US \$500 million for Chinese investments south of the Yalu.¹⁶

Beijing, moreover, has also provided hundreds of millions of US dollars in foreign aid much of it in the form of food grains and petroleum. The size of these shipments increased considerably in 2003, 2004, and 2005 according to available estimates. This aid is reportedly the largest amount China disseminates to any country in the world and is allocated at the highest echelons in Beijing rather than through the normal channels for dispersing development aid in the Ministry of Commerce.¹⁷

Military. China has not disowned or distanced itself from North Korea in the security sphere. The PRC's only formal military alliance is with the DPRK, the "Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance between the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" signed in July 1961. The document commits one country to come to the aid of the other if attacked.¹⁸ However, there does not appear to be any real defense coordination mechanism nor do the terms of the treaty ever seem to have been invoked. While Chinese leaders have on multiple occasions stated publicly and privately that Pyongyang cannot assume that Beijing will come to the rescue, the treaty can provide the justification for an intervention if Chinese leaders consider such a step to be necessary. Thus, the security relationship is perhaps best viewed as a "virtual alliance" with considerable ambiguity as to if and when it might be invoked by Beijing.¹⁹

The alliance may be a virtual one but this does not mean that Beijing does not take it seriously or that the PLA doesn't see it as real. For Chinese civilian and military leaders, this alliance remains relevant and personal. The alliance was sealed in blood during the early 1950s when the so-called Chinese People's Volunteers fought side by side with the Korean People's Army (KPA). Hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers gave their lives in the conflict, and Chinese troops remained in North Korea until 1958.²⁰ The fact that, despite the sacrifice of blood and treasure by Beijing many decades ago, Pyongyang continues to absorb China's attention, consume Chinese resources, and remain a focal point for PLA contingency planning (see below)—including the prospect of a second military intervention—is galling to China's leaders. But all this pushes Beijing to redouble its efforts. Indeed, it is clear the PLA is increasingly concerned about the prospect of instability on China's periphery and on the Korean Peninsula in particular.

15 For analysis of the investment switch, see Jaewoo Choo, "Mirroring North Korea's Growing Economic Dependence on China: Political Ramification," *Asian Survey* 48, no. 2 (March/April 2008): 364. For details and analysis of the investments themselves, see Drew Thompson, *Silent Partners: Chinese Joint Ventures in North Korea* (Washington, DC: U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, 2011).

16 Jeremy Page, "China Builds Up Its Links to North Korea," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 7, 2012, 8.

17 Snyder, *China's Rise*, 113-117.

18 The text of the treaty can be found in *Peking Review* 4, no. 28 (1961): 5.

19 Andrew Scobell, *China and North Korea: From Comrades-in-Arms to Allies at Arm's Length* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2004), 19-20.

20 See, for example, Zhang Aiping, chief compiler, *Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun* [China's People's Liberation Army] vol. 1 (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo Chubanshe, 1994), 137. According to this authoritative source, the CPV suffered more than 360,000 combat casualties (including 130,000 wounded), as well as "380,000 noncombat casualties."

Power Projection . . . around the Periphery

What is unmistakably implicit in the PLA's warfighting scenarios and campaign planning is that if conflict occurs it is expected to flare up close to home.²¹ What PLA doctrinal writings call "local wars in conditions of informatization" are anticipated at or just beyond China's borders. Of course, China's armed forces have limited power projection capabilities and it is still unusual for air, naval, or ground units to deploy or be employed out of area. When units do venture farther afield—outside of China's immediate neighborhood or the Asia-Pacific region—the events are marked with great fanfare. The participation of Chinese forces in United Nations peacekeeping missions around the globe (since 1990) and the anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden (since 2008) are cases in point. But a careful examination of recent PLA official publications and exercises reveals a focus on mastering the relatively modest capability to project power within China from one military region to another.²²

Indeed, Chinese leaders appear to think of national security in terms of four concentric circles: the first is a domestic ring, the second consists of a ring proximate to Chinese territory, the third ring is more expansive encompassing China's wider Asia-Pacific neighborhood, and the fourth ring encompasses the rest of the globe.²³ The first two rings are most delicate and tend to consume the majority of CCP leaders' time. The first ring equates to internal security—the territory that Beijing currently administers or claims sovereignty over. Thus, this ring includes not just the restive, sparsely populated western regions of Tibet and Xinjiang but also the densely populated ethnic Han heartland of eastern China, and frontier areas along the border with North Korea which includes an ethnic Korean minority population of more than two million. Beijing is most sensitive in this first ring because it contains its core national security interests.²⁴ Since at least the mid-2000s, the PLA has worked with local and provincial authorities in frontier areas of the Shenyang Military Region (which encompasses Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Liaoning Provinces) on so-called "border defense building" activities including involved efforts to establish close ties between local communities and military units stationed nearby.²⁵ The goal is to develop a stable, layered, and tightly organized system of border control and protection all the way down to the grass roots level.

21 For example, see M. Taylor Fravel, "Securing Borders: China's Doctrine and Force Structure for Frontier Defense," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 130, nos. 4-5 (August-October 2007): 705-737.

22 *The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces* (Beijing: Information Office of the State Council, April 2013), section on "Carrying out scenario-based exercises and drills"; Dennis J. Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today: Tradition and Transformation for the 21st Century*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 197-199.

23 The rings conception of Chinese security is drawn from Nathan and Scobell, *China's Search for Security*.

24 Other areas include the islands Beijing does not control in the East and South China Seas, including Taiwan, the Senkaku/Diaoyutais, and the Spratlys/Nanshas, which are currently objects of dispute with other claimants. While China has explicitly listed Taiwan as a core interest, Beijing has demurred from officially placing these other islands in the same category.

25 For a fascinating account of this initiative penned by the commander of the Shenyang MR for three years (2004-2007), see Chang Wanquan, "Huimou canyu Dongbe bianfang jianshe de sannian [A Retrospective of three years participating in Northeast border defense building]," *Jiefangjunbao*, January 7, 2009, 8. Of course, General Chang is currently the PRC's Minister of National Defense and concurrently a member of the Central Military Commission.

A second ring of insecurity extends beyond China's actual borders and comprises adjacent peripheral areas to include all neighboring countries and regions—continental or maritime. This area constitutes a band or buffer within which Beijing seeks to maintain stable and sympathetic—or at least neutral—regimes and deny presence or access to the military forces of external powers. North Korea is perhaps the most important of these regimes because of the extreme sensitivity of the Korean Peninsula—its close proximity to China's political and economic heartland and Pyongyang's status as barrier between Beijing and Washington's ally, Seoul, and the ROK-US allied forces south of the Demilitarized Zone. According to General Wang Haidong of the PLA's China Institute for International Strategic Studies, while North Korea's value to China's security is “very different to what it was during the Korean War,” the country still has “special importance to China's national security and must be restored to its status as a strategic buffer.”²⁶ In the mid-2000s, the PLA took over primary responsibility for border defense duties along the boundary with North Korea. Starting in February 2004, the PLA and KPA reportedly instituted regular border defense conferences with their North Korean counterparts.²⁷

Perhaps the most important point to make here is that, from Beijing's perspective, alarm over a North Korean contingency is fueled in large part by fear of what US response this eventuality might produce or what US action might precipitate.²⁸ Since North Korea literally is situated on China's doorstep, not only could instability south of the Yalu River radiate northward but also any military actions by the United States and its ROK ally would send major shockwaves reverberating across China's threshold. This sensitive location is directly adjacent to China's political and economic heartland. Indeed, the Chinese have long referred to the relationship between Korea and China as “lips and teeth”—if the Korean “lips” are removed then China's “teeth” get cold and exposed to the harsh elements.

In Beijing's mind the prospect of instability in North Korea means the disintegration of the barrier (i.e., the “lips”) and raises the specter of US and ROK forces operating north of the DMZ. Also alarming for Chinese leaders is the potential for a conflagration on the Korean Peninsula which might escalate horizontally or vertically. Because of these fears, one can logically infer that the PLA is planning for a North Korean contingency. In fact, this planning focus has been the clear message communicated by PLA analysts to the authors in recent years. But which type of contingency is the PLA planning for?

Korean Contingencies PLA Style

As might be expected, PLA operational plans are not readily accessible. But we can draw on a selection of authoritative writings and commentaries by Chinese military specialists on operational matters. These sources can provide important insights about where, how, and against whom the PLA expects to operate. Any PLA operations south

26 Wang Haidong, “Zhongguo you biyao jian zhanlue wending dai” [China must build strategic buffers], *Huanqiu Shibao on line*, August 27, 2013.

27 Chang Wanquan, “Huimou canyu Dongbe bianfang jianshe de sannian [A Retrospective of three years participating in Northeast border defense building],” *Jiefangjunbao*, January 7, 2009, 8.

28 Scobell, “The View from China,” 72.

of the Yalu River will likely happen suddenly, almost certainly be unilateral, encompass a broad spectrum of missions, and anticipate the real possibility of confrontation with the US military.

Suddenly Confronting a More Powerful Adversary

The precedent of China's decision to intervene in the Korean War in October 1950 remains indelibly etched in many Beijing minds. Furthermore, the calculus behind the move—to prevent US forces from stripping away the “lips”—still resonates six decades later. According to authoritative Chinese military writings, the 21st Century PLA is preparing to face a more powerful adversary with overwhelming air superiority and a size, configuration, and mix of capabilities that could only be the armed forces of one country: the United States. Moreover, the location could only be the Korean Peninsula. In 2005, for example, an article appeared in a technical military journal written by four analysts from the Zhengzhou Air Defense Academy. The team, based in the Jinan Military Region (MR), analyzed the daunting “air threat” posed to a PLA group army from an unidentified adversary in a notional “limited war” fought “along our country's land border.”²⁹

Given Beijing's heightened sensitivity to instability across the Yalu and fear of spillover into the Shenyang MR, Chinese intervention could come quickly (and quite possibly faster than any ROK/US intervention). Thus, if North Korea implodes or erupts in civil war, Beijing will probably intervene earlier than either Seoul or Washington.

China will likely have at least some units of its armed forces poised nearby and ready to go promptly. In the mid-1990s, the focus of maneuver exercises in the Shenyang MR shifted from hostilities with Russia to “possible emergencies on the Korean Peninsula,” and training for a North Korean contingency appears to have intensified since the mid-2000s.³⁰ Then, in December 2013 and January 2014, a series of major exercises occurred in the Shenyang MR in the vicinity of China's border with North Korea, including one in which the number of participating PLA personnel were reported to be as many as 100,000. While the PRC Ministry of National Defense insisted that these were “normal training” events, winter-time drills of this size and scope are highly unusual.³¹

One of the first units to intervene in a North Korean contingency would likely be a light mechanized brigade from the 39th Group Army equipped with wheeled fighting vehicles, but rapid reaction components, including PLA Special Forces, helicopter units, and the PLA Air Force's 15th Airborne Corps (located near Wuhan in the Guangzhou Military Region) would be one of the first formations to arrive.³² However, full

29 Hao Qiang, Feng Lidong, Gong Xu, Yu Junsha, “Jituanjun fankong xi zhan yi kong zhong weixie pinggu [Evaluation of air threat on group army's anti-air raid campaign], *Xiandai jangyun jishu* [Modern Defense Technology], 33, no. 1 (February 2005): 10-14, 18.

30 “Chinese Armed Forces Responding to Tensions on Korean Peninsula,” *Kanwa Defense Review* no. 106 (August 1, 2013): 34-36.

31 “PLA mobilizes 100,000 troops for N Korean border exercise,” *Want China Times*, January 15, 2014, <http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20140115000029&cid=1101>; “Shenyang Drills were ‘Regular Training’ MOD,” *Global Times* January 21, 2014, <http://www.global-times.cn/content/838579.shtml>.

32 Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today*, 84, 104. Each military region has rapid reaction units (RRUs). It is likely that RRUs from other MRs will participate in any North Korean intervention.

mobilization of all the units in the Shenyang MR would probably take weeks and deployment of units from other MRs would take even longer.

Beijing will want to prevent a flood of North Korean refugees into China and seek to cordon off an area south of the Yalu River, and perhaps even establish refugee camps. Beijing will likely also feel a sense of urgency to seize control of North Korean nuclear and chemical sites, especially those in close proximity to the Chinese border. These missions have all been identified as those types China's armed forces should be prepared to execute.³³

Moreover, the PLA continues to maintain chemical defense units both in active duty and reserve components. Shenyang is noteworthy as the only one of seven military regions in China to possess both an active duty chemical defense regiment and a reserve one.³⁴ This dual capacity is probably because of the MR's proximity to North Korea—the most likely location where the PLA will confront chemical weapons.

Chinese urgency will be driven in part by worries over “loose nukes” and in part by a desire to preempt US action. China will assume the United States would be extremely alarmed at the prospect of multiple unsecured suspected weapons of mass destruction sites in North Korea, some quite close to China's border. Beijing's logic is that a nuclear-armed North Korea has prompted enormous US attention so it is highly likely that the real prospect of unsecured WMD will trigger a swift US response. The specter of US troops—even in relatively small numbers—anywhere near the Yalu will be extremely disturbing to Beijing.³⁵ While there is a very good chance that China will seek a United Nations imprimatur on any intervention in North Korea, this authorization is more likely to be sought after the fact than beforehand.

Going It Alone

Despite this history of comradeship-in-arms, in the 21st century the KPA and the PLA seem to act like allies at arm's length.³⁶ That is, there is limited interaction and cooperation combined with a significant amount of mutual suspicion and aloofness. There is a military-to-military relationship but this appears to be extremely modest. The manifestations of the relationship appear largely ceremonial and superficial exchanges of high-level delegations and a small number of KPA officers attending selected PLA professional military education institutions. However, there do not appear to be any field or command post exercises between the militaries of the kind one might expect between real or even nominal

33 Liu Xiangyang, Xu Sheng, Xiong Kaiping, and Zhong Chunyu, “Feizhanzheng junshi xingdong tanyao [An examination of MOOTW], *Zhongguo junshi kexue* (China Military Science), no. 3 (2008).

34 Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today*, 89-90.

35 Regular author conversations since 2002 with multiple military and civilian analysts in Beijing and Shanghai.

36 Scobell, *China and North Korea*.

alliances.³⁷ The most routinized and on-going series of bilateral or multilateral field exercises that the PLA conducts are under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with armed forces of member states.³⁸ By contrast, China's security relationship with North Korea seems strangely dormant.

Because of this condition, it is likely that any intervention by the PLA in North Korea will be unilateral. There may be a veneer of cooperation with the KPA, but there will be nothing approaching the degree of integrated command and control or level of interoperability that exists between US Forces Korea and the Republic of Korea's armed forces. Moreover, one cannot assume there will be any level of cooperation with the KPA in a PLA operation in North Korea. Indeed, it is conceivable that the KPA might oppose Chinese intervention.

Combat and Noncombat Operations

The range of military operations the PLA will expect to conduct span a wide spectrum from low-intensity combat, high-intensity kinetics to noncombat operations dealing with nontraditional security threats.

For the past decade, the PLA has emphasized an expansive set of noncombat, peacetime operations labeled "military operations other than war" or "MOOTW" [*feizhanzheng junshi xingdong*].³⁹ Chinese military doctrine has emphasized a set of four undertakings articulated by then CMC Chair Hu Jintao in December 2004. He outlined four so-called New Historic Missions which highlight a wide range of responsibilities for the PLA: defending CCP rule, safeguarding economic development, protecting national interests, and upholding world peace.

The PLA, of course, has not engaged in any significant combat operations since the 1979 border war with Vietnam. Moreover, since the 2008 election of Ma Ying-jeou as president of Taiwan, the likelihood of crisis or conflict in the Taiwan Strait has been extremely low. With high-intensity, large-scale combat a more distant proposition, in recent years the PLA has turned more attention to dealing with an array of nontraditional security threats confronting China. Outside of China, the PLA sent more than 20,000 troops to participate in more than 20 United Nations Peacekeeping or observer missions; dispatched more than 13 rotations of the three ship anti-piracy task force in the Gulf of Aden; and in early 2011 elements of the PLA assisted in extricating more than 35,000 Chinese civilians from Libya in what China's 2012 Defense White Paper called "the largest overseas evacuation" in the history of the PRC.

37 On China-North Korea mil-mil relations, see Scobell, *China and North Korea*, 8-9. More recent scholarship on the PLA exchanges underscores the absence of robust mil-mil ties between China and North Korea. See Heidi Holz and Kenneth Allen, "Military Exchanges with Chinese Characteristics: The People's Liberation Army Experience with Military Relations," in *The PLA at Home and Abroad: Assessing the Operational Capabilities of China's Military*, eds. Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Andrew Scobell (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 429-473. A recent analysis of the PLA multilateral exercises reveals no exercises with the KPA; Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today*, 206-209.

38 Since 2002, China has conducted almost annual military field exercises with assorted SCO member states. These have included not just the PLA and their counterpart armed forces but also the People's Armed Police and their foreign counterparts.

39 See, for example, Andrew Scobell, "Discourse in 3-D: The PLA's Evolving Doctrine, Circa 2009," in *The PLA at Home and Abroad: Assessing the Operational Capabilities of China's Military*, eds. Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Andrew Scobell (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 99-134.

In addition, PLA and People's Armed Police formations regularly participate in counterterrorism exercises with a variety of countries, notably with the member militaries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Inside China, the PLA has engaged in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, including responding to the Sichuan earthquake in 2008, snowstorms and other natural disasters. According to the 2012 White Paper, hundreds of thousands of uniformed personnel were employed in "emergency rescue and disaster relief activities" during 2008 alone.

The PLA seems to be planning for a range of nonwarfighting contingencies around its periphery. These include protecting the border, stabilizing operations, dealing with refugees, controlling WMD problems, protecting PRC citizens and property, and evacuating non-combatants. Indeed, according to an article coauthored by four officers posted to the headquarters of the Shenyang MR that appeared in a 2008 issue of a prominent PLA journal, military operations other than war include the following: "The defense of land, maritime, and air frontiers, establishing restricted areas, soft battle strikes, military trade and aid, peacekeeping operations, . . . controlling and managing refugees, . . . [dealing with] nuclear, biological, and chemical agents, military control, civil assistance, protecting and evacuating nationals in foreign trouble spots"⁴⁰

Beijing will almost certainly feel pressure to protect Chinese citizens and economic interests in North Korea in the event of a crisis. Chinese businesses now have significant economic investments in North Korea and there are at least thousands of PRC citizens inside the country at any given time.⁴¹

Despite attention to MOOTW, the PLA has not neglected combat readiness and is also training for combat. In recent years, senior leaders have been at pains to stress that while the PLA can perform a wide range of "diversified military tasks," its core mission remains preparing to fight "local wars under conditions of informatization." This focus is what former commander-in-chief Hu Jintao and others have urged. The implicit assumption is that such a war would be most likely to occur at points around China's periphery. Almost immediately after being appointed to succeed Hu as chair of the CMC, Xi Jinping has stressed that the PLA's top priority should be "preparing for military struggle."⁴² Some have interpreted this statement to mean Xi was deliberately adopting a bellicose stance and chalked this up as yet another indication of a more assertive China. However, this rhetoric actually appears aimed at bolstering support within the military for its new commander-in-chief and ensuring the PLA is prepared to execute its mission in Korea or elsewhere.

Conclusion

China's previous rethink on North Korea policy occurred ten years ago and turned out to be a recharge. The decision was determined by Beijing's vital interests: preventing domestic insecurity and maintaining

40 Liu Xiangyang et al., "Feizhazheng junshi xingdong tanyao [An examination of MOOTW], *Zhongguo junshi kexue* (China Military Science), no. 3 (2008), 4.

41 According to statistics from the PRC Ministry of Commerce, there are at least 5,000 Chinese contract workers based in North Korea.

42 For example, see Cary Huang, "Xi Shaping up to be an influential PLA Commander," *South China Morning Post*, August 1, 2013.

a stable buffer at the gateway to China's political and economic heartland. Future Pyongyang provocations are unlikely to change Beijing's buffer strategy. China appears prepared to bolster the North Korean buffer at all costs using every instrument at its disposal—economic (aid, trade, and investment), political (tacitly supporting hereditary succession), diplomatic (refusing to condemn the North publicly for its intransigence or transgressions and pursuing the Six Party Talks), and, if necessary, military (including limited or wholesale intervention to prop up the regime).

Indeed, all indications are that the PLA has been actively planning for a variety of Korean contingencies. While China's armed forces are fully prepared to execute if so ordered, no one in Beijing is eager to send Chinese forces across the Yalu for the second time in sixty years. Unlike 1950, today Beijing has a sizeable tool kit of nonmilitary options at its disposal where Pyongyang is concerned. Chinese leaders would much prefer to manage the problem diplomatically and economically. But this preference does not mean Beijing would hesitate to act militarily if China's vital national security interests were determined to be on the line across the Yalu River.

For successive US administrations, cooperation and coordination with China has been the cornerstone of their initiatives vis-à-vis North Korea. But the above analysis suggests that Washington should alter its expectations of what Beijing would be willing to do. Real, albeit modest, diplomatic and economic coordination has occurred and may continue. But military cooperation or coordination is another story. There has been informal Track II discussion about possible coordination between the US and PRC defense establishments concerning North Korea but the topic is far too sensitive in China to move much beyond the realm of the hypothetical. Despite this reality, persistent volatility on the Korean Peninsula and high costs of miscommunication in a future North Korean crisis require the United States to persevere in a dialog with China.

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RECONSIDERING FUTURE WAR

Predicting Future War

Robert A. Johnson

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ABSTRACT: This article assesses how we think about future war, drawing attention to its associated caveats, obstacles, and intellectual problems. It is divided into three sections: the first acknowledges that predicting the future is immensely problematic, but suggests history can be a critical guide. The second assesses the present and why it is difficult to conceive of accelerating change. The third examines the trends of future war. The article concludes with implications for US forces.

Predicting the Future Operating Environment

Throughout history, changes in the character of war have been difficult for contemporaries to identify, particularly during long periods of peace. While there may be trends and enduring principles of strategy and international relations, it is the variability of conditions, changes in the application of technology, adaptation, and the dynamics of conflict that make prediction, and consequently planning, very challenging. The problem of prediction has not prevented bold assertions, and some dystopian visions of the future have been propagated through sensationalist tracts and even, apparently, in serious scholarship. The modern prophets of doom who foresee a Hobbesian anarchy include such distinguished names as Robert Kaplan, Francis Fukuyama, Samuel B. Huntington and, albeit to a less apocalyptic extent, David Kilcullen.¹ Martin van Creveld and Philip Bobbitt suggest the state is in terminal decline in international affairs, opening the way for chaos and warfare.² Others claimed that war would be conducted “amongst the people” with dire results in terms of civilian casualties, and the official United Kingdom military doctrine of 2009 on future character of conflict referred, in solely negative terms, to a “hybrid” battlefield that would be inevitably “contested, congested, cluttered, connected and constrained.”³ Works on global strategic trends predict a violent future amidst diminishing natural resources, climatic pressures, and global population growth. Nevertheless, such projections are starkly at odds with the conclusions of Steve Pinker, Andrew Mack, and Håvard Hegre, specifically that war, both minor and major, is in decline.⁴ Statistical work

1 Robert D. Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy,” *The Atlantic*, February 1994, <http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour/archive/kaplan.mhtml>; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992); Samuel B. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013).

2 Martin van Creveld, “The Fate of the State,” *Parameters* 26, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 4-18; Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles* (New York: Penguin, 2003)

3 Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force* (London: Allen Lane, 2005); Ministry of Defence, *The Future Character of Conflict* (MOD, DCDC Strategic Trends Programme, February 2, 2010).

4 Steve Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking Books, 2011); Andrew Mack, “More Secure World” lecture at ANU, February 2011; Håvard Hegre et al, “Predicting Armed Conflict, 2010-2050,” *International Studies Quarterly* 55(2) (2013): 1-21.

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at Uppsala University, incorporating all the standard drivers of conflict since 1945, forecast a reduction in the number of wars and in the overall casualty toll in the next fifty years.

In the past, attempts to predict the future of war were just as contradictory. It was always tempting for contemporaries to hold on to strongly-held values and force structures and to downplay unpalatable truths. The selection of preferred assumptions, rather than absolute truths, was a common problem. Nevertheless, some projections, dismissed as absurd by contemporaries, proved accurate in time. Selection, exaggeration, absurdity, contemporary fears and preferences, misunderstanding, and misplaced long-range forecasts were the characteristics of predicting future war in the past, and all these traits still dominate the present.⁵

There are many reasons why prediction is so difficult, even when there are apparently obvious positivist “trends” to guide us. It is tempting to make projections in the present based on the types of wars that seem the most prevalent today and to assume that, for the foreseeable future, all wars will fall into this pattern. Military analysts want to identify the characteristics of future war with some accuracy, not least because expensive technological development programs depend on their judgments, training of specialists is long term, and governments require success with the greatest efficiency. The difficulty is that success is contingent on context. Clarity in what the objective is must be essential, but the dynamics of war frequently change the conditions under which the conflict was entered. Aims, therefore, evolve just as rapidly and comprehensively as the conflict itself. Trends of the recent past give strong indications about war in the near future but still require caution. Failing states, international terrorism driven by radical ideologies, and a diminishing power of Western states to influence events or populations may characterise the immediate future. However, the true value of history is not to invoke direct analogies, nor does the answer lie in trying to extract selections to suit a particular agenda, as so often occurs. The value of history is rather in encouraging critical reflection, to ask questions, and to challenge the positivist assumptions that crowd our field of view. We are subject to the flux of history, and we cannot entirely escape our present, but we should seek to break free of unreasoned supposition about the future through critical thinking.

War and Accelerating Change

Recent assessments of the future operating environment have laid emphasis on trends visible in the present. The relative economic decline of the West in relation to the rise of Chinese manufacturing, a phenomenon not necessarily inevitable in the future, has given rise to the assumption that the world will become more multipolar. Given the brevity of the American unipolar moment after the Cold War, multipolarity is hardly surprising, but its association with the relative economic decline of the West is illogical: it is not automatic. Indeed, the rising military potential of China and ambiguity over Beijing’s long-term plans, referred to with such regularity and suspicion that confrontation now

⁵ See Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Imagining Future War: The West’s Technological Revolution and Visions of Wars to Come 1880–1914* (New York: Praeger, 2007).

amounts to an accepted, inevitable condition, may never occur at all, even in the Pacific.⁶ China provides peacekeeping forces to the United Nations and is primarily focused on its domestic security. Fears of its cyberwarfare potential often fail to take any account of the Chinese government's desire to monitor domestic sedition. The People's Republic of China is particularly sensitive about its border integrity, not an unreasonable attitude given threats to its frontiers in 1950, 1960, 1962, and 1979. Most important of all, China is restrained in its ambition by its interdependence with the West and the global economy. It is reliant on markets, as well as the quiescence of its domestic population. A second assertion is that legal frameworks for Western operations will become less flexible and military officers express a fear they will be too constrained to maneuver at all in the future.⁷ Legal advisors are vital in low-intensity operations among the people and in counterterrorism but would have less bearing on high-intensity campaigns. Indeed, it should be noted that legal advice in Western countries has tended to facilitate rather than obstruct operations. The real obstacle is risk-aversion and fear of juridification of operations at the strategic and policymaking level. Concerns are expressed, for example, about psyops, surveillance, and targeting even though these are intrinsic to counterterrorism.

A third assertion is that future operating environments are forecast as urban, with rapid population growth exerting impossible strain on infrastructure and resources. A further complication is that climatic change is regarded as the catalyst for a greater incidence of natural disasters, particularly affecting coastal cities, and Western forces could find themselves in devastated regions. Resource crises, an assumed trigger for war, are foreseen as reaching an acute stage when energy demands begin to exceed supply or available reserves, and the first to be affected, it is thought, would be cities teeming with impoverished populations. Significant adjustments are indeed likely, but, in fact, these will be driven by the market: as costs become too great, consumers and states will be forced to switch to alternatives, and war may not always be the result. Mapping the choke points of demand and supply, and the relative power of cities, states, and nonstate actors, might produce some correlation with future conflict; however, these correlations cannot be regarded as deterministic.

The most accurate assessments of war in the near future are informed by the present. These foresee large insurgent movements, operating across rural and urban areas, deeply enmeshed in local politics, and enjoying the sympathy if not the support of their populations. Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia have been characterized as large-scale Western military intervention that antagonized local people, threatened vested interests, and were marked by hasty or badly aligned ends, ways, and means. Even if deliberate intervention is not the intention, it is possible that, in the near term, attempts to bring humanitarian relief to a population in the midst of civil war, or a peacekeeping mission gone awry, could produce similar complications and obligations.

6 For an alternative view, see Christopher Coker, *The Improbable War: China, the United States and the Logic of Great Power Conflict* (London: Hurst, 2014).

7 Akbar Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam* (New York: Brookings, 2013).

Since American conventional capability is so overwhelming, and a nuclear exchange is so unthinkable, many believe *all* future adversaries of the West will wage irregular or unconventional warfare. Some assert that proxy warfare will be more common.⁸ Some proxies might not be conventional military forces, but may range from private military companies to transnational corporations and financial institutions.

The terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 in the United States suggests that future attacks will be directed at specific weak points of the West. Their targets, such as civilian populations, embassies, and infrastructure, are invariably nonmilitary, but, in fact, these vulnerabilities are exactly what Western armed forces need to address not least because civilian agencies lack the capability to protect them. In tackling these weaknesses, a radical reappraisal of the role and function of armies is probably required, along with a new appreciation that the future operating environment is as likely to be in the domestic sphere as overseas.⁹

Anxiety about Western vulnerabilities has produced a great deal of speculation about e-warfare, counterterrorism scenarios, interrobotic battles, and the future of unmanned air power to conduct standoff attacks. The problem is these may not characterize future war, even if they are reassuringly predictable for their advocates and critics. Western military analysts are eager to identify the patterns with which they are familiar, even where they tend to select and exaggerate the threats and ignore future opportunities. Much of this is cultural. Clausewitzian notions of decisiveness, the politics of decision, and rapid results are deeply attractive, even though war can be, in essence, indecisive, protracted, dynamic, and unpredictable.

One current characterization of war, we observe, is of increasing digitization, with an emphasis on the metrics of targeting, firing, surveillance, and effects. The steady evolution of this phenomenon has been overshadowed by recent debates about counterinsurgency techniques. Nevertheless, the issues are closely related, for, at the tactical level, insurgents endeavor to overload these superior systems by multiple firing points or various forms of attack, including suicide bombers. Special Forces teams are still required to carry out close surveillance to enable the computerized weapons to engage and they often need to be concealed inside populations or recruit local auxiliaries, employing men using a high degree of empathy and understanding of the needs of nonstate actors and their agendas.¹⁰ Despite attempts to eliminate friction with new technologies countering terrorism and insurgency, human personnel and their high-tech systems are still vulnerable to exhaustion, technical failure, and to erroneous decisions taken by tired, stressed, and scrutinized commanders. Information fog may be less of an obstacle in conventional warfare, but insurgents try to subvert Western information systems, confuse, obscure, and remain concealed. The high-tempo of

8 Andrew Mumford, *Proxy Warfare* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).

9 The implications are that police forces may be compelled to develop more paramilitary capabilities, or, perhaps, that military forces will be forced to confront duties of Military Aid to the Civil Power more frequently, and perhaps blend with policing tasks.

