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THE US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
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Contemporary Strategy & Landpower

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to Fight a Major War?**

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The US Military in Africa

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**Kick the Door Down with
AirSea Battle...Then What?**

Martin N. Murphy



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THE ELIHU ROOT PRIZE

The Elihu Root Prize is an annual award by the US Army War College for the best article (or articles) published in *Parameters* on any aspect of strategic landpower, contemporary or historical. The Quarterly's Editorial Board selects nominees from a given volume year (Spring-Winter); any article published on any theme related to strategic landpower is automatically considered. Winners are selected based on the analytical depth and rigor of their contributions. The prize(s) include an award certificate and honorarium. The Elihu Root Prize is made possible by the generous support of the US Army War College Foundation.

THE ELIHU ROOT PRIZE WINNERS FOR VOLUME YEAR 2014

1st place (\$3,000 Award):

David H. Ucko and Robert C. Egnell, "Options for Avoiding Counterinsurgencies," *Parameters* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 11-22.

2nd place (\$2,000 Award):

Stephen Watts and Stephanie Pezard, "Rethinking Small-Footprint Interventions," *Parameters* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 23-36.

From the Editor

Steven Metz's Special Commentary, "Has the United States Lost the Ability to Fight a Major War?" opens our Summer issue. Metz asks whether the pendulum has recently swung too far in the direction of counterinsurgencies and stability operations; if so, what steps should the US defense community take to bring it back toward center? He also suggests the ability to wage a major war has an important deterrence value.

Our first forum, *The US Military in Africa*, features two articles with contrary perspectives regarding how effective US security assistance in certain areas can be. The first perspective is represented by Kristen Harkness in "Security Assistance in Africa: The Case for More." Harkness suggests US security assistance can encourage reform, if properly targeted and supported. Kersti Larsdotter offers a contrary argument in "Security Assistance in Africa: The Case for Less." She maintains US security assistance to African states has more often than not fallen into the wrong hands, particularly in the Great Lakes region, and thus has led to a recurring cycle of turmoil and violence. Her remedy is to treat the countries within that area collectively, and within the parameters of a comprehensive regional strategy.

The second forum, *Threats Within and Without*, considers how to address two different types of self-radicalized terrorists: those who inflict harm on their fellow citizens, and those who migrate to foreign lands to fight. In the first article, "Insider Threats and Organizational Root Causes: The 2009 Fort Hood Terrorist Attack," Amy Zegart endeavors to shed light on the organizational practices and procedures that permitted, or at least failed to prevent, Major Nidal Hasan's mass shooting on November 5, 2009. In the second essay, "Beyond Information Sharing: NATO and the Foreign Fighter Threat," John Deni suggests members of the North Atlantic alliance could do much more than share information to counter the migration of would-be fighters to other lands.

Our third forum, *Toward a Smarter Military*, considers two ways to leverage intelligence, a theme of rapidly growing significance to the US military. An increasing number of defense documents are pointing to the need for "smarter" military personnel and for better intelligence capabilities and applications. The first article, "Socio-Cultural Intelligence and National Security," by Robert Tomes makes a case for the expanding relevance of socio-cultural intelligence to the emerging operational environment. The second contribution, "Intellectual Capital: A Case for Cultural Change," by Everett Spain, J.D. Mohundro, and Bernard Banks argues the Army can enhance its progress toward a more capable future force by investing in, and cultivating, its intellectual capital. For appropriate caveats to this approach, see the rejoinder by Anna Simons in our "Of Note" section.

In a review essay entitled "Kick the Door Down with Air-Sea-Battle...Then What?" Martin Murphy exposes the superficiality and flawed assumptions of some of the West's strategic thinking today. ~AJE

Has the United States Lost the Ability to Fight a Major War?

Steven Metz

ABSTRACT: The 2015 *National Military Strategy* identifies war with a major power as a “growing” possibility. The more the United States demonstrates it is willing and able to undertake a big war, the more unlikely it is that it will have to do so. Thus, the US military should undertake analyses, wargames, and exercises focused on rapid expansion of the force, to include creating new formations.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States the focus of the American military shifted quickly and dramatically. Previously, most attention was on quick, high-tempo operations against the conventional forces of “rogue states.” Using advanced technology and exquisitely trained units, the US military was designed to crush state adversaries in short order. Desert Storm was the prevailing paradigm.¹

After September 11, the US intervention in Afghanistan, and the outbreak of insurgency in Iraq in 2003, the American military quickly shifted to counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and “man hunting.” This was a deep and far-ranging change. The human domain of warfare, which had drifted into insignificance during the “revolution in military affairs” of the 1990s, returned with a vengeance. Conventional forces learned the importance of cultural understanding in counterinsurgency. Special operations forces moved from the periphery to the centerpiece of American military strategy.² The military and the intelligence communities fused together to identify opponents and neutralize them. The defense industry provided a massive array of equipment and systems optimized for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. While this was a dramatically different type of activity than anyone had expected, thought about, and prepared for, the US military adapted on the fly.

While the American military was learning to fight extremists, insurgents, and terrorists, conventional war was given little thought and effort. As US involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq subsided, defense officials and military leaders began redefining their focus once again. This has proved difficult. In the past, adversaries—whether the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, or the Iraqi and Afghan insurgents—drove such reorientations and provided a beacon to guide defense policymakers and military leaders. In the contemporary

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1 For background, see Steven Metz, “America’s Defense Transformation: A Conceptual and Political History,” *Defence Studies* 6, no. 1 (March 2006): 1-25.

2 See Steven Metz, “Role Reversal: US Special Operations Forces After the Long War,” *World Politics Review*, March 3, 2015, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/15209/role-reversal-u-s-special-operations-forces-after-the-long-war>.

security environment, there is no predominant adversary. This complicates the military's ongoing reorientation since optimizing for one type of conflict or enemy results in suboptimizing for others. What is clear, though, is that the military must prepare for both irregular or state opponents. As the *2015 National Military Strategy* stated:

For the past decade, our military campaigns primarily have consisted of operations against violent extremist networks. But today, and into the foreseeable future, we must pay greater attention to challenges posed by state actors...Today, the probability of US involvement in interstate war with a major power is assessed to be low but growing.³

This is easy—and important—to say, but tough to do in an increasingly austere resource environment.

A future interstate war with a major power would not reprise Desert Storm or the 2003 invasion of Iraq in which the US military overwhelmed enemy forces in lightning campaigns with limited American casualties. Chances are it would be costly and possibly long. As the two wars showed, major powers sometimes go to war expecting a short conflict—a Franco-Prussian War—only to stumble into a long, bloody slogging match. Even though every American wants to avoid this situation, it is important to consider its possibility. Since the *National Military Strategy* identifies interstate war with a major power as a “growing” probability, Americans must ask themselves whether the United States could still fight a conflict lasting years and demanding a major expansion of the armed forces.

History provides a platform for such thinking. The American tradition was to build only a “big war” military when it was needed and then demobilize it as soon as possible. The United States kept a small professional army and navy between big wars for pacifying the frontier, guarding the coast, keeping sea-lanes safe, and—importantly—to form cadres when it had to mobilize for big wars. The Cold War altered this tradition to an extent. As the United States assumed the role of global superpower and guarantor of stability around the world, the immense, and threatening Soviet military required the United States to sustain large forces in peacetime; the Korean War demonstrated neither the United Nations nor the US nuclear arsenal alone would deter communist aggression.

Although the hope was the Second World War had finally been the big war to end all big wars, American policymakers and military leaders recognized the capability to fight major conventional wars remained vital. But this had to be different: American strategists did not think they would have time to create a large military, as during the world wars. To avoid the financial and political costs of keeping huge forces at the ready, as the Soviet Union did, the United States combined active and fully equipped and trained reserve units. The idea was allies and forward-deployed US air and land forces could hold the Soviets until the United States mobilized its reserves, deployed them, and shifted other active units to the combat zone. It was a more frugal way of having a big war capability, one that made heavy use of American air and naval superiority.

³ US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States, 2015* (Washington, DC: US Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 2015), 3-4.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, sustaining a big war capability seemed less important. But unlike the end of the two world wars, American political and military leaders did not abandon this capability wholesale but simply downgraded it. The idea was the US military could undertake at least short major wars. This approach was possible because the American military was so qualitatively and technologically superior to any anticipated enemy force. Luckily, this assumption was never tested by a serious enemy.

Now the qualitative advantages undergirding US military strategy are eroding. As Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work phrased it, “our technological superiority is slipping. We see it every day.”⁴ At the same time, possible adversaries are increasing defense spending while many of America’s most important allies are slashing theirs. This development may lead potential enemies to believe as Tojo, Hitler, and Saddam Hussein did that they can either make intervention so costly that US policymakers will reject it in the first place, or withstand a US onslaught and force a negotiated settlement that reaps the fruits of their aggression. Put differently, US policymakers and military leaders are aware of the growing big war problem but have not yet found a solution.

Today, three plausible scenarios might compel American involvement in a big war. The first would be military aggression from North Korea, possibly a missile barrage or nuclear attack against US targets or a key American ally like South Korea or Japan. If this involved nuclear weapons the United States might have to invade North Korea and replace the Kim regime. Destroying North Korean conventional forces would be costly but would not take long. But there would then be extended period of pacification and occupation, possibly even large-scale counterinsurgency. The second plausible scenario would be Russian military aggression against a US ally, particularly a member of NATO. The third would be Chinese aggression against American partners in the Asia Pacific, or against the United States itself.

Of these three, only the first would likely lead to a strategically decisive outcome in the mode of World War II: regime change and democratization. Barring regime collapse in Russia or China, the other two would probably follow the anticipated pattern for a Soviet invasion of Western Europe during the Cold War, ending with a restoration of pre-conflict borders and, hopefully, weakened, chastised, and less aggressive regimes.

Whatever the precipitant, the decision to undertake a big war would be extraordinarily difficult because of the costs it would entail. Such an effort could not be put on the national credit card the way American involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan were. A big war would mean higher taxes, probably much higher. It would force Americans to postpone or forego consumption and possibly involve World War II-style rationing. While there might be an initial surge in military volunteers, a big war might require a draft. The public might bear these costs if the stakes were high enough, but policymakers could not automatically assume so. After all, when the United States entered World War II the American public was already accustomed to enduring sacrifices after a

4 US Army War College Strategy Conference, Comments as Delivered by Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA, April 8, 2015.

decade of economic depression. Today, the public is unaccustomed to crushing taxation or postponed consumption. It would not take long for dissatisfaction to grow, possibly generating pressure to negotiate a settlement short of victory.

A big war would also require Americans to stop the hyperpartisanship that paralyzes security policy today. Even during the Cold War partisan politics never did fully stop “at the water’s edge” as Senator Arthur Vandenberg phrased it, but there were limits to it when dealing with foreign enemies. Now security policy is used as a partisan cudgel even when it benefits America’s adversaries. Involvement in a big war would only be possible if that stopped, and Americans from across the political spectrum rallied behind whomever is president.

The costs and challenges of involvement in a big war do not stop there. For instance, a future big war would see many more challenges to the American homeland than in the past. During the two world wars there were attempts at sabotage in the United States, a few submarine attacks, and, in World War II, some hare-brained schemes for long-range bombing from Japan and Germany; but the direct threat to the United States was minimal. Those days are over: future wars are likely to see extensive terrorist and cyber attacks on the United States and a range of economic attacks. To fight a future big war, then, the United States would have to expand its homeland security force as much as its expeditionary military. But resources devoted to the expansion of homeland security, whether money, people, bandwidth, equipment, or something else, would be resources unavailable to the expeditionary military. Moreover, the American public would have to accept a level of risk, as well as surveillance and curtailment of civil liberties unseen since the Civil War.

Given all this, would US leaders and the American public accept the costs of a big war? As always, the answer is “it depends.” If the nightmarish North Korean regime uses nuclear weapons, there would be no alternative. Most Americans would support regime change in that case at almost any cost. Aggression by Russia or China in their own regions, even if against an American ally or friendly nation, would be more complicated. Some Americans would feel the blood and monetary costs of reversing aggression by a powerful state in its own region outweighed the benefits. It is impossible to know in advance whether this would be a majority or minority position, but it would certainly be more pronounced than hitherto, when the United States expected all of its wars to be short.

The way Chinese or Russian aggression unfolded would also complicate an American response. Neither is likely to undertake the sort of brazen aggression like Saddam Hussein’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Their opening moves would be “camouflaged” aggression to weaken their victims rather than simply sending their own divisions across international borders. They would launch unattributable cyber and economic attacks. This type of veiled aggression would make it difficult—but not impossible—for whomever is president to commit the United States to war. After all, had Japan not attacked Pearl Harbor even a politician as skilled as Franklin Roosevelt might not have been able to go to war against Japan and Germany, even at a time with significantly less

partisanship in security policy and a with a public more accustomed to sacrifice and deference to national leaders.

Even if American policymakers were considering involvement in a big war, what would the military's leaders tell them? It is not hard to imagine a future president asking, "General or Admiral, if we do this and it does not end quickly, can the military expand? Can it build new ground units, new naval and air squadrons, new cyber defense and attack organizations?" Such questions would certainly give military leaders pause. The problem would not be recruits. There would be a rush of those, at least at first. Training installations could be expanded or built in relatively short order. The challenge would be equipping and supplying the new units given the decline of the US defense industry and its reliance on foreign materials and talent. The United States was able to mobilize for World War II in part because it had an excess of industrial capacity due to the Great Depression. It also had abundant human capacity to tap for war production: women. Now, with the widespread stress on "just in time/just enough" principles, the full utilization of the work force, and globalized outsourcing, the United States has almost no excess industrial or logistics infrastructure, or human capacity to mobilize for war.

That might force future military leaders to advise the president they could build new units, squadrons, and organizations; but these would be inferior to pre-war ones not only in training, leadership, and experience, but also in equipment. Military leaders would then have to decide whether pre-war doctrine and operational concepts could be implemented by new, inferior formations, or whether they would need simpler—and possibly less effective—doctrine the new forces could follow. Alternatively, military leaders might also consider technological solutions. The new formations built during the military expansion might rely more heavily than pre-war ones on autonomous systems of all types, assuming industry could quickly produce thousands of new autonomous systems given economic, technological, and human constraints.

All things considered, politically and psychologically the United States could still fight a big war. While there has been growing support for some degree of strategic disengagement in recent years, most Americans still value global leadership and the tradition of opposing armed aggression. They would heed a call from political leaders to do this again, if necessary. But the old model of a relatively leisurely expansion of the US military while allies bore the brunt of the fighting is bankrupt. A future president might be faced with the horrible decision of deciding whether to sacrifice the pre-war US military to hold the line while new formations are created, or simply to accept aggression.

The more the United States demonstrates it is willing and able to undertake a big war, the less likely it is that it will have to do so. Past enemies believed the United States did not have the will to fight a major conventional war, and thus would leave them with what they gained by armed aggression. Many found that assumption was wrong. By demonstrating the ability to fight a big war once again, the United States can actually lower the chances of it happening. Inversely, assuming there will be no more big wars increases the probability of their occurrence.

Communicating both will and capability—and tamping the hyper-partisanship paralyzing American strategy—are largely the jobs of political leaders. But the military has a vital role to play as well. All the services should grapple with the challenges they might face fighting a big war and in rapidly expanding the size of their forces. The Joint Force should have a series of analyses, wargames, and exercises focused on rapid expansion, to include creating new formations, both expeditionary and those dedicated to homeland security roles. There should be a single organization within the Joint Force specifically assigned responsibility for understanding, preparing for, and planning big wars requiring full national mobilization.

The Army in particular has talked about “expansibility” as it has gotten smaller. One key component of that discussion is abandoning the “just in time/just enough” mindset. Expansibility requires excess capacity during peacetime and top-heavy organizations to provide foundations for expansion. It requires keeping unneeded installations and equipment as hedges against the future. Yet, in a political climate of increasing frugality, pressure is on all the services to get rid of excess capacity. Outgoing Army Chief of Staff GEN Raymond Odierno has already warned the public that his service is “dangerously close” to being cut so much it will not be able to perform its existing missions.⁵ America’s margin of safety is the smallest it has been for many decades.

If this trend continues, the capacity to expand and to fight a big war may atrophy all together. A future president might face a time when he or she feels fighting a big war is in America’s vital national interest, but may then discover it lacks the capacity to do so. If so, the United States might be forced to accept the outcome of aggression not because it is wise, but because it is the only option.

⁵ Michelle Tan, “Odierno: Army ‘Dangerously Close’ to Being Cut ‘Too Deep,’” *Army Times*, August 11, 2015.