10 Diane E. Davis and Anthony W. Pereira, eds., *Irregular Armed Forces and their Role in Politics and State Formation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 149-177; Austin Long, "Going old school; US Army Special Forces Return to the Villages," *Foreign Policy*, July 21, 2010, http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/07/21/going_old_school_us_army_special_forces_return_to_the_villages; Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19.

conventional war suits the technological systems of Western forces, but periods of protracted warfare among populations do not, because here friction reasserts itself more powerfully.

The assumption, much repeated, is that Western operations in the future will be expeditionary since there is no existential state threat to the United States or the European continent. Those who wish to avoid the protracted character of land warfare, like that in Afghanistan, speak of the need for air and sea operations, or, at the very most, a light force structure. Advocates of such a posture rarely acknowledge the limitations of air power that were exposed as recently as operations in Kosovo. Navalists, eager to emphasize the way governments could maintain their freedom of action but not become embroiled in land campaigns, give less attention to the vulnerabilities of sea power in congested littorals or the fact that decision in war in the past occurred on land just as much as at sea. Those who envisaged light forces engaging in peacekeeping seemed not to have considered the consequences of these missions going wrong, resulting in severe fighting and the risk of catastrophic defeat.

The logic of a light footprint in Western expeditionary warfare in 2001-03 was to remain agile, minimize the burden of logistics, and avoid the antagonism of local people with any overt and large-scale military presence. The United States sought specifically to avoid any idea of occupation in Afghanistan to prevent a repetition of the Soviet mistakes in 1979. In 2001, there was considerable faith in the ability of air power to deliver solutions without a substantial ground commitment.¹¹ In fact, the logic of smaller ground forces means greater vulnerability and less intelligence which can only be compensated by a greater reliance on air power. Yet, despite the advent of precision strike and enhanced targeting, reliance on air power has caused higher civilian casualties. This approach proved counterproductive in the militarized policing operations Western forces subsequently found themselves. Air power alone could not provide security for the establishment of a new government. Since operations against Libya (2011), there has again been enthusiasm for air operations that avoid a ground commitment, and limited missile strikes were advocated against the Syrian regime in 2013. It has taken some time for Western powers to realize that not only their methods of war fighting and stabilization, but also their campaign design and doctrines, cannot be treated as immutably superior, and they have been forced to change constantly as operations unfolded.

New technologies, from unmanned aerial vehicles to robotics, and new methods such as cyber denial of service or disruption, do no more to guarantee victory than did the faith in air and sea power in the early twentieth century. The novelty of a technology has never ensured success in its own right—it is the integration of innovation into effective methods and means that gives a strategic or tactical edge. This has been the case particularly with unmanned aircraft with the ability to strike with missiles. Debate has raged on the character, legal and ethical, of targeted killing within states not at war with the West, such as Yemen or Pakistan, of temporarily removing insurgent fighters from the battlefield by extra-legal incarceration, and extraordinary rendition of suspected

11 D. M. Drew, "US Airpower Theory and the Insurgent Challenge: A Short Journey to Confusion," *Journal of Military History*, 62 (1998): 809-32.

fighters.¹² The fact remains that the enemies of the West subvert Western laws of armed conflict; they attack while concealed by the local civilian population, do not adhere to the truth in their information operations, and declare their intention is to inflict mass casualties on those who do not conform to their ideas. The Western concern to protect populations, deeply internalized from the advent of massed air bombardment in the world wars, is not the priority for many non-Western belligerents. Disturbing and unpalatable though it may be for the West, the fact is that intimidation, fear of reprisals, and overwhelming military power have all too often swayed a population into compliance, rather than the selective ethical targeting so treasured by Westerners.¹³ Nevertheless, inconsistencies can also be exploited. Drone strikes without a clear framework of the rules of engagement erode the boundaries between war and peace still further and make it easier for nonstate groups to assert that they, too, possess the right to strike back in an international setting.

Urban and marginal environments where government control is not assured clearly present the greatest problems for security forces, and at times, the military may assume a temporary role as governing authority with legal powers. Western armies find the thought of internal security less attractive than conducting war beyond their national borders. Domestic security is regarded as a form of policing, rather than a military activity. The unhappy history of internal security and coercing of populations, while the traditional role of armies before the nineteenth century, can seem anathema to military professionals. Yet, more emphasis needs to be placed on the objective of getting adversaries to the negotiating table as the parameter of success, seeing negotiation as normative, rather than the exceptional total war concept of military victory through the destruction of the means to resist.¹⁴ Treating war as an extension of politics means that victory is the correlation of ends, ways, and means, and it is a continuous process, not an end-state.

Above all, the inability to predict the future confidently might help explain the current desire to seek out the new while retaining the familiar in future war planning. Nevertheless, in the future operating environment, both old and new concepts of war will coexist. While some adversaries will use new weapon systems and information operations, some will attack infrastructures and attempt to mobilize populations using ideological grievances, but others will physically dig trenches and fight at close quarters. There will be no template for prediction, for every conflict will have its own context.

Finding patterns is common in future war discourse, and the anxieties of the present are usually projected onto the future in exaggerated

12 Kenneth Roth, "What Rules Should Govern US Drone Attacks?" *The New York Review*, March 25, 2013, 16-18.

13 The best documented and most comprehensive use of terror against insurgency include Bolshevik annihilation of white resistance in the Russian Civil War and the Nazi destruction of French resistance activities in central and southern France during the Second World War.

14 Richard Hobbs, *The Myth of Victory: What is Victory in War?* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1979).

terms.¹⁵ Less sensational assessments are not so appealing, attract less attention and, if unfulfilled, are held up as exemplars of complacency. Longer term historical trends are difficult to identify: one cannot be quite sure if the trend identified is the correct one. Moreover, it is impossible to ignore the type of wars in the present. It appears that the world is, for now, in a period of unconventional conflict. Projections are made against this established pattern, which explains why those seeking to demonstrate through statistics a decline in war in the future feel as confident as the doomsayers.

The inherent contradictions of these analyses suggest that, in fact, there is no guarantee that patterns and trajectories are reliable. It is not inevitable that the low intensity, unconventional warfare of today will continue even into the near future. It is possible that episodes of intense and highly destructive interstate war, perhaps including a limited exchange of tactical nuclear weapons, will occur.

Moreover, as David Kilcullen points out in his recent *Out of the Mountains: the Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*, it is not so much that the trends of change are unfamiliar and unpredictable as the *rate* of those changes.¹⁶ He argues that existing institutions, states, governments, and military forces will be overwhelmed by the scale of unrest in new megacities and the tempo of new connectivity. In particular, he argues the future operating environment will be cities rather than states, with future conflicts likely centered on the periphery of sprawling coastal conurbations in the developing world where nonstate armed groups such as drug cartels, street gangs, and warlords compete for resources and influence. Failing states would be the dominant feature of the future, and Kilcullen develops the idea to suggest that states will struggle to govern megacities. Furthermore, Kilcullen illustrates how modern connectivity, such as the internet, mobile phones, satellite technology, Google Earth, and social networks, present both challenges and opportunities in this new operating environment. These tools can mobilize demonstrators as in the Arab Spring, maintain an unofficial economy in Mogadishu, train unskilled soldiers and armorers, and be employed by school children to identify the position of regime snipers in Libya. This connectivity comes into play at both local and global levels and will overload conventional military forces and government institutions.

By advancing a theory of what will be new in the operating environment, one can lose sight of continuities. While cities will potentially be the seedbed of popular unrest, it is also the case that urban areas are dependent on their hinterlands. The point is that cities can be bypassed and contained as well as being a battle space. They are interdependent on other cities, ports, transport infrastructure, and their environs, and that means the city system, as Kilcullen describes it, consists not only of the built-up environment, but of the supporting networks that serve it. Moreover,

¹⁵ Change in human history has been, hitherto, incremental with periodic and episodic “shear events” that are subsequently interpreted as turning points. For Clausewitz and Jomini, the great turning point of their age was the French Revolution, but for many in military history, these moments were identified either as decisive battles, as technological breakthroughs, or the achievements of particular commanders. Such determinisms were challenged in mainstream history and social science but seemed to enjoy a greater longevity in military studies. See Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (London: Routledge, 2004).

¹⁶ David Kilcullen *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

one needs to acknowledge the importance of ideologies and legal aspects of the operating environment, since constraints on security forces are highly likely if they are to confront a Mumbai-style terrorist swarm attack, mass contamination, or low-intensity operations against an aggrieved, poor population taking violent action against their deprivation.

Kilcullen reiterates historic anxieties about resources, threats, and reputations that are unlikely to disappear as causes of war. It is likely that the ends of war will remain predictable, while ways and means will be transformed significantly. Yet, alongside these changes, traditional modes of war will remain. The use of force as an instrument of policy, which seems inevitable, can still be stratified into limited war, the threat of *guerre a l'outrance* (in terms of Weapons of Mass Destruction) and attempts to neutralize an enemy by the defeat of his strategy. Nevertheless, new means during the century may open up new possibilities, or new ways of achieving strategic ends.

Rather than a singular global crisis in the future, clashes of resources and population pressures will vary by region.¹⁷ Some crises, through their sheer scale, may accelerate rapidly. The limited supply, exhaustion, or increased costs of extraction of resources such as energy, water, and food will also vary and affect the developing world more adversely than the developed. The *Global Environment Outlook* of 1999 predicted conflict over water in North Africa and the Middle East between 2000 and 2025, though ideological and governance issues still predominated in those regions midway through that forecasted period.¹⁸ Financial pressures have also proved far from isotropic: the lack of credit in less developed countries leaves them vulnerable to popular unrest. Inequality and youth unemployment are widely predicted to rise over the next thirty years, and there may be a corresponding rise in disaffected groups willing to take violent action.

Nevertheless, there is a risk of exaggeration: terrorist attacks on infrastructures are short-lived and are unable to destroy entire systems. The true vulnerability of the West would be exposed by the economic collapse of China through some mass social unrest and a global stagnation in trade and financial exchange. Nevertheless, the digital revolution promises to increase global GDP far faster and more extensively than the industrial revolution. The acceleration of technological change is likely to produce significant benefits as well as detrimental outcomes. If sequencing a human genome in 2000 took several years and \$50 million, today it can be achieved in a day at a cost of less than a \$1,000.¹⁹ This advanced medical research provides the United States with a significant strategic edge in global relations. The same is true of the ongoing information revolution. More information is generated every two days than the last

17 In recent work by McKinsey and Company, demographic shifts and the rise of emerging markets will, they argue, place strain on global resources to an unprecedented level. Food prices will increase by 40 percent by 2030 and there will be a 30 percent gap in energy supply and demand for oil and gas. There is likely to be a gap of some 40 percent between supply and demand for water. Global meat intake will increase, placing pressure on available land.

18 Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict* (New York: Metropolitan Owl, 2001). The states that are most vulnerable to conflict are Somalia, DR Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan. Areas that are at significant risk are Chad, Yemen, Afghanistan, Haiti, Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire, Pakistan, Guinea, Guinea Bassau, and Nigeria.

19 McKinzezy's presentation at Oxford University, November 28, 2013.

2000 years combined.²⁰ The implication is that grievances will be amplified faster and to a larger audience than before, but solutions may also be faster to acquire. This possibility suggests there will be greater volatility across informational, physical, infrastructural, and ideational domains.

Trends of Future War

The character of war in the future will change as frequently as it has in the past, but there will be many striking continuities, including terrorism and violent mass protest movements. There will almost certainly be a significant increase in irregular warfare in cities and systemic warfare. There are ten trends of future war: irregular warfare in urban areas exploiting infrastructural vulnerability; porosity; dispersal; depth; stealth; miniaturization of combat power; privatization of violence; devolution; nodal systemic operations, and precision.

In large cities, low intensity terrorism could be much more likely. Protracted conflicts require significant military and police manpower and surveillance commitments, and managed media operations. In future war, urban militias may be able to access more lethal weapons including surface-to-air missiles, anti-armor weapons, and contaminating chemical or biological weapons. In urban warfare, military forces would find civil authority collapsing, multiple agencies working in the same spaces with their own agendas, and a vulnerable civilian population expecting relief.

Systemic warfare is just as unconventional, involving attacks on financial systems, the deliberate hollowing out of local economies to create dependent regions and peoples, diffused and mass participation in antistate, antigovernment activity, information operations, cybercrime, cyber blockades, disruptive electronic warfare, selective bio-attacks on sections of society, outages in energy generation and supply, or contamination of food and water. Each type of assault is characterized by an emphasis on the systemic nature of the consequences: they are designed to disrupt, degrade, discredit, or destroy systems on which a state or a people depend.

The process of diffusion has affected the battlefield since the beginning of the industrial age as more lethal weapons of greater precision and range have extended it in-depth. Where Gettysburg was fought within the compass of a few miles in 1863, the Second World War was characterized as a conflict extending across a variety of theaters around the globe, requiring the mobilization of domestic economies and their populations. Since 1945, unconventional wars as well as overt, conventional wars, have affected the entire globe. The interconnected nature of the world economy and communications systems means that even the smallest terrorist act is broadcast to all the world's population.

Closely linked to the idea of dispersal is concealment or stealth, with small organizations operating out of sight, or attempting to remain concealed within populations or remote terrain. Interestingly, despite assertions that clandestine organizations are particularly threatening to the West, digital signatures are increasingly difficult to conceal. Modern

20 Ibid.

state forces are even more exposed and vulnerable, and in the future camouflage in conflicts among the people will require complete blending.

Since the industrial revolution, precision engineering has facilitated smaller and more effective weapons systems, while advances in physics and chemistry have increased their explosive power. Concurrently, it has been possible to manufacture platforms that are smaller yet deliver the same or greater combat power. Machine guns, once large and cumbersome, became hand-held. After the first atomic bombs, new generations of nuclear weapons were designed until it became possible to manufacture a device as small as a nuclear artillery shell. In the near future, it is possible to envisage weapon systems of significant magnitude that can be carried by individuals. The deduction of this trend is that every city, port, and province is a potential battle space.

Warfare is likely to be individualized further in the near future as smaller and smaller groups assert the right to wage war, equipped with significant combat power. The increasing numbers of private security contractors and private military companies, in both domestic and overseas security tasks, is a trend likely to continue. Such a phenomenon makes the conduct of proxy warfare easier, with deniable groups and individuals trained and equipped by both states and nonstate actors. Assamese irregulars, Mexican drug cartels, Somali pirates, and fighters from the Nigerian delta have mounted sustained campaigns against governments, international interests, and large companies on their own terms.

The diffusion of power and communications since the late nineteenth century in the West, and which have now straddled the globe, are reflected in new modes of making war. The development of technology and communications, which was also once the preserve of the elite and the state, has passed into the hands of the population and has become a key enabler for irregular movements. Devolution has also empowered state forces: handheld radio and mobile communications enable small teams and even individuals to enjoy enhanced situational awareness, to locate targets and to maneuver. Increasing specialization means greater connectivity; interoperability and devolution are essential for efficient delivery of effect.

Technological developments continue to enhance precision and the overwhelming power with which to conduct stand-off attacks with considerable effect. More precise means of war in the future will nevertheless require more technician-warriors, able to wield these devices both in defense and offense, such as new generations of antimissile technology and semi-autonomous vehicles. There will need to be multiuse platforms, able to operate on land, sea, and air, and electronically, and there are likely to be smaller numbers of highly trained, well-equipped, and versatile Special Forces, whose vulnerability will be compensated by a range of support options (in transport, intelligence, fires, expertise, and logistics), but in all these state operations, the emphasis will be on greater precision alongside concealment, dispersion, and adaptation to the threats of clandestine attack posed by nonstate or proxy forces. New systems will necessarily be needed to operate with precision underground, in urban spaces, in high-rise buildings, underwater, and in space. For the future, forces will need even greater accuracy, and, more importantly, *greater speed of target acquisition* than at present, if it is to be able to destroy terror forces located or operational within populations.

The ability to inflict nodal or systemic degradation of an enemy's capacity to resist, command, or communicate will be a feature of future war, involving the paralysis of communications, greater emphasis on informational-psychological, cyber, or, in the future, even neurological warfare. It will represent a form of stealthy, deniable e-envelopment. These modes will be part of a wider array of operations against the principal threats of enemies situated within domestic populations.

Implications for Contemporary Armed Forces

Deductions are difficult, and, in a short article, necessarily selective. Nevertheless, brevity and trenchant assertions can provoke critical thought, and it is through informed exchanges that we may challenge assumptions, refine our conclusions and remain alert to misconceptions. In this spirit, the following concluding thoughts are offered.

Future forces will make use of stealth, systemically operating through communications networks and through the exploitation of the vulnerabilities of society. They will use information warfare to spread fear and panic, but also wage kinetic warfare on and among civilian populations. Their aim will be to destroy financial systems, infrastructure, and the willingness to sustain resistance. This unconventional warfare will be more frequent than the sustained, high-intensity wars of the past, although these, too, may still occur. The weaponization of space appears to be imminent.

To meet these threats, states have to identify their own vulnerabilities, and take steps to address them, even if this means the reorganization of their armed forces. Preparation for this diffused, dispersed, devolved warfare of the future will also mean new civil defense measures. In the future anti-terror conflict, information and psychological warfare will be essential. Peacetime preparation is likely to blur with protracted, sometimes domestic, internal security operations, peacekeeping, and counterinsurgency or counterterror missions. Armed forces will probably be deployed on the receipt of specific intelligence in highly mobile and exceptionally rapid operations. Attacks will resemble raids. Intelligence will be the mainstay of operations, but targets of opportunity will also become available fleetingly and will need a fast and precise response to exploit. Intelligent application of tactical concepts will be vital, but so will closer liaison with a variety of civilian agencies.

The current trends of war are an incomplete guide to the future operating environment, but they give some shape to its likely direction. The themes of porosity; dispersal; depth; stealth; miniaturization of combat power; privatization of violence; devolution; precision; nodal systemic operations, and infrastructural vulnerability will occur in a variety of domains—physical, infrastructural, ideational, and informational, especially with regard to cities and systems. The grammar of war, in these areas, has changed. Understanding cities and their hinterlands, their morphology, connections, and vulnerabilities gives the future commander an important advantage whether they are directing regular, irregular, or proxy forces. Understanding the new connectivity of systems, be they electronic, urban, resource-based, or informational, will determine military literacy in the future. Military forces will be forced to adapt to the new environment or face defeat. One way to

improve the ability to adapt is to emphasize the importance of innovation, improvisation and adaptation, and use the past as a critical guide for educational development and institutional change.

Forking Paths: War After Afghanistan

Michael Evans

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ABSTRACT: For defense departments and professional militaries of advanced liberal democracies, judgments concerning future armed conflict are necessary to guide force preparation, personnel readiness, and equipment procurement. When such judgments are made in times of economic austerity and geopolitical uncertainty, the need for clarity of thought on the future of war becomes imperative in determining priorities.

It is not primarily in the present, nor in the past that we live. Our life is an activity directed towards what is to come. The significance of the present and the past only becomes clear afterwards in relation to the future.

José Ortega y Gasset

While all advanced military establishments engage in intellectual examinations about the future of armed conflict, it is often unclear which intellectual methods actually represent best futures practice. In any Western officer corps one can find contending advocates for how best to interpret the future of war. Some argue that the lens of human experience—filtered through a Clausewitzian-style of military history as *Kritik*—is the most sensible way forward; others prefer the geometrical tradition of Jomini and seek to gain better understanding through science in the form of operations research and technical experimentation; still others prefer to look to the interdisciplinary subject of strategic studies as a means of revealing holistic insights on armed conflict. Further diversity in professional outlook is often imposed by imperatives of service affiliation and specialized training for the separate domains of land, sea, and aerospace warfare. Speculation on the future of war may also be affected by the demands of hierarchical military culture ranging from idiosyncratic command preferences to the imposition of short-term strategic and operational goals. Not surprisingly, *ad hoc* intellectual endeavors can easily dominate military institutions—driven as much by the interaction of budgets, personalities, and internal compromises—as by objective mental rigor. Such pressures led American philosopher Lewis Mumford to conclude that military establishments represent “the refuge of third-rate minds” in which institutional thinking can be conformist, sometimes dogmatic, and frequently anti-intellectual.¹

This article probes the generic intellectual requirements involved in preparing to consider the problems of future war. Two caveats are immediately required. First, the author makes no claims to having uncovered any magic formulae for predictive accuracy about future conflicts. Second, this essay is not a meditation on the full sweep of potential future military operations from computers through cyberwarfare to climate change. Rather, it is a reflection on the conceptual demands of dealing

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1 Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc, 1934), 95.

with future armed conflict—what Peter Paret calls the “cognitive challenge of war”—the “how to think” dimension which is the most serious problem facing any military organization.² The author believes that, for armed forces establishments, futures studies, if properly conceived and conducted, are likely to be particularly valuable over the next decade. When militaries are faced with an end to a long period of hostilities—as is the case with the United States and its allies in 2014—they must embark on rigorous contemplation of the shape of future war. The task is “to look ahead, not into the distant future, but beyond the vision of the operating officers caught in the smoke and crises of current battle; far enough ahead to see the emerging form of things to come and outline what should be done to meet or anticipate them.”³

With these issues in mind, three areas are analyzed. First, to provide philosophical and methodological context, the development of modern futures studies is explored and its intellectual connections to the field of strategic studies are highlighted. In the second section, the role history can play in military futures studies is explored. Finally, some speculations on future war are advanced drawing on insights and methods derived from an appreciation of the interplay between futures studies, strategic studies, and historical analysis.

Parallel Lives: Futures Studies and Strategic Studies

As a field of scholarly endeavor, futures studies emerged in the 1950s and coincided with the flowering of the behavioral revolution in the policy sciences and the creation of research institutions that followed the invention of nuclear weapons and the evolution of the Cold War. “The purposes of futures studies,” writes leading Yale sociologist Wendell Bell, “are to discover or invent, examine and evaluate, and propose possible, probable and preferable futures. *The futures field is an integrative science of reasoning, choosing and acting.*”⁴ The pioneers of futures studies include such figures as Harold Lasswell, Daniel Bell, and Herman Kahn. The collective work of these pioneers was concerned with developing the policy sciences into an interdisciplinary pool of problem-solving methodologies to serve as a guide to future decisionmaking.⁵ For example, Lasswell believed the aim of research was to explain past and present conditions, identify emerging trends, and then to project notions of alternative possible and probable futures for use by policymakers.⁶

From Lasswell onward, futures studies became less about attempting a prediction of events and more about forecasting probabilities and developing educated foresight. Whereas a prediction may be defined as human anticipation of an occurrence, futures studies are concerned with defining expectations through the construction of a range of alternative

2 Peter Paret, *The Cognitive Challenge of War: Prussia 1806* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 1-3..

3 Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), 214.

4 Wendell Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies: History, Purposes, and Knowledge: Human Science for a New Era*, Vol.1 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 51; 53-54. Emphasis added.

5 Ibid, chapters 1-3. For further background on the evolution of the field of futures studies, see Edward Cornish, *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future* (Bethesda, MD: World Future Society, 2004); and James A. Dator, ed., *Advancing Futures: Futures Studies in Higher Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002).

6 Harold D. Lasswell, “The Policy Orientation,” in *The Policy Sciences*, eds. D. Lerner and H. D. Lasswell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1951), 3-15.

scenarios. In futures studies, the aim is to isolate a preferred path forward by analyzing the interactions of past experiences and present realities with likely trends and future goals.⁷ In the military sphere, and to paraphrase Gregory Foster, if politics is the art of the possible, then war must be considered “the science of the preferable.”⁸

Following in the steps of Lasswell, Herman Kahn, the futurist and nuclear strategist, invented the modern scenario method—a narrative considering the future drawn from past and present about alternative possibilities under variable conditions. In Kahn’s words, “a scenario results from an attempt to describe in more or less detail some hypothetical sequence of events by imaginative and creative thinking. Scenarios can emphasize different aspects of future history.”⁹ Kahn’s intellectual significance was that he helped introduce a logical methodology that made futures thinking imaginable without assuming the burden of predictability. He recognized that in meeting the challenge of foresight, scenarios are not predictors but indicators of how different driving forces can manipulate the future in different directions. By the end of the 1970s, variants of Kahn’s scenario approach had been adopted for corporate strategy development in leading businesses. As Peter Schwartz has explained, a scenario is “a tool for ordering one’s perceptions about alternative future environments in which one’s decisions might be played out.”¹⁰

Since the 1970s, forms of futures studies have become a staple of large organizations in both the public and private sectors and methodologies have proliferated. John Naisbitt developed the concept of identifying megatrends; in the Pentagon, Andrew Marshall evolved the practice of net assessment to identify patterns in long-term strategic competition; in the RAND Corporation, researchers developed approaches ranging from the Delphi survey technique to assumption-based planning.¹¹ More recently, complexity science and nonlinear chaos theory dealing with stochastic behavior in systems have emerged as factors in futures studies.¹² In 2003, the United Nations University published a comprehensive handbook, *Futures Research Methodology*, highlighting the most common techniques in use.¹³ University teaching in the field tends

7 Cornish, *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future*, 1-8; 78-79; 213; Stephen M. Millett, *Managing the Future: A Guide to Forecasting and Strategic Planning in the 21st Century* (Devon: Triarchy Press, 2011), 29-30; 268-69.

8 Gregory D. Foster, “The Conceptual Foundation for a Theory of Strategy,” *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 1990): 1, 54.

9 Herman Kahn, *Thinking about the Unthinkable* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1962), 150, 152.

10 Peter Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World* (New York: Currency/Doubleday, 1991), 4; Peter C. Bishop and Andy Hines, *Teaching about the Future* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), passim.

11 John Naisbitt, *Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives* (New York: Warner, 1982); Stephen Peter Rosen, “Net Assessment as an Analytical Concept,” in Andrew W. Marshall, J. J. Martin and Henry S. Rowen, eds., *On Not Confusing Ourselves: Essays on National Security Strategy in Honor of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 283-301; Thomas R. Stewart, “The Delphi Technique and Judgmental Forecasting,” in K. C. Land and S. H. Schneider, eds., *Forecasting in the Social Sciences* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1987), 97-113; James A. Dewar, *Assumption-Based Planning: A Tool for Reducing Avoidable Surprises* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

12 Antoine J. Bouquet, *The Scientific Way of Warfare: Order and Chaos on the Battlefields of Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), chapters 5-7.

13 Jerome C. Glenn and Theodore J. Gordon, *Futures Research Methodology* (Washington, DC: American Council for the United Nations University, 2003).

to encompass such skills as trend analysis; the uses of forecasting and backcasting; causal layered analysis; the employment of survey research; simulation and computer modeling; gaming; and the construction of robust and optimal scenarios.¹⁴

However, despite a global proliferation of techniques, futures studies continue to invoke skepticism from many scholars for three reasons. First, there is the problem of prediction. For many critics attempts at forecasting are seen as futile. As Arthur C. Clark once put it, “it is impossible to predict the future and all attempts to do so in any detail appear ludicrous within a few years.”¹⁵ A cursory glance at military history demonstrates this reality. No Western strategist foresaw the crises of 9/11, Afghanistan, Iraq, or the unfolding drama of the Arab Spring. “It is simply not possible,” wrote two writers on military affairs, “to rule out certain kinds of conflict in advance, no matter how unlikely they may seem at any given moment.”¹⁶ Yet, even if accurate prediction is nigh impossible, governments and organizations still require what Nicholas Rescher calls a “philosophical anthropology of forecasting.”¹⁷ Although the future may be observationally inaccessible, it is, in part, cognitively accessible because trends can be identified and extrapolated from the present. Yet such cognitive accessibility is no guarantee that trend analysis will produce accurate projections.¹⁸ This dilemma is well illustrated by the problems experienced in Western intelligence analysis after 1989:

The major intelligence failure since the end of the Cold War was not 9/11 or the wayward estimates of Iraqi WMD. . . . Instead it was the startling lack of attention given to the rise of irregular warfare—including insurgency, warlordism and the ‘new terrorism’. Transnational violence by non-state groups was the emerging future challenge of the 1990s.¹⁹

Despite the risk of misjudgments, Western governments have no choice but to rely upon methods of strategic forecasting to inform policymaking. Inaccuracy can often be attributed to human error, institutional torpor, and flawed organizational learning. Many intellectual problems in forecasting arise “not from failure to predict events per se but rather the failure to realize the significance—the *predictive value*—of antecedents or triggers.”²⁰

The second reason for skepticism about futures studies concerns the problem that as a field they appear to lack any proper foundation in epistemology—that is a theory of knowledge.²¹ Here Bertrand Russell’s 1924 version of Occam’s razor comes into play, “whenever possible, substitute constructions out of known entities for inferences to unknown

14 Andy Hines and Peter Bishop, eds., *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight* (Washington, DC: Social Technologies, LLC, 2006).

15 Arthur C. Clarke, quoted in Nick Deshpande, “Seven Sinister Strategic Trends: A Brief Examination of Events to Come,” *Canadian Military Journal* 11, no. 4 (Autumn 2011): 4, 15.

16 Thomas Donnelly and Frederick W. Kagan, *Ground Truth: The Future of US Land Power* (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 2009), 37.

17 Nicholas Rescher, *Predicting the Future: An Introduction to the Art of Forecasting*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 11.

18 *Ibid.*, 53-55; 70; 86.

19 Christopher Andrew, Richard J. Aldrich, and Wesley K. Wark, “Preface: Intelligence, History and Policy,” in Andrew, Aldrich and Work, eds, *Secret Intelligence: a Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2009), xv.

20 Gregory F. Treverton, *Intelligence for an Age of Terror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 140. Emphasis added.

21 Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Vol 1, 166-67; 191-238.

entities.”²² For skeptics, the very idea of gaining knowledge of the future from the unknown seems counterintuitive. After all, beyond death, taxes, and Hollywood movies, the future is simply nonevidential. Only in a Hollywood version of *The Three Musketeers* can a courtier possess the prescience to change seventeenth century history by informing Cardinal Richelieu: “Your Eminence, the Thirty Years War has just begun.”²³ In futures studies there are no facts, no archives to examine, no participants to interrogate. Those who speculate on what might occur must face the paradox that they must draw on past and present evidence to develop “surrogate knowledge” about the future—a knowledge based as much on intuition and speculation as logic drawn from an evidentiary base.²⁴ Such concerns relate directly to the third reason for scholarly unease about futures studies—namely that the field lacks proper academic quality control and contains too many eccentric manifestations of intellectual behavior. From Nostradamus to Nancy Reagan’s astrologers, assorted seers and media gurus have proliferated. As Herman Kahn recognized in the mid-1970s, popular futurology by attracting “fashionable, banal, polemical and sometimes even charlatanical elements” threatens the credibility of futures studies.²⁵

The above objections notwithstanding, a solid case can be made that serious futures studies—as conducted by universities and governmental institutions—remain essential for progress. Without a perspective on the future, forward-looking policy and resource allocation simply cannot be determined. However, futures studies must be based on intellectual rigor and plausibility. They must involve the identification and extension of predesigned factors—factors that exist in present structures and whose rapid development in the future is both plausible and imaginable.²⁶ For example, from the Greek fable of Icarus in the ancient world to the balloons of the Montgolfiers in the Enlightenment, humans dreamed of conquering the air. Yet it was only with the Wright brothers’ aircraft in 1903 that development of manned flight became a feasible proposition.

Conducted with mental rigor and with a keen eye for context, conjectures about the future often represent a form of presumptive truth—truth which is accepted at a given time as guidance but whose logic cannot be completely verified as accurate using available facts.²⁷ In formulating presumptive truth about the future, policymakers are not entirely without skills and resources. The future is not completely unknown; there are constants at work in the present that can act as guides through the mists of the unknown. What French philosopher and strategic thinker Raymond Aron once called “the intelligibility of probabilistic determinism”—in the form of patterns of social order, value systems, and cultural behavior derived from the past and operative in the present—can provide conditional expectations about the shape of

22 Bertrand Russell, “Logical Atomism,” in *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, D. F. Pears, ed. (Chicago: Open Court, 1985), 160.

23 Colin S. Gray, “Coping With Uncertainty: Dilemmas of Defence Planning,” *British Army Review* (Autumn 2007), no. 143, 36. Like “play it again Sam” in *Casablanca*, this line from the 1948 film, *The Three Musketeers* seems to be apocryphal but it captures the point.

24 Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Vol.1, 236-38.

25 Herman Kahn, “On Studying the Future,” in *Handbook of Political Science: Vol 7, Strategies of Inquiry*, eds. F. I. Greenstein and N. W. Polsby (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 405-06.

26 Rescher, *Predicting the Future*, 69-70.

27 Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Vol. 1, 149-50; 112.

the future.²⁸ Imagining the future in this way is feasible because human society is, in turn, a system of purposive actors whose interactions actively shape and create the process of change.²⁹ Philosophically, the future, then, resembles a set of contending outcomes rather than a single predetermined destination.

The notion of a society as purposive actors attempting to speculate on the future is particularly strong when it comes to the problem of war—a situation reinforced over the past seventy years by the existence of nuclear weapons. Not surprisingly, futures studies and the evolution of modern strategic studies have been closely related as parallel endeavors. Indeed, the futures and strategic studies fields share a number of common characteristics. First, in both fields, prospective thinking about the future is seen as an indispensable skill. Second, both areas have a strong policy orientation and many practitioners tend to see themselves not just as scholars but also as “action-intellectuals.”³⁰ Third, both futures and strategic studies possess an interdisciplinary focus for the purposes of problem solving. Fourth, there is considerable cross-fertilization in methodologies with both futures studies and strategic studies employing common approaches such as trend analysis, gaming, and scenario construction. Finally, both fields often employ historical analysis as an important database to link the past and the present to the future.³¹

It is no accident, then, that Herman Kahn was both a futurist and a nuclear strategist; or that Andrew W. Marshall, long-time head of the Pentagon’s Office of Net Assessment, has spent his career identifying future strategic challenges to the United States; or that Andrew F. Krepinevich, director of the Center for Budgetary and Strategic Analysis, should have written a book in 2009 speculating on future global crises.³² There is a direct line of intellectual convergence in futures and strategic studies from Kahn through Marshall to Krepinevich. Moreover, some of the main philosophical assumptions from futures studies transfer directly to strategic studies. For example, notions of presumptive truth and surrogate knowledge have been central in strategic thinking about how to manage the nuclear weapons revolution. Since a nuclear war has mercifully not been fought, much of the epistemology of nuclear age strategic thought—in the form of theories of deterrence, escalation, and limited war—are clearly based on forms of presumptive truth.³³

28 Raymond Aron, “Three Forms of Historical Intelligibility,” in idem, *Politics and History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1984), 61, 47-59.

29 Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Vol. 1, 159.

30 Roman Kolkowicz, “Intellectuals and the Nuclear Deterrence System,” in *The Logic of Nuclear Terror*, ed. Roman Kolkowicz (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 15-46; Bell, *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Vol. 1, 189.

31 Dator, *Advancing Futures: Futures Studies in Higher Education* and Thomas G. Mahnken and Joseph A. Maiolo, eds, *Strategic Studies: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

32 Sharon Ghamari-Tabrizi, *The Worlds of Herman Kahn: The Intuitive Science of Thermonuclear War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Andrew W. Marshall, “Strategy as a Profession for Future Generations,” in *On Not Confusing Ourselves*, Marshall, Martin and Rowen, 302-11; Andrew F. Krepinevich, *7 Deadly Scenarios: A Military Futurist Explores War in the 21st Century* (New York: Bantam, 2009).

33 From the vast theoretical literature, see especially Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), chapters 12-13 and Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

The Use of History in Futures Studies

Few academic historians today would accept the views of military thinkers, B. H. Liddell Hart and J. F. C. Fuller that the main aim of historical study is to illuminate patterns in understanding future war. Liddell Hart was convinced that, “the practical value of history is to throw the film of the past through the material projector of the present on to the screen of the future.”³⁴ Similarly, Fuller wrote, “unless history can teach us how to look at the future, the history of war is but a bloody romance.”³⁵ These utilitarian ideas are today seen as the antithesis of sound historical practice. “To professional historians,” wrote one soldier-scholar, “the idea of history having a direct utility seems a bit odd, bordering on some form of historiographic and epistemological *naïveté*.”³⁶

How then should military professionals and defense analysts concerned with pondering war in the context of futures studies use the discipline of history in general, and military history in particular? First, they must understand that any study of the future of war must rest on a firm foundation of historical knowledge.³⁷ Military professionals need to learn to think in terms of integrating the *functional* (the application of historically informed military expertise) and the *dialectical* (knowledge of the interactions of the past, present, and future) and to understand how the interplay of continuities and contingencies on these two planes determine outcomes.³⁸ There has never been a better statement on the relationship between the use of history and forming a vision of future war than that advanced by General Donn A. Starry:

The purpose of history is to inform our judgments of the future; to constitute an informed vision; guide our idea of where we want to go; how best to get from where we are (and have been) to where we believe we must be. Implicit is the notion that change—evolution (perhaps minor revolution) is both necessary and possible.³⁹

Second, in approaching the use of history, military professionals must accept that their requirements are legitimately different from those of professional scholars. For most military practitioners, history is of interest less as a pure academic discipline and more as an applied laboratory of knowledge. A soldier’s principal interest in the past is to use it to gain insights of professional value in preparing for, and conducting, the art of war in the present and the future. If the scholarly world seeks to reconstruct history in the pure spirit of Ranke, the armed forces seek to reveal its secrets in the applied spirit of Liddell Hart. In an applied process, some form of military historicism—that is history as evidence and illustration becomes inevitable—if only because the

34 Liddell Hart, *the Remaking of Modern Armies* (London: John Murray, 1927), 173.

35 J. F. C. Fuller, *British Light Infantry in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Hutchinson, 1925), 242-43.

36 Harald Hoiback, *Understanding Military Doctrine: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 80.

37 Williamson Murray, “History, War and the Future,” *Orbis* 52, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 544-63.

38 Dominick Graham, “Stress Lines and Gray Areas: The Utility of the Historical Method to the Military Profession,” in *Military History and the Military Profession*, eds. David A. Charters, Marc Milner, and J. Brent Wilson (Westport CT: Praeger, 1992), 148-58.

39 General Donn A. Starry, “A Perspective on American Military Thought,” *Military Review* 69 (July 1989): vii, 3.

conceptualization of war represents a dialogue between the past and the present aimed at illuminating the future.⁴⁰

Third, to help make an applied approach to history intellectually useful in futures studies, military professionals need to cultivate a capacity to think across time. As a philosophical position, they should adopt as their guide the mantra of R. G. Collingwood that “the present is the actual; the past is the necessary; the future is the possible.”⁴¹ A professional historian who has specifically sought to align historical method to futures studies is David Staley and his work is instructive for military practitioners. “Historical method,” Staley argues, “is an excellent way to think about and represent the future in the classical sense of *historia*, a cognitive intellectual inquiry.”⁴² He seeks to link the *seen* (the present and the past) to the *unseen* (the future). All three zones of time are intertwined and intelligent speculation is possible exactly because there are pre-designed factors in the structure of the present. Staley identifies intellectual similarities between the historical method and the scenario method. Both are attempts at reconstruction and are therefore essentially representations rather than realities; both must be sensitive to context, complexity, and contingency; both employ analogies as indicators of similarity in the midst of apparent difference. Finally, given the absence of direct experience, historians and scenarists both construct mental maps of the past and future respectively.⁴³

Most scenario-building in futures studies involves the use of synchronic narratives (those that describe bounded structures and relations in a given time and space) as opposed to diachronic narratives (those that describe changing events over time). Staley suggests that historians can enrich scenario-construction when they employ a synchronic narrative with a sophisticated historical understanding of plausible situations.⁴⁴ Futures studies should, therefore, use history to construct a structural anthropology of the future—an approach which is focused more on examining *environments* and less on seeking to foresee *events*. In scholarly terms, this is the historical method favored by Fernand Braudel and the French *Annales* school who believed that the history of social structures was more significant for human understanding of change than the sudden fluctuations caused by wild card, unexpected events.⁴⁵ Staley concludes that, in futures studies, empirical historical methodology is “in many ways better than that traditionally employed by social scientists and other scientifically minded futurists.”⁴⁶ Staley’s linkage of historical method to futures studies in general, and to scenario-building in particular, especially his focus on issues of plausibility and synchronic narrative, are techniques that should be studied by any military officers engaged in speculating on future war.

40 Hoiback, *Understanding Military Doctrine: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, 78-85.

41 R. G. Collingwood, “Lectures on the Philosophy of History, 1926” in *The Idea of History: With Lectures 1926-1928*, ed. J. van der Dussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 412-13.

42 David J. Staley, *History and Future: Using Historical Thinking to Imagine the Future* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 2; 48.

43 *Ibid.*, 11-12; 57-60.

44 *Ibid.*, 70-84.

45 *Ibid.*, 71-73; Fernand Braudel, *On History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), 28-31.

46 Staley, *History and Future*, 2.

A useful companion to Staley's integration of historical method and futures studies is contemplation of the growing literature on counterfactual thinking.⁴⁷ A counterfactual is "any subjunctive conditional in which the antecedent is known to be false."⁴⁸ "What if" counterfactual reasoning is a highly underrated asset in the training of military professionals involved in futures analysis. Unlike a future scenario that uses *conjectural knowledge*, a historical counterfactual thought experiment—for example, conceiving of Confederate victory in the American Civil War—operates with *confirmed knowledge* of what actually occurred and then proceeds to think about a different outcome. In scenario-building, backcasting may be employed in which one posits a desirable future and then works backwards to identify actions that will connect the future to the present. In contrast, those involved in developing a historical counterfactual must learn to treat known moments in the past as if they are like the present with only limited foreknowledge of the future. The use of subjunctive thinking (the employment of imagination) and the disciplined need for ensuring plausibility and probability in historical counterfactuals, make them useful learning devices and mind-set changers for scenario development in futures analysis.⁴⁹

Ultimately, the value of historical knowledge in futures studies, particularly in the military realm, lies in its demonstration that there is no single future and that many alternatives beckon. Indeed, the intimate relationship between historical knowledge and futures studies is vividly captured in the Jorge Luis Borges story, "The Garden of Forking Paths." In this tale, a Chinese sage, Tsu'i Pen, invents an invisible garden labyrinth in which "time forks perpetually toward innumerable futures."⁵⁰ The Chinese master chooses one path, and eliminates others to produce multiple outcomes. By human agency, he partially constructs the future by a choice of alternatives from among the forking paths. Today, in attempting to think incisively across time, make value judgments, and construct alternative courses of action, the work of a military futures specialist is not unlike that of Borges's sage.

Speculations on Future War

Having established the anatomy of futures studies, we must contemplate how such studies can be employed in examining the future of war beyond Afghanistan. Predictions on future war may be impossible but rational anticipation through research and organizational learning are required to improve understanding and readiness. The aim of futures studies in the armed forces must be to enhance institutional creativity for

47 Philip E. Tetlock and Aaron Belkin, eds., *Counterfactual Thought Experiments in World Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Niall Ferguson, ed., *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (London: Picador, 1997); Philip E. Tetlock, Richard Ned Lebow and Geoffrey Parker eds., *Unmaking the West: 'What If' Scenarios That Rewrite World History* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006); and Richard J. Evans, *Altered Pasts: Counterfactuals in History* (Waltham, MS: Brandeis University Press, 2013).

48 James Fearon, "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science," *World Politics* 43 (1991): 169-95.

49 Steven Weber, "Counterfactuals, Past and Present," in Tetlock and Belkin, *Counterfactual Thought Experiments in World Politics*, 268-90.

50 Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths," in idem, *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings* (New York: New Directions, 2007), 28; 19-29.

theorizing about war in the pursuit of long-term military effectiveness.⁵¹ Colin Gray puts the intellectual challenge well when he writes, “we *know* a great deal about future war, warfare, and strategy. What we *do not know* are any details about future wars, warfare episodes, and strategies.”⁵²

When applied to analyzing military conflict, futures studies should draw on its own cognitive corpus reinforced by knowledge from strategic studies and history to facilitate holistic analysis. Such an interdisciplinary merger yields a useful set of mental tools ranging from trend analysis and scenario development to concepts of presumptive truth, surrogate knowledge, and predesigned factors through to the notion of society as a system of purposive actors governed by the intelligibility of a probabilistic determinism. A focus on building historical knowledge yields a number of key approaches. These include thinking across time both functionally and dialectically; the construction of synchronic narratives for environmental rather than predictive event analysis; and the use of historical logic for case study analysis including a capacity for counterfactual thinking.

In an era in which digital networks, precision weapons, and media penetration are transforming the geography of conflict into diffuse forms; where the domains of space and cyber are emerging alongside the increased automation of war from robotics to unmanned systems; and an array of global-regional inflection points make intersected crises more likely—the application of imaginative and robust futures studies is imperative. To demonstrate how some of the conceptual tools and techniques of futures studies might be applied to thinking about war, contending contemporary views about armed conflict are examined. This is a contested area which reveals much about the factors shaping future war—ranging from continued globalization through transformational geopolitics to the challenge of rapid demographic change.

Contending Views of Future War: Radicals, Traditionalists, and Integrationists

Over the last decade there has been no Western consensus on the future of war. Rather, there has been a split in thinking among three loose schools of thought: radicals, traditionalists, and integrationists. The radicals constitute a group who see the future of war largely in irregular terms related to the impact of globalization. The traditionalists continue to uphold the primacy of conventional conflict and are inclined toward seeing the future of war in terms of great powers and transformational geopolitics. The integrationists believe the intersection of globalized conditions, transformational geopolitics, and changing demographic patterns will produce a world in which modes of armed conflict will overlap and merge. For analysts involved in the professional study of armed conflict, the premises and beliefs of the radicals, traditionalists, and integrationists of future war need to be carefully interrogated.

The Radicals: The Regularity of Irregular War

Those who argue in favor of a future marked by irregular warfare believe there has been a paradigm shift away from conventional conflict.

⁵¹ Richard W. Woodman, John E. Sawyer, and Ricky W. Griffith, “Toward a Theory of Organizational Creativity,” *Academy of Management Review* 18, no. 2 (April 1993): 293.

⁵² Colin S. Gray, “The 21st Century Security Environment and the Future of War,” *Parameters*, 37, no. 4 (Winter 2008-2009): 17. Emphasis added.

They point to the over-preoccupation of Western militaries in the 1990s with high-technology and information warfare theory as proof of failure to anticipate the asymmetrical challenges of the post 9/11 era in Afghanistan and Iraq. Their theoretical touchstone is Rupert Smith's "war amongst the people" in which nonstate actors and assorted indigenous forces in failing states combine to create protracted campaigns of combat and stabilization.⁵³ Leading international advocates of this view of future war include David Richards, a former Chief of the British Defense Staff; Greg Mills and Vincent Desportes; and, in the United States, scholars such as John Nagl and John Arquilla.⁵⁴ Much of the prevailing attitude is summed up by Richards and Mills in their introduction to the book, *Victory Among People*:

Conventional war is a thing of the past. Such is one lesson from Afghanistan and Iraq. This appears even true for those countries that possess a considerable array of conventional weaponry. Why should they risk everything in a conventional attack, if they can instead achieve their aims through the use of proxies, or through economic subterfuge and cyber-warfare?⁵⁵

These beliefs are shared by many in the French military. For example, General Vincent Desportes writes that "the symmetrical war is dead, or at least the chances of it happening are negligible" making irregular war the reality for the foreseeable future.⁵⁶ American thinking can be found in the work of the so-called "COINdinita," or irregular school of thought, in which the central argument is a need to restructure US forces for sustained counterinsurgency and stabilization operations on the basis that "our [US] capacity to win the wars we are not fighting far exceeds our ability to win the ones in which we are currently engaged."⁵⁷ The argument appears to be that, given the frequency of irregular conflict, "the long debate between the leading conventional and irregular thinkers . . . seems finally over. The irregulars have won."⁵⁸

The above views require careful examination by futures specialists simply because the idea of "the regularity of irregular warfare" conflates tactical asymmetry with strategic difference and detracts from a holistic understanding of war.⁵⁹ Despite the predominance of irregular warfare over the last decade, the notion that long-term, expensive, population-centric counterinsurgency must be adopted was deeply problematic for both military and political reasons.⁶⁰ This development can, in part, be

53 General Sir Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).

54 David Richards and Greg Mills, eds, *Victory Among People: Lessons from Countering Insurgency and Stabilising Fragile States* (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2011); General Vincent Desportes, *Tomorrow's War: Thinking Otherwise* (Paris, Economica, 2009); John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005); John Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011)

55 Richards and Mills, "Introduction in idem," *Victory Among People*, 1.

56 Desportes, *Tomorrow's War*, 27; 41.

57 John Nagl and Brian M. Burton, "Dirty Windows and Burning Houses: Setting the Record Straight on Irregular Warfare," *Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (April 2009): 98.

58 Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits*, 279-80.

59 W. Alexander Vacca and Mark Davidson, "The Regularity of Irregular Warfare," *Parameters* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 18-28.

60 For a critique see David Ucko, "Whither Counterinsurgency: The Rise and Fall of a Divisive Concept," in *The Routledge Handbook of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, ed. Paul B. Rich and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (New York: Routledge, 2012), 67-79; US Army, ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, October 2011)

attributed to the typology of theorizing in the decade from 2004-14, much of which was based on forms of presumptive truth, surrogate, and conjectural knowledge drawn from flawed historical analogies.

A futures analyst might note that, in the revival of counterinsurgency after 2004, most historical lessons were drawn from twentieth century colonial-domestic conflicts such as Malaya and Algeria rather than from more relevant expeditionary-interventionist conflicts such as Vietnam. A close examination of US intervention in Vietnam would have revealed the basic flaw in post-2006 counterinsurgency: the problem of weak host regimes. The conclusion of Charles Maechling Jr, Lyndon Johnson's advisor on counterinsurgency in Vietnam, resonates when it comes to the expeditionary-interventionist approach adopted in fighting insurgents in Afghanistan:

COIN in theory failed in practice [in Vietnam] since it had to be implemented by an unpopular, unrepresentative local regime. Moreover, the presumption by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in supposing that middle-grade US Army officers and civil servants from the American heartland could create a viable rural society in a primitive and densely populated Asian country in the middle of a civil war is staggering. There was no way for the Americans to get beneath the surface of Vietnamese life.⁶¹

To use the language of futures studies, the weakness of the centralized Karzai regime in ethnically diverse Afghanistan represents a classic predesigned factor in a decentralized tribal society. Progress has been difficult for the intervening Western forces in Afghanistan since, to quote Maechling again, “dependence on a weak central government [represents] the old horror of responsibility without authority elevated to the plane of high strategy.”⁶² In recent counterinsurgency efforts, if Charles Maechling's strategic warnings and the “deadly paradigms” identified by counterinsurgency scholars such as D. Michael Shafer had been studied—rather than the tactical techniques of David Galula and John Nagl—a deeper understanding of actual conflict *environments* rather than merely the pattern of military *events* might have occurred in the decade 2004-14.⁶³

In dissecting the notion of an alleged dominant irregular paradigm in future war, military analysts need to avoid over-determinism and historicism in their prospective thinking and focus on discretionary forms that Western counterinsurgency might assume in the years ahead. While the 2012 US Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis publication, *Decade of War* may be correct to state that “operations other than conventional warfare will represent the prevalent form of warfare in the future,” prevalence is not a determinant of intervention.⁶⁴ The document's recommendations that the United States and its allies focus on environmental knowledge, improved language-culture skills, interagency coordination, and better special operations and general purpose force

61 Charles Maechling, Jr., “Counterinsurgency: The First Ordeal by Fire” in *Low Intensity Warfare: Counterinsurgency, Proinsurgency and Antiterrorism in the 1980s*, eds. Michael T. Klare and Peter Kornbluh (New York, Pantheon, 1987), 46.

62 Charles Maechling, Jr., “Our Internal Defense Policy—A Reappraisal,” *Foreign Service Journal* (January 1969): 27.

63 Michael D. Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of US Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

64 Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA), *Decade of War: Enduring Lessons from the Past Decade of Operations* (Suffolk VA: Division of the Joint Staff, 15 June 2012), 7.

integration and military assistance (foreign internal defense and security force assistance) are useful—but such measures are all contingent on the rationale of strategic choice.⁶⁵

Military analysts need to remember that irregular conflict has many conceptual manifestations that require careful case-by-case treatment in the spirit of Staley's structural anthropology of the future—from jungle through mountain to city—and these require synchronic forms of operational analysis. For example, future special operations and general purpose forces integration need to be accompanied by an appreciation that counterterrorism and counterinsurgency are less blended than distinct modes of military activity that can operate at cross-purposes if improperly applied. In an interventionist campaign, a counterinsurgency approach is designed to *build* the political capital of a host government while a counterterrorism approach requires that a host government *use* its political capital in authorizing kill-capture missions by external forces that may further erode its support base.⁶⁶

Future war analysts surveying the problem of irregular conflict require a balanced perspective: one that avoids the institutional amnesia of the post-Vietnam era but does not exaggerate the importance of this field of armed conflict. Analysts must pay special attention to political dynamics and to the development of indirect approaches by external intervention forces. In particular, they must treat the proposition that war among the people represents the future of war as simply a form of conjectural knowledge and subject it to case studies using synchronic analysis aimed at determining actual environmental conditions and identifying any predesigned factors. Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan cannot be used as conclusive evidence that insurgency *per se* represents the future of armed conflict; nor should recent conflicts be used by professional militaries to benchmark their military effectiveness, especially when most irregular adversaries are devoid of close air support, advanced missiles, and combined arms formations.

Traditionalists: Conventional War as the Gold Standard

In examining the second view of future war, the traditionalist approach that upholds the primacy of conventional conflict, military futures analysts need to be equally rigorous. While it is certainly true that conventional war looms as the most serious, if not the most likely, test for armed forces, it is much less clear what forms it might assume in the years to come. The case for a strategic future dominated by powerful states was set out by Philip Bobbitt as early as 2002 when he wrote in the wake of the 9/11 attacks: “I strongly believe the greatest threats to American security in the early twenty-first century will come from powerful, technologically sophisticated states—not from ‘rogues,’ whether they be small states or large groups of bandits.”⁶⁷

Since that time, military analysts such as Michael Mazaar and Gian Gentile and historians such as Douglas Porch have condemned America's preoccupation with irregular conflict as a folly which can only degrade

65 Ibid., 1-2; 7-10.

66 Michael J. Boyle, “Do Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency Go Together?” *International Affairs* 86, no. 2 (March 2010): 333-53.

67 Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 315.

core military skills and strain the operational depth of the armed forces.⁶⁸ The concerns of American traditionalists are shared in other militaries. In a reflection on modern joint operations, the British general serving as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) reflected on how a preoccupation with counterinsurgency prejudiced the Israeli military's capacity for armored warfare in Lebanon in 2006:

The Israelis failed to grasp the opportunity to employ manoeuvre to isolate and destroy Hezbollah. . . . An [Israeli] Army which was once seen as the exemplar of bold manoeuvre but which had adapted for enduring COIN operations in the occupied territories had lost its collective understanding of the art of manoeuvre, particularly armoured manoeuvre, at formation level.⁶⁹

Traditionalists are concerned with conventional warfare challenges in which high-technology and weapons platforms are dominant from ballistic missiles to anti-satellite weapons through submarines and aircraft carriers to unmanned systems, cyberwarfare, and anti-access and area denial (A2AD) capabilities. They would be heartened by the content of the 2012 *Joint Operational Access Concept* and by the ideas of the 2012 United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*. The latter document outlines much that is important in conventional war including digital collaboration, global agility, joint flexibility, cross-domain synergy for focused combat power, cyberwarfare, precision strike, and information operations.⁷⁰

Many traditionalists, particularly those associated with navies and aerospace power, view the rise of China as the central strategic challenge facing the United States and its allies in the coming decades. The literature on China's military rise is vast and is outside the analytical scope of this article. It is sufficient to note that much contemporary American strategic assessment of China is a heady brew of Western realism that bears more than a passing resemblance to the Europe of 1914-1945. Indeed, the scholarship on an Asian Europe by leading social scientists such as John J. Mearsheimer and Aaron L. Friedberg represents an interesting exercise in Western probabilistic determinism.⁷¹

However, for military analysts, Occidental historical analogues regarding China must be treated as no more than a combination of presumptive truth mixed with historicism. China remains a society of purposive actors who are heirs to an ancient Confucian civilization and its military modernization trajectory is neither that of Imperial Germany nor a delayed duplicate of Meiji Japan. Military futures specialists need to ponder carefully Asia's own martial history by thinking in functional and dialectical time streams that consider the military implications

68 Michael Mazarr, "The Folly of "Asymmetric War" *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 33-53; Gian Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York: The Free Press, 2013); Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of a New Way of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

69 General Sir Richard Shirreff, "Conducting Joint Operations" in *The Oxford Handbook of War*, eds. Julian Lindley-French and Yves Boyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 379.

70 US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operational Access Concept, Version 1.0* (Washington, DC: JCS, January 2012), 14-27; 33-36; and *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations; Joint Force 2020* (Washington, DC: JCS, September 2012), 4-14.

71 John Mearsheimer, "The Rise of China Will Not be Peaceful," *The Australian*, 18 November, 2005, 10; John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011).

of David C. Kang's celebrated counterfactual challenge to American realists: "I wondered why we would use Europe's past—rather than Asia's own past—to explore Asia's future."⁷² In short, China's military modernization needs to be carefully situated in a study of Sinological strategic culture in all its indigenous complexity—ranging from the cultural realism of Alastair Iain Johnston through the cultural exceptionalism of Yuan-Kang Wang to Mikael Weissmann's "mystery of the East Asian peace."⁷³

Finally, we need to remember that, unlike the conventional wars with Iraq in 1990–91 and 2003, a US military confrontation with China in Asia would ultimately be a collision between two nuclear-armed states. If such a confrontation escalated, it would represent a global crisis of a magnitude not seen since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. For these reasons, the likelihood of conventional armed conflict between the United States and China—whether couched in terms of air-sea battle doctrine or joint anti-access concepts—remains remote. As strategist, Edward N. Luttwak, warns:

Large [US] military expenditures aimed at China must . . . be closely questioned. . . . Nothing resembling a general China/anti-China war with armies in the field, naval battles, and conventional air bombardments is possible in the nuclear age. China may be making exactly the same colossal error that Imperial Germany did after 1890, but this is not a devolution that ends with another 1914, another war of destruction. *The existence of nuclear weapons does not preclude all combat between those who have them, but does severely limit its forms.*⁷⁴

It is incumbent on those who see China as a long-term antagonist of the United States to make their case not just in terms of conventional capabilities but in the context of deeper currents of military rivalry, ideological conflict, economic competition, strategic culture, and geopolitics. If such a multi-layered, synchronic analysis is not performed convincingly, then distorted forms of conjectural and surrogate knowledge from preconceived notions of Sinology may come to dominate American strategy.

Integrationists: The Confluence of Warfare

A third group of thinkers on future war are the integrationists who view the coming of globalization and its interaction with geopolitical change and demographics as facilitating a conventional and unconventional spectrum of armed conflict involving both nonstate and state actors. The world of the integrationists is one in which lethal technologies ranging from battlespace drones to battlefield improvised explosive devices (IEDs) coexist. As senior US defense officials from Robert Gates to William Lynn have noted, the categories of war are blurring into "hybrid or more complex forms of warfare" and the consequent "increase in lethality across the threat spectrum means we

⁷² David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), xi.

⁷³ Alastair Iain Johnstone, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Yuan-Kang Wang, *Harmony and War: Confucian Culture and Chinese Power Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Mikhael Weissmann, *The East Asian Peace: Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁷⁴ Edward N. Luttwak, *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy* (New York: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2012). 98. Emphasis added.

cannot prepare for either a high-end conflict with a potential near-peer competitor or a lower-end conflict with a counterinsurgency focus.”⁷⁵

This multi-mode, or hybrid understanding of war, is reflected in the January 2012 document *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* which outlines a broad range of tasks from countering irregular conflict through A2AD and nuclear deterrence to stabilization tasks.⁷⁶ After two long counterinsurgency campaigns, the US Army is moving towards a greater notion of unified and full-spectrum operations in which it is “capable of defeating or destroying a hybrid threat, defined as a diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements or some combination thereof, unified to achieve mutually benefiting effects.”⁷⁷ A hybrid view of future conflict, a confluence of warfare, has gradually become a form of received wisdom in the English-speaking West. The National Intelligence Council’s *Global Trends 2030* states that while great power conflicts remain unlikely, “the risks of interstate conflict are increasing [due] to changes in the international system.” However, it cautions, “if future state-on-state conflicts occur, they will most likely involve multiple forms of warfare.”⁷⁸ This is a view shared by the British defense establishment.⁷⁹

It is most important for military futures analysts to note that hybrid warfare did not suddenly appear with Hezbollah in the Lebanon conflict of 2006. Historically, the phenomenon has long roots and was encountered in China during the Chinese civil war of 1946-49; in South Vietnam in the form of simultaneous Viet Cong guerrilla cadres and North Vietnamese main force units; and in Sri Lanka with the multidimensional campaign of the Tamil Tigers. The concept of hybridity in war has received little attention in the United States until recently perhaps because of the neglect of Vietnam as a field of study by the professional military. It is an interesting counterfactual thought experiment to consider that, if the United States had succeeded strategically in Vietnam, whether the hybrid character of the Viet Cong-North Vietnamese enemy would have been more fully appreciated and understood.