Security Assistance in Africa: The Case for More

Kristen A. Harkness

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ABSTRACT: This article argues that political tampering with military recruitment and promotion practices, especially the construction and dismantling of ethnically based armies, has led African militaries to intervene in politics in order to block or reverse democratization efforts. The entrenchment of politically insulated, merit-based military institutions is thus necessary to deepen democracy in Africa. The United States can assist by offering protection, training, and financial incentives to encourage reform.

Promoting peace and security in Africa through the establishment of democratic institutions and good governance has been prioritized by the Obama administration as a key US foreign policy concern.¹ Weak and failed states threaten national security because they “attract destabilizing forces.” Unable to control their borders or police their territory internally, such states provide breeding grounds and transit routes for terrorist organizations, drug cartels, weapons traffickers, and other criminal networks.² For example, poor governance and rampant conflict in northern Nigeria and Somalia have given rise to two of the continent’s most dangerous terrorist organizations, Boko Haram and al Shabaab, while persistent political instability and poverty in Guinea Bissau have led that country to become an international hub for drug trafficking.

Democracy is seen as a long-term solution to this threat because democratic institutions remove many of the underlying causes of state weakness. Democracy creates peaceful channels for resolving social conflict, alleviating incentives for domestic strife. Democracies are more politically inclusive, remedying the systemic exclusion of ethnic groups from political power; this kind of exclusion is a known driver of insurgency, as often occurred at the hands of autocratic rulers.³ Democracy is also associated with the rule of law, which both dampens popular grievances and provides a stable context for investment, entrepreneurship,

1 Johnnie Carson, “US-Africa Policy Under the Obama Administration (Remarks to the Harvard University Africa Focus Program),” April 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2010/139462.htm>.

2 US Department of the Army, *Stability Operations*, Field Manual 3-07 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, 2008), 1:11; and US Department of State, *Conflict Prevention and Crisis Response: Responding to Emerging Instability Overseas*, June 21, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/211773.pdf>.

3 Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, “Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis,” *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (January 2010): 87-119; Philip Roessler, “The Enemy Within: Personal Rule, Coups, and Civil War in Africa,” *World Politics* 62, no. 2 (April 2011): 300-346; and Andreas Wimmer, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Brian Min, “Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set,” *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 2 (April 2009): 316-337.

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and other determinants of economic growth, thereby raising populations out of poverty. Strengthening democratic institutions and protecting democratic gains have thus become core principles of both US policy toward Africa and the strategic approach adopted by Africa Command (AFRICOM).⁴

Yet, democracy is in decline. Larry Diamond argues that since the turn of the 21st century, “there has been a significant and, in fact, accelerating rate of democratic breakdown” with at least 25 democracies having collapsed since 2000—a failure rate of 17.6 percent.⁵ Africa, in particular, has struggled deeply with democratization. Despite the passing of over 20 years since most African countries took their “indispensable first steps” toward liberalization and adopting competitive elections, the latest Freedom House reports indicate that recent setbacks have left only 12 percent of the continent free today.⁶ Of Diamond’s collapsed democracies, 32 percent are in Africa, suggesting the continent contributes significantly to global trends of increasing authoritarianism.⁷ Even Botswana, long considered a bulwark of democracy in Africa, has recently suffered government harassment of opposition candidates, interference with media reporting, and abuse of state resources during campaigning.⁸

The continued absence of democracy in many African countries, and the loss of democratic institutions in others, threatens continued instability and conflict in a region already rife with the problems generated by weak states. For US policymakers and AFRICOM to reverse this trend, a deeper understanding of Africa’s struggle to democratize is necessary. This article hopes to contribute to such an understanding by focusing on the role of African militaries in blocking or reversing democratization efforts. It then proposes a number of policy interventions that may help reform these institutions to be more compatible with democracy.

Political Tampering, Ethnic Armies, and Military Intervention against Democracies

While many roads can lead to democratic reversals, from the gradual extension of executive power to the erosion of civil liberties that may accompany prolonged counterinsurgency efforts, direct military intervention has been an important contributor to this regretful outcome. When dissatisfied with democratic politics, militaries have prevented the implementation of free and fair elections, tampered with balloting, engaged in voter intimidation, overturned election results, and deposed

4 Carson, “US-Africa Policy Under the Obama Administration,” and Carter Ham, *Senate Armed Services Committee Statement of General Carter Ham, USA Commander, United States Africa Command*, March 7, 2013, 6, www.africom.mil/Doc/10432.

5 Larry Diamond, “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession,” *Journal of Democracy* 26, no. 1 (January 2015): 144. See also Larry Diamond, “The Democratic Rollback,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (March-April 2008).

6 Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 10; and Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2015,” <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015>.

7 Diamond, “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession,” 145. See table “Breakdowns of Democracy, 2000-2014.”

8 Amy R. Potete, “Botswana: Democracy Derailed? Botswana’s Fading Halo,” *AfricaPlus*, October 20, 2014, <https://africaplus.wordpress.com/2014/11/03/botswana-democracy-on-course-or-derailing>.

newly elected civilian leaders. Indeed, in Africa, coups have quickly followed nearly 40 percent of electoral transfers of power—when one leader peacefully hands over executive power to the next via the ballot box, a critical cornerstone of democratic politics.⁹ Since 2010 alone, coups have been attempted against the elected civilian governments of Burundi (2015), Guinea (2011), Guinea-Bissau (2010 & 2012), Madagascar (2010), Mali (2012), Mauritania (2008), and Niger (2010). African militaries thus share much of the responsibility for Africa's difficulties in sustaining democratization. As Bratton and van de Walle have argued, where militaries have opposed democracy, liberalization has stalled or failed.¹⁰

Political tampering with military recruitment, retention, and promotion practices plays a crucial role in understanding why African militaries have been so predisposed to intervening against elected governments. First, most African countries have no tradition of insulating militaries from direct interference by the chief executive. Highly institutionalized and independent judicial and legislative branches of government are rare in fledgling democracies. So too are well developed and functioning ministries of defense that can provide legal-bureaucratic and impersonal civilian control over the military. Absent these institutions, few checks and balances exist on the ability of presidents to appoint and dismiss military officers based on their personal whims. When social conflict arises over controversial elections or other common problems of newly established democratic institutions, military officers whose political loyalty comes under question then face the real potential of dismissal or demotion. They may preempt this possibility, or take revenge in its aftermath, by intervening in politics: seizing power themselves or throwing their support behind the opposition.

The recent coup in Burundi is a case in point. In early 2015, President Pierre Nkurunziza sought advice from members of his inner circle on seeking a third term in office, including from Major General Godefroid Niyombare—an old ally, fellow former Hutu rebel fighter in Burundi's civil war, and recently named director of national intelligence. Niyombare expressed his concerns with violating the terms of the peace agreement and the constitution, which limit presidents to two terms, and advised Nkurunziza not to run again. He was then summarily dismissed as the national intelligence director (although he remained in the army). A few months later, mass social protests erupted after the president publicly indicated his intentions to run in the upcoming elections. Within weeks, on May 13, Niyombare resurfaced to lead a coup attempt against his former ally. Although the coup was quickly put down, it represents a significant failure of the extensive training by the United States and others to promote political neutrality within the Burundi military. Unchecked, personal control over high-level military appointments directly contributed to this re-politicization of the army.¹¹

9 Kristen A. Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coups Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2014 Forthcoming): 17.

10 Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 211-216.

11 David Blair, "Burundi Shares Ethnic Balance that Led to Rwanda Genocide—But This Conflict Is Different," *The Telegraph*, May 14, 2015; "Burundi: What Is Behind the Coup Bid?" *BBC*, May 15, 2015; Patrick Nduwimana and Goran Tomasevic, "President Returns to Burundi after Army Says Coup Bid Failed," *Reuters*, May 14, 2015; Morgan Winsor, "Who Is Godefroid Niyombare? Meet the Burundi Army General Who Declared a Coup to Oust President Pierre Nkurunziza," *International Business Times*, May 13, 2015.

Second, Africa is historically burdened by a particularly insidious form of political tampering: ethnically recruited military organizations that foster loyalty through shared identity, or ethnic armies.¹² This tradition began under colonialism. Colonial armies relied on racially white soldiers, largely drawn from the European metropole, to officer far-flung forces while recruiting natives into the rank-and-file. Martial race doctrine stipulated these local recruits should be drawn from politically reliable ethnic groups with great military prowess.¹³ Groups like the Kalenjin in Kenya, the Acholi in Uganda, and the Mossi in Burkina Faso thus came to dominate their respective colonial militaries.¹⁴

Although decolonization brought opportunities for change, many African countries continued to build ethnic armies post-independence. The late 1950s and early 1960s was a period of great regional instability: Ghana suffered ethnically-based political party violence; Congo-Brazzaville experienced urban riots that fell along tribal lines; Rwanda saw deadly pogroms after the Hutu revolution unseated the Tutsi monarchy; Sudan erupted into civil war; and the Congo state completely collapsed after widespread army mutinies.¹⁵ As insecurity spread, leaders searched for effective ways to ensure military loyalty, and many turned to the colonial model of recruiting politically loyal ethnic kin. Some such ethnic armies were built with the collusion of departing colonial powers, such as the Fulani/Peuhl dominated military of Cameroon and the Hutu based army of Rwanda.¹⁶ Others were constructed through violent processes of purging, such as occurred in Sierra Leone until all groups except the Limba had been removed from both the police and armed forces.¹⁷ Still others came about when ethnically based rebel forces captured central power, as the Tutsi dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) did in 1994. In these ways, many contemporary African states inherited a tradition of ethnically based security institutions.¹⁸

Democracy deeply threatens such ethnic armies because elections may bring to power new leaders who no longer share in their identity. Africa is highly diverse, with the majority of countries boasting dozens if not hundreds of ethnic groups. Democratic elections thus carry with them a high likelihood that power will rotate between leaders of distinct ethnic backgrounds. Where new leaders inherit an ethnic army whose

12 Cynthia Enloe, "The Military Uses of Ethnicity," *Millennium* 4, no. 3 (Winter 1975): 220-233; Cynthia Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); Boubacar N'Diaye, *The Challenge of Institutionalizing Civilian Control: Botswana, Ivory Coast, and Kenya in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2001).

13 J. Bayo Adekun, "Ethnicity and Army Recruitment in Colonial Plural Societies," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, no. 2 (April 1979): 154.

14 *Ibid.*, 160; and John Keegan, *World Armies* (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1983), 598-600; Timothy Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File: Social Implications of Colonial Military Service in the Kings African Rifles, 1902-1964* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999), 58.

15 Ali A. Mazrui and Michael Tidy, *Nationalism and New States in Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1984), 59; Rene Gauze, *The Politics of Congo-Brazzaville* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1973), 65-66; Catherine Newbury, "Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda," *Africa Today* 45, no. 1 (January-March 1998): 13; and Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 315-317.

16 Minorities at Risk Project, "Minorities at Risk Dataset," http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/mar_data.asp; and Patrick Lefèvre and Jean-Nöel Lefèvre, *Les Militaire Belge et le Rwanda, 1916-2006* (Brussels: Racine, 2006), 11-12.

17 Thomas S. Cox, *Civil Military Relations in Sierra Leone: A Case Study of African Soldiers in Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 106-107.

18 See also Enloe, "The Military Uses of Ethnicity," and Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies*.

identity is different than their own, they possess strong incentives to restructure that army: to either diversify it to more appropriately match the multiethnic character of their societies or to dismantle it and rebuild a new army of their coethnics in its place. Either type of restructuring threatens the existing ethnic army's exclusive access to an important source of state power, prestige, and patronage. To protect their privileged position, they may block democratization efforts from gaining traction, interfere with free and fair elections, overturn or otherwise invalidate results, or seize power before or after the new leader takes office.

Consider Guinea-Bissau, a small West African country whose instability and poverty have resulted in its transformation into a central hub of cocaine trafficking to Europe and heroin trafficking to the United States.¹⁹ Protracted fighting with the Portuguese army for independence fractured Guinea-Bissau's ethnic groups, with the rebel army recruiting primarily from the Balanta while the Portuguese managed to keep the loyalty of the Fula and Mandinga. Rebel victory and the collapse of Portuguese colonialism in the mid-1970s thus led to the immediate establishment of a Balanta-dominated armed forces.²⁰ Early nationalist leaders attempted to restructure this army along more multiethnic lines, to no avail. Both the first and second administrations, led respectively by Presidents Luis Cabral and João Bernardo Vieira, faced numerous coup attempts from the Balanta military and were eventually deposed.²¹ Despite an aborted turn toward democracy in the late 1990s, no government has yet been able to diversify the military.

In 2012, steps toward democratization were once again attempted—and quickly halted by the military. By this time, the Balanta-dominated army was thought to have become heavily invested in the drug trade, combining ethnic control over the security sector with access to millions of dollars in illicit trade.²² The Presidential race had narrowed to a field of two candidates, Carlos Gomes and former president Kumba Yala, with a run-off election scheduled for late April. Gomes, the clear front runner and an ethnic outsider to the military (Yala shares Balanta ethnicity), then publicly expressed his intentions of reforming the armed forces. Claiming that Gomes had signed a secret document authorizing foreign intervention to restructure the military, army officers seized power and cancelled the election.²³ While they eventually handed power back over to civilians in 2014, no president in Guinea Bissau has yet served his full term. Were the current government to challenge the military or attempt reform, it would likely be overthrown as well.

Guinea-Bissau is not unique in confronting the challenges of building democratic institutions while encountering the resistance of ethnically based security institutions. Ethnic armies have existed in slightly under half of all electoral power transfers in Africa and, when confronted with a new leader of a different ethnic identity, have overturned those

19 Raggie Johansen, "Guinea-Bissau: A New Hub for Cocaine Trafficking," *Perspectives* 5 (May 2008): 4-7; and Ed Vulliamy, "How a Tiny West African Country Became the World's First Narco-State," *The Guardian*, March 9, 2008.

20 Keegan, *World Armies*, 239-240.

21 Patrick Chabal, *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 251-258.

22 Vulliamy, "How a Tiny West African Country Became the World's First Narco-State."

23 "Guinea-Bissau's Coup: Besieged in Bissau," *The Economist*, April 17, 2012; and "Gunfire Heard' in Guinea-Bissau Capital," *BBC*, April 12, 2012.

elections by seizing power fully 75 percent of the time.²⁴ For example, in Nigeria, the northern Hausa/Fulani had long dominated the officer corps during the country's many years of military rule. Early democratization efforts came to a stand still when, in 1993, the military annulled election results that would have placed Moshood Abiola, a southern Yoruba, in the presidency.²⁵ Elections were not held again for another six years while the military continued to govern. In Cameroon, independence era leader Ahmadou Ahidjo, with French collaboration, built a northern Fulani/Peuhl dominated military.²⁶ After Ahidjo's retirement, Paul Biya, a Christian southerner and ethnic Bulu, won election to the presidency. He then immediately announced plans to transfer Fulani/Peuhl soldiers out of the elite Presidential Guard, sparking a coup attempt.²⁷ Biya survived the coup and, in its aftermath, restructured the military around his own ethnic group—a situation that remains of grave concern today.²⁸ Kenya too has a history of its presidents stacking military institutions with coethnics: the Kikuyu dominated the army under Jomo Kenyatta and the Kalenjin under Daniel arap Moi. Indeed, Moi's restructuring led to Kenya's only coup attempt orchestrated by disenfranchised Kikuyu officers.²⁹ After Mwai Kibaki came to power in 2002, he once again purged the higher ranks of the security services, replacing Kalenjin officers with mostly those of the Kikuyu and closely related Embu and Meru ethnic groups.³⁰ While the military refrained from intervention during this particular transition, the danger remains that the future election of a non-Kikuyu would severely test the political neutrality of the Kenya Defense Forces.

The presence of ethnically recruited military organizations may also have more subtle, yet still insidious, effects on young democracies. Possessing an ethnically narrow army loyal through ties of ethnic affinity and patronage may embolden state leaders to disregard the desires and rights of much of their population. They may ignore legislative laws and judicial rulings, intimidate voters from different ethnic groups, and otherwise expand their power beyond constitutional limits. Whether direct or indirect, these effects are pernicious for democracy.

Additionally, leaders of fragile democracies facing social unrest may be tempted to undo past restructuring and, using their ability to politically tamper with military recruitment, return to historical precedents of ensuring loyalty through ethnicity. Since the 1990s, peace agreements and constitutional reforms have diversified many of Africa's militaries,

24 Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coups Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa," 18.