There is much to be considered by futures specialists in hybrid manifestations of armed conflict, not least in the demographic implications of merged aspects of armed conflict in the urban realm. Between 2015 and 2030, up to one billion people are expected to move from rural areas into cities and towns throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The global population will expand from 7.1 to 8.3 billion with over sixty percent living in urban areas characterized by an unequal and multi-speed global economy, increased social fragmentation, and pervasive social media.⁸⁰ The phenomenon of a global urban transi-

75 Robert M. Gates, “The National Defense Strategy: Striking the Right Balance,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (January 2009), 52, 1st Quarter, 5; William J. Lynn, III, “Global Security Forum 2011 Keynote Address,” (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 8 June 2011) at csis.org/files/attachments/110608_gsf_plenary-transcript.pdf

76 Department of Defense, *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, January 2012), 3-8.

77 Association of the US Army, *US Army Training for Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Institute of Land Warfare, September 2011), 8.

78 *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, 53-55; 65. Emphasis added.

79 United Kingdom, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, October 2010), 16.

80 Jack A. Goldstone, “The New Population Bomb: The Four Megatrends That Will Change the World,” *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 2 (January-February 2010): 31-43.

tion will yield a rich field in trend analysis, scenario-building, pattern recognition and synchronic narratives. Since military conflict mirrors human habitat, aspects of warfare are likely to involve cityscape as well as landscape and the consequences for security and stable governance from competition for natural resources and energy supplies from overpopulated megalopolises and shanty cities from Lagos through Karachi to the Indo-Pacific littoral will be challenging. “In the future,” notes one British document, “we will be unable to avoid being drawn into operations in the urban and littoral regions where the majority of the world’s population lives.” In 2006, for the first time in history, the global urban population exceeded the rural population.⁸¹

For integrationists, the rise of strategic pluralism is the central reality of present and future war. Such pluralism yields a range of global-regional inflection points ranging from crises in the Islamic world, the transformation of parts of Asia, the rapidly changing demography of urbanization, and irregular and hybrid challenges emanating from fragile states. While outcomes cannot be predicted, their repercussions may be dangerous since they are rapidly transmitted by the power of information networks and instant images.

Conclusion

The Czech novelist Milan Kundera once wrote that “man proceeds in the fog. But when he looks back to judge people of the past, he sees no fog in their pasts.”⁸² The conceptual challenge of war is like movement through a mist of the unknown; it is the cognitive demand to understand how the past and the present interact to shape armed conflict in the future. The passage of historical time into first the present and second into the future, means that forms of futures studies will always be essential despite their inability to predict events. In the military realm, such studies provide a corpus of ideas and methods that can be used to explain the structure and components of war and their relationship with political, economic, and social factors. The primary goal is to anticipate in general rather than to predict in particular; to build skills in foresight by exploring alternative possibilities—the forking paths of the future. Seen in this light, futures studies are far better at explaining potential environments of conflict rather than the shape of conflict’s events.

Knowledge of strategic-military environments is a valuable asset to cultivate if only because it ensures that prospective thinking can be as much about orientation as expectation. Properly conducted with interdisciplinary rigor, military futures studies should encourage a brisk exchange of creative ideas and critical modes of thinking on plausible alternatives and probabilities. Such a process encourages flexibility and the more flexible an armed forces establishment is, the more adaptable it is likely to be when faced with the unexpected. A fusion of historical knowledge with an understanding of present trends is important in constructing any image of a future. In this realm, the task of the military futures specialist is an unforgiving intellectual struggle to grasp meaning from fleeting time and circumstance. It is a task for the creative and bold

81 Ministry of Defence, *The Future Character of Conflict* (Shrivenham: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, February 2010), 21.

82 Milan Kundera, *Testaments Betrayed* (NY: Harper/Collins, 1990), 238.

mind in which error and misjudgment are as likely as accuracy and foresight. In a real sense the military futures analyst shares the melancholy fate of F. Scott Fitzgerald's adventurer, Jay Gatsby, who, conscious of the past yet trapped in the present, reaches out continuously towards the green light of the future:

[T]he orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but . . . tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.⁸³

⁸³ F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (New York: Scribner reissue edition, 2004, original publication 1925), 180.

The National Guard as a Strategic Hedge

James D. Campbell

ABSTRACT: This article suggests alternatives to proposed organizational reductions and balance between the Active force and the National Guard. It examines specifics of the cost, use, and effectiveness arguments on both sides of this contentious issue. Finally, this article serves as a catalyst to renew the broader public discussion regarding the proper roles of the regulars and the militia—the National Guard—as integral parts of the nation’s defense and security architecture.

As the year 2014 approaches, the nation anticipates the close of what has widely been described as the longest war in our country’s history. With the assumed ending of that war, many citizens and political leaders anticipate our regular military will be required to do what it has historically always done at the end of a war—shrink. Despite the fact the war in Afghanistan is not the nation’s longest, and our involvement there will likely not entirely end in 2014, the broad expectation or even demand that the military’s size and budget be reduced is both normal and necessary.¹

This expectation of significant post-war regular military reductions reflects long, deep-rooted, and traditional national practice. Indeed, following most of our country’s earliest wars there was a significant national movement to eliminate the regular army altogether, and return to our traditional reliance on the citizen-soldiers of the militia for the country’s defense. After the Revolutionary War the Continental Army was, in fact, effectively disbanded, with less than one hundred soldiers retained to guard stores.² After the War of 1812, the War with Mexico, the Civil War, and the War with Spain, the regular army was drastically reduced, and in spite of continuous fighting on the Western frontier, the nineteenth-century regular army never exceeded a “peacetime” strength of approximately 30,000.³ In contrast, the organized militia strength remained at well over 100,000 during this period.⁴ The first half of the twentieth century was little different, with the regular army (including the nascent Army Air Force) reaching a strength of only 125,000 on the

1 The Seminole Wars lasted on and off between 1819 and 1858; the Sioux Wars between 1854 and 1890; the Apache Wars between 1849 and 1886; and the fighting with the Cheyenne people from the 1850s until 1878. The US involvement in Vietnam lasted fourteen years, from 1961 when the first combat advisors were deployed until 1975 when the government of South Vietnam collapsed.

2 In 1784, Congress disbanded the Continental Army in the wake of the Newburgh controversy, and left only 80 soldiers and a handful of officers to guard remaining military stores. See Allen Millet, and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense, a Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 91.

3 *Ibid.*, 280.

4 *Ibid.*, 264.

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eve of the Second World War in 1936.⁵ That same year the strength of the National Guard was roughly 400,000.⁶

The post-conflict reductions of the Army and the Air Force after the Second World War, the Korean War, and the War in Vietnam were not as drastic as after previous wars, due to the ongoing Cold War with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), but there were reductions nonetheless. Finally, in the 1990s following the first Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the active military once again was reduced in hopes of a “peace dividend.” Certainly these reductions were not as great as those of many previous major post-war periods, but they were significant and perceived by the nation and its leadership as both normal and necessary. At the same time, the combined strength of the National Guard, both Army and Air, remained close to its historic norm, approximately 450,000 soldiers and airmen.

One constant has existed through all these wartime expansions and post-war contractions of the regular military. That constant has been the relatively steady size of, and national reliance on, the nation’s militia (since 1903 the National Guard) as a strategic hedge to allow for rapid expansion of the country’s military capacity in time of emergency. The militia (and later the National Guard) has provided the “expansible Army” function first advocated by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun in the 1820s, and has always been federalized (or has provided state volunteer units) to augment regulars during emergencies. As a result, much of American military history is really the history of the activated militia or National Guard; there were virtually no regular units at Gettysburg, for example, and the second American division to deploy to France in 1917 was the 26th “Yankee” Division, composed solely of National Guard units from the New England states. One of the two Army divisions in the first wave of assault landings on Omaha Beach at Normandy in 1944 was the 29th Division, a primarily Virginia and Maryland National Guard division.⁷ This expansible strategic hedge has continued to allow for needed growth in regular forces in times of crisis: In 2004-05, approximately half of the units deployed in Iraq were from the National Guard, allowing the regulars to reset and begin the growth in size which allowed virtually continuous unit combat rotations, including units from the National Guard, ever since.⁸

This is our history, our national paradigm for military organization and employment which has served us well for the past 237 years. These peacetime contractions of the regular military and reliance on a larger, well-trained, and resourced National Guard have been critical to the nation’s ability to husband resources, and refocus peacetime budget priorities toward domestic development and economic expansion. This

5 Gene Gurney, *A Pictorial History of the United States Army* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1966), 372.

6 Maurice Matloff, ed., *American Military History* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1975), 409-417.

7 *Ibid.*, 418-419; Millet and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense, a Military History of the United States*, 280; Dramatically, the 1940 federalization of the National Guard allowed Congress to more than double the size of the active Army overnight. Federalizing the Guard allowed 300,000 trained soldiers to be inducted into active duty, augmenting the approximately 125,000 soldiers of the regular Army.

8 Brigadier General Todd McCaffrey, “*Active Component Responsibility in Reserve Component Pre-and Post-Mobilization Training*,” (Washington, DC: HQDA G3, 12 March 2013).

ensured we retained the capacity to deter potential adversaries, respond to crises, and rapidly augment the active military when needed. The long-recognized fact throughout our history that the militia, when not federalized, costs significantly less than the regular military has allowed for this routine peacetime reprioritization of national resources. A less-often discussed, but nonetheless critical, function of this organizational method was recognized by the founders of the nation—a small standing regular force and reliance for the preponderance of our security on the militia acts as a significant brake on executive power, requiring Congress either to authorize a federalization of the militia or vote for an expansion of regular forces to mobilize the nation for engagement in a major conflict. This model has been accepted with a broad consensus throughout our history by military and civilian leadership and the mass of our citizens.

The year 2013–14, however, would appear to be different from the previous 237 years of the country's existence. During the past twelve-month period, both Army and Air Force leadership have argued for, and even attempted to force through, a reduction in forces that would result in, at best, a partial reversal of this historically proven and accepted national paradigm. At worst, these moves by the services might result in a complete reversal of our accepted military system by drastically reducing the National Guard to what may be its lowest relative level of strength and combat capability in our history, all while attempting to keep the active Army and Air Force at a larger size even than at the beginning of the current period of conflict.

What is different about this particular period of post-conflict national retrenchment that would cause our service leaders to change historically proven and accepted norms and practices? Why is there a need, given the current National Military Strategy and significant resource constraints, when our conventional forces are not likely to be widely engaged or deployed in the near future, to retain large forces in the active military and cut the vastly less-expensive National Guard to the bone? We must ask these questions while recognizing that our nation has a newly modernized National Guard which more than ever before in its history has dramatically proven its military capability and effectiveness, and which has repeatedly reinforced its critical Constitutional domestic support role in the past twelve years.

To be sure, there is a compelling need for the United States to have a capable active Army and Air Force. The global commitments of the nation, and the uncertainties and fast moving crises we may face, all dictate that our military needs the capability to commit our standing forces rapidly, and in some cases, in a matter of days or even hours. The numbered war plans of the Combatant Commands all have validated requirements for forces which can be deployed swiftly or forward-stationed to execute national strategy. We always have and will continue to need a strong, ready, and capable regular Army and Air Force as a key component of our larger military. However, the following discussion examines some of the pertinent issues in the debate over the roles of the regular active duty and National Guard forces.

Cost

During the last year, as part of the debates concerning reductions in the size of the services, one area of disagreement is the question of the cost of regular forces as compared to the cost of the National Guard. Various studies have produced differing conclusions; studies by the Reserve Forces Policy Board, the RAND Corporation, and from within the Office of the Secretary of Defense are some of the best known. Advocates for reductions in the National Guard have argued that there is no major cost saving to be had by either growing or retaining the current size and structure of the Guard at the expense of the regulars. Support for this position has consisted largely of data showing that when federalized, Guard units and personnel cost the same as regular forces. Additionally, adherents to this position argue that maintaining Guard units at the high levels of readiness and modernization they have held over the past twelve years have resulted in higher costs.

Undeniable, when federalized, Guard units cost roughly the same as regular units. Similarly, it is also true regular forces maintain the large institutional military training and professional education structure from which all components of the services benefit. There is also no denying that significant resources have been expended over the past twelve years to meet the Defense Department's statutory and moral obligations to recapitalize the National Guard and bring its units and personnel up to par with active forces in terms of fielding the same equipment and maintaining the same standards of readiness in training, personnel, and logistics. However, these arguments miss some major points.

First, since the modernization of the Army Guard has been virtually completed over the past twelve years, the costs of providing updated and modern equipment will not continue at the same levels in the future. Clearly, the costs of modernization for the Air Guard are a somewhat different matter, as the Air Force has not invested in modernization of the Guard in the same way the Army has done. Maintaining a modern and capable National Guard is a necessity for the nation; in the absence of a draft these forces have been and will continue to be used in combat, and must have the same capabilities as the Active Army and Air Force. This moral imperative dictates that modernization requirements will not go away, regardless of the relative balance between Regular and Guard forces. That investment will go far given the other cost-effective aspects of the Guard.

Second, in the case of the Army, given the current Force Generation Model, Guard units are only planned to be federalized for one year out of every five—assuming Guard units will actually be mobilized with any consistency at all. Given that deployments for all service components have slowed since the end of our involvement in Iraq and we can expect they will be further reduced after the end of combat operations in Afghanistan next year, in the future Guard units will rarely be federalized, except for routine deployments in support of operations in places like Kosovo, or for training events. Additionally, as the reductions in operational tempo and deployments affect the regulars in the same way as the National Guard, it begs the question: In an era of severely constrained resources, when much of our military will be in a nondeployed “dwell” status, why would we maintain large, expensive, and static

regular forces at a reduced level of readiness, when we can maintain those same forces with virtually identical capabilities and levels of readiness, at a fraction of the cost, in the National Guard?

Ultimately, the facts remain as they have for the entire military history of this country. The National Guard, when not called into active federal service, even when kept at a high state of readiness, does not cost as much as regular forces. The majority of Guard personnel are paid for a baseline of sixty-three days per year, and the federal government does not maintain a large support structure of housing, schools, base facilities, and support services for the Guard which are maintained for the regulars. Retirement and medical costs for the Guard are a fraction of the same costs for regulars. Training, equipment maintenance, operational mileage, and flying hour programs for the Guard are significantly lower than those for the Active Force. The cost of maintaining National Guard facilities is partly borne by the states. National Guard headquarters are smaller and do not require the same personnel overhead as their active counterparts. Finally, the National Guard does not have to pay to move its personnel and their families every two to three years. These facts have remained unchanged for the past 237 years. The Army's own current cost data show that in one year, when not mobilized, Army National Guard Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) and other units cost approximately one-third that of similar regular units.⁹ The fact that the Army National Guard, which at current force levels is only one-third smaller than the regular Army and provides thirty-nine percent of the Army's operating force, and yet only uses twelve percent of the Army's total budget, should make any further arguments about the relative costs of each component irrelevant.¹⁰

Use

One of the arguments made by senior service leadership in support of keeping a large active force is that the services do not have rapid or direct access to the National Guard in a crisis or during routine circumstances in the same way they have access to the regulars or reserves. The services have complained that to gain access to the Guard for military operations they must receive permission from states, governors, the Congress, and follow other cumbersome procedures when trying to prepare and deploy forces. They also have argued that even when they do gain access to the Guard, it takes Guard units up to twenty-four months to prepare for deployments, which is too long in a crisis situation. Consequently, they argue they must have a large standing regular force ready to respond instantaneously or overnight, and cannot be expected to work through the complex and lengthy requirements needed to mobilize and deploy the Guard.

To address these arguments, it is important to clarify the processes and authorities available to the services and to the President and Congress when they need the country's militia. Since 1792 when Congress passed the Militia and Calling Forth Acts, the President and Congress have had the statutory authority to federalize the militia, and

9 ARNG-G3 Briefing, "Many Feasible Alternatives Exist," 24 July 2013 (US Army "FORCES" costing model, 28 June 2013).

10 *Ibid.*, slides 7-14.

the laws now in place allow for rapid and complete federalization of all the National Guard, parts of it, individual units, or even individual soldiers and airmen. This federalization can be done without permission from states, governors, Adjutants General, or anyone else. These are the processes used since the beginning of the twentieth century, when National Guard units were federalized to assist in the Mexican Punitive Expedition; these same authorities were used to call into federal service the entire National Guard at the stroke of a pen in both 1917 and 1940. Three National Guard divisions were federalized during the Korean War, and since 1991 the number of National Guard units, soldiers, and airmen who have been mobilized into federal service for either training, overseas contingency operations, or direct combat has numbered in the hundreds of thousands. In each of these cases, mobilizations have been rapid, have followed the procedures set in law—and have not been restricted by state authorities. Not once in the past twenty-five years have the services been delayed or denied complete access to the combat reserves of the National Guard when needed.

The argument that it takes up to twenty-four months to mobilize a National Guard unit is also specious. There is no legal requirement for any advance notice for the mobilization of the National Guard. In fact, between 2001 and 2006, many National Guard units had as little as thirty days notice for their deployments. The “requirement” for twenty-four months notification is a policy put in place by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to allow for more predictability for the Guard during repeated deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. In actuality, the Air Force requires all its National Guard units to maintain themselves and their individual airmen at a level of readiness capable of being mobilized and deployed in 72 hours, and the Army’s own training model dictates that National Guard BCTs, the largest and most complex units in the militia, can be mobilized and sent to a combat theater in an average of 80 days.¹¹

Given these facts, it is likely that when the services use arguments about “access,” they really mean “control.” Indeed, the services do not exercise routine, direct control over the National Guard when it is in a Title 32 United States Code (USC) status. When not under federal, or Title 10 USC status, the National Guard is under the authority of its respective state or territorial governors. As a result, the services do not exert direct control over the National Guard all the time, but they do, in fact, exert a significant amount of indirect control through regulatory and fiscal mechanisms. National Guard officer promotions are managed by the state, but this management must be done in accordance with federal law and the regulatory requirements of the services. Standards of training, personnel readiness, maintenance, and operational performance are dictated and managed by the services. Air National Guard wings and other units operate daily under the management oversight and control of their respective Air Force Major Commands—many perform important operational missions seven days a week, while not formally mobilized, under the control of those commands.

11 Office of the Secretary of Defense Report to Congress, “*Reserve and Active Components Units of the Armed Forces*,” (Washington, DC: Draft working document, 26 September 2012).

It is possible, therefore, that this issue of control can be reduced to these terms: first, the Adjutants General respond to their governors and not the service chiefs; second, the militia can be used by the governors in a state active duty status without reference to the services or anyone else in the federal government; third, the governors can appoint senior officers in the National Guard using individual state laws and procedures, and only then submit those officers to a federal recognition process for approval by Congress; and finally, the services cannot, by federal statute, make major force structure or organizational changes to the National Guard without permission from Congress and the affected state governors.

Convenient or not, this is our military system, and it has been constituted in this fashion since the earliest days of the Republic for very specific reasons. The militia tradition of this country dates back to the English reaction against oppressive standing armies resulting from the aftermath of the English Civil War in the mid-seventeenth century, and the requirement for a strong, state-controlled, citizen militia was viewed by the founders as a critical hedge against an oppressive executive power or overreach by the central government.¹² Finally, having such a large and important part of the Army and Air Force residing in local communities, under state control, provides the enormous benefit to the nation of creating and fostering close bonds between the military and its parent society—bonds which would not exist if the military was stationed only on federal bases, isolated from the broader American people. The National Guard is the military in our communities, a role which is particularly important in the majority of states and territories where there are no large federal installations. General Creighton Abrams, when Chief of Staff of the Army in the early 1970s, recognized this very useful bond when he reinforced the military construct through the doctrine which bears his name, and which ensures the country cannot go to war without mobilizing its citizens and communities through activation of the National Guard and Reserve.

There is one final point about the use of the National Guard which should be a part of the national discussion concerning the balance between Active and Reserve Component forces. Our military currently has only a limited amount of strategic deployment capacity, both air and sea. This lift capability is a critical element in decisions about managing everything our military does in support of the national strategy, from how it is organized, to the size and basing of units. Our strategic lift capacity restricts the numbers of Army BCTs and other supporting forces we can send around the world in a crisis. The time it takes to get the first, limited number of units in place overseas, and then to get the ships and planes back and set to move follow-on forces is and should be a centrally important factor in how we manage the balance between the number of regular combat units and the number of combat units in the National Guard.

¹² James Madison asserted in Federalist 46 that, given that the population of a country could only support a Regular Army of a certain size, at the time of his writing the United States could only expect to have a maximum standing force of 25-30,000. He then stated that the various states' militias should be "half a million" strong to counter any potential threat to liberty from this standing force.

For example, as stated previously, the Army's training model directs that it takes an average of 80 days to mobilize and prepare a National Guard BCT for deployment. When during a crisis it takes 80 days or longer for the first units to be deployed and for the ships and aircraft to return for a second lift, it would perhaps make sense to plan for a significant number of our second lift of combat forces to be from the National Guard. Since the services can, in fact, rapidly call these units and personnel into federal service immediately in time of emergency, we would merely need to mobilize them and begin final training at the start of a crisis, so they would be ready for the second lift. Of course, most situations which would require the deployment of large numbers of conventional forces would not arise overnight, so in reality the National Guard could actually be mobilized and start final training well in advance of any projected or required deployment date. All units, regardless of service component, not part of the first lift of forces are, in fact, part of a second echelon; they are not a part of the first-line force and standing by at a somewhat reduced level of readiness. Given this fact, it is arguably more economically and militarily feasible in a time of severely constrained resources, to choose the force which is the most cost-effective to constitute the bulk of this second echelon. Doing so, of course, would require that our national military leadership embrace the fact that Guard forces are actually part of their larger service, and are capable of performing at levels equal to their regular counterparts.

Effectiveness

A final argument in this debate, one which has been made perhaps less stridently in the past few years but one which has existed for as long as our country's military, is that of the relative combat effectiveness of the National Guard. The argument between Regular and Provincial during the colonial period, between Continental and Militiaman during the Revolutionary War, and between the Regulars and the Volunteers and militia during the nineteenth century are all a part of this age-old conundrum. The post-Civil War position taken by one of the fathers of modern American military thought, Emory Upton, was that regulars were the only really viable force on the modern battlefield and that militia or volunteers were of limited value, at best.¹³ But his contemporaries Leonard Wood, Nelson Miles, and later, John Pershing, were very complimentary of these soldiers and used them to great effect in their campaigns in the American West and especially in Cuba, the Philippines, and WWI.

The very small size of the peacetime regular Army during the first half of the twentieth century was probably responsible for this debate subsiding—the massive national mobilization efforts during the world wars demanded a far less parochial view of the various service components' relative levels of efficacy. The argument has returned since then, and seems to be a regular manifestation of our peacetime jockeying for reduced military resources. The most recent incarnation of this perennial debate has taken a few distinct tacks. First, full Air National Guard unit mobilizations have not occurred at any significant level during this wartime period—the Air Guard has met its deployment responsibilities

13 Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968).

by using individual volunteers or small parts of units, because the larger units themselves are not ready or able to take on a full mobilization. Second, although the Army Guard has undoubtedly mobilized and deployed enormous numbers of units and soldiers, its divisions and BCTs have not performed as true “battle-space owners” in the conduct of full-spectrum combat operations—they lack the higher-order skills and experience to do so effectively.

These arguments obscure some important truths. Air National Guard units have mobilized and deployed exactly those capabilities, sometimes embodied as full units and sometimes as unit or individual contributions to the Air Expeditionary Forces, which the Air Force has directed them to provide. Air Force senior leaders, to their credit, have openly acknowledged that without the routine and critical contributions of the Air National Guard, the Air Force would not have had the successes they have enjoyed over the past twelve years. Indeed, the Air Force could not have performed its mission at all. Air National Guard units provide virtually all of the Combat Air Patrols over the continental United States, and without the refueling missions performed daily by the Air National Guard, such as the Atlantic air bridge provided by the Guard’s Northeast Tanker Task Force, these operations would flatly not have been possible. It is important to note that mobilization and deployment policies and procedures are set by the Defense Department and the services, not by the National Guard or the states; these policies, which have been in place during the past several years, do not necessarily reflect the laws which govern Guard mobilizations or combat employment.

Army senior leaders have stated that Guard combat brigades and divisions have not performed the same difficult missions as their regular counterparts, and have insinuated that although at the company and even battalion level the Guard performs very well, the higher headquarters do not. Again—Guard units have performed exactly those missions which they have been given by the Army, and do not have a say in what those missions are. Additionally, over seventeen of the forty-six Guard brigades deployed since 2001 have, in fact, performed full-spectrum operations in theater.¹⁴ Those that have not were acting as security forces or in many cases as training teams embedded with either Iraqi or Afghan forces—arguably the most critical mission ensuring the long-term success of both theater strategies. It is important to note that at the height of National Guard combat deployments to Iraq in 2005, when over forty percent of the combat units were from the National Guard, the Guard also rapidly mobilized and deployed over 50,000 soldiers and airmen in domestic support of Hurricane Katrina relief operations, including two division headquarters to exercise command and control. National Guard BCTs and divisions routinely manage the Guard’s complex Constitutional role of domestic support during emergencies, a military mission at least equal in importance to overseas operations.

Ultimately, however, these arguments are unnecessary and unhelpful. At the outset of any conflict, regular units generally can be expected to have a more rapid transition to a wartime footing, and can in most cases conduct complex operations more readily. After a transitional

¹⁴ ARNG-G3 Briefing, 28 June 2013, “ARNG BCTs Deployed by Year,” (source DAMPS orders).

period, the militia gain the skills needed and perform equally as well as regulars. This paradigm has been the case in every single war this country has waged, and the past thirteen years have been no different, except perhaps in the fact that the transitional period was far shorter and in some cases nonexistent, due to the great investments made by the services in training and leader development for the National Guard following the First Gulf War. National Guard units, both Army and Air, have performed just as well in the past thirteen years as any of their regular counterparts—there is no evidence suggesting they have had leadership or disciplinary problems, or combat failures out of the norm. The truth is that regardless of service component, there are good units and good leaders, and there are ineffective units and marginal leaders. Some of them are regulars, and some are in the National Guard. Again—there were virtually no regular units at many of the most important military engagements in our history, and the oldest and some of the most highly decorated units in the military are in the National Guard. A final word on this argument: How many National Guard units must fight and succeed, suffer casualties, earn decorations and citations, and serve with dedication and honor before we stop this destructive debate and make no distinction between organizations, regardless of component? A soldier or airman, an Army Brigade Combat Team or Air Force Wing is and ought to be an interchangeable combat capability, regardless of component. Acceptance of this fact is the only way to solve the larger problems we face as a military.

Conclusion

In 2000, before the start of the current series of wars and interventions, the Army National Guard had, along with myriad other units, forty-two combat brigades within its force structure. The regular Army contained thirty-three combat brigades. This ratio was widely perceived as normal and acceptable by senior leaders and force planners—after all, throughout the country's history the peacetime balance between the militia and the Regulars has always been that way—a highly trained, professional, and ready regular force, supported by its combat reserve of a larger, well-resourced, and ready militia. This balance served us well in the initial years of conflict after 2001. As planned and executed time and again in the past 237 years, the National Guard mobilized units and provided follow-on forces after the regulars conducted initial operations. In the breathing and reset space allowed by the mobilization of the National Guard, the United States had time to grow the size of the regulars while maintaining steady deployments.

A difference, however, between these past twelve years and our other periods of conflict, occurred regarding the balance of militia and regular combat forces. Throughout this period of conflict, the number of combat brigades in each service component was radically altered. Between 2001 and 2013, the regular Army has grown to include forty-five combat brigades, while the National Guard has been reduced from forty-two to twenty-eight combat brigades—a *thirty-three percent decline during wartime*. Why is this? Many of the Guard combat brigades have been converted to either support or multifunctional units, while a few have been eliminated. This change has altered the important balance in our forces which has always allowed for our country to mobilize its

combat capacity rapidly without spending enormous sums in peacetime to maintain a standing force. Additionally, the regular Army is now out of balance and no longer has the ability to support itself with units which provide engineering, logistics, and other support functions for combat formations—these types of units overwhelmingly now reside in the Guard or the Army Reserve. The Combat Reserve of the Army, which has historically always been the National Guard, is now for the first time in our history in danger of not being able to mirror or provide the same maneuver combat functions as the active Army.

This article posed two questions: What is different about 2014 and this particular period of post-conflict national retrenchment that would cause our service leaders to try to change historically proven and accepted norms and practices? Why is there a need, given the current National Military Strategy and significant resource constraints, when our conventional forces are not likely to be widely engaged or deployed in the near future, to retain large forces in the active military and reduce the vastly less-expensive National Guard? I would suggest there is, in fact, no difference between now and any other period of post-conflict retrenchment in our national history. There is no valid reason to abandon our time-tested and broadly accepted methods of military organization in peacetime.

There may be some who argue that the world is a much more unstable and dangerous place now than ever before, and that the United States has far too many commitments to allow for a significant reduction in active forces, and so the needed cuts in forces must be found elsewhere. There are also those who argue that whatever cuts are made must be “fairly apportioned” between the various components of the Army and Air Force. These arguments do not support close examination. The world is not more dangerous or unstable now than in the past—there are fewer wars and other conflicts now across the globe than at any time in the past thirty years. The United States faces no existential threats, and there are no peer military powers on earth immediately pressing our allies or other interests. There is, still, a valid need for us to have a military that can respond to crises and maintain the ability to deploy rapidly in emergencies, while being able to fight and win against any adversary. But there are no truly looming threats and adversaries who are any more dangerous than those we have faced in the past, and who should cause us to reverse hundreds of years of proven military organizational practices.

If our global commitments are such that some argue we must maintain a large standing regular force, an historical comparison may be useful as a rebuttal. At the height of the British Empire, in the years around the turn of the twentieth century when the global political, diplomatic, and military situation was fraught with crises and tensions which ultimately built to the start of the First World War, the British government was able to maintain its dominion and exercise its military commitments to the Empire—one quarter of the earth’s surface including one quarter of the earth’s population—with a regular Army that never exceeded 300,000 men.¹⁵ Does the United States now have commitments and a global dominion that would cause us to exceed this number? Or can we

15 In August, 1914, at the start of the First World War, the regular British Army had a strength of 247,342. See Tim Travers, “The Army and the Challenge of War,” in *The Oxford History of the British Army*, ed. David Chandler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 211.

afford to transfer some of our active military capacity into our proven National Guard, where it can remain trained and ready and cost the nation approximately one-third what it would cost to maintain it on active duty?

What is the reason for the emphasis on “proportionality” in proposed military reductions? Any adherent to this position must explain a few things. If all units, soldiers, and airmen are truly viewed as equal, interchangeable, and important elements of their respective services, why would not the Army and the Air Force work to save vast amounts of money, and preserve a broader and higher level of unit readiness, by retaining a greater number of combat brigades and Air Wings through transferring them, by apportion, from the Active Army and Air Force to the National Guard? “Fairness” and “proportionality” have nothing whatever to do with it—the real issue is for us together to rationally determine how we can maintain the best military with the largest capacity and capability at the least cost to the nation. In order to reach this point, this point of decisionmaking, truly visionary leaders would have to finally and completely abandon the parochial views which pit regular against militiaman, and which view one component as somehow inherently superior to another, without recognizing the unique values and strengths of each which combine to provide the nation with its best possible military.