25 Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 216.

26 Minorities at Risk Project, "Minorities at Risk Dataset."

27 "Attempted Coup—Political Changes—Budget," *Keesings World New Archive* 30 (September 1984): 33075.

28 Minorities at Risk Project, "Minorities at Risk Dataset."

29 N'Diaye, *The Challenge of Institutionalizing Civilian Control*, 123-131.

30 Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2013), 712-713.

including in Benin, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.³¹ Attempts to dismantle these ethnically diverse armies could once again motivate targeted soldiers to defend themselves by intervening in politics. Such is the fear at this very moment in Burundi. Under the peace agreement that ended Burundi's civil war, the army was split equally between Hutu and Tutsi soldiers, creating a diverse army. Yet, ethnic divisions remained, with former Hutu rebels largely politically aligned with the ruling party and former Tutsi soldiers of the old state army sympathizing with the opposition. Although the May coup attempt was not itself ethnically motivated—it was led by a Hutu, against a Hutu president, and put down by loyalists under the Hutu army chief of staff—Nkurunziza's reaction to the coup has nonetheless disproportionately targeted Tutsi soldiers (possibly due to their suspected political loyalties). Many officers now fear that the army is being purged along ethnic lines, with hundreds arrested already. This threat may inspire Tutsi soldiers, who have so far remained aloof from the country's political turmoil, to abandon their neutrality. If that happens, and the military splits violently along ethnic lines, a far worse conflict could erupt.³²

Assisting Reform

For many African countries, military reform is thus necessary to achieve stable democratic institutions over the long-term. Militaries must be insulated from political tampering, whether personally or ethnically motivated. Existing ethnic armies must also be restructured such that soldiers are no longer recruited and promoted based on their ethnic identity. Only then can power be safely transferred between elected leaders without the constant danger of military intervention. Nationally representative armies may also assist in better constraining chief executives within their constitutional limits, thus averting other forms of autocratic regression.

What is needed is the proliferation and entrenchment of merit-based military institutions. Once well established, systems of merit-based recruitment and promotion insulate soldiers from purges, demotions, and other negative outcomes due to their ethnic identity or political leanings. Soldiers then have less reason to fear personal consequences resulting from social unrest or democratic rotations of power, thereby lessening military resistance to democratization and increasing their political neutrality.

The United States and other international actors can assist with such reform in three key ways. First, reform can threaten existing armies and destabilize regimes in the short term. The on-the-ground presence of neutral foreign troops or advisors can dampen fears, ensure fairness, and even shield struggling civilian governments from coup attempts

³¹ See, respectively, William J. Foltz and Steve McDonald, eds., *Democratization in Africa: The Role of the Military (Report on the Second Regional Conference)* (Cotonou, Benin: The African-American Institute, 1995); Osman Gbla, "Security Sector Reform under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone," *International Peacekeeping* 13, no. 1 (March 2006): 83; and Gavin Cawthra, "Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa," in Gavin Cawthra and Robin Luckham, eds., *Governing Insecurity: Democratic Control of Military and Security Establishments in Transitional Democracies* (London: Zed Books, 2003), 32-38.

³² "Burundi Crisis Spreads Outside the Capital; Army 'Purge' Underway Following Failed Coup," *Mail and Guardian*, June 6, 2015; and "Burundi: What Is Behind the Coup Bid?" *BBC*, May 15, 2015.

during restructuring. Second, security sector reform programs and military-to-military exchange and training programs can offer direct assistance in developing and implementing merit-based recruitment and promotion systems. Finally, financial incentives could be used to reward African governments for maintaining such systems. Of course, these measures are no panacea and cannot substitute for a domestic willingness to grapple with reform. But we can reward, assist, and even protect those African governments who are trying to build a better democratic future for their country.

Protective Boots on the Ground

Dismantling existing patronage networks, ethnic or otherwise, within the military directly threatens officers with the capacity to violently halt reform efforts. Soldiers may fear they will be unable to meet meritocratic standards. Or they may fear democratic reforms merely provide a palatable cover for displacing current officers in favor of another political or ethnic network. In either case, the existing army may resist restructuring, creating the very instability such reform ultimately seeks to prevent.

AFRICOM, working with other regional and international actors, could play a pivotal role in helping governments to overcome these short-term challenges and implement reforms by putting boots on the ground. The most precarious period of restructuring is the initial transition from ethnic (or political) loyalty to meritocratic recruitment and promotion policies. During this time, fears may run high as new systems quickly replace old practices and previously excluded groups have entered the military in significant but small numbers, posing a threat to the existing dominant group but still easily sidelined or purged. The presence of ground troops or military advisors can dampen fears and shield civilian governments as this initial restructuring takes place. Just as in the aftermath of civil wars, foreign personnel are neutral to existing conflicts and can pass reliable information to all sides about compliance with regulations, rumored troop movements, and other indicators of defection from, or cooperation with, the new system. They can thus reduce fear and uncertainty and prevent accidents from spiraling out of control.³³ Foreign troops or advisors can also act as early warning systems for coup plots by monitoring military movements, thereby discouraging hardliners from violent resistance to reforms. Such monitoring takes away from any planned attack the elements of stealth and surprise—which are crucial to successful coup attempts.

Yet, sending significant numbers of military personnel in support of reform, even advisors, would encounter serious obstacles. Placing troops on the ground relies on both the willingness of the host country to accept foreign military personnel, and the willingness of external actors to supply them. In the aftermath of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States has been hesitant to put boots on the ground, even in small numbers—although sending advisors may be a more palatable option. Even AFRICOM's ability to send advising and training personnel is limited. Under the Army's Regionally Aligned Force (RAF)

33 For a discussion of peacekeepers as neutral forces in the aftermath of civil wars, see Virginia Paige Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work?: Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 93-98.

concept, a brigade has been attached to AFRICOM since 2013. Teams can be deployed in support of training missions, but they are generally short missions involving small numbers of personnel.³⁴ Equally important, the African Union has long emphasized finding “African solutions to African problems” and the common stance of the vast majority of African countries is to discourage hosting foreign troops. Stationing combat troops, or even large advising teams, on African soil could thus seriously damage perceptions of, and support for, AFRICOM.³⁵ Whether small advising teams could deter or prevent determined military opposition to reform remains an open question.

Training in Support of Merit

Even where reforming democracies cannot be directly protected, training assistance is still vital to their success. For countries that have long operated by other norms, creating and maintaining systems of merit based recruitment and promotion is neither intuitive nor easy. To ensure that officer recruitment and promotions are based on merit rather than political or ethnic loyalty, military academies and advanced staff colleges may need to be established, restructured, expanded, or their curricula overhauled, to tie advancement in the ranks to continuing education. Decisions must be made over the qualities and achievements militaries seek to reward for each rank and career track and then performance indicators, promotion criteria, pay scales, entrance and advancement tests, and other incentives designed on that basis. And both civilian and military personnel must be trained to administer and continually improve such systems. Well versed in these procedures, the US military can offer critical assistance to fledgling democracies in the process of building them.

The United States could tie such training into existing programs. First, AFRICOM, working with the State Department, is currently extensively involved in training partner nations to enhance their own long-term ability to provide security. The Africa Contingency Operations and Training Assistance (ACOTA) program, part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), has already partnered with 25 African countries to train over 77,000 African peacekeepers. In the last few years, the program has shifted away from direct training and toward enhancing local training infrastructures.³⁶ Similarly, Operation Juniper Shield has trained company-sized forces from 10 African nations in the trans-Sahel to increase border security and counter the illicit flow of people, goods, and arms across the region.³⁷ These existing advisory teams could assist in expanding military education programs to prepare soldiers for merit-based promotion protocols and help develop performance indicators and promotion criteria while deployed on missions. Second, International Military Education Training (IMET) and Expanded International Military Education Training (E-IMET) programs already focus on human rights, military professionalization,

34 David E. Brown, *AFRICOM at 5 Years: The Maturation of a New US Combatant Command* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2013), 77-78.

35 Ibid., 57, 62; and Gorm Rye Olsen, “Fighting Terrorism in Africa by Proxy: The USA and the European Union in Somalia and Mali,” *European Security* 23, no. 3 (2014): 291.

36 US Department of State, “Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI),” <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/gpoi>.

37 Brown, *AFRICOM at 5 Years*, 34.

understanding civilian control of the military, and judicial reform.³⁸ Building merit-based systems seems a natural extension to this important work. Finally, AFRICOM has also participated in Security Sector Reform programs that involve more extensive restructuring of security forces, especially after civil wars. Operation Onward Liberty, for example, saw 50-60 uniformed military advisors sent to Liberia to assist with reform.³⁹ In such cases, a rare opportunity exists to rebuild the defense sector almost from the ground-up and measures that promote merit could be folded into existing security sector reform efforts.

Increasing the US training role during military reform efforts would, moreover, align well with existing strategy in the region. AFRICOM's priority is to "lead from behind": building partner capacity and preventing conflict while enabling African nations to solve their own security concerns.⁴⁰ Increased military-to-military exchanges would hopefully strengthen partnerships between US and African forces while creating more robust and stable local military institutions and civil-military relations over the long-term.

Financial Incentives

Finally, external actors can develop financial incentives that reward African countries for establishing merit based recruitment and promotion systems and dissuade their dismantlement. Military aid, or broader forms of development aid, can be tied directly to maintaining meritocratic and politically neutral security institutions. Of course, the United States gives military aid for a variety of reasons—including for counterterrorism, counter narcotics, and other strategic purposes—and thus may not wish to tie much of its aid package to merit-based restructuring. Even bonus funds, however, for steps taken in the right direction might still make a difference, especially given the cash-strapped nature of many African states. Beyond aid, other types of rewards could include additional spaces in military education and exchange programs, priority for assignment to regional and international peacekeeping operations, and higher pay rates for participation in them. Such financial and prestige rewards would encourage governments to begin reform efforts and make it costly for them to tamper with merit-based systems in the future.

Reliance on financial incentives does have its limitations. Threatening to withhold aid or other rewards may be largely ineffective if the threat itself is not credible. Militaries in strategically important countries, like Egypt, know that the United States is unlikely to significantly cut their aid. Even where aid is withheld, it can be replaced by other actors, such as China and Russia, with less conditionality. Making participation in peacekeeping operations contingent on any reform criteria would be difficult. Current African peacekeeping missions rely heavily on contingents from autocratic and semi-autocratic countries because very few African nations are both democratic and willing to contribute troops.⁴¹ Such supply deficiencies preclude placing conditions on those willing to participate. Finally, regimes may simply value ethnically or politically

38 *Ibid.*, 36.

39 *Ibid.*, 35.

40 *Ibid.*, 15.

41 *Ibid.*, 80-81.

loyal militaries more than the cost of losing any rewards offered for maintaining merit-based institutions.

Indeed, current policies of suspending development aid, as well as membership in regional organizations, in the wake of coups have shown meager results.⁴² Militaries in countries such as Guinea-Bissau and Niger frequently seize power, resulting in the suspension of aid, then schedule elections and retreat to the barracks. The international community quickly restores aid, and when elections fail to go their way or other domestic turmoil strikes, the same militaries intervene again.⁴³ Suspending aid in the wake of coups, given its quick restoration after a transition back to civilian rule, thus seems to discourage militaries from governing but not from intervening in politics.

Nonetheless, financial rewards cannot hurt and they may marginally shift the incentives facing local civilian and military actors such that they support and maintain reforms.

Conclusion

Military intervention has been a key stumbling block preventing democratic consolidation in Africa. Political tampering by African leaders with military recruitment, retention, and promotion practices fuels such intervention. Political tampering has motivated officers to abandon their neutrality and forestall the consolidation of fledgling democracies. Africa's legacy of ethnically recruited militaries has also been a pernicious destabilizing force. Africa's diversity means that elections will bring to power leaders who no longer share the identity of historically constructed ethnic armies. Threatened with restructuring and diversification, these ethnic armies may act drastically to avoid losing their privileged access to an important source of state power and patronage; they have halted elections, engaged in voter intimidation and ballot fraud, annulled results, and overthrown the government.

Deepening democracy in many African countries thus requires dismantling established ethnic armies, reforming militaries along meritocratic lines, and insulating them from political tampering. Not only is such restructuring normatively desirable in meeting standards of justice wherein every citizen, regardless of their ethnic identity, should be able to serve their country with honor, but it is essential for truly democratic politics. Elected state leaders should hail from any and all social groups—without destabilizing the state.

42 International organizations, such as the World Bank, regional organizations, and individual countries have all practiced suspending aid and diplomatic relations after military coups. The United States is required to suspend aid under the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, as they have done in cases like Mali, as well as to cease any security assistance to a military that has seized power (Ham, *Senate Armed Services Committee Statement*, 10; and Monika Mark, "US Suspends Mali's Military Aid After Coup," *The Guardian*, March 26, 2012). The European Union considers cases on an individual basis but has at least partially suspended aid and cooperation in the past (Mark Anderson, "EU Restores Ties with Guinea-Bissau Five Years After Coup," *The Guardian*, March 25, 2015). And the African Union censures members, suspends their membership, and even applies sanctions after coups (see Jonathan M. Powell and Trace C. Lasley, "Constitutional Norms and the Decline of the Coup d'état: An Empirical Assessment," Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association (New Orleans, LA, January 12, 2012).

43 See, for example, "US and France Suspend Aid After Military Coup in Niger," *The New York Times*, January 29, 1996; and Scott Stearns, "World Bank Restores Aid to Niger Following February Coup," *Voice of America*, May 19, 2010.

Diversifying African militaries may have several other beneficial effects. First, if reliance on an ethnically narrow army emboldens leaders to engage in repressive behavior they might otherwise think twice about—from intimidating opposition parties and other ethnic groups to ignoring legislation and judicial rulings—then decreasing that reliance may force leaders to moderate their behavior. Second, practices of ethnic exclusion are known to feed rebellion and ethnic insurgencies. Improving Africa's record of ethnic inclusion in a critical state institution could have long-term ameliorative effects on instability in the region.

Yet, the necessary reforms toward merit-based military institutions will likely exacerbate the very problem they seek to solve. Ethnic armies are unlikely to acquiesce quietly to their own dismantling. This is where the United States and its allies can play a vital role in assisting and even protecting reform-minded governments. Troops or advisors on the ground can provide neutral information on compliance and deter coup attempts through monitoring. Training assistance can help governments with the practicalities of establishing and maintaining merit-based recruitment and promotion systems. And financial incentives can be structured to discourage eroding the new systems. For example, military or development aid, places in military-to-military exchange programs, and bonus pay for peacekeepers could be tied to maintaining merit-centered security forces.

These measures can not provide a panacea for domestic problems and they cannot overcome stiff resistance from leaders long accustomed to recruiting their militaries from amongst their own coethnics or otherwise politically tampering with the army. Moreover, even if established, protecting merit-based recruitment and promotion systems over time will be an even more difficult challenge. Indeed, the long-term entrenchment of merit-based military institutions relies on reforms in other areas of governance. The rule of law and the development of legislative and judicial constraints on executive power are both necessary to prevent presidents facing insecure environments, and the potential of divisive internal conflict, from tampering with merit-based militaries and returning to well-established practices of building security institutions around political or ethnic loyalty. International assistance and incentives to continue moving in the right direction can help, but success will ultimately rest on a general evolution of domestic political practices toward democracy, the rule of law, and civilian control over the military. This is a struggle that must, in the end, be fought domestically—but we can and should protect and reward reformers.

Security Assistance in Africa: The Case for Less

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ABSTRACT: US strategic approaches in the African Great Lakes region are primarily based on security assistance for training and equipping African forces for operations in East, North, and West Africa. This assistance risks causing more incidents of violence. A new strategy, based on a comprehensive approach to the security challenges in the region, as well as the deployment of international “boots on the ground” – American or others – is needed to reduce violence and to minimize the risk of new terrorist safe havens appearing in central Africa.

One of the main security interests of the United States in Africa is to counter the violent extremism perpetrated by organizations such as the al-Shabaab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).¹ In order to do so, current US military strategy aims at training and equipping African forces for peacekeeping and counterterrorist operations.² Violent extremism in the Great Lakes region in central Africa (here understood as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda) is rare; nonetheless, over the past seven years, the United States has trained tens of thousands of troops in the region for deployment to other parts of Africa. Burundi and Uganda, for example, have almost 12,000 troops currently deployed as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and Rwanda has more than 3,500 troops deployed in Sudan as part of the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The Great Lakes region is highly unstable and characterized by a long history of violence, weak governments, a great number of armed groups, and regional power struggles. The most violent and unstable state is the DRC, where 7 million people currently require humanitarian assistance and nearly 2.8 million are internally displaced.³ After three decades of authoritarian rule and widespread human rights violations by the government of President Mobutu Sese Seko (1965-1997), two regional wars (1996-1997 and 1998-2003), several insurgencies, and

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1 Senate Armed Services Committee, “Statement of General David M. Rodriguez, USA, Commander, United States Africa Command Before the Senate Armed Services Committee Posture Hearing,” Senate Armed Services Committee, March 6, 2014.

2 This article is only discussing the military efforts and strategies of the United States in Africa. The United States has, however, a much broader national security strategy. See The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, February 2015).

3 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2015/172* (New York: United Nations Security Council, March 10, 2015), 5.

perpetual local conflicts, the DRC is currently one of the world's five most fragile states.⁴ The ungoverned territory in the eastern part of the country is utilized as a safe haven by a variety of domestic and foreign armed groups, including several from neighboring Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. Over time, conflicts have been fueled across borders, creating an intricate web of violence within the region.

This article argues improving the capacity of the armed forces in this unstable region to conduct peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations against violent extremists, current US military strategy actually risks escalating violent conflict in the Great Lakes. Not only would such an escalation be devastating for the populations living in the region, it would also be counterproductive for the United States, increasing the risk that terrorist safe havens will increase in central Africa.

There are two major problems with the current strategic approach. First, states in the region are fragile, making security cooperation perilous. Second, bilateral approaches in this region, which is characterized by intricate entanglements, risks disturbing the balance of power and increasing the risk of violent conflict.

By changing the current US strategy of bilateral security assistance and small-footprint interventions to one of putting international "boots on the ground" – American or others – the same amount of US resources might have more success in countering violent extremists in Africa. The United States should therefore support a regional intervention, either by the United Nations or the African Union.

United States in the Great Lakes Region

The United States military strategy in Africa rests on the principle that "efforts to meet security challenges in Africa is best led and conducted by African partners."⁵ The United States thus relies on providing security assistance and small-footprint interventions. Although the United States has been militarily engaged in Africa for a long time, the establishment of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) in 2007 represents a reorganization of US efforts in Africa.⁶ AFRICOM is the main vehicle for coordinating all US security activities in Africa. US interests are served by building defense capabilities, responding to crisis, and deterring and defeating transnational threats through military operations, exercises, and security cooperation programs. In 2013, for example, AFRICOM conducted 481 security cooperation activities, 55 operations, and 10 exercises.⁷

Although AFRICOM is engaged throughout Africa, its immediate priorities are to counter violent extremism and to enhance stability in East, North, and West Africa respectively.⁸ Subsequently, US mili-

4 Kendall Lawrence, "The World's Ten Most Fragile States in 2014," *Fragile States Index*, June 24, 2014, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi14-fragile10>.

5 Senate Armed Services Committee, "Statement of General David M. Rodriguez," 5. For an overview of US security assistance in general, see Andrew J. Shapiro, "A New Era for US Security Assistance," *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (Fall 2012).

6 For an overview of the development of AFRICOM, see J. Peter Pham, "The Development of the United States Africa Command and its Role in America's Africa Policy under George W. Bush and Barack Obama," *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 5, no. 3 (2014).

7 Senate Armed Services Committee, "Statement of General David M. Rodriguez," 3.

8 *Ibid.*, 8-12.

tary assistance for the countries in the Great Lakes region is primarily focused on training and equipping African forces for peacekeeping and counter-terrorism in other parts of Africa. The DRC has received the largest amount of US military assistance in the region. Since 2007, the DRC has received almost 120 million dollars.⁹ The main aim of this assistance has been to support the reform of the Congolese armed forces as well as to provide assistance to increase the capacity of the Congolese army for regional stabilization operations. Funds from Foreign Military Financing (FMF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) accounts, for example, have been used to support military advisors to the Congolese Armed Forces, the deployment of mobile training teams who have provided basic soldier and officer training, and the development of military strategy and doctrines.¹⁰

The US military assistance for Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda has been more explicitly focused on increasing the armed forces' ability to participate in peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations in other parts of Africa. Rwandan armed forces have received almost 15 million dollars since 2007, primarily used for pre-deployment training for the deployment in the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur, UNAMID.¹¹ Burundian and Ugandan forces have received almost 25 million and 28 million dollars, respectively, for pre-deployment training for the African Union Mission in Somalia, as well as almost 70 million dollars for counter-terrorism training.¹² In addition to the bilateral arrangements with the countries in the Great Lakes region, the United States has assisted the African Union in operations against the Ugandan armed group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), in DRC, Central African Republic and South Sudan since 2011. Around 100 US military personnel have assisted in strengthening cooperation among the national militaries of Uganda, CAR, DRC and South Sudan as well as enhancing their capacity for operational planning.¹³

In total, the United States has provided training for almost 28,000 Burundian troops, 27,000 Ugandan troops, and 14,000 Rwandan troops,

9 The amount is calculated from the US Department of Defense and US Department of State's *Foreign Military Training: Joint Report to Congress*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2013. I have also included the Peacekeeping Operations account from the US Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification: Foreign Operations*, for the Fiscal Years of 2009-2015, in which the 'actual' numbers for year 2007-2013 is presented.

10 See US Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2015; US Department of Defense and US Department of State, *Foreign Military Training*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2014.

11 For a list over all the courses, see US Department of Defense and US Department of State, *Foreign Military Training*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2014.

12 US Department of Defense and US Department of State, *Foreign Military Training*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2014; US Department of Defense, *Section 1209 and Section 1203(b): Report to Congress on Foreign-Assistance Related Program for Fiscal Year 2011* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, October 2012); US Department of Defense, *Section 1209 of the NDAA for FY 2008 (Public Law 110-181): Report to Congress on Foreign-Assistance Related Programs for Fiscal Year 2012* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, May 2013). Note, according to the US Department of Defense and US Department of State's joint report, *Foreign Military Training*, Uganda received 152 million dollars for counter-terrorism training in 2012, while according to the US Department of Defense report, *Section 1209*, it was only around 19 million dollars, for both Uganda and Burundi that year.

13 See for example, US Department of Defense, *Section 1209 of the NDAA for FY2008*; United Nations Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 January 2014 from the Coordinator of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, S/2014/42 (New York: United Nations Security Council, January 23, 2014), 28-29.

increasing the capacity of their respective armed forces.¹⁴ Uganda is currently the largest contributor to AMISOM, with more than 6,000 troops; Burundi is the second largest contributor to AMISOM, with almost 5,500 troops; and Rwanda has more than 3,500 troops in UNAMID.¹⁵ These are important steps towards achieving US aim of denying terrorist safe havens in East, North, and West Africa.

The Great Lakes region is, however, a problem in and of itself, and despite several years of US security assistance, it is still highly unstable. One example is the latest developments in Burundi. In anticipation of upcoming elections, the country has experienced a failed military coup, repressed political opposition, and increased violence, which has resulted in almost 100 killed, 500 wounded, and more than 100,000 refugees.¹⁶ Bilateral policies based on security assistance for fragile states to supply African troops for military operations in other parts of Africa risk destabilizing the Great Lakes region. The escalation of conflict could spark another regional war, with devastating effects for countries in the region as well as for US interests in Africa.

Security Assistance for Fragile States

Security assistance and small-footprint interventions are considered to have many advantages. Most importantly, they increase the political and military reach of the supported governments as well as reduce political and financial costs compared to a full-scale military intervention.¹⁷ Security cooperation with fragile states is, however, notoriously problematic. In some cases, supported armies have overthrown democratically elected governments. In March 2012, for instance, US-trained Malian officers undertook a coup which toppled the democratically elected government. Military coups in Egypt in June 2013, and in Thailand in May 2014, are two further examples. In other cases, such as, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya and Mauretania, US-assisted armies have committed extensive human rights violations. Research suggests security assistance is especially unsuccessful in achieving desired results if states are fragile.¹⁸

Instead of stabilizing the receiving state, military assistance risks being used by forces supporting insurgents that are committing human rights violations or restricting democratic processes. First, if the discipline and loyalty of security forces in a supported state is weak, security assistance risks being channeled to armed groups. Although all states in the Great Lakes region are more or less fragile, the Congolese armed forces are especially problematic and are known to support foreign

14 The numbers of trained troops for respective country is taken from the US Department of Defense and US Department of State's, *Foreign Military Training: Joint Report to Congress*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2014, including the proposed numbers for 2014.

15 AMISOM, "Burundi," February 4, 2015, <http://amisom-au.org/burundi/>; AMISOM, "Uganda – UPDF," February 4, 2015, <http://amisom-au.org/uganda-updf/>; Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations, "UN Peacekeeping," February 4, 2015, <http://rwandaun.org/un-peacekeeping>.

16 BBC, "Burundi Vice-President Gervais Ruffyiki Flee," *BBC*, June 25, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-33267428>.

17 See for example, Shapiro, "A New Era for US Security Assistance."

18 Oeindrila Dube and Suresh Naidu, "Bases, Bullets, and Ballots: The Effect of US Military Aid on Political Conflict in Colombia," *The Journal of Politics* 77, no. 1 (January 2015); Michael J. Mc Nerney, et al., *Assessing Security Cooperation as a Preventive Tool* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2014); Stephen Watts, et al., *Countering Others' Insurgencies: Understanding US Small-Footprint Interventions in Local Context* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2014).

armed groups on their territory. They were extensively collaborating with Rwandan and Burundian insurgents during both regional wars in 1996-1997 and 1998-2003, even incorporating Rwandan insurgents into their ranks. Despite the establishment of a new military organization in 2003 – the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) – and continuing military reforms, some commanders have sustained their support for Rwandan insurgents, selling weapons and supplies, as well as conducting operations together against Congolese armed groups.¹⁹

Other Congolese commanders support Congolese armed groups. The integration of former insurgents into the army, as part of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs and security-sector reform, has created whole battalions with stronger ties to Congolese armed groups than to the government, facilitating defection and collaboration between the army and the insurgents.²⁰ In 2012, for instance, several commanders defected from FARDC and established a new Congolese armed group, the M23. Assistance for the Congolese armed forces could end up supporting one or more of the insurgent groups currently residing on Congolese territory, increasing rather than decreasing the instability in the region.

Second, security forces in fragile states often have poor human rights records, and assistance for such forces risks benefiting troops who commit atrocities. Once again, the Congolese armed forces stand out, having been highly criticized for their lack of discipline, and for their ruthlessness against civilians, including rape and mass atrocities.²¹ One of the main US military efforts in DRC so far, the establishment and training of the 391st Commando Battalion, clearly illustrates this challenge. In 2010, US Special Forces trained a light infantry battalion of about 750 troops who were to become part of the Congolese army's new rapid reaction force. The battalion was also intended to be a model for future reforms within the FARDC.²² However, in November 2012, during military operations against the Congolese armed group M23, the battalion took part in raping around 130 women and girls.²³ Burundian and Ugandan troops are also known for human rights violations, although on a smaller scale. Recently, both Burundian and Ugandan AMISOM troops have been accused of raping women in Somalia.²⁴

19 See for example, United Nations Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 January 2014*, 24.

20 For an overview of the development of Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), see Colin Robinson, "Army Reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of the Congo 2003-2009," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 23, no. 3 (July 2012); and Maria Eriksson Baaz and Judith Verweijen, "The Volatility of a Half-Cooked Bouillabaisse: Rebel-Military Integration and Conflict Dynamics in the Eastern DRC," *African Affairs* 112, no. 449 (October 2013).

21 See for example, United Nations, *Progress and Obstacles in the Fight against Impunity for Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York: United Nations, April 2014); and United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office on Human Rights Violations Perpetrated by Soldiers of the Congolese Armed Forces and Combatants of the M23 in Goma and Sake, North Kivu Province, and in and around Minova, South Kivu Province, from 15 November to 2 December 2012* (New York: United Nations, May, 2013).

22 US Africa Command, "750 Congolese Soldiers Graduate from US-Led Military Training, Form Light Infantry Battalion," September 20, 2010, <http://www.africom.mil/Newsroom/Article/7727/750-congolese-soldiers-graduate-from-us-led-milita>.

23 Craig Whitlock, "US-Trained Congolese Troops Committed Rapes and Other Atrocities, UN Says," *The Washington Post*, May 13, 2013; and United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office on Human Rights Violations*.

24 Human Rights Watch, *The Power these Men Have Over Us: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by African Union Forces in Somalia* (New York: Human Rights Watch, September 2014).

Last, governments of fragile states are often repressive against their political opposition in order to stay in power, and the increased capacity of security forces assisted by a third party could be utilized in this regard. All governments in the region have been more or less repressive. According to several sources, Rwanda is well known for “being run by a dictatorship with little respect for human rights.”²⁵ Furthermore, repression by both the Congolese and Burundian governments is currently increasing in anticipation of upcoming elections in 2015. During demonstrations against the Congolese government’s plan to revise the electoral law in January this year, around 500 individuals, many from the opposition, were arrested, and more than 20 people were killed by security forces.²⁶ The Burundian government has recently opted to change the constitution in order to stay in power, and has imposed restrictions on freedom of speech; it has also distributed weapons to its youth wing (the Imbonerakure), and intimidated, imprisoned and killed candidates of the opposition.²⁷ The repressive use of security forces by these governments against their own populations, contributes to insecurity in the region.

Bilateral Arrangements for Regional Dynamics

US military strategy in the Great Lakes relies on multiple bilateral agreements, which is highly problematic in a region defined by profound regional entanglements. The Burundian, Rwandan, and Ugandan governments have, for example, all supported Congolese armed groups. During the two regional wars, all three governments fought on the side of the Congolese insurgents against the Congolese government. Rwanda and Uganda also occupied large parts of eastern and northern DRC during the second war. Furthermore, contemporary Burundian, Rwandan, and Ugandan armed groups have been utilizing Congolese territory since the 1990s, provoking relations between the governments, and each of the corresponding governments have used the armed groups as an excuse to intervene militarily in the DRC, with or without the Congolese government’s approval.²⁸

Tensions between the Congolese government on the one side, and the Rwandan and Ugandan governments on the other are still pronounced. The continuing presence of both Rwandan and Ugandan armed groups on Congolese territory is at the heart of the problem. Although the number of insurgents is much smaller than previously (between 1,500 and 2,000 Rwandan insurgents and no more than 2,000 Ugandan insurgents) they are still causing cross-border incidents.²⁹ Congo has recently accused Rwanda and Uganda of supporting the Congolese armed group M23, and according to the UN Group of Experts final report in 2014, Rwanda has been especially active. Among

25 Filip Reyntjens, “Constructing the Truth, Dealing with Dissent, Domesticating the World: Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda,” *African Affairs* 110, no. 438 (January 2011).

26 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2015/172* (New York: United Nations Security Council, March 10, 2015), 2.

27 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Burundi, S/2014/550* (New York: United Nations Security Council, July 31, 2014), 8-9.

28 For an overview of the region between 1996 and 2006, see Filip Reyntjens, *The Great African War: Congo and Regional Politics, 1996-2006* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

29 Interview, MONUSCO official, Goma, DRC, October 12-17, 2014; and United Nations Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 January 2014*, 19, 28.

other things, it has been recruiting fighters and providing arms and ammunition for the Congolese insurgents. During periods of heavy fighting in 2013, Rwandan armed forces were reinforcing the M23 with troops as well as tanks on Congolese territory. In June 2014, new accusations of cross-border fighting occurred between Rwanda and DRC.³⁰ Since the beginning of 2015, when a deadline for the disarmament of the Rwandan armed group the FDLR in DRC was ignored by the group, the Rwandan President Paul Kagame also voiced his increasing dissatisfaction with the inaction of the Congolese armed forces and the international community in pursuing the FDLR.³¹

Since the main party of the current Burundian government – the CNDD-FDD – was a Burundian armed group fighting together with the Congolese government during the second regional war, and the number of Burundian insurgents on Congolese territory is small, the relations between the two governments are much more favorable. The mounting tensions and increasing turmoil in anticipation of upcoming elections in Burundi have, however, contributed to the increased number of Burundian actors on Congolese territory. Both the opposition and the youth wing of the ruling party (the Imbonerakure) are using ungoverned territory in eastern DRC to prepare for war if the outcome of the election is not favorable.³² This development could jeopardize current relations between the Congolese and Burundian governments. If it follows previous patterns, the increased presence of Burundian insurgents and armed forces on Congolese territory could also contribute to intensified hostility between groups at the local level, increasing the risk of violence in eastern DRC.