Clearly these questions require serious and open debate, in circles both inside and outside the military hierarchy and the government. The successful future of our all-volunteer military and our country’s financial health demand that it occur soon.

RESERVE COMPONENTS: POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Reserve Component Costs: A Relook

Rick Morrison

ABSTRACT: The Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) costing model suggests Active and Reserve forces cost about the same. Thus, many of the assumptions about the cost-effectiveness of Reserve Components may need a closer look.

Budget Cycles

As we close the book on one of America's longest military engagements, the battle for shrinking resources is growing more intense. But what risk can we realistically assume before we place US security interests in jeopardy? Many solutions call for the Army to move more of its capabilities to the Reserve Component. However, the cost savings may not be as great as we might think. This article explores some of those costs through the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) costing model.

Cost-Effective Reserve Components

The National Guard Bureau *2013 Posture Statement: Security America Can Afford* states "The National Guard is the DOD's most cost effective component." One of the reasons listed is that "For 11% of the Army Budget, the Army National Guard provides 32% of the Army's total personnel and 40% of its operating forces."¹ The *United States Army Reserve 2013 Posture Statement* makes a similar claim: "As the Army's only Federal Operational Reserve Force, the Army Reserve provides a cost-effective way to mitigate risk to national security. For only 6 percent of the Army budget, the Army Reserve provides almost 20 percent of the Total Force."²

Clearly, the percentage of total force provided by each reserve component is correct. However, statements about percent of the Army budget need to be qualified. They hold true when viewing the Army budget purely from an appropriations-sponsor perspective, but the Army pays for several National Guard and Army Reserve expenses through active Army appropriations. Here are a few examples:

- Other Procurement of Army (OPA) appropriation is used to purchase new equipment for all three components. The Army may buy 50 new trucks and allocate ten to the ARNG and ten to the USAR. The cost of new equipment is not included in reserve component appropriations.
- Operations and Maintenance, Army (OMA) appropriation pays the overhead costs of operating ten rotations per year at the National

1 GEN Craig R. McKinley, *2013 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement*, 4, http://www.nation-anguard.mil/features/ngps/2013_ngps.pdf.

2 LTG Jeffrey W. Talley and CSM James L. Lambert, *America's Army Reserve: a Life-Saving and Life-Sustaining Force for the Nation, 2013 Posture Statement*, June 6, 2013, ii. [http://www.usar.army.mil/resources/Media/ARPS_2013_6-6-13%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.usar.army.mil/resources/Media/ARPS_2013_6-6-13%20(2).pdf).

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Training Center (NTC) and Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). The National Guard uses one rotation per year at each center and pays its own military personnel costs and a portion of the O&M expenses associated with training away from home station.

- OMA also pays to operate the initial military training sites in which the ARNG and USAR send tens of thousands of soldiers through each year (Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training, etc.). The reserve components pay their own personnel costs via their National Guard Pay, Army (NGPA) and Reserve Pay, Army (RPA) appropriations for soldiers while they are on active duty, but the overhead costs of operating those training bases are under the OMA appropriation.

Put differently, the percentage of the total Army budget attributed to the ARNG and USAR would be higher if the portion of active appropriations in the base budget spent on the RCs were included in the calculations.

But How Cost-Effective?

From 2010 to 2012, I led a team of analysts on a project directed by HQDA. We were tasked by the Army G-8 Program, Analysis and Evaluation Division (PA&E) to determine the comparable costs of providing similar AC/RC units in a Force Generation Cycle. The purpose was to gain commonality of numbers, specifically the cost of active component and reserve component soldiers so we could meet three objectives: (1) Conduct a comprehensive analysis on the Business Case for Operationalizing the Reserve Component; (2) establish common Army costing baselines to compare Active and Reserve Component costs; and (3) gain leadership agreement (AC, ARNG, and USAR) so those leaders could accurately engage the Office of the Secretary of Defense and other agencies outside the department.³

My team, comprised of top analysts from all three components, designed a cost model that supported a range of utilization scenarios. We focused on three unique applications: (1) Allocated: A unit moves through the ARFORGEN cycle and deploys during the available year; (2) Apportioned: A unit moves through the ARFORGEN cycle and deploys on a noncombat contingency mission at some point in the available year; and (3) Apportioned: a unit moves through the ARFORGEN cycle but has no mission in the available year and does not deploy. HQDA asked us to provide cost comparisons on the Heavy Brigade Combat Team (BCT), Stryker BCT, Infantry BCT, and the Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB). We also included results for four types of smaller formations to gain an appreciation of how manpower, mission sets, and equipment impacted the results. We included the engineer battalion, civil affairs battalion, medium truck company, and military police company in our report. We chose units found in at least two of the three components with the same Standard Requirements Code (SRC). Figure 1 lists the SRCs and which components the unit types reside in.

³ COL Morrison earned recognition as the military runner -up for the 2010 Pace Award for his effort in leading this team to create the AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model. The Pace Award is named for former Secretary of the Army Frank Pace Jr., who served in the position between 1950 and 1953, during the Korean War. The award has been presented annually since 1962 to an Army officer under the grade of colonel and a civilian, GS-14 equivalent or below.

Unit Type	SRC	AC	ARNG	USAR
HBCT	87300G301	X	X	
IBCT	77300G301	X	X	
SBCT	47100F501	X	X	
CAB	01300G201	X	X	
Engineer BN	05435R001	X	X	X
Civil Affairs BN	41705A001	X		X
Medium Truck CO	55727F101	X	X	X
Military Polic CO	19667L001	X	X	X

Figure 1. The unit types, their respective Standard Requirements Code (SRC), and the components in which they reside.

The AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model produced results that provided the following observations. In general, reserve component ARFORGEN cycle costs are lower for Personnel and Operations & Support; however, equipment recapitalization cost is a significant offsetting factor for equipment-intensive units. The differential in cost is greatest in units with lower equipment operating costs.

Unit Type	ARNG	USAR
BOG/DWELL	1:4/1:5	1:4/1:5
HBCT	\$0.97/\$0.87	
IBCT	\$0.88/\$0.85	
SBCT	\$0.92/\$0.88	
CAB	\$1.02/\$0.94	
EN BN	\$0.92/\$0.91	\$0.86/\$0.85
CABN		\$0.77/\$0.71
TC CO	\$0.91/\$0.90	\$0.86/\$0.84
MP CO	\$0.87/\$0.84	\$0.86/\$0.83

Figure 2. Results from the AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model in this figure can be stated using this example for the HBCT: "For every \$1.00 the AC spends on an HBCT in a 1:2 ARFORGEN cycle, the ARNG will spend \$0.97 for an HBCT in a 1:4 ARFORGEN cycle or \$0.87 in a 1:5 ARFORGEN cycle."

Review Figure 2 to see how relative costs indicate there are some unit types that might be best suited for the Active Army, while others might be best suited for the ARNG or USAR, at least from a cost perspective. We used the allocated scenario (units in an ARFORGEN cycle that deploy or mobilize to a combat theater) to create this table. Costs for Active units were based on the unit going through a 1:2 ARFORGEN cycle (9 months boots-on-the-ground: 18 months in Reset and Train/Ready). Costs for ARNG and USAR units were based on both 1:4 and 1:5 ARFORGEN cycles (1-year boots-on-the-ground: 4 or 5 years in Reset and Train/Ready Phases).

As Figure 2 shows, for every dollar the Army spends on an Active Component unit, it will spend the amount indicated for an ARNG or

USAR unit of the same type. For example, for every dollar spent on an Active Heavy Brigade Combat Team in a 1:2 ARFORGEN cycle, the Army will spend \$.97 to send an ARNG Heavy Brigade Combat Team through the 1:4 cycle and \$.87 for the 1:5 cycle. These data show that to train, equip, and deploy an ARNG Heavy Brigade Combat Team in a 1:4 ARFORGEN cycle costs basically the same as an Active Heavy Brigade Combat Team. It also shows that a 1:5 cycle is the cheaper option for the ARNG relative to what the Army spends on the same type of Active Army Heavy Brigade Combat Team. At the other end of the cost spectrum, an Army Reserve civil affairs battalion only costs \$.77 and \$.71 on the dollar for a 1:4 and 1:5 ARFORGEN cycle, respectively. In both ARFORGEN cycles, it is much cheaper to have civil affairs units in the Army Reserve than in the Active force. Look closely at the Combat Aviation Brigade costs in Figure 2. It is actually more expensive for an ARNG Combat Aviation Brigade to go through the 1:4 ARFORGEN cycle than it is for its Active counterpart in a 1:2 cycle.

Compare this result to statements in the media claiming ARNG and USAR soldiers (personnel costs) are about one-third the cost of the active component when not mobilized. That is a valid statement. However, one has to be aware that simply comparing personnel costs between the components is only a small part of the issue. One has to consider OPTEMPO, equipment, and capital reinvestment costs to gain a true appreciation of the costs involved.

Addressing Risk?

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 12 of the Constitution provides the impetus for expanding and contracting the Active Army while maintaining a relatively constant militia.

The Congress shall have Power To . . . raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years...

Article I, Section 8, Clause 12

The language in the Constitution implies that the Army will grow in times of crisis and return to “normal” afterwards. But what should “normal” look like in 2015 or 2025?

The AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model does not address the risk involved if a unit is placed in the Reserve Component. It typically takes ARNG and USAR units longer to train for deployment than their Active counterparts. However, some smaller Army Reserve units only need the statutory minimum 48-unit training assemblies and 15 days of annual training to deploy at the T-2 standard. Those units should remain in the Reserve Component.

The basic premise for the Operational Reserve is to provide enough premobilization training to allow reserve component units that require additional training days to deploy in less time once they reach the mobilization station. If our national security goals can be met by risking a longer wait for reserve component formations to deploy, then the AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model can inform Army leaders as to which units might be better suited—from a budget perspective—for the ARNG or USAR and those that should reside in the active force.

Equipment-intensive units (Heavy Brigade Combat Teams, Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, Combat Aviation Brigades) should primarily reside in the active force since the same SCRs in the ARNG cost almost as much, if not more, to maintain across an ARFORGEN cycle and because these unit types require more intensive collective training to deploy.

If we accept the results of the AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model, one potential conclusion is that, since Heavy Brigade Combat Teams and Combat Aviation Brigades are expensive to maintain in the ARNG, they should be moved to the active force. In that way, we can significantly reduce one part of the risk equation. The ARNG might respond by arguing it has to keep its heavy forces for homeland defense, but would be willing to help reduce the active force by rebalancing the combat support and combat service support units into the reserve force.

The Army is trying to remain relevant to the new security environment, and each of the Army's three components is making its case. The basic question is how much risk are we willing to take? What happens when our active forces are insufficient and complementary reserve component forces cannot be deployed fast enough to fill the gap? This is a perennial question, one usually (and unfortunately) answered in hindsight. How small can our Total Army be and still protect our vital interests? What risks are we willing to accept by reducing any of our Army's components further than what the current drawdown plan calls for?

Insights from the AC/RC ARFORGEN Costing Model and can help the Army reduce its operating costs by rebalancing forces among components. Only after we assess these results will we be able to design an affordable, balanced, relevant total force that allows us to meet our national security objectives.

Commentaries & Replies

On “Confronting Africa’s Sobels”

Chris Mason

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This commentary is in response to the article, “Confronting Africa’s Sobels” by Robert L. Feldman and Michel Ben Arrous published in the Winter 2013-14 issue of Parameters (vol. 43, no. 4).

“

Confronting Africa’s Sobels” by Robert Feldman and Michel Ben Arrous is a solid and scholarly discussion of the problem of military personnel in Sierra Leone who crossed sides in Sierra Leone’s bloody civil war from 1991 to 2002. They acted as “soldiers by day and rebels by night” to maximize their ability to prey on their own civil population, often coordinating with insurgent bands to deconflict the despoliation of villages where both forces were operating. The authors point out that in Sierra Leone, rebel leaders and the army both recruited young men from the same demographic of the same ethnic group. They note that in most civil conflicts in Africa, where government soldiers and rebels are drawn from different ethno-linguistic groups, massacres and reprisals driven by ethnic conflict are the norm. However, they do not suggest the Sobel phenomenon may be limited to rare cases like Sierra Leone where ethnic animosities were not a major factor fueling the insurgency. Indeed, a major shortcoming of the article is that the authors suggest there are other examples of this phenomenon but do not cite additional cases. This commends the potential for further research into the Sobel issue to determine if it exists elsewhere or was unique to the civil war in Sierra Leone.

The article is most intriguing in its discussion of the role of private military companies in Africa, and least satisfying in its conclusions. The intractable issues of post-colonial Africa have frustrated diplomats and development agencies for decades, and the vague and chimerical suggestions of the authors—that a troubled African nation should simply “get its own house in order,” for example—are not policy prescriptions likely to cut the Gordian Knot of Africa’s manifold governance problems. Furthermore, it remains an open question whether foreign military training efforts in Africa, which include several hours of classroom lectures on respecting human rights and so on, actually change deep-rooted social values and behavior and “professionalize” African armies or simply make them more lethal and efficient. Certainly, they do nothing to improve the governments which give them their marching orders. As John Foster Dulles advised President Eisenhower sixty years ago, “strong armies do not make strong governments. Strong governments make strong armies.”

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The Authors Reply

Robert L. Feldman and Michel Ben Arrous

The authors thank Dr. Mason for his thoughtful critique of our article. With regards to his request for further examples, let us preface our response by stating that shifting loyalties and periodic changeovers from soldier to rebel are certainly not limited to Sierra Leone. As discussed below, Algeria, Pakistan, Mexico, and the Central African Republic had or have various iterations of the Sobel phenomenon. In Sierra Leone the phenomenon may best be seen as a dramatic configuration of nonspecific patterns. The duration of whatever state (soldier or rebel) can be longer, as in the Tuareg case discussed in the article. Repetitive instances of army passivity, as in Algeria during the 90s, when villagers were massacred in the immediate vicinity of army compounds, do not occur without a degree of complicity within security forces. A similar point has repeatedly been made regarding the reliability of Pakistani military and intelligence agencies and their reluctance to attack a number of Taliban bases. Other disturbing configurations are observed in drug wars, such as that in Mexico where vigilante groups, some of them duly integrated in the army, fight specific cartels while banding up with others.

What was unique to the war in Sierra Leone was the concentration of military, political, and economic power in an urban lumpenproletariat. Condemned as a “recruiting ground for thieves and criminals of all kinds,” the lumpenproletariat was analyzed by Karl Marx as a “social scum” unable to develop a political struggle on its own, a “passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of society” that could only become, on occasion, “the bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.” The underprivileged youth of Freetown proved Marx wrong. One may wonder if history isn’t repeating itself in the Central African Republic, as the border between anti-balaka militias (many of them wearing army uniforms) and the rank and file of the army, who are largely drawn from the same social margins, appears extremely fuzzy.

Perhaps the most widespread security threat in Africa today is the destruction of citizens’ confidence in the institutions that are supposed to protect them. Military training programs may help to curb this destructive process, but we concur with Dr. Mason that these are often inadequate. Concerted efforts also need to be made in other key sectors like the judiciary and the police, though previous efforts here, too, have often fallen far short of desired outcomes. In this regard, we may mention the issue of “poldits,” a portmanteau of “police” and “bandits,” in reference to off duty policemen or checkpoint officers who rent their uniforms and weapons to *coupeurs de route* (personal observations in Benin, Burundi, and Cameroon): this is yet another variation of the Sobel phenomenon.

On “The True Tragedy of American Power”

J. Thomas Moriarty II

This commentary is in response to the article, “On the True Tragedy of American Power” by Isaiah Wilson published in the Winter 2013-14 issue of Parameters (vol. 43, no. 4).

In “The True Tragedy of American Power,” Colonel Isaiah Wilson III argues that US policymakers often conflate the use of force with power. He argues, “Power is the foundation of force; but an excessive employment of force—not just military, but economic and political—can erode the power foundation.”¹ With a conceptual tip of the hat to the classics, he analogizes the United States to a tragic hero and focuses on the negative repercussions of an overreliance on force, especially military force, in meeting global responsibilities.

Wilson should be commended for offering a valuable discussion on the differences between power and force. That said, while Wilson’s emphasis on the consequences of excessive force has merit, it comes at the expense of fully developing the exact causal relationship between power and force, and, specifically, the role of power in limiting the availability of certain force options.

Wilson’s warning for how excessive force can lead to a decrease in state power is wise. However, this begs the question of why powerful states feel the need to employ force excessively in the first place. If a broad explanation of power is the ability to get states to do something they are not likely to do on their own, then a state that feels a need to use a disproportionate amount of force is, by definition, a state that lacks power or is in decline. Powerful states do not need to rely primarily on force; weak states do. Importantly, a state with declining power finds itself limited not only in its ability to achieve its goals without the use of force but also in the types of force it can employ. For example, a loss in economic power reduces the ability of that state to utilize economic force to settle its affairs. Thus, conceptually speaking, decreases in a state’s power create the conditions for overreliance on force, which, eventually, causes even greater power loss.

The increasing dependence of the United States on military force is not the result of leaders mistaking force for power, as Wilson argues; rather, it arises ironically from the attempts of the United States since the end of World War II to create a stable international system. A consequence of developing democratic and economically diverse countries throughout the world is that these states have begun to challenge US dominance in international affairs.² As these states increase their political and economic powers, the United States has seen its ability to influence others through the use of these advantages decline. Faced with this loss of power, the United States has begun to rely on the one

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1 Isaiah Wilson, “The True Tragedy of American Power,” *Parameters* 43, no. 4 (Fall 2014):17.

2 Arthur Stein, “The Hegemon’s Dilemma,” *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984):355-386.

element of national power for which it retains dominance—its military. If there is a true American tragedy, it's almost certainly this. It is not that policymakers misunderstand the distinction between force and power; instead, it is their flawed belief that military force can halt the loss of power in other arenas.

Analogizing the United States as a tragic hero is problematic. Central to a tragic hero is a sense of inevitability, an inability to reverse the looming doom that awaits. While the decline in US power was, and is, inevitable, the United States need not suffer Hamlet's horrific fate; it need not be a tragic hero. The United States must accept limits to both its power and its military force. In this vein, Colonel Wilson and I are in complete agreement.

The Author Replies

Isaiah Wilson III

My sincere thanks and compliments to Dr. J. Thomas Moriarty II for his commentary and his thoughtful critique of the propositions and arguments I offered in my article. The issue—of the present, past, and future of American uses of force and our understanding and appreciation of the difference between “force” and “power”—is a fundamental one, not merely as a point of academic debates, but critically determinative of our Nation's future roles, responsibilities, and most importantly, reputation and legitimacy of future US global leadership . . . its suasive “power” both at home and abroad. Dr. Moriarty's response keeps this debate alive and dynamic, at a most precipitous moment: at a time when the potential “tragedy” of mistaking force and acts of force as acts of real power could prove most deleterious to both the United States' future presence and prestige in world affairs and, more impactful, to future global stability, security, and prosperity.

Failure to distinguish between applications of strategic tools from strategy itself, combined with flawed displacement of force (to include over-use of military treatments) over time can lead to the decline and fall of great powers. This is the tragedy to which I am speaking. The “tragedy” is not merely additive, it is multiplicative . . . logarithmic. Choosing how one “displaces available force(s) over time” is an essential part of the power equation . . . of strategy itself; especially critical in times of compounding security dilemmas under austerity. Being capable of producing reliable, durable, enduring, and legitimate power solutions to geostrategic problems under conditions of rapidly declining force resources, first demands a clear-eyed and accurate understanding of the difference between force (ways and means) and power—the former being a necessary part of the latter, but considered separate from principled and value-informed ends, woefully insufficient proxies to real long-lasting power. Additionally, seeing, understanding, and leveraging the power potential in “other's” forces available (that is, the power of multilateralism; collective actioning) as part of our own power equation offers genuine possibilities for overcoming America's current tragic

flaw, and consequently, America's tragedy. Dr. Moriarty would be well reminded (as should we all) to take some solace in the fact that America may only be in "Act III," the "Climax of Action," of this five-act tragedy, where the Hero stands at a crossroads, still at a point of choice, of decision and opportunity to avoid the "Falling Action." As in all of Shakespeare's tragedies, dark tragic endings seem inevitable primarily in retrospect, once the hero's fall is complete. Tragedy dooms its hero, but it promises to its audience that a sense of the tragic—of the limits of force—might save them from the hero's fate. In this sense, tragedies are not inevitable, but rather reversible. Conflicts in force and power can be resolved, and eventually will be, whether through a catastrophe, the downfall of the hero, or through his victory and transfiguration. Once again, as in past times, why and how America chooses to intervene will matter most.

On “Rebalancing US Military Power”

J. Kane Tomlin

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This commentary is in response to the article, “Rebalancing US Military Power,” by Dr. Anna Simons published in the Winter 2013 issue of Parameters (vol. 43, no. 4).

It is always a pleasure to read diplo-military articles, as I have long been an advocate of a full spectrum approach to conflict that includes diplomacy at one end and military force at the other. Dr. Simons presents compelling arguments for the use of “partnering” as both a strategically and tactically superior option to the current US post-Cold War role as a world leader in an increasingly asymmetric and destabilized world. However, I feel that some of her arguments could be more fully developed and that her lack of focus on military advisors’ leadership requirements along with chronological details limits the applicability of her recommendations. I would like to develop her thesis further and respectfully include actionable recommendations that would more effectively turn the concept of “partnering” into policies that could be implemented.

Dr. Simons’s economic arguments are particularly valid, as the “development of a global land power network” and “limit[ing] boots on the ground” are admirable goals. However, looking to the Marshall Plan’s post-WWII successes, one should add significant time commitments in addition to troop levels (or lack thereof). Her partnering argument becomes much more compelling when policymakers realize these endeavors take decades to cement, in contrast to Dr. Simons’s assertion in the article. Therefore, the economic and resource requirements of a partnership versus a counter-“everything under the sun” approach becomes more attractive provided academics and diplomats without field experience do not overlook the leadership requirements. As any combatant commander will attest, leadership is paramount to success in partnering.

Rather than accept Dr. Simon’s thesis outright, I argue the actual shift to partnering is a two-step process that should not be shortchanged in pursuit of expediency. True partnership and professionalization requires direct leadership instead of mere advising. Only leadership’s trust building function leads to true partnering as a longer-term sustainment strategy. Many successes in WWII were predicated on American military leadership in a direct role during combat operations. Merrill’s Marauders and General Stillwell’s Chinese forces are both examples of successful diplo-warfare precisely because these generals led their forces from the front. Distrust of advisors grows exponentially when the partner nation’s military leadership feels the advisors view themselves as superior. The element of leading from the front is overlooked in this article.

SFC Tomlin is currently serving as the Course Manager and Master Diver in charge of the Engineer Diving Officer Course at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center. SFC Tomlin has two tours to Iraq and has served as the Diving Liaison Officer to USFI in charge of all Army diving operations. SFC Tomlin has a Master’s Degree in Homeland Security and is pursuing a Doctorate in Strategic Security from Henley Putnam University.

While Dr. Simon's familial relationship analogy is accurate in many respects, it does not take into account what I coin the "father-son" element. Similar to the parent-child relationship in later stages, the early stages of a leadership-based partnership require leadership by example. Just as a young son learns to "be a man" by watching his father's example, young militaries learn professional behaviors by seeing them in action. No amount of formal training can replace the "follow me and do what I do" style of a direct leader. Additionally, just as a son emulates his father's example in order to win approval, host nation militaries try to earn praise by following the example of leaders they trust and respect. Tactically, this is the first step to professionalizing the host nation's military. Subsequently, the relationship should morph into a "marriage" type espoused by Dr. Simons. Failure to lead and earn trust means the recommendations in this article are doomed to fail.

Civic action as the ultimate litmus test of military readiness to partner is a fantastic recommendation and should leverage the existing Civil Affairs organization within the military. I also agree flag officers should retain the authority to curtail these operations when the host nation's military proves unable or unwilling to provide basic civil services for their citizens. I argue the partnership envisioned by Dr. Simons should be tactically implemented as a two-stage process; first, in a direct leadership role of the host nation's military, and then in an advisory role once trust is earned between both parties. I also think that coercive diplomacy and prioritization of American interests are viable diplomatic options for gaining rapid tactical advantages in spite of the indictment they are given in the article. Unfortunately, there is simply not room in this commentary to expound fully, though many will agree that creating an asymmetry of motivation to comply with US desires is sometimes necessary (*vis-à-vis* Pakistan's air space after 9/11).

While the professional soldier has a long and illustrious history associated with the storied ideal of the "warrior poet," Dr. Simons is advocating for a new twist on an old ideal—the Warrior Diplomat. Conceptually, this is a sound and timely ideal that limits American expenditure of manpower and treasure. This goal becomes more important in endeavors that increasingly require long time commitments to avoid the fate we see in Iraq today. With the addition of leadership skills to Dr. Simons's list of required traits, her ideals can certainly be implemented "on the cheap" compared to the large scale COIN strategy recently promoted by General Petraeus. In an era of shrinking budgets and growing crises around the globe, Dr. Simons's recommendations are much more realistic.

The Author Replies

Anna Simons

Many thanks to SFC Tomlin for the seriousness with which he took my arguments. I agree with him: partnering should last decades, if not longer. However, I also want to be clear:

determining whether we have a worthwhile partner should not take decades. Indeed, it should not even take a decade.

We Americans should be very cautious and not fall for laws of “averages” when it comes to partnering, advising, stability operations, nation-building, counterinsurgency, or anything else involving other countries’ militaries. Yes, according to current conventional wisdom, a successful counterinsurgency takes at least a decade to wage. But this is precisely why I concentrated on the Huk Rebellion. What Ramon Magsaysay and Edward Lansdale accomplished not only represents a short, decisive success, but should suggest that every case is sufficiently unique; none should be treated as an average anything. Otherwise, it becomes too easy to want to reach for manuals rather than do what Lansdale did: read the situation in the Philippines for itself, and not for something else.

I also turned to Lansdale because the success he assisted with required minimal time, minimal money, and a minimal footprint—but a great deal of nondoctrinaire thinking and a willing partner. Magsaysay’s willingness, along with his and Lansdale’s wife, were key. Willingness to turn the Filipino Army around preceded legitimacy. And, again, willingness should never be too hard for advisors to accurately gauge.

As for the issue of “direct leadership,” I agree with SFC Tomlin. Taking charge was surely the easiest way for American and British leaders to attain results during World War II. However, sensibilities and sensitivities have shifted considerably since then. It is hard if not impossible to imagine where an American would be allowed to ‘lead’ another military’s forces today. Guerrilla forces, maybe. But a unit in a sovereign country’s military? We did not even attempt that in Afghanistan or Iraq. Nor is it clear whether it would be locals or the American electorate who would resist such a notion more vigorously.

At the same time, SFC Tomlin alludes to the attributes advisors should possess. I again agree. They do need to lead by example – which means their comportment needs to be beyond reproach. They must embody the best our military has to offer in terms of maturity and expertise. Of course, this means that what American advisors communicate nonverbally is as important as anything they say. In fact, I’d submit that the 21st century challenge for “warrior-diplomats” or for any Americans sent abroad to advise foreign forces is to be able to lead without taking charge.

Drones, Drone Strikes, and US Policy: The Politics of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

Ulrike Esther Franke

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The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in military operations is currently among the most hotly debated topics in the national and international media. While at first few showed interest in this military technology, the increasing number of missile strikes carried out via UAVs in remote areas of Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia by the United States Armed Forces and the CIA has raised public awareness. Today, reports on “drone strikes” are published daily; UAV names such as Global Hawk, Predator, or Reaper are on everyone’s lips. Criticism of the use of unmanned technology has equally gained momentum. Several organizations lobby for the complete or partial ban of drones, efforts which have resulted in a discussion on adding a protocol to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) to ban fully autonomous UAVs. High-ranking members of the US defense community have advised caution regarding the use of armed drones and propose moratoria on US drone strikes.¹

Drones—unmanned, remotely piloted, aerial vehicles, short UAVs—are now used by the armed forces of approximately 70 countries around the world. The club of armed UAV holders remains more exclusive; for the moment, its members only include Israel, the United Kingdom, the United States, and most likely China and Iran. This situation, however, is likely to change sooner rather than later with many countries considering the procurement of armed drones.

The four books reviewed in this essay are all motivated by the belief that “the precipitous increase in drone use we have witnessed over the past few years represents just the beginning of the proliferation and widespread use of UAVs, across many contexts.”² Disagreement may reign over whether or not this development is positive; however, the authors agree on one point: drones are here to stay.

Many articles and papers have been written on UAV use, but scholarly debate has been surprisingly slow with academia only getting intensively involved in recent years. Accordingly, this review features works by a journalist, an anti-drone activist, and several academics.

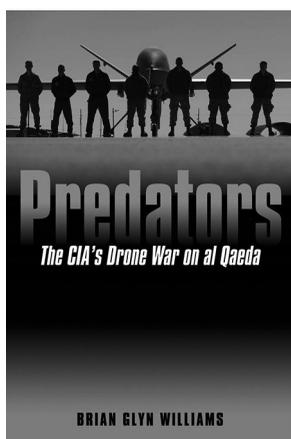
Winning the Battle but Losing the Hearts and Minds—The Importance of Drone Perceptions

Perceptions matter, sometimes even more than reality. Drones certainly have a dreadful reputation—even though they may not necessarily

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¹ David Kilcullen and Andrew McDonald Exum, “Death From Above, Outrage Down Below,” *The New York Times*, May 16, 2009.

² Bradley Strawser, ed., *Killing by Remote Control. The Ethics of an Unmanned Military* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9.



Brian Glyn Williams, *Predators: The CIA's Drone War on al Qaeda* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2013), 281 pages, \$29.95.

deserve it. This is what Brian Glyn Williams tells readers in *Predators: The CIA's Drone War on al Qaeda*.

Williams, a professor of Islamic History at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth and an expert on the history of the Middle East, cofounded in 2009 UMass Drone, a research project and open-source online database on attacks carried out via armed drones.³ With *Predators*, Williams aims at “record[ing] the history of what amounts to an all-out CIA drone war on the Taliban and al Qaeda.”⁴ A historian by training, he claims wanting to stay neutral in the emotive drone debate: “Proponents and opponents of the campaign can do with this story what they will.”⁵ His neutrality may be debatable; Williams clearly has his own opinion on

whether the use of drones in counterterrorism is effective. Nevertheless, *Predators* is recommended reading to those interested in how US counterterrorism efforts in Pakistan and elsewhere have affected civilian populations living in the targeted countries.

Williams studies the impact of the missile strikes by US drones in remote regions of the world, in particular in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The book is clearly enhanced by Williams's deep knowledge of Pakistani politics and the Pashtun tribal areas. He ensures his readers get at least a general notion of its history, emphasizing that the FATA has always been an independent entity rather than a proper part of the Pakistani state.

Williams's main argument has three parts: (1) The US drone strikes in Pakistan are precise and succeed in killing high-value targets and lower-level Taliban operatives (some of whom have plotted against the United States and other Western nations); (2) The perception of the strikes is very negative in Pakistan and abroad; (3) The drone campaign may ultimately prove counterproductive as it alienates the public whose hearts and minds need to be won.