Although the support for Burundian, Rwandan, and Ugandan armed forces is small from a US perspective (only around 150 million dollars since 2007) it is important for countries in the region. According to the Department of Defense and Department of State's Joint Report to Congress on Foreign Military Training, almost 28,000 Burundian troops, 27,000 Ugandan troops and 14,000 Rwandan troops have been trained by the United States over the last ten years. This is a significant contribution considering the number of active forces in each country: 20,000 in Burundi, 45,000 in Uganda and 33,000 in Rwanda.³³ Although the number of forces is stable, their ability to use force has been enhanced: some forces have attended courses in peacekeeping logistics or basic fighting skills, while others have been trained in counter-terrorism and urban warfare by the US Marines. Considering the uneasy relation between the states in the region, this contribution could easily tip the delicate balance between the states, and if there is a disagreement

30 United Nations Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 January 2014*, 10-12; and France24, "Second Day of Fighting on Border between Rwanda and DRC," June 12, 2014, <http://www.france24.com/en/20140612-second-day-fighting-rwanda-democratic-republic-congo-border/>.

31 Edmund Kagire, "Paul Kagame Complains of Inaction on Rwandan Rebels in DRC... Again," *The East African*, April 7, 2015, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Rwanda-cites-double-standards-in-failure-to-deal-with-FDLR/-/2558/2678444/-/blu9dvz/-/index.html>.

32 Interviews, NGO staff and MUNUSCO official, Bukavu, DRC, October 1-12, 2014.

33 The numbers of trained troops for respective country is taken from the US Department of Defense and US Department of State's *Foreign Military Training: Joint Report to Congress*, for the Fiscal Years of 2007-2014, including the proposed numbers for 2014. The numbers of active force for respective country is taken from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: The Annual Assessment of Global Military Capabilities and Defense Economics 2015* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Routledge, 2015).

between the states, they are all better equipped to pursue their own agendas with military means.

Rethinking US Strategy in the Region

If current US strategy risks conflict escalation in the Great Lakes region, thereby decreasing the prospects for countering violent extremism in Africa, is there a better approach? More importantly, could another strategy increase prospects for achieving US goals in Africa, without increasing costs?

The core problem for stability in the Great Lakes region is undoubtedly eastern DRC with its ungoverned territory utilized as a safe haven by a multitude of domestic and foreign armed groups. The porous borders between the countries further add to suspicion between governments. According to several researchers, large-scale military interventions decrease the security dilemma between belligerents, and increases the chances of peace.³⁴ Previous research also indicates that international forces are highly important for preventing conflicts from spreading across borders.³⁵ International forces can decrease suspicion between governments concerning cross-border support for each other's armed groups and prevent government forces from intervening in neighboring states. Furthermore, international troops could also decrease the risk that military assistance will be used by indigenous forces to support insurgents, commit human rights violations, and restrict democratic processes.

If a large-scale military intervention could increase the trust between the states in the region, the United States would certainly be more successful in achieving its military objectives in Africa. There are mainly three ways this could be achieved, each with its own costs and benefits. First, the United States could launch a large-scale unilateral or coalition military intervention. The United States already has a small military presence in the region. In addition, AFRICOM's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa has established its operational headquarters in Djibouti, not too far from the Great Lakes region. Close cooperation with the armed forces in the region would be important in establishing good relations with host nations, and increasing prospects for success. However, a US military intervention in central Africa could be costly; indeed, much more costly than current efforts. Since US security interests in the region do not enjoy a high priority, this solution would not be politically viable.

Second, the United States could increase its support for UN operations in the Great Lakes region by supporting a large-scale intervention. The only UN operation currently deployed in the region is the UN mission in DRC (MONUSCO) with about 22,000 troops, including the so-called Force Intervention Brigade. The Force Intervention Brigade is a recent addition of about 3,000 troops and has a more forceful mandate

³⁴ See for example, Hultman, et al., "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (October 2013); Andrea Ruggeri, et al., "Managing Mistrust: An Analysis of Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping in Africa," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 3 (June 2013); and Barbara Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

³⁵ Kyle Beardsley, "Peacekeeping and the Contagion of Armed Conflict," *The Journal of Politics* 73, no. 4 (October 2011).

than the rest of MONUSCO. It has recently been quite successful. In 2013, it helped the Congolese armed forces defeat the rebel group M23. It has also targeted Burundian, Rwandan, and Ugandan armed groups located in the DRC.³⁶ The UN mission has, however, been deployed since 1997 without achieving its goals. Increased support from the United States for the UN mission, both in terms of materiel and personnel, as well as knowledge, could greatly increase its effectiveness. The current US military assistance for the region is about 55 million dollars per year. This amount equals almost 10 percent of the total budget for MONUSCO's military and police personnel costs in 2014, making a change in US strategy highly desirable for the UN mission.³⁷ Acceptance for the United Nations in the region is, however, decreasing. In 2014, the UN political mission in Burundi was withdrawn at the request of the Burundian government, and in 2015, the government of DRC requested a withdrawal of the UN mission in DRC. Furthermore, there are no current UN operations in Burundi, Rwanda, or Uganda, making the regional aspects of the power dynamics difficult to address with a UN mission.

Last, the United States could also support an increased presence of African Union forces in the Great Lakes. The AU is currently conducting one operation in the region, with support from the United States. It is a regional operation deployed in DRC, Central African Republic, and South Sudan against a Ugandan armed group, the LRA. Although the effectiveness of regional organizations for peacekeeping and peacemaking is still debated, regional organizations are indeed taking more responsibility for peace operations.³⁸ An increased presence of AU troops in the region would follow the current US approach of African solutions for African problems.³⁹ It would also be a cheaper option than deploying American troops on the ground while being politically more viable than increasing the UN presence in the region. If building on the current AU approach of cross-border operations against the Ugandan armed group, an increased responsibility for the AU in the Great Lakes region might also increase prospects for the deployment of forces across borders.

The African Union is, however, still developing its peacekeeping and counterinsurgency capabilities, and it is criticized for having ill-trained and ill-equipped armies, as well as underfunded operations.⁴⁰ Its troops are also repeatedly accused of committing human rights violations.⁴¹ Furthermore, the deployment of a large AU military intervention in the

36 For the latest developments, see United Nation Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2015/172* (New York: United Nation Security Council, 2015).

37 The amount of US military assistance is calculated between the years of 2009 and 2013, and taken from the US Department of Defense and IS Department of State's *Foreign Military Training: Joint Report to Congress*, for the Fiscal Years of 2009-2014. The cost of MONUSCO personnel is taken from United Nations General Assembly, *Approved Resources for Peacekeeping Operations for the Period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, A/C.5/68/21* (New York: United Nations, January 23, 2014).

38 See, for example, Laurie Nathan, *The Peacemaking Effectiveness of Regional Organisations*, (London, UK: Crisis States Research Center, 2010).

39 The United States is providing military assistance for developing the AUs peacekeeping capacity. Most of the support is, however, for deploying troops in operations in northern Africa.

40 Robert L. Feldman, "Problems Plaguing the African Union Peacekeeping Forces," *Defense & Security Analysis* 24, no. 3 (September 2008).

41 For example, Ugandan and Burundian troops in Somalia. Human Rights Watch, *The Power these Men Have Over Us*.

Great Lakes region risks increasing regional tensions instead of decreasing them, depending on which countries provide troops for the mission. The African Union Regional Task Force (RTF) is one example of the risks of deploying an AU mission. It was established in 2012 in order to pursue the LRA. The main troop contributor to the RTF is Uganda, with additional forces from DRC, South Sudan and CAR. On the one hand, the cooperation between different states across borders contributes greatly to stabilization in the region and to the elimination of the LRA. On the other hand, cross-border movements of the RTF's armed forces in pursuit of the LRA have caused intense accusations between neighbors, and since the establishment of the RTF, the Congolese government has accused Ugandan armed forces of repeated unauthorized incursions.

Conclusion

Currently, US policy in Africa is focused on preventing safe havens for terrorist organizations in the northern parts of Africa. Security assistance for the states in the Great Lakes region is primarily intended to train and equip forces for peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations elsewhere. However, the Great Lakes region is unstable, with fragile states, active armed groups, and a precarious regional power balance. Furthermore, in anticipation of upcoming elections in 2015, both the Congolese and Burundian governments have increased repressive measures against their political opposition, escalating tensions in the region.

Considering the complexity of state relations within the Great Lakes region, it is clear the current US strategic approach risks contributing to the escalation of the conflicts and tensions rather than decreasing them, and that another strategy is desirable. Although a full-scale US military intervention would be costly, and nearly impossible because of political realities, increased US support for UN or AU operations in the region could be a solution. By converting current bilateral security assistance programs into a comprehensive regional effort for providing either UN or AU "boots on the ground," the regional power balance could be more easily managed, decreasing the risk of destabilization. By supporting a regional solution, with a substantial number of international forces on the ground, instead of bilateral small-footprint interventions and security assistance programs, the history of security assistance for countries in the Great Lakes region—such as France's support for the former Rwandan government—can avoid being repeated, and the likelihood of genocide and regional wars reduced.

Insider Threats and Organizational Root Causes: The 2009 Fort Hood Terrorist Attack

Amy Zegart

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ABSTRACT: This essay examines the 2009 Fort Hood terrorist attack with two goals in mind: illuminating the organizational weaknesses inside the Defense Department which led officials to miss the insider terrorist threat; and contributing to a growing body of theoretical research examining the connection between underlying organizational weaknesses and disasters.

Insider threats to American national security pose a potent and growing danger. In the past five years, trusted US military and intelligence insiders have been responsible for the Wikileaks publication of thousands of classified reports, the worst intelligence breach in National Security Agency history, the deaths of a dozen Navy civilians and contractors at the Washington Navy Yard, and two attacks at Fort Hood that together killed sixteen people and injured more than fifty.

Defined as those who use “authorized access, wittingly or unwittingly, to do harm to the security of the United States,” insider threats encompass an array of adversaries – ranging from mentally ill individuals who commit uncontrolled violence, to coldly calculating officials who betray vital national security secrets.¹ This essay analyzes a case study of one important subset of the insider threat universe – Islamist terrorists – and highlights the often overlooked organizational weaknesses that prevent the US government from detecting them. Specifically, it examines the underlying organizational shortcomings that kept the Defense Department (DOD) from detecting and collecting red flags before the 2009 Fort Hood attack, when a self-radicalized Army psychiatrist named Nidal Hasan walked into the deployment center and fired 200 rounds, killing thirteen Defense Department employees.²

Hasan’s shooting spree remains the worst terrorist attack on American soil since 9/11 and the worst mass murder at a military installation in American history. Hasan may be the best-known example of an Islamist terrorist insider but he is not the only one.³ Importantly, Hasan’s

1 Paul N. Stockton and Eric T. Olson, Co-Chairs, *Security from Within: Independent Review of the Washington Navy Yard Shooting* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, November 2013), 2, <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/Independent-Review-of-the-WNY-Shooting-14-Nov-2013.pdf>.

2 In August 2013, a military jury found Hasan guilty of murder and sentenced him to death. Hasan is currently awaiting execution while his case is on appeal.

3 In October 2000, Ali Mohamed, a naturalized American citizen who served as a Special Forces sergeant in the 1980s, pleaded guilty for his role in Al Qaeda’s 1998 bombing of US embassies in Africa. In 2011, Jason Naser Abdo, a radicalized Muslim Army infantryman, deserted his Kentucky base and was arrested in Texas for allegedly plotting to bomb a restaurant frequented by Fort Hood soldiers. In June 2012, National Public Radio reported that the FBI was investigating more than 100 Muslim extremists in the US military community. Dina Temple-Raston, “FBI Tracking 100 Suspected Extremists in Military,” *National Public Radio*, June 25, 2013. As former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas’ Security Affairs Paul Stockton noted, “The threat is very serious.” Paul Stockton, in discussion with author, November 9, 2011.

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Fort Hood attack is also a case that is empirically rich for process tracing, thanks to declassified investigations by the DOD, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).⁴ While these investigations provide valuable new information about what happened, they still offer an incomplete understanding of why. To date, the 2009 Fort Hood attack has been attributed mostly to leadership failures, poor policy guidance, and political correctness regarding disciplining or investigating a Muslim-American in the military.⁵ These are important parts of the story, but they are not the only important parts. Key organizational factors – structures, career incentives, and cultures inside the Pentagon – also played an essential and overlooked role. Better understanding of these silent and powerful organizational dimensions provides a fuller picture of what went wrong and the lessons to be learned.

Section one reviews a growing body of research in organizational theory and its insights for the Fort Hood case. Section two provides a narrative of Hasan’s radicalization and attack drawing from recently declassified primary sources. Section three turns to the Pentagon, examining key failures and their organizational causes. Section four offers concluding thoughts about what can be gleaned from this case and why it matters.

Organization Theory and Disasters

Research examining the connection between organizational pathologies and disasters is wide-ranging but offers four key insights for understanding why the Army failed to prevent Hasan’s 2009 attack. The first is surprise attacks are almost never really surprises. Instead, decentralized structures are prone to scattering signals of impending attack rather than aggregating and amplifying them. Wohlstetter’s classic examination of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor found that separate intelligence units in the War, Navy, and State departments operated largely independently, without a central coordinating mechanism. The result: Vital clues of the attack were dispersed in different bureaucracies, where they became lost amidst the “noise” of false leads, irrelevant

4 Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); US Congress, *A Ticking Time Bomb: Counterterrorism Lessons from the U.S. Government’s Failure to Prevent the Fort Hood Attack*, Report of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 112th Cong., 1st sess., February 3, 2011 [hereafter cited as Senate Report]; Togo West, Jr. and Vern Clark, Co-Chairs, *Protecting the Force: Lessons from Fort Hood, Report of the DOD Independent Review* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, January 2010) [hereafter cited as West/Clark Report]; William H. Webster Commission, *Final Report of the William H. Webster Commission on the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Counterterrorism Intelligence, and the Events at Fort Hood, Texas, on November 5, 2009*, Redacted Version (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Released July 19, 2012) [hereafter cited as Webster Report]. Each of these reports covers different terrain. The West/Clark DOD review of 2010 focused on whether Pentagon policies and leadership were adequate in the Hasan case and the lessons learned for force protection more generally. The Senate’s 2011 investigation examined both the Army and FBI, but redacted nearly all details about Hasan’s relationship with Anwar al-Aulaqi. The FBI’s Webster Commission report, released more than a year later, filled these gaps, containing an exhaustive review of the relationship and communications between Hasan and Aulaqi that included verbatim contents of their emails. Together, these sources shed much light more light on what went wrong than why. This essay seeks to fill the gap.

5 Senate Report, 31; West/Clark Report; House and Senate Committees on Homeland Security, US Congress, *Homegrown Terrorism: The Threat to Military Communities Inside the United States: Hearings before the Joint Committee on Homeland Security*, 112th Cong., 1st sess., December 7, 2011. For media commentary about political correctness and Fort Hood, see Charles Krauthammer, “Medicalizing Mass Murder,” *Washington Post*, November 13, 2009; Heather Somerville, “Fort Hood attack: Did Army Ignore Red Flags out of Political Correctness?” *Christian Science Monitor*, February 3, 2011; Frank Rich, “The Missing Link from Killeen to Kabul,” *The New York Times*, November 14, 2009.

information, and deception.⁶ Examinations of 9/11 found similar coordination deficiencies half a century later.⁷ As noted by Richard Betts, even if warning eventually occurs, decentralization often ensures the gears will grind slowly, giving the attacker an advantage.⁸

The second insight emphasizes the hidden hazards of routines, which lead individuals in bureaucracies to continue doing things the same old way even when they should not, and to channel information in rigid formats and mechanisms that make red flags harder to detect. Graham Allison, for example, first pinpointed the unintended consequences of standard operating procedures during the Cuban missile crisis, noting American reconnaissance planes discovered the missile sites because the Soviets were building them literally by the book, using exactly the same telltale fencing and construction specifications – without camouflage – used in the Soviet Union.⁹ Charles Perrow, Scott Sagan, and other “normal accident” theorists have found standard operating procedures in complex, tightly coupled organizations to be key causes of chemical plant disasters, nuclear power plant accidents, and a chilling number of Cold War nuclear weapons near-misses.¹⁰

The third insight is career incentives and organizational cultures often backfire, rewarding the wrong behavior at the wrong times. Several researchers find that misaligned incentives and cultures played major roles in undermining safety before the *Challenger* space shuttle disaster, contributed to the 1994 friendly fire shutdown of two US Black Hawk helicopters over the Iraqi no-fly zone, and ensured the FBI’s manhunt for two 9/11 hijackers just nineteen days before their attack received a low priority and was handled by one of the least experienced agents in the New York office.¹¹

The fourth insight from this literature is organizations matter more than most people think: like “dark matter,” organizational weaknesses lurk invisibly in the background but profoundly affect the workings of the policy universe.

As discussed below, evidence suggests Hasan slipped through the cracks not only because individuals made mistakes or fell victim to political correctness, but also because defense organizations worked in

6 Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

7 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004); and Amy B. Zegart, *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

8 Richard K. Betts, “Surprise Despite Warning: Why Sudden Attacks Succeed,” *Political Science Quarterly* 95, no. 4 (Winter 1980-1981): 551-572. See also Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, “Choice-Theoretic Approaches to Bureaucratic Structure,” in Robert F. Durant, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of American Bureaucracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 2010), 638-665.

9 Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).

10 Charles Perrow, *Normal Accidents: Living with High Risk Technologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Scott D. Sagan, *The Limits of Safety: Organizations, Accidents, and Nuclear Weapons* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); and Scott D. Sagan, “The Problem of Redundancy Problem: Why More Nuclear Security Forces May Produce Less Nuclear Security,” *Risk Analysis* 24, no. 4 (2004): 935-946.

11 Scott A. Snook, *Friendly Fire: The Accidental Shootdown of US Black Hawks over Northern Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Diane Vaughan, *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risk Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Zegart, *Spying Blind*, 157-160.

their usual ways. Robust structures, processes, and cultures that were effective in earlier periods for other tasks proved mal-adaptive after 9/11. As the new insider terrorist threat grew, Defense Department officials unwittingly clung to visions of force protection, personnel policies, and interagency staffing arrangements designed for an earlier time, raising the likelihood that Hasan would go unnoticed.

Portrait of an Insider Threat

Nidal Hasan was born and raised in Virginia to Palestinian immigrants who ran an upscale Middle Eastern restaurant and convenience store.¹² He was known as “Michael” to his friends in high school, graduated from Virginia Tech in 1992, attended medical school at the military’s Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and spent his entire medical career as an Army psychiatrist.¹³

In retrospect, Hasan’s transformation from Army officer to fratricidal terrorist was neither sudden nor secret. In 2003, Hasan began defending Osama bin Laden, justifying suicide bombing, and declaring his devotion to Sharia law over the US Constitution to his peers and supervisors in conversations, classes, and presentations spanning several years.¹⁴ He examined violent Islamist extremism in several off-topic assignments during his medical training, charging that US military operations were at war against Islam, and that Muslim-Americans in the military could be prone to fratricide.¹⁵ One presentation so alarmed and offended Hasan’s classmates the instructor had to stop it. Colleagues described Hasan as having “fixed radical beliefs about fundamentalist Islam” that he shared “at every possible opportunity.”¹⁶ The Director of Walter Reed’s Psychiatric Residency Program thought Hasan was a “religious fanatic.”¹⁷ Hasan’s views were so troubling, several colleagues reported him to superiors and one supervisor tried twice to convince Hasan to leave the military and explored whether he qualified for conscientious objector status.¹⁸ In late 2008, nearly a year before his attack, Hasan captured the attention of the FBI when he began emailing Anwar al-Aulaqi, an American, English-speaking radical cleric in Yemen; al-Aulaqi was under FBI investigation and widely viewed as one of the most influential “virtual spiritual sanctioners” of terrorism in the world. Hasan’s initial email was alarming: he asked whether a Muslim US soldier who committed fratricide would be considered a martyr in the eyes of Islam.¹⁹

12 “Times Topics: Nidal Malik Hasan,” *The New York Times*, April 9, 2014.

13 Mitchell Silber, “Radicalization in the West Revisited: Confirming the Threat,” PowerPoint Presentation, New York Police Department Intelligence Division, November 14, 2011; and Senate Report, 27.

14 For Hasan’s 2007 Power Point presentation on Islam and threats emanating from Muslims conflicted over US military operations in Muslim countries, see <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/gallery/2009/11/10/GA2009111000920.html>.

15 Senate Report, 29-31.

16 *Ibid.*, 29.

17 *Ibid.*, 28.

18 *Ibid.*, 28-30.

19 Webster Report, 41, 75. Over the next twelve months, Hasan sent Aulaqi a total of eighteen emails while the FBI’s investigation stumbled. See Webster Report 63, 68.

Hasan was also considered a poor performer at work.²⁰ Rated in the bottom 25 percent at Walter Reed and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Hasan was known to show up late or not at all, oversaw a patient load ten times lower than most of his peers, proselytized inappropriately to patients, and even allowed a homicidal patient to escape from the emergency room.²¹ According to a memo written by his supervisor, Major Scott Moran, Program Director of Walter Reed's Psychiatric Residency Program, Hasan "demonstrate[d] a pattern of poor judgment and a lack of professionalism."²²

Despite these outward signs of radicalization and inadequate performance, supervisors consistently gave Hasan good reviews and promoted him, claiming in Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs) that his off-topic presentations on violent Islamist extremism gave him "unique skills" and his "keen interest in Islamic culture and faith" could "contribute to our psychological understanding of Islamic nationalism and how it may relate to events of national security..."²³ As the Senate investigation concluded, "These evaluations bore no resemblance to the real Hasan, a barely competent psychiatrist whose radicalization toward violent Islamist extremism alarmed his colleagues and his superiors."²⁴ Aside from one negative mark for failing to take a physical training test, Hasan received no negative grades in any of his Officer Evaluation Reports, which were part of his permanent file and used as the basis for promotion.²⁵ When the FBI discovered Hasan was emailing Anwar al-Aulaqi about fratricide and opened an investigation, the Joint Terrorism Task Force investigator who reviewed Hasan's OERs found nothing amiss.

Organizational Weaknesses

Hasan's Fort Hood attack signaled the emergence of a new adaptation challenge for the Defense Department: rethinking what "force protection" meant. Throughout the Cold War, force protection involved providing physical protection against external security threats. This was true even in counter-terrorism, where the most serious and well publicized terrorist attacks, the bombing of the Beirut Marine barracks in 1983 and the Khobar Towers attack of 1996, involved foreign terrorists parking trucks near US military installations and blowing them up. For decades, force protection meant higher fences, tougher checkpoints, and other perimeter security measures to prevent outsiders from attacking US installations.²⁶

After 9/11, adapting to new force protection realities required two shifts in thinking. The first was Islamist-terrorist enemies could be Americans, including Americans operating inside the military. The second was protection meant taking measures to catch potential

20 Senate Report, 27-35.

21 Senate Report, 33; and Daniel Zwerdling, "Hasan's Supervisor Warned Army in 2007," *National Public Radio*, November 18, 2009.

22 Scott Moran, Memorandum to Credentials Committee at National Capital Consortium Psychiatry Residency Program regarding Nidal Hasan, May 17, 2007, obtained by *National Public Radio*, <http://www.npr.org/documents/2009/nov/hasanletter.pdf>.

23 *Officer Evaluation Report, Nidal Hasan, Covering Period from July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009* (July 1, 2009), Hasan US Department of Defense File, Stamp 20100108-330, cited in Senate Report, 33.

24 Senate Report, 33.

25 *Ibid.*

26 West/Clark Report, 26; and Stockton, discussion, November 9, 2011.

perpetrators, not just hardening targets.²⁷ As Paul Stockton, the former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs, noted, "There was an insider threat that DOD had never had to prepare against in the past."²⁸ In short, DOD started from a position of weakness: for half a century, the department's structure, systems, policies, and culture had been oriented to think about protecting forces from the outside, not the inside.

More specifically, the Defense Department had three systems offering opportunities to identify Hasan as a growing threat and to take action: the disciplinary system, the performance evaluation system, and the counter-terrorism investigatory system run jointly with the FBI through Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs). How and why each failed is reviewed below.

Disincentives in the Disciplinary System

Hasan did not have to commit a terrorist act or even threaten to do so to be disciplined or discharged from the military. Stating beliefs that his loyalty to the Koran took precedence over his loyalty to the Constitution and his duties as an officer constituted sufficient grounds for discharge. His poor performance also should have led to disciplinary actions, according to both the Senate and Pentagon reviews.²⁹ Yet this never happened. Although several of Hasan's superiors were aware of his radical views and job performance, all chose to take no formal action. Why?

The Senate and Pentagon investigations point fingers in different directions. The Defense Department faulted failures of leadership. "We conclude that although the policies we reviewed were generally adequate," the report notes, "several officers failed to comply with those policies when taking actions regarding the alleged perpetrator."³⁰ The review strongly suggested individuals be held accountable, and the Secretary of the Army ordered disciplinary action against nine officers in Hasan's chain of command.³¹ The Senate, by contrast, found the key failure was the military's unwillingness to name, detect, or defend against violent Islamist extremism. "We are concerned," said the report, "that...worries about 'political correctness' inhibited Hasan's superiors and colleagues who were deeply troubled by his behavior from taking the actions against him that could have prevented the attack."³²

Yet evidence suggests individual leadership and political correctness were not the only causes of failure. Indeed, when many individuals fail in the same way, something systemic is usually at work. In this case, that systematic factor was the Army's organizational incentives for promoting and disciplining subordinates, which led nine people in Hasan's chain of command to make the same incorrect call. Incentives also suggest political correctness only went so far: Hasan's superiors had powerful reasons

27 West/Clark Report, 26.

28 Stockton, discussion, November 9, 2011.

29 Senate Report, 45-47; and West/Clark Report, 9.

30 West/Clark Report, 9.

31 Jim Miklaszewski, "Nine Officers Face Disciplinary Action in Fort Hood Shooting," *NBC News*, March 10, 2011.

32 Senate Report, 31.

to avoid initiating disciplinary proceedings against anyone in their unit, Muslim or otherwise.

Organizational incentives mattered in two respects. First, Hasan's rank and medical specialty were both in extremely short supply. Army supervisors knew it would be nearly impossible to deny him promotion, much less dismiss him. Due to cutbacks after the Cold War, the Army had a significant shortage of captains and majors at the time (Hasan was a captain for several years before being promoted to major in May of 2009). This shortage was pronounced in the Army's medical corps and particularly acute for psychiatrists. In 2008, the Army had a fill rate of just 83 percent for captains in the medical corps.³³ A Defense Department mental health task force underscored the seriousness of shortages in uniformed mental health professionals, calling manpower and resource shortages the "single finding that underpins all others" in its report about the urgent need to improve mental health care for service members and their families.³⁴ Of the Army's 27 medical specialties, psychiatry suffered some of the worst and most chronic shortages.³⁵ While Hasan was failing to show up for work and espousing radical beliefs, the Army was fighting two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, dealing with mounting cases of post-traumatic stress disorder, and struggling to keep mental health professionals in the service. Incentives to promote, were "huge," as one official admitted, and the institutional emphasis was on transferring rather than eliminating problems.³⁶ Transfer Hasan is exactly what they did. As the officer who assigned Hasan to Fort Hood told a colleague there, "You're getting our worst."³⁷

There were also strong disincentives for supervisors to take action against any subordinate because doing so involved high opportunity costs, draining time and resources away from other activities in a military stretched thin by two long-running wars.³⁸ As one government official put it, "50 percent of every manager's time is spent managing the 3 percent of the people in the office who shouldn't be there."³⁹ Another former government official estimated that even if a military officer committed a crime, dismissing him would take six months to a year. Getting rid of poor performers would take even longer. The danger posed by Hasan's radicalization for the military was new, but the larger organizational incentives that failed to stop it were not.

33 US Government Accountability Office, *Military Personnel: Army Needs to Focus on Cost-Effective Use of Financial Incentives and Quality Standards in Managing Force Growth*, Report to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, House Committee on Armed Services, GAO-09-256 (Washington, DC: US Government Accountability Office, 2009).

34 US Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health, *An Achievable Vision: Report of the Defense Task Force on Mental Health* (Falls Church, VA: Defense Health Board, 2007), 41, <https://archive.org/details/AnAchievableVisionReportOfTheDepartmentOfDefenseTaskForceOnMental>.

35 US Government Accountability Office, *Military Personnel: Status of Accession, Retention, and End Strength for Military Medical Officers, and Preliminary Observations Regarding Accession and Retention Challenges*, Briefing for Congressional Committees, GAO-09-469R (Washington, DC: US Government Accountability Office, 2009).

36 Interview with former government official, November 18, 2011.

37 Senate Report, 34.

38 In 2008, *Foreign Policy* and the Center for a New American Security jointly surveyed more than 3,400 active duty and retired military officers. The survey found widespread concern that the military, particularly the Army, was severely strained. "The US Military Index," *Foreign Policy*, February 19, 2008, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2008/02/19/the_us_military_index.

39 Interview with government official, July 29, 2004.

Hasan's religion, to be sure, exacerbated these incentives. The military had poor guidelines and training about the threat posed by Islamist extremism. As a result, some of Hasan's supervisors knew little about the Muslim faith and could not differentiate between legitimate religious expression and outward displays of extremism incompatible with the teachings of Islam and military service.⁴⁰ Religion also played a more subtle role, raising the political and legal stakes for any supervisor taking disciplinary action against one of the Army's few Muslim officers.⁴¹ Politically, disciplining a service member for religious beliefs may have been particularly sensitive given the context of US wars against the predominantly Muslim countries of Iraq and Afghanistan. Hasan's supervisors also may have wanted to tread carefully to avoid any potential charges of religious discrimination.

In sum, incentives worked against disciplining or dismissing Hasan despite his public displays of violent extremist ideology and poor job performance. Hasan was an Army major and a psychiatrist at the exact moment the Army sorely needed both and the disciplinary system required supervisors to expend substantial effort with a low probability of success. Against this backdrop, Hasan's religion raised potential political and legal costs of being perceived as targeting Muslims unfairly. Political correctness made taking action difficult; the broader incentives to promote and avoid disciplinary hassles made it even more so.

The Performance Evaluation System: Making Red Flags Invisible

Supervisors not only failed to take action against Hasan, they failed to note their concerns in Hasan's Officer Evaluation Reports. Consequently, when the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force investigator learned Hasan was communicating with a well-known foreign terrorist and reviewed Hasan's OERs, he found no red flags. Instead, Hasan's records showed a well-respected military officer who had received positive reviews from superiors. Some even sanitized his obsession with Islamist extremism as praiseworthy research.⁴²

Here, too, political correctness and individual leadership failures played a part, though it is clear red flags did not go unnoticed. One of Hasan's instructors and one of his colleagues each referred to him as a "ticking time bomb."⁴³ A memo from the head of Hasan's residency program noted serious concerns about Hasan's performance and religious activities.⁴⁴ The question, then, is not why red flags were never raised, but why so many never made it into Hasan's official evaluation reports where they would have been seen by the FBI.

Much of the answer lies in the OER system itself. The Army's personnel evaluation system was designed to improve the performance of individuals within a command, ensure efficient promotions throughout the service, and identify traditional violence-related problems such as domestic violence or gang activities. What the personnel evaluation

40 Senate Report, 31-32, 47-49; and West/Clark Report, 16-18.

41 In 2008, Muslims accounted for less than half a percent of active duty forces. Yochi J. Dreazen, "Muslim Population in the Military Raises Difficult Issues," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2009.

42 Senate Report, 33.

43 *Ibid.*, 8.

44 Moran, Memorandum, 2007.

system was *not* designed to do was identify counterintelligence risks or insider terrorist threats.

Personnel Files: The Trouble with Fresh Starts

The supervisor's personnel file system was, above all, temporary and local. When a new service member arrived on a base or installation, he came alone: no OERs, files, information, or notes from other supervisors accompanied him. Instead, each supervisor started with almost no visibility into a service member's prior performance. The system ensured individual service members "started fresh" with each posting. This policy also reflected a deeply held cultural norm about what leadership means in the Army. Good commanders motivate and mold the men and women under their command, whatever their individual faults or development needs.

This personnel file system had its benefits, but by design it also prevented the accumulation of red flags. Because every commander started his records of a subordinate anew, there was no way to obtain a dynamic picture of a service member's performance or an integrated view of supervisor concerns. All but the most serious red flags rose and fell *within* each command, disappearing as soon as the service member moved onto his next posting.