In Williams's words, the United States:

[C]ontinue[s] to wrestle with a paradox. While the war against the Taliban was transformed into a hunt for HVTs [high-value targets], it became obvious that America's most advanced weapon in the hunt for elusive terrorists might also be their worst enemy in the underlying battle to win the hearts and minds of the people of this volatile region;⁶

Perceptions can be more important than reality;⁷ and

3 UMass Drone Home Page, <http://www.umassdrone.org/>.

4 Brian Glyn Williams, *Predators: The CIA's Drone War on al Qaeda* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2013), xi.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., 38.

7 Ibid., 207.

Drone strikes are a public relations and strategic disaster in Pakistan.⁸

Williams argues the missile strikes by American UAVs are precise and kill comparatively few civilians because of six distinct factors: bureaucratic safeguards ensuring targets are selected properly; UAVs' ability to loiter for a long time, which increases intelligence and allows a strike at the most opportune moment; high resolution cameras; human intelligence on the ground thanks to a spy network and support by the Pakistani government and security services; the use of smaller missiles; and the tactic to target combatants while they are in vehicles.⁹ By analyzing many strikes, he shows that although mistakes and accidents have caused civilian casualties, the majority of those killed are high-value targets and lower-level Taliban operatives. Williams's analysis of the strikes is thorough; his assessment and critique of some of those organizations collecting data on these strikes is at times, however, disproportionate and would have benefited from more extensive editing.

The fact that the strikes are efficient has clearly not reached the Pakistani public, or rather, Williams argues, it was not communicated properly: "Without an American public relations campaign to counteract the critics' attacks on the drone efforts, they remained a mystery for most outsiders, who assumed the worst."¹⁰ Misperceptions do not only exist regarding information on the number of civilian casualties. Many Pakistanis were and still are outraged by the apparent US drones' incursions into their national territory. Williams argues:

[B]oth their elected leaders (Musharraf, Zardari, and Gilani) and their military leaders have actively supported the drone campaign—so much so that they have allowed the CIA to run drone strikes on the Taliban and al Qaeda from the Shamsi Air base in Pakistan. If the United States is, or was, allowed to operate on Pakistani soil with Pakistani troops guarding the drone base at Shamsi, their operations cannot be termed a violation of sovereignty.¹¹

But, Williams criticizes, neither the United States nor the Pakistani government has made real efforts to fight misperceptions or even deliberate misrepresentations, which is why these misperceptions have spread. Ultimately, the reader is left wondering whether this is all worth it: "Opinion in Pakistan, a country of 190 million people, is being turned against the United States all for the sake of killing hundreds of low-level Taliban fighters."¹²

The Macro View

Mark Mazzetti's *The Way of the Knife* is not about the use of UAVs per se. Rather, Mazzetti, *The New York Times* national security correspondent and Pulitzer Prize winner, discusses more generally the new ways of US military action: the use of a "scalpel" rather than a "hammer"—a phrase coined by former chief counterterrorism advisor John Brennan and which inspired the book's title.¹³ For Mazzetti, the "way of the

8 Ibid., 206.

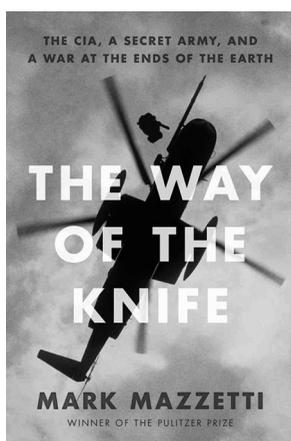
9 Ibid., 101-110.

10 Ibid., 86.

11 Ibid., 189.

12 Ibid., 212.

13 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Remarks by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John Brennan at CSIS, May 26, 2010.



Mark Mazzetti, *The Way of the Knife. The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth* (New York: Penguin Press, 2013), 381 pages, \$29.95.

knife” is, however, not a positive metaphor but consists in “a shadow war waged across the globe” in which “America has pursued its enemies using killer robots and special-operations troops.”¹⁴

The book is based on hundreds of interviews with current and former government officials as well as members of the CIA and the military. Mazzetti opens the black box of some of the most secretive US organizations—the Central Intelligence Agency, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), the State Department, and the Pentagon. Mazzetti describes, placing much focus on the story of individuals, how the context of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the following military interventions have transformed the United States and its ability to wage wars.

In the book, the author explains how US intelligence and military work became blurred and how it militarized the CIA. In the early 2000s, “the Pentagon had the capabilities for hunting-and-killing operations, but the CIA had the authorities.”¹⁵ After 9/11, and due to the workings of a number of influential officials, the CIA revived and JSOC came of age. The result was a jockeying between the Pentagon and CIA for supremacy in new American conflicts. Eventually, “the Central Intelligence Agency has become a killing machine, an organization consumed with man hunting,”¹⁶ while JSOC became “the secret army . . . needed to fight a global war.”¹⁷

Mazzetti retraces the development of the CIA since the 1990s. He describes how the agency lost most of its power with the end of the Cold War and some embarrassing revealings of past activities. This changed with the Global War on Terror. The CIA is “no longer a traditional espionage service devoted to stealing the secrets of foreign governments, [it] has become a killing machine, an organization consumed with man hunting.”¹⁸ The descriptions of the inner-CIA discussions about the role of the agency and their use of armed UAVs are particularly interesting. When the first missiles were strapped onto Predator aircraft in 2000, the CIA did not show much enthusiasm for them. The aircraft “looked like a gangly insect and had a loud engine that made it sound like a flying lawnmower.”¹⁹ Also, in this pre-9/11 world, “the idea of the CIA establishing military-style bases anywhere in the world seemed crazy.”²⁰ Targeted assassinations were not an option: “We’re not like that. We’re not Mossad,” Richard Clarke is cited saying. A former head of the CIA’s Counterterrorist Centre later told the 9/11 Commission

14 Mark Mazzetti, *The Way of the Knife. The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth* (New York: Penguin Press, 2013), 5.

15 *Ibid.*, 81.

16 *Ibid.*, 4.

17 *Ibid.*, 75.

18 *Ibid.*, 4.

19 *Ibid.*, 91.

20 *Ibid.*, 92.

that in the years before the attacks, they would have refused a direct order to kill bin Laden.²¹

The JSOC is portrayed as the brain child of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld—the chapter on JSOC is entitled “Rumsfeld’s Spies.” In it, Mazzetti describes how Rumsfeld “envied the spy agency’s ability to send its operatives anywhere, at any time, without having to ask permission.”²² His answer? “[T]o make the Pentagon more like the CIA.”²³ Eventually, JSOC became “the secret army [Rumsfeld] needed to fight a global war.”²⁴

Readers predominantly interested in UAVs will find chapter 5 particularly informative; in it, Mazzetti describes the initial stages of the CIA’s drone program. Equally enlightening are Mazzetti’s reports of several instances where drones were used because manned operations were considered too risky politically. Putting boots on the ground would be considered an invasion, while putting armed drones in the air to do the same job was considered less of an infraction.²⁵

Mazzetti’s book is an interesting and even entertaining work, loaded with interview quotes and background information. He underlines the importance of the context in which the new US way of warfare was born as well as the role specific individuals played. Indeed, his focus on the individuals involved can, at times, be distracting. The author rarely mentions a person without giving his or her background—education, family situation, and career development. This, combined with the novel-like writing style, can at times distract from more important elements. Furthermore, there is no chronological and very little geographical or thematic order in Mazzetti’s writing—trying to find a specific piece of information can, therefore, be challenging. This critique notwithstanding, this book should lie on the nightstand of all those readers interested in the CIA and the inner workings of a nation at war.

Stop the Drones—The Activist’s View

No review on drone literature would be complete without Medea Benjamin’s *Drone Warfare*, which has become one of the most-read books on UAV use. Benjamin is a political activist, best known for her interruption of President Obama’s counterterrorism speech at the National Defense University in May 2013 where she demanded to “take the drones out of the hands of the CIA” and to end signature strikes.

There is no ambiguity—Benjamin is an activist, and *Drone Warfare* is an activist’s book. It is not a book about drone use, but against it. Benjamin’s position is clear: “The drone wars represent one of the greatest travesties of justice in our age.”²⁶ For her, UAVs are “death robots,”²⁷ “killing machines,”²⁸ and “killer drones.”²⁹ The book is a pamphlet

21 Ibid., 88.

22 Ibid., 68.

23 Ibid., 68.

24 Ibid., 75.

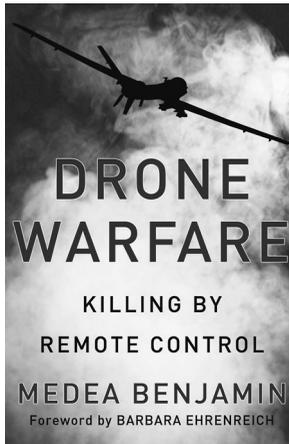
25 Ibid., 116, 133.

26 Medea Benjamin, *Drone Warfare. Killing by Remote Control* (London: Verso, 2013), 124.

27 Ibid., 53.

28 Ibid., 28.

29 Ibid., 15.



Medea Benjamin, *Drone Warfare. Killing by Remote Control* (London: Verso, 2013), 246 pages, \$16.95.

against armed drones, and parts of it could double as a pacifist manifest. Benjamin quotes President Eisenhower's famous statement that "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."³⁰ Following this same logic, she criticizes the procurement of US drones during a financial crisis which "led to the slashing of government programs from nutrition supplements for pregnant women to maintenance of national parks."³¹ The book is permeated by emotional stories of maimed Pakistani and Afghan children and parents who have to bury their sons "in the dry cold soil of the village they had loved."³² The last two chapters are dedicated to activism against drone use and US military policy.

This is one side of Benjamin's book. At the same time, *Drone Warfare* is also an informative, well-researched work that provides the reader with an extensive list of references. Benjamin tries to discuss the most important aspects of the use of armed UAVs: the history and development of drones, the drone market, the points of view of drone pilots, the legality and morality of their use, drone use by other countries, and the points of view of drone use by terrorists and victims. As informative literature on UAV use is still scarce and mainly comes in forms of newspaper reports, this in itself is laudable. Her discussion of the drone market and the UAV-"military-industrial-complex" is particularly enlightening. Even well-informed readers can be sure to find new pieces of information and good quotes. Readers new to the subject get an overview of the main points of discussion.

Unfortunately, Benjamin's generic opposition to the use of armed drones stands in the way of an academically rigorous discussion of the topic. Her critique is unfocused, as the object of her criticism is not clear. She often does not differentiate between the technology, i.e., unmanned weaponry, and policy, or using unmanned weaponry in specific ways in specific contexts. This is a general problem of the drone debate; for Benjamin it means that a lot of her criticism appears ill-directed.

At times, her critique of both the wars and drones appears a bit naïve, as no alternative is proposed. It is not clear what Benjamin argues in favor of. When she criticizes that "[w]hen military operations are conducted through the filter of a far-away video camera, there is no possibility of making eye contact with the enemy and fully realizing the human cost of an attack," the reader is left wondering what the alternative would be.³³ Returning to a type of warfare in which soldiers make eye contact with their enemies (a type of warfare lying long in

30 Ibid., 54.

31 Ibid., 17.

32 Ibid., 111.

33 Ibid., 160.

the past, not only since the advent of drones)? Benjamin fails to answer these questions.

Benjamin's book is a good introduction to the topic and interesting read even for those familiar with the debate. One should, however, be advised to counterbalance the biased view with other, preferably more academic and analytically rigorous accounts.

Gut Instincts are not Enough—Academia's Contribution

Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military adds academic and analytical rigour to the discussion. In the current drone debate—largely dominated by journalists and activists and often conducted on an emotional level—this book serves as a reminder of the merits of scholarly work. The volume was edited by Bradley Jay Strawser, assistant professor of Philosophy at the United States Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. Strawser is best-known by students of drone warfare through his groundbreaking article “Moral Predator, The Duty to Employ Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles.”³⁴

While Strawser, because of this paper, is sometimes considered a drone advocate, his agenda in *Killing by Remote Control* is to “push the scholarly conversation [over the ethics of drones] to a deeper analytic level.”³⁵ He believes the debate needs to move out of the “first wave” of journalistic attention: “those of us working on and thinking seriously about these questions need to move out of those early phases [...]. *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military* is part of that deeper analytic push.”³⁶

The book's chapters discuss the ethics of using remotely controlled weapons for lethal missions. The focus lies on armed UAVs, targeted killings, and autonomous systems. Many tricky ethical questions are addressed in the book:

- Can drone warfare be analyzed through the lenses of Just War Theory or are new theories and rules needed?
- Does the use of UAVs undermine military virtues?
- Does the use of UAVs imply the judgment that the targets of such weapons are expendable while the operators are not?
- Do UAVs make war more likely and is this necessarily a negative development?
- Should extreme military asymmetry in warfare be condemned?
- Are there ethical differences between remotely piloted and autonomous



Bradley Strawser, ed., *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 296 pages, \$49.95.

34 Bradley Jay Strawser, “Moral Predators: The Duty to Employ Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles” *Journal of Military Ethics* 9, no. 4 (2010): 342-68.

35 Strawser, *Killing by Remote Control*, 5.

36 Ibid.

weapons?

In the particularly thought-provoking chapter 6, “Robot Guardians: Teleoperated Combat Vehicles in Humanitarian Military Intervention,” Zack Beauchamp and Julian Savulescu address the claim that armed drones will make war easier and, therefore, more likely—an assertion frequently brought forward by anti-drone activists. The authors argue that “lowering the threshold is not, as commonly assumed, necessarily a bad thing. In at least one case, the bug is in fact a feature: drones have the potential to significantly improve the practice of humanitarian intervention.”³⁷ In their opinion, often, “the wars states do not fight are the ones they most ought to,” namely, interventions to stop human rights abuses and crimes against humanity.³⁸ The reason for the reticence is casualty aversion. If drones make going to war easier as they minimize the risk to the intervening soldiers, this means that intervening for humanitarian reasons would equally be made easier. Furthermore, according to Beauchamp and Savulescu, when states grant significant weight to minimizing their own casualties, “they are more likely to fight in ways that result in significant—and preventable—loss of civilian life.”³⁹ UAVs could, therefore, help to reduce civilian casualties in humanitarian interventions.

Avery Plaw’s chapter “Counting the Dead: The Proportionality of Predation in Pakistan,” should become compulsory reading for anyone interested in the discussion of the effectiveness of targeted killing via drones. Plaw, a colleague of Brian Glyn Williams at UMass Drone, analyzes the numbers on civilian casualties in Pakistan gathered by the four “most rigorous and transparent databases” that track the impact of drone strikes, namely *The New America Foundation*, *The Long War Journal*, *UMass Drone*, and the *Bureau of Investigative Journalism*.⁴⁰ By meticulously studying their numbers, Plaw concludes the missile attacks have been “highly effective in eliminating enemy operatives, including key leaders, particularly when these HVTs [high-value targets] are hidden in inaccessible and politically problematic locations like the FATA.”⁴¹ Furthermore, Plaw shows that US nondrone operations in the FATA, such as precision artillery strikes or commando raids, have caused much higher civilian casualties than attacks via drones. Therefore, he argues that the issue of proportionality does not provide a basis “for claiming that US drone strikes in general are either unethical or illegal (although this does not preclude such claims on other grounds).”⁴²

Not all of the authors see the development towards an increased use of UAVs positively though. David Whetham (chapter 4 “Drones and targeted killing: Angels or Assassins?”) warns the US strikes in remote areas of Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia are establishing a norm which “doesn’t get used just by ‘nice people.’”⁴³ He criticizes the United States for not being more transparent with regard to its actions.

37 *Ibid.*, 106.

38 *Ibid.*, 114.

39 *Ibid.*, 112.

40 *Ibid.*, 126.

41 *Ibid.*, 145.

42 *Ibid.*, 127.

43 *Ibid.*, 78.

Without transparency as to why an individual has been killed, a targeted killing carried out anywhere for the best of reasons and in the most careful, conscientious, and professional way might as well be considered an assassination or just plain murder. If a state is not prepared to provide any of that information at all or any reason or justification for a killing, then we should refrain from calling such an action targeted killing and instead call it what it effectively becomes—an execution.⁴⁴

In “War without Virtue?” (chapter 5), Australian philosopher Robert Sparrow expresses concerns that the use of UAVs for military purposes poses a significant threat to martial virtues such as physical and moral courage, loyalty, honor, and mercy. In his view, the introduction of UAVs marks “a significant quantitative—and perhaps even qualitative—change in the nature of military combat.”⁴⁵ Because of the absence of risk to life and limb, and the fighting in complete safety, martial virtues are no longer required. For Sparrow, this is a “disturbing prospect.”⁴⁶

It is impossible to do each paper of an edited volume justice in a short review. Each of the eleven chapters in *Killing by Remote Control* deserves more attention. The collection’s main contribution, however, does not lie solely in the quality of its chapters and well-made arguments. Rather, the volume in its entirety demonstrates the valuable contribution scholarly writing can make to the current drone debate.

As editor Bradley Strawser emphasizes, it is crucial to question one’s beliefs and intuitions. At first sight, there appears to be “something profoundly disturbing about the idea of a war conducted by computer console operators, who are watching over and killing people thousands of kilometers away.”⁴⁷ On closer examination, though, the views “that something is intrinsically wrong with this form of killing over other forms of killing, simply in virtue of being remotely controlled, across all possible circumstances . . . are surprisingly hard to articulate consistently and clearly.”⁴⁸ Strawser’s call to look closer and be more rigorous is particularly convincing since he admits “in following the arguments where they led, I ultimately arrived at several conclusions rather far afield from my initial ‘gut instincts’ that first got me interested in the topic.”⁴⁹ “Gut instincts” can and should not lead an academic debate. Rather, “such sentiments must be unpacked . . . ; an argument is needed, not mere assertion. At this point in the debate, we still await such an argument.”⁵⁰ *Killing by Remote Control* is an important step in this direction.

Conclusion

Each of the four books discussed in this review has specific merits—*Predator* gives a fascinating account of the Pakistani perspective; *The Way of the Knife* allows an insight into the black box of US state agencies in their global fight against terrorism; *Drone Warfare* is an appealing example of activism literature; and *Killing by Remote Control* is a useful scholarly work

44 Ibid., 82, 83.

45 Ibid., 86.

46 Ibid., 104.

47 Ibid., 88.

48 Ibid., 10.

49 Ibid., xvii.

50 Ibid., 12.

on the ethics of drone use. While these books naturally have flaws, as a whole they form a comprehensive overview of the current drone debate.

The drone literature still suffers from shortcomings. As the four books show, the debate revolves almost exclusively around the use of armed UAVs for lethal operations. Unarmed UAVs, which have proliferated extensively over the last few years, are rarely, if ever, discussed. While “killer robots” may be more attention-grabbing than surveillance UAVs, the almost complete disregard of other UAV types is deplorable. The focus also predominantly lies on the US use of drones even though more and more countries procure and use UAVs. More research is needed with regard to these developments. In general, more data, official data in particular, is needed, such as the numbers of civilian deaths caused by missiles fired from UAVs.

One interesting fact that deserves more attention is touched on by several of the authors but not discussed in detail. It appears that operations—even lethal ones—carried out by UAVs are perceived as being less intrusive, less of an infraction of a state’s sovereignty. Brian Williams shows how the Pakistani public appears to accept UAVs more than boots on the ground: “The Pakistanis were willing to countenance the occasional civilian death or attacks on militants if they were administered by unmanned drones, US troops landing on Pakistani territory was essentially construed as an act of war.”⁵¹ Mark Mazzetti makes a similar point. While most international lawyers would not support such a view, President Obama recently voiced the same idea when he discussed the drone program in May 2013. He warned about the risk that manned operations would “lead [the US] to be viewed as occupying armies, unleash a torrent of unintended consequences,” and “may trigger a major international crisis.”⁵² Sending drones, the message was, is much less controversial.

It is clear that much research remains to be done with regard to the study of UAV use for military purposes. The works reviewed here provide a useful basis for further research and are a good step in this direction.

51 Williams, *Predators*, 74.

52 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by the President at the National Defense University*, May 23, 2013, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university>.

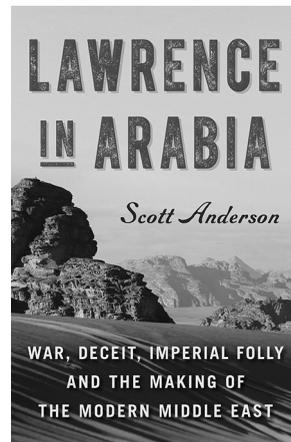
T. E. Lawrence: Enigmatic Military Visionary

W. Andrew Terrill

T.E. Lawrence is the most well-known British national hero of World War I. In the Arabian Desert, Lawrence waged a war of movement against Turkish forces that contrasted starkly with the gruesome deadlock on the Western front. In pursuing his own version of desert combat, Lawrence was an early and important advocate of modern guerrilla warfare tactics, and his exploits during the 1916-18 desert war showed significant military gains for his highly inventive and unorthodox form of combat. Geopolitically, Lawrence's actions had a direct bearing on the formation of the modern Middle East, and his controversial legacy is still important today. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that a number of Lawrence biographies have been published during and after his lifetime. More recently, there has been a notable increase in such works in the years following the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003. As the United States encountered ongoing difficulties in that country, Lawrence's actions throughout the Arab world may have seemed relevant to the important strategic and operational questions that needed answers. These questions revolved around not just guerrilla warfare but also finding ways in which Arab and Western troops could build mutual trust and function effectively as partners.

Lawrence as a Military Thinker: Amateur Among Professionals

Former war correspondent Scott Anderson has some interesting insights about Lawrence's understanding of military culture and the conduct of military operations, including his willingness to challenge conventional wisdom. Anderson notes that Lawrence was well-read on military topics, but he had no formal officer's training prior to receiving a 1914 direct commission as an acting second lieutenant. As a junior officer, Lawrence was assigned to intelligence duties in Cairo due to his understanding of Middle Eastern cultures and the Arabic language. He developed these skills over his four years as a junior field archeologist, primarily based in Syria. In his early army career, Lawrence was a brilliant intelligence officer, but he also had a rebellious personality and maintained a dismissive attitude toward higher authority. His sometimes uncomfortable encounters with military bureaucracy and various doctrinaire senior officers also gave him serious doubts about the future of the war. Early in his military career, Lawrence provided strategic briefings to a number of senior officers assigned to the Mediterranean Expedition (MED-EX) and was appalled when he found out about their plan for an invasion at Gallipoli, Turkey, which he



Scott Anderson, *Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Doubleday, 2013), 57 pages, \$28.95.

viewed as a “despicable mess.” While Lawrence expected the landing at Gallipoli to be a disaster, even he was probably surprised by the scale of the catastrophe. The young officer was further disillusioned as evidence began to pour in that the alternative invasion site advocated by the Cairo intelligence office appeared to have been a golden opportunity for an easy victory. This alternative plan called for an invasion of Alexandretta (now called Iskenderun) which was defended by a garrison of mostly Arab conscripts on the verge of mutiny against their Turkish officers.

Lawrence had an even closer view of the next Middle Eastern disaster following Gallipoli. This was the effort to seize Baghdad from the east with an Anglo-Indian army. This force advanced deep into the Iraqi hinterland without properly protected supply lines and the Turks correspondingly surrounded and isolated it in the city of Kut. As with Gallipoli, proper military procedures were disregarded due to a prevailing belief that the enemy was “tough but slow-witted” and, therefore, did not need to be treated in the same way as a European adversary. Also like Gallipoli, there was a high price for this arrogance. Lawrence was called in from Cairo in late 1915 to help British Major General Charles Townshend negotiate with the Turks for the release of his surrounded troops. Through Lawrence and other intermediaries, the best the British commander could do was to seek to bribe the Turkish general with gold. This treasonous offer was quickly and contemptuously rejected and the entire British force of 13,000 was compelled to surrender. As a mediator brought in for the specific task of negotiating with the Turks, Lawrence was not made a prisoner of war, but he had a firsthand view of the fruits of poor planning and lofty British disdain for the enemy. Closer to the Cairo headquarters, British offensives to break through the Turkish line at Gaza failed twice. Lawrence was also deeply unhappy with what he called the “staggering incompetence” on the Western front in Europe where two of his brothers, Frank and Will, were killed in 1915 and 1916 respectively.

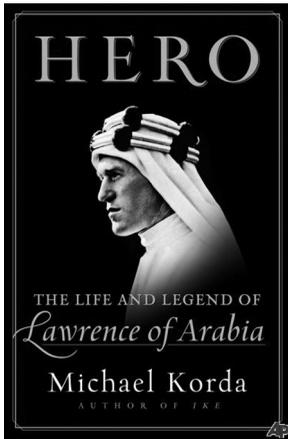
In generating his own strategic vision, Lawrence believed the British should embrace the “Arab way of war” as the organizing principle for the “Arab Revolt” against Turkey. This uprising had originated with Sherif (later King) Hussein of the Hejaz (in what is now western Saudi Arabia). In Lawrence’s view, warfare in Arabia bore a striking resemblance to the medieval warfare he had studied at Oxford with its use of multiple decentralized forces under various autonomous nobles. Arab raiders had no military discipline, no NCOs, and numerous debates among themselves over just about everything they did. In evaluating their potential against the Turks, Lawrence believed that Bedouin forces fought effectively in small groups of raiders while they were usually extremely poor raw material for training as conventional troops. In particular, he saw the potential for Arab forces to play an effective role in the war through hit-and-run strikes, long-range sharpshooting, and a tradition of surprise attacks. Lawrence felt that the Arab forces could make their greatest contribution by avoiding large battles and striking unexpectedly at weak points in the Turkish defense, particularly logistical units and facilities and most especially the Hejaz railway. Lawrence also hoped (as most competent military leaders do) to find ways to inflict the absolute maximum damage with the minimum loss of life.

Lawrence gained the trust of the Arab Revolt’s leaders in ways that went beyond simply being polite and knowing the Arabic language.

Lawrence also passionately identified with Arab aspirations for independence. While this fervor is well known, Anderson goes further than many authors and suggests that Lawrence became more loyal to Arab independence than to anything else in the war. He notes that Lawrence told the leading Arab field commander, Prince Feisal, about the Sykes-Picot Agreement for British and French domination of post-war Arab lands, while it was still a state secret and by doing so technically committed treason. This act was the beginning of what Anderson calls “a quiet war against his own government” where he “arguably betrayed his country” (486). Anderson also notes that Lawrence attempted to convince an American intelligence officer, Captain William Yale, to speak to his superiors in favor of Arab independence and push against British and especially French policies for dominating the post-war region. Viewed in this light, it is difficult to see how Feisal or the other Arab leaders could have found much fault with Lawrence. He had their political best interests at heart and he served as their strongest advocate in British circles especially when vying for British military resources including weapons and gold.

Anderson’s charge of possible treason seems vastly overblown since the future of the Arab world was yet to be decided at the Paris Peace Conference where British policies on such issues were to be finalized in coordination with the other allies. The Sykes-Picot Agreement was mostly a place holder that did not represent final or fully formed policy. Additionally, General Allenby later made it clear that Feisal should have been told about the Sykes-Picot Agreement at some point and expressed surprise in 1918 when Lawrence (dishonestly) told him he had not done so. Moreover, the British leadership knew of Lawrence’s commitment to Arab freedom, and always saw it as an asset (but not a guide for policy). Lawrence himself gave his own take on the loyalty issue in a more indirect manner. The former guerrilla leader, who was famous for his monumental self-recrimination (bordering on masochism), never indicated that he felt the slightest bit disloyal to the United Kingdom as a result of his wartime conduct. Rather, for the rest of his life, he brutally blamed himself for lying to the Arabs on his country’s behalf over the issue of Arab independence. While Lawrence was torn by conflicting British and Arab interests and priorities, he inevitably defaulted to British interests while trying desperately to help the Arabs within the constraint of these priorities. If Lawrence betrayed his country, he never knew it and never felt it.

In a departure from other Lawrence biographies, Anderson’s book also devotes considerable attention to the activities of British intelligence units in the Middle East and the various spy networks in the Middle East. The book also follows the activities of American oilman, soldier, and government official William Yale, Zionist leader Aaron Aronson, and German “orientalist” and spy Curt Prufer. These individuals were important to the history of the Middle East but mostly peripheral to the story of T. E. Lawrence. One cannot help suspecting that Anderson included their activities in such depth in order to distinguish it from the numerous other Lawrence biographies. Readers will probably view this approach as either a useful innovation or a mistake, depending on their interest in these people.



Michael Korda, *Hero: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2011), 762 pages, \$17.99.

Lawrence's Personality: Strengths and Weakness

A different kind of book is *Hero* by best-selling author Michael Korda. This work serves as a comprehensive biography of T. E. Lawrence from his childhood until his death in a 1935 motorcycle accident. The title clearly indicates Korda's reverence for Lawrence, whom he refers to as both a hero and a genius. In contrast to the evaluation put forward by Anderson, Korda states, "It is worth noting that even though Lawrence wanted the Arabs to win, and hoped by getting to Damascus first to invalidate the Sykes-Picot Agreement, he never forgot that he was a British officer first and foremost" (400). In a slightly more equivocal statement he also claims, "No man ever tried harder to

serve two masters than Lawrence" (400). This argument may be more defensible than Anderson's technical treason argument for reasons already discussed. Additionally, Lawrence was certainly hostile to the Middle Eastern aspirations of the United Kingdom's French ally, but he would hardly be the first Briton to view the interests of the United Kingdom and France as divergent. He further assumed some sort of post-war association between the Arabs and the United Kingdom and saw this as good for both parties.

A recurring point in this study is that Lawrence, by purpose or happenstance, had something approaching the perfect background for his role as a driving force for the revolt in Arabia. Lawrence's credentials included his years in the Arab world, understanding of Arab social structure, language, and culture, and wide-ranging reading on military topics. Lawrence's undergraduate passion for medieval fortifications gave him a "feel for topography," which he developed even further as an intelligence officer and mapmaker for British intelligence in Cairo. While still an undergraduate working on his thesis, Lawrence walked over 1,000 miles throughout the Middle East visiting 36 castles dating back to the crusades. Lawrence was even a crack pistol shot, although he later fell short on this count when he accidentally killed his own camel while participating in a charge against Turkish forces around 40 miles from Aqaba. Lawrence also had a high tolerance for hardships and a dismissive attitude toward creature comforts that served him well as a guerrilla leader. He had no trouble existing on small amounts of bad food and was able to go without sleep for days at a time. He tolerated repeated bouts of malaria, dysentery, infected boils, and other ailments. According to Korda, Lawrence, "lived at some point beyond mere stoicism and behaved as if he were indestructible" (198). This endurance gave him the ability to inspire others and earned him the respect of very tough Bedouin leaders such as Auda Abu Tayi of the Howitat tribe.