In earlier times, the Army's preference for a localized evaluation system encouraged commanders to develop subordinates and deal with their problems. In the post-9/11 context, however, the cost-benefit calculus of this system became more problematic. The personnel file system significantly raised the odds of failure in Hasan's case because it isolated the signals of his radicalization rather than concentrating them. Evidence of Hasan's radicalization toward violence spanned six years and three postings. Although different supervisors expressed misgivings, nowhere did these misgivings converge. Each time Hasan got his "fresh start," his radicalization toward violent extremism continued unchecked. As intended, OERs were used for promotion purposes, which meant they were short and standardized, creating little opportunity for reporting concerns across commands.

In Hasan's case, his secret security clearance only made matters worse, raising the high threshold for reporting derogatory information about him even higher. The Pentagon review found that once a service member obtained a security clearance, supervisors were generally averse to reporting any potential negative information about him short of criminal activity.⁴⁵ In short, the very design of the Army's systems to evaluate personnel made it likely that red flags about Hasan would remain invisible. Concerns that appeared at the local level lived and died in the supervisor's filing cabinet. Ironically, the forms used to track personnel inhibited the Army's ability to learn about threats inside its ranks.

This problem is not unique to the Army. Sociologists have found that businesses and government agencies usually develop standardized ways of communicating as they grow larger and more diversified. The problem is these standardized communication forms keep the

45 West/Clark Report, 13.

organization from learning and adapting to new challenges.⁴⁶ Issues that cannot be reported routinely are not routinely reported. With Hasan, the Army's personnel evaluation system worked smoothly into failure.

Joint Terrorism Task Forces: The Wrong Personnel

The DOD's third chance to stop Hasan rested in the FBI's inter-agency Joint Terrorism Task Forces, which drew members from a number of federal and local agencies to facilitate information sharing and coordination.

On January 7, 2009, ten months before the attack, the Washington, DC Joint Terrorism Task Force received an electronic communication from the San Diego JTTF relaying that Hasan had sent two emails to Anwar al-Aulaqi. They provided the text of both emails, and noted that Hasan was believed to be a military service member stationed at Walter Reed. The case was handed to the Defense Department member on the Washington JTTF to follow up. He did, but only in the barest sense, as his entire investigation took only four hours. The DOD official verified Hasan's position in a DOD personnel database, checked the FBI's investigative databases to see whether Hasan had been the subject of any investigations (he had not), and obtained Hasan's OERs, which praised his research and gave no hint of concern about his performance or radicalization. The official decided not to interview Hasan or any of his coworkers in part because he worried – wrongly – that interviews would jeopardize the FBI's investigation of Aulaqi. He believed – again, wrongly – that Hasan's use of his real name on the communications with Aulaqi suggested the relationship must be part of legitimate research. He focused the inquiry very narrowly, on whether Hasan was actively engaged in terrorist activities at that moment, not whether he was in the process of radicalizing and could pose an emerging threat. An FBI agent in San Diego found the investigation so “slim,” he thought Hasan might be confidential FBI informant.⁴⁷

At first glance, it appears a single person made serious mistakes. However, a closer look reveals the slipshod investigation had less to do with individuals, and more to do with organizations: the most important reason this investigator did his job poorly was because he was the wrong man for the job.

Like most detailees sent from the Defense Department to Joint Terrorism Task Forces, the DOD official investigating Hasan had no meaningful counter-terrorism or counter-intelligence expertise or experience. Rather than coming from one of the military's counter-intelligence units, analytic shops, or special forces, he came from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), which is part of the Inspector General's office used to investigate cases of waste, fraud, and abuse.⁴⁸ A review of DCIS press releases from 2009 to 2011 finds that the entire office handled just two cases per year with any counter-terrorism connection during this three-year period. By contrast, DCIS handled an average of 52 cases per year involving fiscal waste, fraud, and

46 Vaughan, *Challenger Launch Decision*; Barbara Levitt and James G. March, “Organizational Learning,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988): 319-340.

47 Senate Report, 36-38; and Webster Report 41-62.

48 Senate Report, 36.

abuse issues such as false travel claims, kickbacks, embezzlement, theft of military supplies, and military export control violations.⁴⁹

The Pentagon had strong incentives to send detailees from DCIS to Joint Terrorism Task Forces: DCIS employees were relatively plentiful; they were least mission-critical to the military; and they satisfied the FBI's demand for personnel with federal investigative authorities. DCIS, said one former government official, "sent people to JTTFs because they had the bodies at the time and the other units in the Pentagon did not."⁵⁰ Finding people for any joint duty assignment was always a challenging task, and this particular joint duty assignment was far afield from core military operations. "There was resistance by Army and Air Force to sending people out there," said another former government official.⁵¹ Finally, precisely because Joint Terrorism Task Force work fell outside the scope of core military activities, the Pentagon deferred to the FBI about who was best suited for the job. To the FBI, "best" meant "most like an FBI agent," not someone with relevant domain or intelligence analysis expertise. According to a former government official, the FBI requested DOD personnel who were sworn federal law enforcement officers, which meant they could carry guns, wear badges, and were authorized to enforce all federal laws just like the FBI. In fact, the Pentagon had tried sending more skilled analysts and personnel with counter-terrorism experience from the Army and Air Force years earlier. But because they were active duty personnel and not sworn federal law enforcement officers, Army and Air Force detailees were often relegated to clerical work on the task forces. By 2006, the Army and Air Force were resisting sending anyone, so the Pentagon and FBI agreed on using DCIS to fill those manpower needs.⁵² In short, staffing FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces with DCIS detailees made good bureaucratic sense for the Pentagon, even though it made JTTFs less likely to succeed.

Given DCIS's mission and expertise, any detailee sent from there to a Joint Terrorism Task Force would have had a hard time catching Hasan. This particular DCIS detailee did not find a potential terrorist or counterintelligence threat in large part because nothing in his work experience taught him how to look for one. He believed Hasan's use of his real name while communicating with a well-known terrorist leader was proof that nothing nefarious was afoot.⁵³ One can see why: in his experience, crimes involved covering up identities and activities, not revealing them. His investigative experience also led him to approach Hasan as a criminal case, not an intelligence threat. He sought information only about the existence of past investigations and the immediate

49 Author analysis of press releases from 2009, 2010, 2011 at "Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS)," *Office of Inspector General, United States Department of Defense*, <http://www.dodig.mil/inv/dcis/>.

50 Interview with government official, November 14, 2011.

51 The official noted that the Navy took a different view, largely because of the way that counter terrorism and counterintelligence are handled organizationally. The Army and Air Force used active duty personnel to investigate counter terrorism and counterintelligence cases. The Navy used a civilian Navy Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). In the Navy, NCIS personnel have full law enforcement authorities, which put them on par with FBI special agents in terms of the activities they are allowed to perform. Active duty Army and Air Force personnel, by contrast, are not sworn law enforcement officers and as a result have not been considered equal partners in the JTTFs. Interview with former government official, November 18, 2011.

52 Interview with former government official, November 18, 2011.

53 Senate Report, 37.

threat, rather than future possibilities.⁵⁴ Notably, the DCIS investigator's FBI supervisory agent shared this narrow approach and approved his memo closing the inquiry. In addition, the Senate investigation's narrative leaves the impression the DCIS investigator (along with several FBI agents and supervisors) failed to recognize the importance of Anwar al-Aulaqi, and may have not really understood the danger he presented.⁵⁵ Said one former DOD official: "They [the DCIS detailees] didn't have the training, experience, or skill set to do counterintelligence and anti-terrorism because their expertise was in the area of fraud investigations. They share the same basic qualifications of an FBI agent but do not have the specialized capabilities of an FBI Counterintelligence/Antiterrorism agent."⁵⁶

Conclusion

Organizational factors played a significant role in explaining why the Pentagon could not stop Nidal Hasan in time. Despite 9/11 and a rising number of homegrown Jihadi terrorist attacks, the Defense Department struggled to adapt to insider terrorist threats. DOD continued to view force protection as guarding against external dangers, not internal ones. Faced with substantial manpower shortages, Pentagon officials responded to incentives and promoted Hasan while his performance remained sub-par and his public expressions of extremism grew. Red flags emerged within Hasan's units but were never put on paper because the performance evaluation systems were never designed to collect them. Rather than concentrating warning signals, the personal file and OER systems scattered them, giving Hasan a critical advantage. The Defense Department's JTTF member who investigated Hasan saw nothing amiss because he was trained to ferret out waste, fraud, and abuse, not to look for signs of radicalization or counterintelligence risk. Perverse organizational incentives led the Defense Department to place him on an FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force because of his expendability, not his expertise. In sum, the Pentagon's force protection, discipline, promotion, and counter-terrorism investigatory systems all missed this insider threat because they were designed for other purposes in earlier times, and deep-seated organizational incentives and cultures made it difficult for officials to change what they normally did.

Learning lessons from failure is never easy. People and organizations often remember what they should forget and forget what they should remember. The Fort Hood case suggests that learning lessons is also hindered by a levels-of-analysis problem. Policymakers naturally attribute failure to individuals and policies. While these are important factors, key causes also lie deeper within organizations – namely, in the structures, processes, and cultures that make them tick. From NASA space shuttle accidents to nuclear near-misses, surprise attacks, and terrorism, a growing body of research finds that the organizational roots of disaster are often less visible and more important than we think. Unless the Pentagon's organizational weaknesses in confronting insider threats are better understood, only some lessons of Fort Hood will be learned, and future failures will be inevitable.

⁵⁴ Senate Report, 36; and Webster Report, 81.

⁵⁵ Senate Report, 36-38.

⁵⁶ Interview with a former DOD official with detailed knowledge of, and experience working with, DCIS operations who represented DOD on JTTF governance questions, November 18, 2011.

Beyond Information Sharing: NATO and the Foreign Fighter Threat

John R. Deni

ABSTRACT: Despite disagreement among experts and policymakers over its significance, the foreign fighter threat to Europe is very real. Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), such as NATO, have an important role to play in countering this threat, including through information sharing. Even though the North Atlantic alliance has its hands full at the moment, member states can further leverage NATO's unique advantages.

The foreign fighter threat in Europe and North America is a real one, as the January 2015 attacks at the office of the satirical French magazine *Charlie Hebdo* have made clear. However, there is significant debate among experts over just how significant that threat is. On the one hand, the flow of foreign fighters from the West to Syria and Iraq today is larger than that of any recent conflict. On the other hand, few of those fighters appear to be returning to Europe or the United States to engage in terrorist plots or attacks, and so the threat appears real yet not terribly significant.

Regardless of which side of the debate one supports, the challenge of foreign fighters, like all transnational problems, is not one individual states can solve on their own. Certainly states can and should individually take necessary steps to prevent, prohibit, and respond to the threat of foreign fighters. However, collective measures are necessary as well to maximize, leverage, and enable the actions taken by individual countries.

To this end, several Western states have engaged in bilateral and multilateral exchanges of information and other forms of collaboration, such as the All Partners Access Network, an unclassified information sharing service developed by the US Department of Defense (DoD). In addition to these *ad hoc* forms of cooperation among two or more states, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) may have an important role to play. Indeed, there is already evidence IGOs, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have begun to contribute to countering the foreign fighter challenge.

Specifically, the North Atlantic alliance has emphasized the importance of intelligence sharing as a means of countering the foreign fighter threat. But is this the role it is best suited to play? How can NATO's member states best leverage the alliance's comparative advantages, especially since membership includes the United States and its vast array of military resources? If the United States is to play an increased or modified role through NATO, how can the US Army contribute? In order to answer these and related questions, this article first surveys the nature and scope of the foreign fighter threat. Determining the significance of the foreign fighter threat is critically important to assessing whether and how NATO might do more. Certainly facilitating information sharing,

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as the alliance does today, is vital, but NATO is equipped and structured to do more, or to do so more effectively. Some members may be reluctant to see the securitization – or NATO-ization – of a domestic law enforcement area, while outside critics might argue NATO lacks effective tools to address the foreign fighters’ center of gravity. In short, although the short-term outlook for a greater NATO role in this area is likely limited, the allies risk foregoing an important means of countering the foreign fighter problem if they do not fully leverage NATO’s potential.

Foreign Fighters

“Foreign fighter” is the label used to refer to nonindigenous individuals who choose to engage in insurgent military operations in foreign conflict zones without the promise of financial remuneration.¹ One prominent scholar has defined Islamic foreign fighters as unpaid combatants with no apparent link to the conflict other than religious affinity.² Depending on the number of foreign fighters flowing into a given conflict zone, as well as the capabilities and skills they bring with them, foreign fighters can play an important role, perhaps even a decisive one, in a particular conflict.

Whatever their role, when that conflict ends, or whenever foreign fighters choose to return to their countries of origin, they may pose a significant threat to the security of their home country. This risk seems particularly high in Europe today, given the number of EU nationals of Islamic faith who have recently traveled to fight in Syria and Iraq. Reliable figures are difficult to obtain, but researchers put the number of Europeans fighting in Syria and/or Iraq at roughly 4,300 – of which the greatest concentrations come from France, the United Kingdom, and Germany.³

Foreign Fighters in Syria/Iraq			
Austria	100-150	Netherlands	200-250
Belgium	440	Norway	60
Denmark	100-150	Spain	50-100
Finland	50-70	Sweden	150-180
France	1,200	Switzerland	40
Germany	500-600	United Kingdom	500-600
Ireland	30	Western Balkans	500
Italy	80		

1 For a discussion of various foreign fighter definitions, see Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Foreign Fighters Under International Law* (Geneva, Switzerland: Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, October 2014), 5-7.

2 Thomas Hegghammer, “The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and Globalization of Jihad,” *International Security* 35, no. 2 (Winter 2010-2011): 53.

3 Table compiled by author based on data from Peter R. Neumann, “Foreign Fighter Total in Syria/Iraq Now Exceeds 20,000; Surpasses Afghanistan Conflict in the 1980s,” *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), Department of War Studies, King’s College London*, January 26, 2015, www.icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/; and from Adrian Shtuni, “Ethnic Albanian Fighters in Iraq and Syria,” *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 4 (April 2015): 11-14.

Separately, the US Director of National Intelligence has testified before Congress that roughly 3,400 Westerners have traveled to Syria since 2011.⁴ Disagreements over the numbers do not change the fact that the foreign fighter challenge is not a problem specific to any particular region of Europe; on a per capita basis, the leading sources appear to be Kosovo in southeastern Europe, Belgium in western Europe, and Denmark in northern Europe.⁵

Moreover, the foreign-fighter threat to Europe appears to be real and growing, as evidenced by well-publicized attacks over the last several months, as well as disrupted plots. For instance, in May 2014, a returning French jihadist who had recently fought in Syria killed four people at a Jewish museum in Brussels. Later that same year, in October, a Canadian jihadist who had also fought in Syria killed one Canadian soldier at a war memorial in Ottawa.

Just a few months later, in January 2015, Chérif and Saïd Kouachi attacked offices of the satirical French newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, killing 12 people. Before their attack, the Kouachi brothers had declared themselves followers of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and both traveled to Yemen for weapons training in 2011. At almost the exact same time in January 2015, Amedy Coulibaly, an avowed follower of the Islamic State (ISIS), attacked a kosher supermarket in Paris, killing a policewoman and four hostages. Most recently, in June 2015, a suspected Islamist beheaded his boss and tried to blow up an American-owned industrial gas plant in the suburbs of Lyon, France. Shortly thereafter, in mid-July 2015, French officials revealed that they had thwarted an Islamist plot to attack a military installation in the south of the country.

Serious, but not Significant

Despite these recent and vivid examples, there are different perspectives on the precise scope of the foreign fighter threat. On the one hand, some look at the available evidence and conclude the foreign-fighter threat is real, but not terribly significant. For one thing, the skeptics argue similar concerns regarding foreign fighters were expressed in the wake of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq, and yet the threat proved far less virulent than many predicted.⁶

Certainly the foreign-fighter threat is nothing new. Foreign fighters have been a part of various military conflicts for decades, if not centuries.⁷ For example, over 30,000 foreign fighters participated in the Spanish Civil War from 1936-1939. Of this number, almost 3,000 were Americans who traveled to Spain and served in various units which collectively became known as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Similarly, roughly 20,000 foreign fighters traveled to Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989 to fight against Soviet forces there. These fighters largely came from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, as well as Egypt, Tunisia, and Indonesia.

4 James R. Clapper, "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," Statement for the Record before the US Senate Armed Service Committee, February 26, 2015.

5 Neumann, "Foreign Fighter Total in Syria/Iraq Now Exceeds 20,000"; and Shтони, "Ethnic Albanian Fighters in Iraq and Syria."

6 Daniel L. Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, "Homeward Bound? Don't Hype the Threat of Returning Jihadists," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 6 (November/December 2014): 37-42, 44-46.