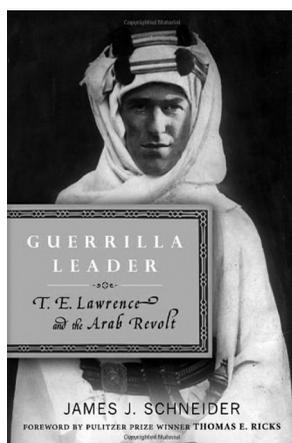
Korda's detailed consideration of Lawrence's personality and pre-war background may be especially useful for military audiences interested in questions of leadership. Lawrence had a great deal to offer the military

but was sometimes a difficult officer to manage. He often assumed (correctly) that he knew more than his superiors and had very little regard for military rank. Yet some leaders, including Brigadier General Clayton of the intelligence service and especially General Edmund Allenby commanded Lawrence's deep respect and loyal service. General Allenby, and Lawrence maintained an especially strong relationship based on mutual trust. Lawrence made significant promises to Allenby and then endured tremendous hardship to keep them to the extent he could do so. Lawrence was always attentive to the danger of disappointing Allenby and on occasion took very serious personal risks to avoid letting his commander down. Allenby in turn "rode Lawrence on the loosest of reins" (196). He provided him with goals and objectives and then allowed the young commander to reach them in his own way. In first meeting with Lawrence, Allenby was clearly on the same page as the emerging guerrilla leader. As a former horse cavalry officer, he quickly saw the potential of Lawrence's mobile force for conducting hard-hitting raids. Allenby's support for the Arab Revolt remained unequivocal, although London showed uneven interest, and the British government in India was concerned about its potential to inspire rebellious Muslims in India.

As noted, Korda's book is the only study under review that provides a comprehensive examination of Lawrence's post-war activities. In the years following the war, Lawrence moved forward some important tasks before seeking obscurity. He played a key role at the Paris Peace Conference as an advisor to Feisal and advocate of Arab goals. He further served for a year as a senior official of the colonial office working with Winston Churchill and others to help establish the new states of Iraq and Transjordan (later Jordan). The part of his life that is more difficult to understand is his decision to serve in the Royal Air Force, and more briefly in the Royal Tank Corps, as a junior enlisted man for a number of years. Surely his efforts to help the Arab people achieve greater autonomy and eventual independence could have continued after the war with him serving in progressively more responsible positions. In some ways, Lawrence seemed more interested in atoning for his perceived sins than seeking to mitigate them. Korda has more difficulties with this part of the book, sometimes maintaining that Lawrence's decision to seek obscurity was rational, understandable, and based on wartime trauma. He also somewhat defends the way in which Lawrence rode his motorcycle ("motorcycles always appear suicidal to those who don't ride one" (590), while also noting that many of Lawrence's friends were mortified at what they saw as his daredevil ways. Lawrence had already had two potentially fatal accidents with his motorcycle before a third accident claimed his life in 1935.

Lawrence and Guerrilla Warfare

James Schneider's book is an examination of Lawrence's role in revolutionizing irregular warfare. It deals almost exclusively with the desert war and gives no attention to Lawrence's activities before or after the war. This is not a book based on newly uncovered information or sources on Lawrence's life. Rather, it is a commentary and elaboration on the reasoning behind Lawrence's military theories and actions by a professor emeritus of military theory at the School of Advanced Military Studies of the US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth.



James Schneider, *Guerrilla Leader: T. E. Lawrence and the Arab Revolt* (New York: Bantam, 2011), 328 pages, \$28.00.

This analysis is often conducted effectively with Schneider teasing out the implications of Lawrence's views and analyzing why they were effective in directing desert warfare against conventional adversaries. He also indicates the ways in which the Arab guerrilla forces were able to support General Allenby's conventional army as part of the overall campaign. Schneider considers Lawrence's ideas about guerrilla warfare to be a revolutionary reframing of the Arab revolt. This reframing involved turning the uprising into a war designed to exhaust the Turkish enemy rather than seize territory or capture cities such as Turkish-held Medina.

Throughout this study, Schneider displays a recurring interest in the concept of military leadership. He provides a particularly good critique of General Allenby, who despite early difficulties in Europe became one of the war's best generals. Schneider also considers the role of Prince Feisal as a leader, although his most detailed consideration is naturally directed at Lawrence. Lawrence served as a key decisionmaker on the distribution of British gold, weapons, and other forms of support. Such responsibility creates leverage and opportunities but only makes one a transactional military leader if it remains the sole source of authority. Lawrence, however, quickly emerged as an inspiring leader through his intelligence, bravery in battle, soaring oratory, and total identification with their struggle against the Turks. Additionally Schneider states that Lawrence increasingly relied on outstanding tribal leaders for tactical leadership, thereby freeing him to provide purpose, direction, and motivation to the Arab Revolt.

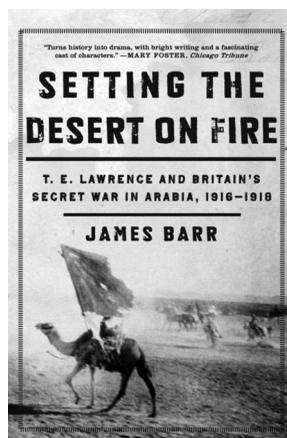
Schneider maintains that Lawrence was an effective leader because he empathized with not only the wider goals of the Arab revolt, but also with the needs of his own troops. Lawrence was sometimes reckless with his own life, but never wasteful of the lives of the fighters who served with him. The casualties inflicted on his forces troubled him deeply, especially high among his personal bodyguard, who fought beside him and were also needed due to the price on his head of twenty thousand pounds alive or ten thousand dead. Schneider maintains that Lawrence's sensitivities dovetailed closely with the Arab view of warfare. He notes that in Western militaries, the mission assigned by higher headquarters almost always takes precedence over efforts to keep casualties low. In contrast, among Arab raiders the welfare of the unit is almost always more important since the fighters were often irreplaceable. If a mission becomes too potentially costly in human lives, it is simply abandoned. While Lawrence never willingly abandoned important missions set by higher authority, he was careful to avoid striking well defended areas and may have missed some lucrative targets of opportunity to protect his own forces.

Schneider also states that Lawrence failed as a leader near the Arab village of Tafas when, according to his book *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence issued a "no prisoners" order to Arab forces moving against

a retreating Turkish force after it had committed atrocities against Arab villagers. Schneider maintains that at this point, Lawrence had lost his “moral compass” and, therefore, his capacity for leadership. There are, nevertheless, some uncertainties about this incident that Schneider does not seem to consider. As is well known, Lawrence was a man of extremely strong views about the Arab Revolt to the point that some scholars view his writings as “sanitized” to portray the Arab army in the best possible light.¹ At no time was his version of events more suspect than in the Tafas incident where he had been accused of being “transparently tendentious and misleading” for such factors as overemphasizing the innocence of the Arab villagers, who were most likely well-armed and in open rebellion against the Turks.² James Barr (see below) has additional reasons for doubting Lawrence’s account of Tafas based on other eyewitness descriptions of the events there. Lawrence’s empathy, which Schneider repeatedly notes as an asset, makes his acceptance of the blame for this incident at least somewhat suspect. Events in Tafas may have occurred despite Lawrence’s orders, and avenging Arab tribal forces may have been uncontrollable by any one person at this point regardless of leadership skills.

The Meaning of the Arab Revolt

Former journalist James Barr’s *Setting the Desert on Fire* is a focused and thoughtful consideration of both the Arab Revolt and Lawrence’s role in the uprising. More than any of the other books under review, Barr considers the context and geopolitical consequences of Lawrence’s actions by noting overlapping and clashing interests among a variety of individuals, groups, and countries associated with the Middle East theater. Like Anderson, Barr spends considerable effort sorting out the motives and disagreements of a variety of nations and individuals. Imperial powers like the United Kingdom and France had a number of global interests and priorities, and many of them were in contradiction. Adding to the richness of the work, Barr is particularly nuanced in his understanding of Arab tribal, regional, and other differences. He also notes Lawrence’s own subtlety of mind when considering intersecting political and cultural/religious problems that came up during the war. An important example of Lawrence’s good judgment was his opposition to sending a British brigade into the heart of the Hejaz. Non-Muslims are not welcome in the Hejazi cities of Mecca and Medina, but Lawrence believed that British troops in this region were more of a political than a religious problem for the Arabs. While religion might offer a strong religious justification for excluding Western troops, Lawrence also knew that even Muslim troops from the British Empire would be



James Barr, *Setting the Desert on Fire: T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Secret War in Arabia, 1916-1918* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009), 362 pages, \$27.95.

1 John D. Grainger, *The Battle for Syria, 1918-1920* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2013), 176.

2 *Ibid.* p. 166.

equally unwelcome in such large numbers. His judgment was allowed to prevail in this instance because of the agreement of a number of senior officers.

Barr notes that one of the first guerrilla raids against the Hejaz railway was conducted by Arab forces accompanied by Major Herbert Garland, a British explosives expert, who eventually taught Lawrence about techniques for using mines and bombs. Garland's raid was a success, destroying an irreplaceable Ottoman locomotive and seriously disrupting rail traffic between Anatolia and the Hejaz. Yet Garland returned to the base at Wajh hating everything about working with Arab forces. In particular, he viewed Arab raiding forces as insufficiently committed to the missions they were given, unwilling to move quickly, constantly diverted by efforts to find forage for the camels, and democratic to a fault so that nothing gets done until considerable squabbling is worked out. A variety of other British officers were equally appalled by the Arab propensity for looting and belief that they were entitled to go home after they had acquired a sufficient level of booty. British complaints are easily understood, but the culture clash also presented a serious problem for British-Arab unity of effort. Lawrence, in contrast to many of his contemporaries, attempted to immerse himself in Arab culture, accepting delays and other problems as the cost of doing business. Lawrence stated that he wanted to "rub off his British ways." He endeavored to act according to tribal values even when, as a foreigner, he would have been easily forgiven for not doing so, at least in small matters. He also dressed in Arab clothing, unlike other British officers.

Barr further displays a strong understanding of the nature of the Arab military campaigns and probably does the best job of explaining the evolution of Arab tactics in this conflict. Lawrence started by attacking trains with explosives, destroying train tracks, and demolishing telegraph wires and poles. He also attacked Turkish patrols, and Arab raids became larger and struck at more important targets over the course of the war. On one important occasion, he changed his approach to defend the town of Tafileh which was threatened by conventional Turkish attack. Lawrence's victory at Tafilah gave the Arab army some increased credibility, but it never really outgrew its raiding heritage or developed into an effective force for seizing and retaining territory. It was not easy to guide an Arab army during this period, even when many differences could be overcome with liberal amounts of gold. Among the "regular troops" who had defected from the Ottoman army, Syrian and Iraqi factions were often angry with each other and required constant mediation. Likewise, the inexhaustible capacity of Bedouin troops for looting often made this a higher priority for them than externally imposed military objectives. Some would even seize booty while they were under fire. Accountability for British-provided gold and supplies was often maddeningly nonexistent.

Barr agrees with Anderson who states that Lawrence was a "booster" and an "apologist" for the Arabs with whom he served. The most striking example of this behavior occurred during the previously noted incident near the village of Tafas shortly after a Turkish brigade committed a number of atrocities, including the murder of children. Furious Arab leaders, and especially the Howeitat chieftain, Auda abu Tayi, demanded revenge and wiped out the entire force, killing the

wounded where they had fallen and refusing to allow enemy troops to surrender. According to Barr, and in contrast to Schenider's analysis, Lawrence seems to have had nothing to do with the decision to kill the wounded Turks, although he did take responsibility for it. Barr quotes Lawrence as stating, "We ordered 'no prisoners' and the men obeyed" (287). Other witnesses do not remember it that way. Ali Jawdat, a future Iraqi prime minister, described how Lawrence attempted to save a group of prisoners but was unable to do so in the face of Arab forces bent on revenge. Another British officer, Frederick Peake, who worked closely with Lawrence stated that he was certain Lawrence did all he could to stop the massacre but the tribal force was "beyond control." As overall victory approached, Lawrence may simply not have been prepared to see the Arab army criticized or portrayed as an avenging mob so he changed the story to assume the blame himself.

In the final campaigns of the Middle East theater, Allenby continued to view Lawrence as indispensable. The squandering of vast amounts of gold by Prince Feisal's younger brother Zaid convinced him that while the Arabs had been doing "pretty well," they were also an "unstable lot" who needed British leaders "they know and trust" (224). In Allenby's scheme of action, Lawrence not only had to cut important railroad links and destroy key bridges, but he had to do so at precise times so the Turks would lose capability to move troops exactly when these troops were needed. Often he accomplished these goals, although setbacks occurred. The Arab army was also important in supporting Allenby's deception plan, which sought to convince the Turks that the main allied force arrayed against them would not strike on the coast. In late 1918, Arab forces severely disrupted railroad activity at the important railroad hub of Deraa and moved on to play an important role in the liberation of Damascus.

Conclusion

Obviously, one will find a tremendous degree of overlap in four recent books on T. E. Lawrence, although the same story can appear quite differently from alternative vantage points. Scott's book may annoy some readers by its continuous biographical forays into the lives of people Lawrence barely knew, but it is exceptionally strong in other respects including the discussion of Lawrence's personal growth as a strategist and leader. Korda's book is outstanding as a childhood-to-grave biography, although the author's great regard for Lawrence may have caused him to appear a little too apologetic for some of Lawrence's more eccentric decisions. The Schneider book is interesting as an intellectual exercise, but Barr's study is probably most valuable for a military audience due to its detailed description of the military campaigning associated with the Arab revolt and the political context in which this struggle was conducted. The strong link between military actions and political outcomes is clear in all these books but is especially nuanced in Barr's study.

Surprisingly, US military personnel seeking answers about contemporary problems through the prism of Lawrence's life may find such answers elusive when examining what Korda presents as his almost perfect background and preparation for his task of supporting the Arab Revolt. Beyond Lawrence's linguistic skills and his understanding

of Arab history and sociology was his total identification with Arab goals. Lawrence believed in Arab independence and was continuously searching for ways to achieve this goal through Arab battlefield accomplishments. Without this total commitment, Lawrence would never have been fully trusted by leaders such as Prince Faisal no matter how well he could conjugate Arabic verbs. As fearless and knowledgeable as he was, T. E. Lawrence could never have become Lawrence of Arabia if he felt his mission was to convince the Arabs that they had no interests apart from those of the United Kingdom. He knew better, they knew better, and this understanding was the basis of brilliant wartime collaboration.

Book Reviews

PREDICTING WAR

Who Wins? Predicting Strategic Success and Failure in Armed Conflict

By Patricia L. Sullivan

Reviewed by Thomas G. Mahnken, Jerome E. Levy Chair of Economic Geography and National Security, US Naval War College

Patricia L. Sullivan's *Who Wins?* seeks to understand why strong states so often are unable to achieve their aims in wars against weaker adversaries. She demonstrates that the reason rests not merely with the belligerents' resolve or their strategic choices, but rather with the nature of the political objectives they pursue. In particular, she argues strong states are most likely to succeed when their aim is to seize territory from a weaker opponent or overthrow its regime. By contrast, victory is least likely to follow attempts to coerce a weaker adversary into changing its behavior.

This is a timely and important study, one that illuminates the relationship between political objectives, the value that statesmen and soldiers attach to them, and victory. Two centuries ago, Carl von Clausewitz wrote about the correlation between the value a state attaches to its ends and the means it uses to achieve them:

Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political object, the value of this object must determine the sacrifices to be made for it in *magnitude* and also in *duration*. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow.

Sullivan delves deeply into this relationship, examining different political objectives and how easy—or difficult—it has been for the stronger power to achieve its aims in war. She develops several sets of hypotheses and tests them systematically in conflicts from the end of World War I to the present. It is a thoughtful and relevant work of scholarship.

That said, one suspects that “predicting strategic success and failure in armed conflict” (the book’s subtitle) using the model she describes is more an art than a science. First, one wonders just how accurately we can know *a priori* how much we, or our adversaries, value achieving a particular aim, or even what the precise aims of our opponents are. As she points out in her recapitulation of conflict between Saddam Hussein’s Iraq and the United States (31-43), such estimates are often mistaken and frequently plagued by misperception. Furthermore, both ends and assessment of the political, social, and economic costs of war often change as a conflict unfolds. States may continue fighting beyond the “rational” point of surrender when their leaders’ prestige becomes invested in the war or the passions of the people become aroused. Alternatively, heavy losses may lead to escalation of a conflict, changing its character.

Second, it is worth questioning the author’s taxonomy of political objectives. At times, she portrays them as existing on a spectrum



New York: Oxford University Press, 2012

177 pages

\$27.95

running from “brute force” objectives (including acquiring or defending territory, seizing resources, overthrowing a regime, or defending state sovereignty) to coercive ones involving changing an adversary’s policy (46). In other places, she views such aims discretely (124), although her main argument is built around the dichotomy between “brute force” and “coercive” objectives. Yet the line between brute force and coercion is hardly clear. Having seized territory (a “brute force” objective), a government must then coerce its adversary into renouncing efforts to retake it. Indeed, most of the “brute force” objectives in Sullivan’s taxonomy require a great deal of coercion to bring a war to a successful conclusion.

If there is to be a useful distinction among the varieties of aims that states may pursue in war, it is likely that which Clausewitz drew between wars fought for limited aims and those fought for unlimited aims. As he wrote:

War can be of two kinds, in the sense that either the objective is to *overthrow the enemy*—to render him politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please; or *merely to occupy some of his frontier districts* so that we can annex them or use them for bargaining at the negotiating table.

The former is a true “brute force” aim, while the latter involves considerable coercive leverage.

These observations should not obscure the value of the volume. *Who Wins?* is a book that both scholars and policymakers will find insightful and thought-provoking.

Wargames, From Gladiators to Gigabytes

By Martin van Creveld

Reviewed by Douglas B. Campbell, Director, Center for Strategic Leadership and Development, USAWC



Cambridge University
Press, 2013
321 pages
\$27.00

Martin van Creveld has produced an extensively researched and exhaustively written history of wargaming. This is especially timely given that wargaming is regaining visibility within the national security community writ large. As the United States, NATO countries, and other regional leaders seek to understand the national security issues developing post Arab Spring and, more specifically, post Iraq and Afghanistan, wargames are returning as a key tool in this effort.

Van Creveld defines a wargame as a contest of opposing strategies that, while separated from real warfare, simulates some key aspects of real war. He begins his study examining the behavior of animals, then transitions into hunting, combat sports and contact sports, all which reflect issues associated with warfare and wargames. Play fights, as he describes them, provide the earliest indications of the conduct of wargames and the concepts of wargaming. During his discussion of Great Fights—staged engagements between primitive societies—he highlights some of the limitations of wargames, which are encounters prearranged in both time and place, sacrificing perhaps the most important “principle of war,” surprise. Throughout the book, van Creveld constantly returns to the theme regarding the limitations of wargames in substituting for

real war. His extensive research into the behavior of tribes throughout the world and his demonstration of similar behavior patterns where they engage in “wargames” to settle issues and disputes provide a detailed understanding of the universality of this behavior.

As he addresses single combat as wargames he starts with the interesting story of David and Goliath, attributing to David a strategy that allowed him to exploit specific advantages to defeat his opponent. The author spends considerable time discussing champions who fought in lieu of major combat throughout ancient civilization. He then leads us through the history of gladiators and ancient Rome and its eventual decline due to the incredible cost of maintaining a professional combat force used specifically to entertain people. The conduct of tournaments during the Middle Ages, where champions and later knights, who reflected the flower of their societies and fought each other for prestige, honor, and advancement, reflects the same motto as modern soldiers of fortune, “meet interesting people—and kill them.”

The changes that overtook warfare in the 15th and 16th centuries had a significant impact on these types of games. The introduction of gunpowder and firearms essentially eliminated the honor associated with champions, who fought in tournaments to demonstrate their abilities without fighting a war. Other games began to be used, and van Creveld highlights chess as an example of a game that reduces the threat of physical injury while developing strategic thinking. Although chess reinforces Clausewitz’s dictum that the objective of war is to overthrow the enemy, i.e., capturing the opposing monarch, it reflects the imperfections van Creveld continues to raise regarding wargames—the lack of any of the threats or pains associated with war.

He traces the rise of the hex-based board games that allowed leaders to conduct complex wargames as we understand them today. By the 19th century, wargames that used complex rules and a hex-based board system allowed leaders to use them for military training and education. They encouraged leaders to practice command and control and exposed them to the world of strategy and dealing with the paradoxical and unexpected. He also highlights the introduction of what we today call the “after action review.” Each game ended or was supposed to end with a thorough discussion. The objective was to find out what had been simulated, what had not been simulated, and what had and had not worked and why. One of the other interesting points he raises is that while military leaders selected the scenarios to wargame, the vast majority of them were never translated into reality. Van Creveld does identify the key objective of military wargames is to allow participants to try their hand at dealing with the unexpected, whether a scenario is ultimately realized is almost irrelevant. Wargames also allow participants to understand simple but essential ideas regarding the conduct of war.

Van Creveld also highlights the introduction of the political dimension into wargaming. He quotes President Kennedy as saying, following the Bay of Pigs operation, that senior American military did not understand the political implications of their recommendations, opening up a new perspective to wargaming. The key factor of political games is that there are no detailed rules as to what constitutes victory. The author also discusses nuclear wargames and the implications of computer-based

wargames as leaders continue to replicate all aspects of warfare within their wargames.

He details the fact that conventional warfare is far more complex than ever before and that wargames must be connected to the real world as these games are serious business on which many lives depend. Much of what van Creveld addresses in this book is deep history and of questionable value to someone trying to understand the issues of wargames and their value to the military; however, the sections that outline the current uses of wargames and, more specifically, the issues that limit their value are worth consideration.

STRATEGIC FLEXIBILITY

Strategic Thinking in 3D: A Guide for National Security, Foreign Policy, and Business Professionals

By Ross Harrison

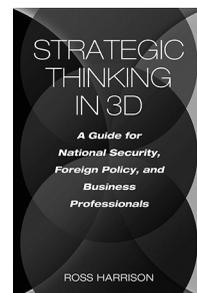
Reviewed by Charles D. Allen, Colonel (USA Retired), Professor of Leadership and Cultural Studies, US Army War College

As a former corporate chief executive officer, current professor of practice of international relations at Georgetown University, and having worked with corporate and nongovernmental agencies, Ross Harrison has an enduring professional interest in developing strategies. Over the past decade, he has had substantial engagement with US Army War College (USAWC) and other senior level college faculty members as a contributor to the Teaching Strategy Group. A quick review of the book's bibliography, endnotes, and in-text references reveals that Harrison is steeped in materials used in the curriculum for the Army War College's Theater of War and Strategy course. Accordingly, the author's approach is familiar to this reviewer as well as reflective of the USAWC curriculum in its Strategic Leadership and Defense Management courses.

While many critics lament the current state of American strategy and offer commentary on the paucity of the strategic thinking among US leaders, Harrison gets to the core question long posed by USAWC colleagues and other scholars, "Why is strategy difficult?" (Jablonsky, 1992). His *Strategic Thinking in 3D* offers a framework for how to think about strategy and how to think strategically. The former is about discernment of individual as well as organizational purpose and goals and the creation of a viable approach to attain each. The latter is about posing questions to gain situational awareness of the factors that influence the development and successful execution of strategy.

The author succinctly presents the many conceptions about the nature of strategy as it is interpreted across traditional domains—government, military, and corporate/business. He adopts an overarching definition from Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts, where "Strategy is fundamentally about identifying or creating asymmetric advantages that can be exploited to help achieve one's ultimate objectives despite resource and other constraints, most importantly the opposing efforts of adversaries or competitors and the inherent unpredictability of strategic outcomes" (2-3).

Harrison's presentation of eight underlying assumptions about strategy is very useful and helps to define its nature—subject to human agency, intentional, competitive, and possessing system properties as it interacts with other systems. The assumptions are formed around: interests, opposing wills, choices, limits, passion, integration causality, and leverage. While he offers a base definition of strategy, the author does not provide one for strategic thinking. Our USAWC definition is complementary and would be useful: strategic thinking "is the ability to make a creative and holistic synthesis of key factors affecting an



Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2013
197 pages
\$29.95

organization and its environment in order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and long-term success.” (Allen and Gerras)

The book is well organized and presented in three parts: the inward face of strategy, the outward face of strategy, and the power of integration. The “3D” in the title is the author’s suggestion that strategy is best thought of and executed in three dimensions: systems, opponents, and groups. Understanding one’s own system is imperative to determining the existing and needed capabilities. Examining current and potential opponents’ systems as sources from which competitors generate their capabilities allows the targeting and disruption of opposing strategies. Leveraging one’s own stakeholder group adds resources to prosecuting a successful strategy. For each discussion of the strategic dimensions, Harrison provides practical examples to illustrate concepts and principles in the application of his framework. Harrison’s concluding section offers a refreshing twist as the framework is applied to a prominent and persistent security threat to the United States today—al Qaeda. Rather than developing a US strategy against its foe, he uses the “3D” framework to examine the al Qaeda strategy and, in doing so, provides interesting insights.

Harrison appropriately establishes disclaimers and caveats in his preface and conclusion. Perhaps the most important is, “the general framework is intended to be used suggestively rather than dogmatically.” So there is a duality with the internal and external focus of strategy that requires balance—adapting the organization/enterprise to its environment as well as designing methods to shape that same environment to attain its goals and objectives.

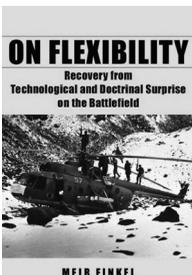
This book is an effective primer on strategy. Harrison holds his own against several more cerebral and complex treatments of strategy and strategic thinking—he does not promise too much. Readers should be wary of any book about strategy and strategic thinking that is so compact, lest they think strategy is merely about determining ends, ways, and means. To paraphrase Clausewitz, “Everything in [strategy] is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.” Far from an easy read, *Strategic Thinking in 3D* is accessible, thought provoking, and pragmatic for a wide range of individuals who may wrestle with the challenges of an uncertain and competitive environment. The value in Harrison’s work is not that it provides answers but asks the questions that drive leaders and their organizations to explore factors which may have strategic effect and substantive impact—then enables the crafting of viable strategies.

On Flexibility: Recovery from Technological and Doctrinal Surprise on the Battlefield

by Meir Finkel

Reviewed by Raphael D. Marcus, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of War Studies, King’s College London.

Adapting to surprise on the battlefield has been a challenge militaries have faced since the beginning of history. In the progressively growing field of scholarly literature pertaining to military innovation and adaptation, there are few works which convey the complexity and



Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Security Studies, 2011

324 pages

\$25.95

difficulty of military change as thoughtfully as *On Flexibility*. Written by Colonel Dr. Meir Finkel of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), *On Flexibility* provides an original and elegant theoretical framework for analyzing military adaptability, as well as offering practical recommendations for modern militaries to enable rapid recovery from battlefield surprise on the doctrinal, operational, and techno-tactical levels.

Finkel's main thesis is that modern militaries must maintain a flexible and adaptable doctrine and organizational culture to cope with inevitable battlefield surprise and the constantly changing operational environment. He convincingly makes his argument by elucidating seven historical case studies which pertain to doctrinal, operational, and techno-tactical aspects of warfare: four case studies exemplify successful recovery from surprise due to the flexibility of the military organization, and three case studies highlight military failure to recover from surprise due to inflexibility. These cases are drawn from select British, French, and German experiences in World War II, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan, and highlight the degree of organizational flexibility of each military and their ability or inability to "recover from battlefield surprise.

Finkel provides succinct definitions of technological and doctrinal surprise while also outlining sensible criteria for "successful recovery" from surprise on the battlefield, which, he notes, is not confined to the techno-tactical level of war. Using a graded criteria scale, successful recovery is defined as the military's complete recovery and ability to devise a counterresponse; the next best response would be neutralizing the damage from surprise without devising a counterchallenge, followed by minimizing (but not neutralizing) damage caused by the surprise. "Failure" of recovery would be inability to minimize damage from the surprise. The theoretical framework also discusses various forms of flexibility present in military organizations: conceptual and doctrinal flexibility, organizational and technological flexibility, flexibility in command-and-control and cognition, as well as mechanisms for implementation of lessons learned.

Case studies of successful recovery are drawn from German experiences in WWII dealing with the T-34 Soviet tank and the British chaff, and the IDF during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The case study focusing on IDF surprise to the Egyptian introduction of anti-tank weapons in the Sinai in the 1973 War is particularly compelling. The informal and improvisational organizational culture of the IDF fosters tenacity and promotes mission-command principles; armored corps commanders on the ground were able to adapt their tactics fairly rapidly (despite a lack of weapons diversity—a key enabler of flexible responsiveness). Hence, Finkel notes that IDF organizational culture and individual unit initiative was of paramount importance.

Case studies of failure to recover from surprise are drawn from the slow British recovery from bouts with German armor, the French experience with the German blitzkrieg, as well as the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. The Soviet failure to recover from surprise in low-intensity conflict (LIC) while engaged in Afghanistan against the mujahedeen is a relevant historical study of inefficient military learning during LIC. Soviet doctrinal dogmatism and a hierarchal command-and-control structure inhibited decentralized autonomy of soldiers and prevented

Soviet recovery from the surprise of its own ineffectiveness on the Afghan battlefield.

Given the timely nature and current focus on low-intensity conflict and counterinsurgency (COIN) by many military organizations, the book could have benefitted from additional case studies of military adaptation and recovery from surprise during LIC or COIN, which for the most part (with exceptions), has been absent from the broader military innovation literature until recently. As we know, adapting “under fire” was an immense challenge that confronted United States, British, and Israeli forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and elsewhere, and further case studies could have provided additional relevant lessons for Western militaries that, in the present operational environment, are doctrinally and tactically focused on COIN and “hybrid” warfare.

Given that surprise is inevitable, Finkel’s solution for recovery lies in sensible and flexible force-planning and doctrine development, rapid techno-tactical adaptability, and officer education grounded in a military culture which promotes agile thinking. Col. Finkel’s own experiences and expertise as Director of the IDF Ground Forces’ Concept Development and Doctrine Department are evident, as he deemphasizes the ability to make accurate, “perfect” predictions based on intelligence, instead focusing on organizational and technological adaptability (while also underscoring technology’s inherent limitations).

Col. Finkel’s work is a compelling contribution to the existing literature on military innovation, and in his conclusion, he appropriately places his work among the major works in the subfield, “filling the gap” left by others who analyzed interwar and long-term innovation. Finkel’s work also nicely complements other very recent publications by Stanford Security Studies scholars Dima Adamsky, Eitan Shamir, and James Russell that deal with topics on military culture and innovation, mission command, and “bottom-up” learning.

In sum, *On Flexibility* is an interesting and challenging book which adds to the current conceptual thinking regarding militaries’ ability to recover from surprise and adapt, something that has been emphasized in various recent US and British military manuals, and will certainly continue to remain relevant in the future.

URBAN FIGHTING

Concrete Hell: Urban Warfare from Stalingrad to Iraq

By Louis A. DiMarco

Reviewed by Gregory Fontenot, Colonel (USA Retired), Lansing, Kansas

In *Concrete Hell*, Louis A. DiMarco surveys historical trends in urban combat since World War II. Lieutenant Colonel DiMarco brings to his task both professional and personal interests. An experienced soldier and historian, DiMarco has focused his recent professional life on the problem of urban combat as a doctrine writer and teacher at the Army Command and General Staff College. DiMarco seeks to make three contributions related to understanding the urban battle space, providing insights into the nature of urban combat and its evolution—drawing from tactical, operational, and strategic considerations he believes will remain relevant. Regarding the last item, he explores the transition of urban combat from “simplistic conventional” fights in Stalingrad and Aachen to a “complex hybrid mixture” found in Chechnya and Iraq, concluding these “hybrid” fights in Chechnya and Iraq foretell the future.

Generally, DiMarco makes his case effectively. He begins by noting that at the turn of the century the Army was “particularly wary” of urban combat. DiMarco is absolutely right. The Army and, for that matter, US armed forces sought to avoid fighting in cities. This tendency may have come, in part, from focusing on defending cities in Europe. The Army in Europe, in particular, gave considerable thought to how to fight in towns and cities in the context of defense but far less thought on offensive urban combat. At the end of the Cold War, few soldiers imagined the United States would find itself in any kind of urban combat. Moreover, there were a great many “defense experts” who claimed that various revolutions in military affairs precluded ground combat let alone urban ground combat. Some believed that the nature of warfare itself had changed and that “contactless” battle would result.

But DiMarco’s argument, at least where the US Army is concerned, would have benefited from reviewing what the Army did do. Shortly after Operation Desert Storm, General Fred Franks (commanding the Training and Doctrine Command) confronted the idea that urban combat would be among the missions the post-Cold War Army might have to undertake. He did not have the money to develop large urban combat training centers and instead focused on developing a single “world class” venue at Fort Polk. However, Fort Polk’s urban combat venue was useful at the tactical level only.

The absence of large venues did not prevent the Army thinking and writing about urban combat. DiMarco played an important role in this effort providing a chapter in one of several books on urban combat published by the Army. These included Roger Spillers’ *Sharp Corners* in 2001 and William G. Robertson and Lawrence Yeats, *Block By Block* in 2003. These major studies were accompanied by lively arguments in journals as well. In the fall of 2002, the Army’s angst over urban combat came to a head as the possibility of war with Iraq loomed. Accordingly, the Army organized Operations Group F within the Battle Command



Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, 2012

232 pages

\$24.96

Training Program to study and teach the principles of urban combat to all deploying divisions including the 1st Marine Division. Although DiMarco did not personally play a role in this effort, he was part of the team at Fort Leavenworth that developed the means to educate units. Simultaneously, the Army sought to learn from the Israeli experience that DiMarco describes in his chapter on Israeli Operations on the West Bank in 1992.

Despite this observation DiMarco, for the most part, delivers on his desired contributions. At the strategic level the central insight he offers is the role policy and politics play in decisions that led to urban combat. In several examples that DiMarco chose, politics proved central not only on the decision to fight in cities but also on how the attacker chose to fight. His assertion is absolutely right and demonstrable. For example, the operations of 1st Brigade 1st Armored Division in Ramadi in 2007 were driven by political considerations first. The Ready First Combat Team, as that brigade was styled, used classic conventional tactics to take the city while engaging local leaders simultaneously in an effort to separate them from the insurgents. The Ready First also sought to avoid destroying the city while saving it. DiMarco argues this operation demonstrated a transition from “simplistic conventional” fights in World War II to a “complex hybrid mixture of conventional and insurgent combat.”

This assessment is not convincing. In the chapter devoted to the US operations to seize Aachen in 1944, it is clear the US commanders did not care whether they reduced Aachen to rubble. Yet DiMarco points out that, although the Army did reduce much of the city to rubble, US commanders provided for what they considered a hostile population. They did so to separate them from the German Army defenders but also to avoid killing civilians unnecessarily. He further notes that US government troops arrived on the heels of the infantry. In other words, at least some of the characteristics of complex “hybrid” operations existed even in 1944. What seems more likely than the fundamental change DiMarco posits is that the means used depend on the ends the attacker intends to achieve. If in October 1944, the US Army had wanted to encourage the inhabitants of Aachen to switch sides or at least be neutral, then their approach would have been different. DiMarco and others miss this essential point when they conclude the means have changed for any other reason than the ends have changed. Finally, describing Stalingrad and Aachen as “simplistic” is simply not accurate. Fighting to seize a vigorously defended city may well be merely complicated rather than complex but it is not simplistic.

DiMarco’s conclusions on the operational and tactical levels are all on the mark. His consideration of Stalingrad not only reviews the thoroughly bad strategic choices that Hitler made but also the poor operational decisions by German commanders. The risks they chose to take with respect to flank security are only one of several bad choices. Although DiMarco discovered little that is new, his study reaffirms some lessons which armies have had trouble learning. For example, one lesson learned again and again is that tanks are useful in cities. This idea is one that just will not stick. German tactical guidance in 1938 deemed tanks too heavy, too awkward, and too vulnerable to flank attacks from side streets to operate in cities. Yet in each case DiMarco studies, with the exception of Algiers, tanks proved essential. Generally, this observation

is a subset of the more important notion of combined arms. Urban combat absolutely demands a combined arms approach.

Colonel DiMarco's book is a useful survey of combat operations in cities. He deserves to be read and, more importantly, the conclusions he reaches considered carefully and critically as fighting in "concrete hell" is likely to remain a feature of operations in the future. Doing so will help realize DiMarco's goal of the US armed forces taking on board the often repeated lessons of fighting in cities.

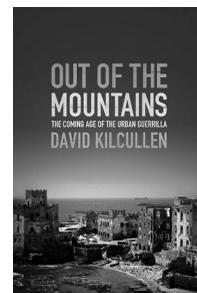
Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla

By David Kilcullen

Reviewed by José de Arimatéia da Cruz, Visiting Research Professor at the U. S. War College, and Professor of International Relations and Comparative Politics at Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, GA

David Kilcullen, author of *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* and *Counterinsurgency*, delivers another essential work in *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*. Kilcullen is no stranger to the study of insurgency and counterinsurgency. He is a former soldier and diplomat. He also served as a senior advisor to both General David H. Petraeus and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. *Out of the Mountains* offers a new way of looking at the nature of future conflicts given four powerful tectonic forces impacting the world of the twenty-first century: population, urbanization, coastal settlement, and connectedness. Kilcullen's thesis is that the cities of the future—mostly coastal, highly urbanized, and heavily populated—will be the central focus of tomorrow's conflicts, which will be heavily impacted by the four megatrends of population growth, urbanization, littoralization, and connectedness. He asserts that "more people than ever before in history will be competing for scarcer and scarcer resources in poorly governed areas that lack adequate infrastructure, and these areas will be more and more closely connected to the global system, so that local conflict will have far wider affects" (50).

Within this heavily populated, highly urbanized, littoralized, and connected world, "adversaries are likely to be nonstate armed groups (whether criminal or military) or to adopt asymmetric methods, and even the most conventional hypothetical war scenarios turn out, when closely examined, to involve very significant irregular aspects" (107). Kilcullen defines nonstate armed groups as "any group that includes armed individuals who apply violence but who aren't members of the regular forces of a nation-state" (126). Under this broader definition of nonstate armed groups, Kilcullen includes "urban street gangs, communitarian or sectarian militias, insurgents, bandits, pirates, armed smugglers or drug traffickers, violent organized criminal organizations, warlord armies, and certain paramilitary forces. The term encompasses both combatants and individuals who don't personally carry arms or use violence but who belong to groups that do" (126). Those nontraditional nonstate armed groups not only undermine the authority and legitimacy of the state but also corrupt the social fabric of society. The "new warrior class" or "conflict entrepreneurs" are those individuals in society part of the "bottom billion" who have lost all hopes of a better future, social



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288 pages
\$27.95

advancement, and have resorted to the use of force to partake in the spoils of society.

In Kilcullen's analysis, as the world is greatly impacted by the four megatrends, some cities in the Third World will become a breeding ground for conflict. Those cities will become "urban no-go areas," where government presence and authority are extremely limited. Those so-called "urban no-go areas" of a megacity in the Third World which have become "safe havens for criminal networks or nonstate armed groups, creating a vacuum that is filled by local youth who have no shortage of grievances, whether arising from their new urban circumstances or imported from their home villages" (40). Kilcullen explains, "rapid urban growth in coastal, underdeveloped areas is overloading economic, social, and governance systems, straining city infrastructure, and overburdening the carrying capacity of cities designed for much smaller populations . . . the implications for future conflict are profound with more people competing for scarcer resources in crowded, underserved, and undergoverned urban areas" (35-36). Those so-called "urban no-go areas" are the feral city of the twenty-first century. The concept, derived from the field of biology, was first introduced to the political science literature by Richard J. Norton a decade ago in his influential article entitled "Feral Cities," which appeared in the *Naval War College Review* 66, no. 4 (Autumn 2003), pages 97-106.

According to Norton's definition, feral cities are "metropolis with a population of more than a million people, in a state the government of which has lost the ability to maintain the rule of law within the city's boundaries yet remains a functioning actor in the greater international system" (quoted in Kilcullen, page 66). This definition of feral cities or urban no-go areas fits any larger urban centers today in the Third World, such as Mumbai, Karachi, Rio de Janeiro, and Kingston, to mention only a few locations. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the host of the World Cup (2014) and the Olympic Games (2016) is currently facing the problems defined by Kilcullen in his assessment of feral cities or urban no-go areas. Rio has one of the largest "favelas" or shantytowns in Latin America: Rocinha. With a population over a million people, Rocinha was recently appeased by the Pacifying Police Units (UPPs). Prior to the pacification, Rocinha was controlled by the notorious drug lord Antonio Francisco Bonfim Lopes, also known as Nen, and his Amigos dos Amigos gang. Nen is now in prison, but even in prison he controls drug trafficking and issues commands to his foot soldiers or "new warrior class."

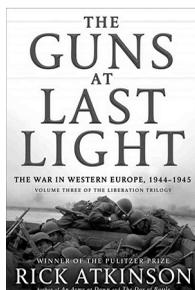
This text can be especially useful to students at the United States Army War College, particularly the book's theoretical framework. Kilcullen argues that the basis for the control systems applied by non-state armed groups of all kinds is what he calls the theory of competitive control (126). Kilcullen defines the theory of competitive control as follows:

In regular conflicts (that is, in conflicts where at least one combatant is a nonstate armed group), the local armed actor that a given population perceives as best able to establish a predictable, consistent, wide-spectrum normative system of control is most likely to dominate that population and its residential area (126).

Kilcullen's theory of competitive control basically holds that, "non-state armed groups, of many kinds, draw their strength and freedom of action primarily from their ability to manipulate and mobilize populations, and that they do this using a spectrum of methods from coercion to persuasion, by creating a normative system that makes people feel safe through the predictability and order that it generates" (114). Despite their control mechanisms, often by using violence and intimidation, some people in the feral cities of Third World countries support non-state armed groups due to their false sense of security and order. Since the police and law enforcement authorities are seen as criminal elements in uniform, the population responds to predictable, ordered, normative systems that tells them exactly what they need to do, and not do, to be safe (126). This author has seen this kind of behavior personally in two of Rio's most notorious favelas, the Nova Holanda favela in Bonsucesso and Jacarezinho favela in the Maria da Graça neighborhoods. The theory also suggests "a behavioral explanation for the way in which armed groups of all kinds control populations It also suggests that group behaviors may be an emergent phenomena at the level of the population group implying that traditional counterinsurgency notions, including "hearts and minds" may need a rethink" (127).

In conclusion, I highly recommend this text to anyone interested in insurgency and counterinsurgency studies. The traditional view of insurgency and counterinsurgency in the mountains of Afghanistan is quickly changing. Conflicts in the twenty-first century will more likely occur in increasingly sprawling coastal cities, in peri-urban slum settlements that are enveloping many regions of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Those so-called "mega-cities" will be the source of much urban political exclusion and violence in the years to come (see Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, *Mega Cities: The Politics of Urban Exclusion and Violence in the Global South* (New York: Zed Books, 2009).

WORLD WAR II



New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2013

877 pages

\$40.00

The Guns at Last Light: War in Western Europe, 1944-1945: Volume Three of the Liberation Trilogy

By Rick Atkinson

Reviewed by David T. Zabecki, Ph.D., Major General (USA Retired)

The 1944-45 Allied World War II campaign in Northwest Europe is an oft-told story. In *The Guns at Last Light*, the third volume of his award-winning Liberation Trilogy, journalist-turned historian Rick Atkinson revisits this key episode of the pivotal event of the 20th century. Is there anything fresh in the way he retells this familiar story? If you already have read many books on the subject, is this one worth reading? The answer to both of these questions is an unqualified yes.

This is a large and complex story. As historian Will Durant once noted, “History is so indifferently rich that a case for almost any conclusion from it can be made by a careful selection of instances.” The craft of history, therefore, is based on the art of selecting what to include in your narrative, and what to leave out. In the case of very large and complex events, that largely becomes a function of where you focus the story.

Most military history writing tends to focus at either the high level or the low level. As S. L. A. Marshall wrote in his 1947 book, *Men Against Fire*:

The body of military history is almost exclusively a record of the movement of armies and corps, of decisions by generals and commanders-in-chief, of the contest between opposing strategies and the triumph of one set of logistical conditions over another. The occasional rare passages from the battlefield which are thrown in to illuminate and make zestful the story of the overall struggle are usually of such glittering character or dubious origin to warrant a suspicion that they have little real kinship with the event.

Atkinson is one of those rare writers who can focus on those two widely-separated levels and integrate them into a unified and cohesive story. As he did in his first two volumes, he deftly zooms his lens down to the level of the individual American GIs, British Tommys, and German *Landsers* fighting it out on the line of contact; and then he slowly pans back out, up the chain of command to the senior commanders at the operational and strategic levels and their political masters in Washington, London, and Berlin. The result is a rich tapestry that is a clear and intelligible picture of the western half of the end game of World War II.

Interweaving his own skillful narrative with the voices of those who fought from the shores of Normandy to the banks of the Elbe, Atkinson helps the modern reader understand the agonies and the hardships endured by the soldiers on both sides who faced each other across the line of contact, while at the same time appreciating the gut-wrenching and all too often lose-lose decisions forced upon their generals by the grinding friction of battle and impenetrable fog of war. Nowhere do these conundrums appear more starkly than in Operation Market-Garden and later in the fight for the Hürtgen Forest, arguably the single worst defeat ever suffered by the American Army.

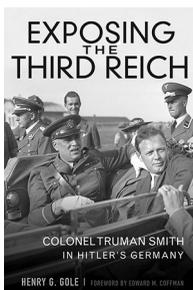
One of the most impressive features of Atkinson's writing style is his authenticity of voice. Any military historian or professional soldier can read his narrative without having to stumble over terms and concepts that are used incorrectly or tossed out loosely in an attempt to establish some sort of level of authority. Yet at the same time that he manages to use precise military expressions in their proper contexts, Atkinson does so without lapsing into jargon or getting bogged down into pseudo-military babble. His narrative is one that can be read, understood, and appreciated by laymen and by military insiders alike—no mean feat of writing.

Although he was never a soldier himself, Rick Atkinson spent a considerable portion of his life around the American military. The son of a career US Army officer, Atkinson was born in Munich, Germany, and grew up on military posts around the world. A three-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize, he was, from 1983 to 1999, a reporter for the *The Washington Post*, specializing in defense issues. During that period, he was one of the very small number of journalists widely respected by common soldiers and general officers alike. From 2004 to 2005, he held the General Omar N. Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership at the US Army War College. He understands soldiers at all levels and the world they live in. His empathy shows clearly in his writing, not only for the soldiers on the line, but also for their commanders all the way up the chain. Even when he is dissecting, analyzing, and critiquing the commanders' battlefield decisions, he does it objectively, without moralizing or preaching. In 2010, he received a well-deserved Pritzker Military Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing.

Journalism and history are not quite the same things, and as a historian Atkinson does his homework. The research he has put into all three volumes of the series is impressive by any standards. To develop an understanding for the ground, he went out to many of the key battlefields, including for this volume the still dark, foreboding, and all too-seldom visited Hürtgen Forest. As he wrote in the second volume of the trilogy, *The Day of Battle*, "The ground speaks even when eyewitness no longer can . . ." Any experienced soldier will know exactly what he means here, and Atkinson has taught himself to "read the ground" as a soldier would.

This third volume's exhaustive listing of his chapter notes and sources totals 198 pages. The sources run from books to contemporary newspaper and periodical accounts; to papers, letters, personal narratives, and diaries; and to interviews he conducted with surviving participants of the actions. He made 23 visits, averaging two to three days each, to the US Army Military History Institute, part of the Army Heritage and Education Center at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, which he accurately describes as "among the greatest military archives in the world and a priceless asset to anyone studying World War II."

No matter how many other World War II books you may have on your bookshelf, make room for this one.



Lexington: University Press
of Kentucky, 2013

354 pages

\$40.00

Exposing the Third Reich: Colonel Truman Smith in Hitler's Germany

By Henry G. Gole

Reviewed by Richard G. Trefry, Lieutenant General (USA Retired)

The period of time between World War I through World War II is a fascinating story that has produced a myriad of books covering the military history familiar to professional soldiers. Henry Gole has examined what might be called a second order of history of this era and has outlined the evolution of US military strategies in earlier works such as *The Road to Rainbow* and *Preparing the Army for Modern War*. These two books provide studies of the maturation of the profession of arms in the US Army from World War I through the twentieth century.

Keeping with that theme, Henry Gole's *Exposing the Third Reich* is a story of how influential a single officer was in his service from WWI culminating in the development of NATO in the early 1970s. Colonel Truman Smith was the son of a West Pointer who was killed in the Philippines. Truman himself was a graduate of Yale University, class of 1915. He secured a commission in the National Guard of New York and was accepted into the Regular Army. After service on the Mexican border, he was assigned to the 4th Regiment of the 3rd Division. Colonel Smith was an outstanding officer in combat in World War II, commanding up to Battalion, and was awarded a silver star for his actions. After the armistice, he was assigned occupation duty in Coblenz, Germany, and then to duty in the American Embassy in Berlin, Germany.

The years between 1918 and 1924 provided Truman Smith with the experience that developed him as an expert on occupation duty and attaché duty in Germany. He developed many contacts and friendships with German officers that would last through World War II and the formation of NATO. Both he and his wife developed linguistic capabilities that made both of them very effective members of the Embassy staff. Of particular note was an interview Smith had with Adolph Hitler in Munich in November of 1922.

After his time in Berlin was over, he was assigned to Fort Hamilton in New York, which he later described as the worst assignment he had in his total career. However, that assignment led to selection for attendance at the Infantry Officers Advance Class at Fort Benning in 1926-27 immediately followed by attendance at the Command and General Staff College in academic year 1927-28. He returned to Ft. Benning to serve on the faculty of the Infantry School from 1928-32, which was under the direction of Colonel George C. Marshall. Many of his fellow instructors became Division and Corps Commanders in World War II. His experience in Germany brought him to the attention of Colonel Marshall and that established a personal and professional relationship that lasted through their lifetimes. From 1932-33, Smith attended the Army War College and his assignments to the 25th Division in Hawaii provided two years as a commander of a battalion in the 27th Infantry Regiment (The Wolfhounds).

Perhaps the most interesting chapter in the book is number seven, entitled "Marshall's Men." It provides the best description of how Colonel Marshall and his faculty revolutionized military instruction. His methods of instruction and the capabilities of his faculty provided the keys to military instruction that have lasted until today.

Of particular note is Smith's relationship with German Army officers. One, Captain von Schell, was an invited German student officer in the 1930-31 Infantry Advance Course. This relationship provided close personal and professional friendships that lasted through World War II and into NATO.

Smith was a model officer in the field of military intelligence. Probably his most significant coup was inviting Colonel Charles Lindbergh to Germany where he was given the opportunity to inspect and fly all the types of planes of the Luftwaffe. Smith and Lindbergh were so effective they were accused of being pro-Nazi. Smith's intelligence efforts were so successful that, in essence, he became General George C. Marshall's personal intelligence officer.

During the formation of NATO, Smith played a major role. His relationship with German officers was essential in securing their participation in NATO. His personal and professional friendships with General Speidel, who had been Rommel's Chief of Staff, was particularly relevant.

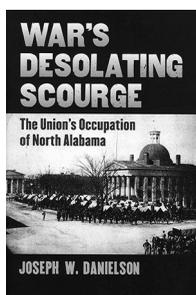
Colonel Truman Smith deserves this book. Colonel Henry Gole has provided us with a publication all professional officers should include in their libraries.

THE CIVIL WAR

War's Desolating Scourge: The Union's Occupation of North Alabama

By Joseph W. Danielson

Reviewed by Robert H. Larson, Ph.D., Professor of History, Lycoming College



Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012

234 pages

\$34.95

The origins of the Civil War as a total war has long been identified solely with William T. Sherman's march through Georgia and the Carolinas in 1864-65. Recently, however, some historians have challenged this view, arguing instead that the shift towards total war began far earlier. In his book *The Hard Hand of War*, Mark Grimsley argues that McClellan's defeat in the Peninsula Campaign in the summer of 1862 marked the turning point when Northern opinion became convinced that only a harsh policy toward Southern civilians would restore the Union. Charles Royster's *The Destructive War* goes back even further, claiming that calls for the absolute destruction of the enemy appeared in both the North and South from the very beginning of the conflict. In this latest contribution to the subject, *War's Desolating Scourge*, Joseph W. Danielson examines the experience of the sixteen counties of northern Alabama occupied by Union forces for much of the war and concludes that, at least for this area, local resistance by pro-Confederate civilians led Union forces to adopt a "hard war" approach to the conflict.

Union forces first entered northern Alabama in April 1862 when 7,000 troops of General Ormsby Mitchell's 3rd Division of the Army of the Ohio entered Huntsville, Alabama, and proceeded to extend their authority over the entire region. They were under explicit orders from the commanding general of the Army of the Ohio, Don Carlos Buell, to avoid any action against Southern property or civilians in the hope of winning over the local population with a policy of conciliation. The policy lasted less than a month. The people of northern Alabama were overwhelmingly devoted to the cause of secession and not at all interested in reconciling with the North. Almost immediately, they began to engage in acts of resistance, ranging from snubs and insults to outright attacks on Union soldiers and supply trains. The Union troops responded with arrests of community leaders, censorship, the destruction of private homes in the vicinity of the attacks, and even the confiscation of food and cotton. The struggle only ended when Braxton Bragg invaded Kentucky in the summer of 1862, and Buell was forced to evacuate Alabama and follow him. According to Danielson, this five-month occupation neither dampened the support of northern Alabamans for the Confederate cause nor led them to doubt that it would be victorious.

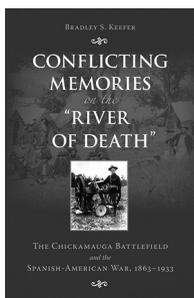
For the next seven months, the region remained peaceful, but in April 1863 Union cavalry began to launch raids into northern Alabama from bases in Tennessee and the following fall occupied the region once again. This time their actions were guided by a new War Department directive commonly known as the Lieberman Code which allowed for direct action against civilians if military necessity warranted it. It was, in fact, much like Ormsby Mitchell's policy the previous year. This second occupation was far harsher than the first and slowly but steadily—just

as “a continued dropping of water will wear away a rock”—wore down the Alabamans’ enthusiasm for independence. By 1865, the region was reduced to a wasteland, many civilians were forced to rely on the Union occupiers for food or else starve, and acts of resistance to the Union occupation “dramatically decreased.” The strength of the rebellion had been broken, but its spirit had not. Alabamans recognized that secession had failed and that slavery was over, but they remained fiercely determined to protect white supremacy and willingly used violence and terror to achieve it.

Detailed regional studies can perform a valuable function in illuminating and giving depth to broader trends. Danielson has combed numerous archives to uncover letters and diaries to document the changing attitudes of both Union soldiers and Southern civilians in northern Alabama. He convincingly demonstrates the depth of the Alabamans’ determination to achieve independence as well as the shallowness of the Union soldiers’ initial support for the policy of conciliation. He also makes an effective case that, in the example of northern Alabama, the breakdown of the policy of conciliation was a response to local resistance and not to changes in national attitudes or policy. This contention directly challenges Grimsley who dismisses the role of guerilla resistance in the hardening of Union attitudes. Finally, he makes a strong argument—whether he intended to or not—that only a policy of hard war directed against Southern civilians would have sufficed to bring them back into the Union, and even then it would not change their core beliefs or unwillingness to embrace racial equality.

Unfortunately, Danielson’s presentation is marred by repetition and at times a curious vagueness. One has to read—and perhaps reread—carefully to understand exactly when the two periods of Union occupation occurred. The information is there, but its presentation is anything but clear. More seriously, he provides little concrete information on that second occupation in contrast to the first. We do not know when it began beyond “the fall of 1863,” nor how many troops or which units were involved, nor who commanded them. Most curiously, he notes that Sherman made his headquarters here periodically in the spring of 1864, but outside of a letter the following October expressing pleasure to his wife that his soldiers “take to it [foraging] like Ducks to water,” he provides no indication of anything else he did during these months.

In short, Danielson provides some useful information and insights into the evolution of the Civil War into a total war on a regional level, but his work lacks the perspective to be of wide interest.



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Conflicting Memories on the “River of Death”: The Chickamauga Battlefield and the Spanish-American War, 1863-1933

By Bradley S. Keefer

Reviewed by Richard J. Norton, Professor of National Security Affairs, US
Naval War College

While *Conflicting Memories* is a welcome addition to the mountain of works dealing with the US Civil War and its effects on this nation, the book is less about the battle of Chickamauga as it is about remembering and enshrining the battle. The result is much more than a history, as interesting as that history is; rather it offers insights and raises questions as to how we remember and shape history and what happens when different histories occupy the same ground.

The battle of Chickamauga, fought between 19 and 20 September 1863, was a bloody affair which pitted the talents of Confederate General Braxton Bragg against those of Major General William Rosecrans, commanding the forces of the Union. Other notable figures from both north and south include Lieutenant General James Longstreet, who, with his Corps, had been temporarily detached from Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia and Major General George H. Thomas, whose determined defense of the Union line at Horseshoe Ridge would make him a national hero. Although the battle ended in a Confederate victory, all rebel gains would be lost by November as Generals Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan won the battles of Lookout Mountain and Lookout Ridge, and ended the siege of Chattanooga by rebel forces. As a result of these operations, Grant would rise to command all Union Armies and the heart of the Deep South would be open to the Union advances of 1864 and Sherman’s “March to the Sea.” Chickamauga was the second most costly battle of the Civil War—the first was Gettysburg—and has been the subject of many books, of which Peter Cozzens’s *This Terrible Sound* may well be the best.

Thirty five years later, Chickamauga experienced another seismic historical event, one that could have potentially supplanted or at least could force a sharing of historical pride of place with the civil war battle. In 1898, as the United States prepared for and fought a war with Spain, Chickamauga served as a vast training camp for many of the regiments earmarked for service overseas. Although the leading wave of these forces passed through Chickamauga in reasonably good shape, those who followed them were ravaged by disease with attendant death tolls that exceed any combat casualties. The memories of these deaths with concomitant allegations of government incompetence and malfeasance were potential competitors with those recollections of Civil War heroics and sacrifice. A war of sorts—a war of memories—would be fought and although the Civil War narrative would prevail, the story of needless deaths of thousands of newly recruited volunteers for the Spanish American War would not be completely silenced.

Keefer does a commendable job showcasing how efforts to create a military park at Chickamauga played out against a national backdrop where southern proponents of the romanticized “Lost Cause” were

countered by the increasingly politically powerful membership of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). At stake was the place of veterans and the units in “the national memory,” and in the case of Chickamauga the most determined veteran was Henry Van Ness Boynton who would make preserving the battlefield and its “lessons” his life’s work.

As Keefer relates, establishing a Chickamaugan narrative satisfactory to north and south, the hundreds of regiments, batteries, divisions and other units that had fought there, and to leaders, many of whom bore great antipathy toward one another was no easy task. Battle lines had to be recreated, and one common version of events agreed upon. Creating the park also required congressional approval and the support of local communities. At every turn, new issues arose. Which units would be the most prominently featured? What requirements if any, would be applied to memorials and monuments? How accessible would the battlefield be to tourists?

It took Boynton and others until 1895, but at last the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park was dedicated and officially opened. The park would celebrate “American valor and sacrifice,” serve as instructional terrain for students of history and future military officers and, as Gettysburg had done in the east, to “sanctify” the ground upon which so many had given their lives. In a marked difference from Gettysburg, Chickamauga would also boast Camp Thomas, an army installation, for the park was also intended to serve as a site for military training and maneuvers.

Camp Thomas, as it turned out, was instrumental in initiating a series of events which resulted in the greatest challenge to Boynton’s vision. As war with Spain loomed, militia and volunteer units flocked to the colors and Chickamauga was selected as a logical training facility where regiments would be brought to fighting trim and then deployed to the war. To some degree the martial display of thousands of men preparing for war fit nicely with the story of the Civil War battle and the depiction of American, vice northern or southern, heroism. However, predictably, the less noble pursuits of young soldiers, including drinking and frequenting of bordellos that sprang into existence near the camp, caused friction with local authorities and did not fit as well with the narrative. Such issues in themselves could likely have been dealt with—except for the shockingly high mortality rates that resulted from a variety of illnesses associated with putting vulnerable populations of young men together in close proximity with insufficient sanitation and a lack of modern medical knowledge.

It was perhaps inevitable that the illness and death at Camp Thomas became intertwined with other Army “scandals” of the day. In particular, there were allegations the Army’s tinned meat rations were toxic, and that Army medicine as a whole was deficient. The response of senior medical and Army officers at Camp Thomas was that the War Department failed to provide adequate resources, Chickamauga was an unhealthy locality in general, local water supplies were tainted, and there was a lack of hygienic discipline among the volunteers.

Boynton mounted an interesting defense of the Army and the military park. He blamed certain senior officers for falsely attacking the War Department to excuse their own failings while at the same time

implying the volunteers themselves were not made of the same tough and manly material as their Civil War forebearers. This defense of the War Department was clearly over the top. As Graham Cosmas, in *An Army for Empire* brilliantly recounts, the War Department and the Army, although not as ill prepared as popular recounting would have it, were not ready for the demands of the Spanish-American War and subsequent Philippine insurrection, and this lack of readiness was reflected in a medical department that in many ways was far inferior to that of the Civil War.

In the end, however, Boynton prevailed. Chickamauga remains to this day primarily a Civil War battlefield, with memories of Camp Thomas relegated to marginalia. Chickamauga's memories are martial, its sagas of sacrifice, courage, and eventual national reconciliation. What Keefer has done, and done exceptionally well, is to remind us that such commemorative landscapes do not simply appear as much as they are manufactured and negotiated and that the story of that creation and bargaining is not only essential to understand the evolution of such national historic shrines but important in itself.

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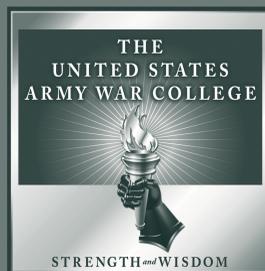
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