7 Barak Mendelsohn, "Foreign Fighters – Recent Trends," *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 189-202.

Skeptics of the significance of the foreign-fighter threat also argue, perhaps more importantly, the “blowback rate” in the case of the conflict in Syria and Iraq today is not terribly high, at least not yet.⁸ The blowback rate refers to the proportion of foreign fighters who return to their countries of origin and engage in terrorist plots or attacks.

Low blowback rates may exist for any number of reasons. For example, many fighters leave their home country to fight in foreign conflicts with no intention of returning to conduct terrorist attacks.⁹ These individuals, who are estimated to comprise the vast majority of foreign fighters, lack violent intentions toward their fellow countrymen. Instead, they may be motivated to become foreign fighters by a genuine desire to help those they perceive as oppressed by some other political entity.¹⁰ And in some cases, they may travel to conflict zones to fight against Islamic extremism.¹¹

In many instances, foreign fighters die in conflict zones – either as suicide attackers or in combat against opposing forces – and therefore never get the opportunity to return home.¹² One European intelligence official put the figure at roughly 20 percent of Europeans who have traveled to Syria and Iraq to participate in the fighting there have died in combat.¹³ Additionally, evidence suggests Western fighters are considered relatively less effective in combat, as they lack battle-hardening experience of other groups such as those from Chechnya.¹⁴ As a result, some reports indicate Westerners are used for suicide missions, which obviously also prevents them from returning home to conduct attacks.¹⁵

Alternatively, foreign fighters may choose to participate in religious wars elsewhere.¹⁶ In some cases, foreign fighters may decide never to return home. Instead, they may settle elsewhere to avoid arrest, which is increasingly appealing to them as more and more Western states criminalize traveling to, or fighting in, recognized conflict zones.

Evidence also suggests many of those who travel to fight in foreign conflicts become disillusioned quickly. Many find the reality to be far

8 Thomas Hegghammer, as quoted by Andrew Gilligan, “Syria Suicide Bomber: When will Britain take Jihadis Seriously?” *The Telegraph*, February 14, 2014, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10638616/Syria-suicide-bomber-When-will-Britain-take-jihadis-seriously.html. “I suspect that the blowback rate [from Syria] will be relatively low,” said Hegghammer, “but it could change.”

9 Thomas Hegghammer, “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists’ Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting,” *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 1 (February 2013): 10.

10 Asim Qureshi, *Blowback: Foreign Fighters and the Threat They Pose* (London: CAGE, 2014), 8-9. In the early days of the Syrian civil war, many Western foreign fighters were motivated by a desire to help fellow Muslims against Bashar al-Assad’s government, as noted in “It ain’t Half Hot Here, Mum,” *The Economist*, August 30, 2014.

11 Stephanie Huang, “Not All Foreign Fighters are Jihadists,” *The Drum* (Australian Broadcasting Company), June 4, 2015, www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-05/huang-not-all-foreign-fighters-are-jihadists/6523562.

12 Mary Anne Weaver, “Her Majesty’s Jihadists,” *New York Times Magazine*, April 14, 2015.

13 As quoted in Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, *Be Afraid. Be A Little Afraid: The Threat of Terrorism from Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq*, Policy Paper No. 34 (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, November 2014), 20.

14 Comments made by a US intelligence analyst assigned to Europe during an unclassified discussion on the foreign fighter threat, Zagreb, Croatia, June 11, 2015.

15 *Ibid.*; Barak Mendelsohn, “Foreign Fighters – Recent Trends,” *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 201; and comments made by a US officer assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency during an unclassified discussion on the foreign fighter threat, Zagreb, Croatia, June 11, 2015.

16 Peter Neumann, as quoted in Weaver, “Her Majesty’s Jihadists.”

different from what they were led to believe by recruiters, social media, or other propaganda.¹⁷ Others become disillusioned because they are prevented from engaging in actual fighting. There is evidence those who volunteer to fight abroad are viewed with suspicion by local fighters, who fear some have been sent by foreign intelligence services.¹⁸ As a result, some get turned down by Islamic extremist organizations while others spend weeks or months in menial tasks, unrelated to combat.

Finally, others are arrested or otherwise intercepted by intelligence services or border security personnel, either going to or coming back from Syria and Iraq. Recent reports indicate Turkish officials in particular have begun to gain better control of their lengthy borders with both Syria and Iraq.¹⁹ Additionally, some of the very tools foreign fighter networks rely upon for recruitment and inspiration – especially social media and the internet – provide an effective vehicle for intelligence services to learn about, track, and investigate foreign fighter activity in the West.

Skeptics also discount the threat of ISIS or other foreign fighters hiding among migrants heading to Europe. First, sending foreign fighters into Europe by way of migrant flows is risky – many migrant ships fail to make it, and others are seized by authorities. Second, ISIS must conserve resources and consolidate its positions in Syria, where it faces a Russian-backed Assad regime, and in Iraq, where it faces an Iranian- and American-backed, Shiite-dominated regime. The combination of poor odds and limited resources means sending fighters to Europe via migrant flows is a particularly ineffective and inefficient methodology.²⁰

Serious and Significant

In contrast to skeptics, many see in the available evidence a major security threat that is only getting worse. Those who argue the threat is significant point out that regardless of the extent of the volunteer blowback, foreign fighters with battlefield experience are capable of committing more lethal attacks than those without it.²¹

Secondly, those who see the threat as significant maintain ISIS views the United States and the West as strategic enemies.²² They point to Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, the Islamic State's chief spokesman, who proclaimed, "We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at

17 Shiraz Maher and Peter R. Neumann, "Boris Johnson's Proposal for British Fighters in Syria and Iraq is Dangerous and Counterproductive," *The Independent (UK)*, August 26, 2014, www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/boris-johnsons-proposal-for-british-fighters-in-syria-and-iraq-is-dangerous-and-counterproductive-9692303.html. Also, comments to the author made by a US intelligence analyst assigned to Europe during an unclassified discussion on the foreign fighter threat, Zagreb, Croatia, June 11, 2015.

18 Weaver, "Her Majesty's Jihadists."

19 Erin Cunningham, "The Flow of Jihadists into Syria Dries Up as Turkey Cracks Down on the Border," *The Washington Post*, August 1, 2015.

20 Christian Nellemann, as quoted in Danny Kemp, "Europe Migrant Terror Threat Overblown: Experts," *Agence France Presse*, May 22, 2015.

21 Hegghammer, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting," 11.

22 Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," *The Atlantic*, March 2015, www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/.

the slave market.²³ They also note that in January 2015, ISIS released a video via social media networking sites reiterating the group's encouragement of lone wolf attacks in Western countries, specifically calling for attacks against soldiers, law enforcement, and intelligence personnel.

In fact, a growing number of cases appear to substantiate or validate this perspective. Officials in Australia, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom have recently disrupted terrorist plots, and in some cases individuals linked to ISIS, or other violent extremist groups, have attacked security officers.²⁴ For example, in December 2014, a French national entered a police station in Joue-les-Tours near the city of Tours in central France, and began stabbing police officers in a violent extremism attack before being killed by police. In September and October 2014, British and Australian authorities separately thwarted attacks targeting local law enforcement – those arrested in each of these scenarios had suspected ties to ISIS.

Thirdly, according to US officials, the flow of potential terrorists to Syria is greater than it has been for any other theater of conflict in decades – more than Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, or Somalia.²⁵ To date, the United States estimates that over 20,000 foreign fighters have traveled to Syria from more than 90 different countries; of this number, at least 3,400 have come from Western countries. As noted earlier, the largest numbers of Western foreign fighters are believed to come from France, Britain, Belgium, and Germany, but in per capita terms Kosovo, Belgium, and Denmark lead in Europe.

Accordingly, many foreign fighters – more than in past conflicts – have Western passports. With such passports, and thanks to the Schengen Agreement and other visa-free travel regimes, crossing borders in the West is relatively easy. Moreover, Iraq and Syria are geographically much closer than Afghanistan or Somalia, and hence easier for West Europeans to travel to.

Meanwhile, US officials also maintain Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) continues to pose one of the greatest threats to the West.²⁶ In addition to plots to cause large-scale loss of life, including by attacking transportation infrastructure, AQAP is evidently capable of encouraging, inspiring, and even directing individual or lone-wolf attacks in the West.²⁷

23 As quoted in Caleb Weiss, "Islamic State Spokesman Again Threatens West in New Speech," *Long War Journal*, September 21, 2014, www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/09/islamic_state_spokesman_again.php.

24 Michael Steinbach, Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Official Statement before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC, February 11, 2015, www.fbi.gov/news/testimony/the-urgent-threat-of-foreign-fighters-and-homegrown-terror.

25 Nicholas J. Rasmussen, "Countering Violent Islamist Extremism: The Urgent Threat of Foreign Fighters and Homegrown Terror," Statement before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC, February 11, 2015, www.docs.house.gov/meetings/HM/HM00/20150211/102901/HHRG-114-HM00-Wstate-RasmussenN-20150211.pdf.

26 Michael Steinbach, Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Official Statement before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC, February 11, 2015, www.fbi.gov/news/testimony/the-urgent-threat-of-foreign-fighters-and-homegrown-terror.

27 Ibid., and Priya Joshi, "Chalie Hebdo Paris Shooting: MI5 Head Warns Al-Qaeda are Now Plotting 'Large Scale Massacre' in Britain," *International Business Times*, January 9, 2015, www.ibtimes.co.uk/mi5-head-warns-al-qaeda-are-plotting-large-scale-massacre-britain-1482583.

AQAP's online English-language magazine *Inspire* regularly encourages lone wolves to conduct attacks on Western targets. The March 2014 edition promoted the use of car bombs in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, specifically aimed at "sports events in which tens of thousands attend, election campaigns, festivals and other gathering [sic]. The important thing is that you target people and not buildings."²⁸ The December 2014 edition encouraged lone wolves to carry out small arms attacks and provided detailed instructions for constructing a bomb. The Tsarnaev brothers reportedly used similar instructions to construct explosives used in the Boston Marathon bombings.²⁹

Indeed, the lone-wolf problem is potentially even more challenging than that of centrally-planned Al Qaeda or ISIS attacks. Both organizations use high-quality, traditional media platforms – such as *Inspire* magazine mentioned above – as well as widespread social media campaigns to propagate extremist doctrine.³⁰ The recently attempted attack on a provocative cartoon contest in Texas typifies both the danger as well as the difficulty in countering it.³¹

An Increasing Role for IGOs

Western countries have implemented an array of individual responses, including criminal provisions, preventative and punitive administrative tools, and counter- or de-radicalization measures. Within Europe, most states have addressed the foreign-fighter challenge at both departure and return stages through a mix of repressive and preventive measures.³² These steps reflect the conventional wisdom that a comprehensive approach is necessary, one spanning law enforcement as well as preventative measures, and including tactics such as stepped up border security, tightened immigration controls, and measures to counter violent extremism.

At the same time, a consensus is emerging that while primary responsibility for dealing with this challenge rests with individual states, intergovernmental organizations can play important supporting roles.³³ This is especially so in standardizing common practices, sharing information, and institutionalizing *ad hoc* arrangements.

In support of such steps, in September 2014, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2178. This resolution called on all UN

28 As quoted in Lazar Berman, "Al-Qaeda Magazine: Strike NY, DC with Car Bombs," *The Times of Israel*, March 19, 2014, www.timesofisrael.com/al-qaeda-magazine-strike-ny-dc-with-car-bombs/.

29 Abby Ohlheiser, "NYPD Beefs up Times Square Security after Online Call for 'Lone Wolf' Attacks," *The Washington Post*, September 18, 2014, www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2014/09/18/nypd-beefs-up-times-square-security-after-online-call-for-lone-wolf-attacks.

30 Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, "ISIS and the Foreign-Fighter Phenomenon," *The Atlantic*, March 8, 2015, www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/03/isis-and-the-foreign-fighter-problem/387166/.

31 Associated Press, "Texas Incident Fuels Concern about Lone-Wolf Terror Attacks," *The Chicago Tribune*, May 7, 2015, www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-lonewolf-terror-attacks-20150506-story.html#page=1.

32 European Parliament Research Service, *Foreign Fighters: Member States' Responses and EU Action in an International Context* (Brussels: European Parliament Research Service, February 2015), 6.

33 The Council of Europe, "Foreign Fighters and Returnees from a Counter-Terrorism Perspective, in Particular with Regard to Syria," Memo 16768/13, as cited in Asim Qureshi, *Blowback: Foreign Fighters and the Threat They Pose* (London: CAGE, 2014), 1; and European Commission, "Fighting Terrorism at EU Level, an Overview of Commission's Actions, Measures and Initiatives," January 11, 2015, www.europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-3140_en.htm.

member states to ensure increased border security, “by effective border controls and controls on issuance of identity papers and travel documents, and through measures for preventing counterfeiting, forgery or fraudulent use of identity papers and travel documents.”³⁴ The resolution also called on member states to employ “evidence-based traveler risk assessment and screening procedures,” and for states to arrest foreign fighters travelling to or returning from conflict areas.³⁵ Finally, it called upon member states to develop and further enhance their efforts to counter violent extremism, placing increasing emphasis on pro-active, preventative measures.³⁶

Meanwhile, the EU has been somewhat slow in engaging the foreign fighter problem, largely for two reasons. First, the recent EU electoral cycle and the changing of the guard in the EU Commission resulted in a lack of senior-level attention to the foreign fighter threat.³⁷ Second, data protection and privacy concerns have been raised by civil libertarians and center-left members of the European Parliament.³⁸

Over the last year evidence increasingly suggests the EU is expanding its efforts to coordinate the domestic responses of member states and to support other member state efforts with regard to the foreign-fighter challenge. In June 2014, the European Council promulgated a series of guidelines emphasizing the importance of judicial and police cooperation, a reinforced coordination role for Europol and Eurojust, and the development of an EU Passenger Name Record system.³⁹ In October 2014, the European Union adopted a strategy for countering ISIS and the threat of foreign fighters. The strategy itself is classified, but the outline was released publicly, and emphasizes the necessity of developing best practices, sharing lessons learned, building counter-narratives, identifying recruitment and facilitation networks, and prosecuting foreign fighters as necessary.⁴⁰

Most recently, in April 2015, the European Union launched a new five-year security strategy that includes a number of initiatives aimed at the foreign fighter threat.⁴¹ Key elements of the strategy include establishment of a European counter-terrorist center, the launch of an EU forum on information technology (IT) to encourage greater cooperation between member states and the IT sector, and increased funding for programs such as the European Criminal Records Information System.

34 UN Security Council, Resolution 2178 (2014), adopted on September 24, 2014, p. 4, available at www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2178%20%282014%29.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 6-7.

37 Teemu Sinkkonen, *War on Two Fronts: The EU Perspective on the Foreign Terrorist Fighters of ISIL* (Helsinki, Finland: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, January 2015), 3.

38 Nikolaj Nielsen, “MEPs Clash with EU Officials Over Foreign Fighters,” *EUobserver*, November 5, 2014, www.euobserver.com/justice/126396.

39 Conclusions of the European Council Meeting, EUCO 79/14, Brussels, June 26-27, 2014, www.data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-79-2014-INIT/en/pdf. The European Council is comprised of all heads of state or government of the member states and the president of the European Commission. Europol, or the European Police Office, is the law enforcement agency of the EU, handling criminal intelligence and combating serious international organized crime. Eurojust is the EU agency responsible for judicial cooperation among member states in criminal matters.

40 General Secretariat of the Council, “Outline of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy for Syria and Iraq, with Particular Focus on Foreign Fighters,” 5369/15, Brussels, January 16, 2015, www.data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5369-2015-INIT/en/pdf.

41 Suzanne Lynch, “EU Reveals New Five-Year Strategy to Combat Terrorism,” *The Irish Times*, April 29, 2015..

Similarly, NATO has been playing an important role in countering the foreign fighter threat through its efforts in intelligence sharing. The sharing of relevant intelligence forms just one part of the alliance's broader approach to addressing the threat from terrorism, which is spelled out in "NATO's Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism."⁴² This concept, known as MC-472 in NATO bureaucratic parlance, was developed by the NATO's Military Committee in late 2001 and then approved by the alliance heads of state and government at the November 2002 Prague summit. It outlines ways in which the alliance might contribute to member state efforts against terrorism in four areas:

- Antiterrorism (essentially defensive measures);
- Consequence Management (dealing with, and reducing, the effects of a terrorist attack once it has taken place);
- Counterterrorism (primarily offensive measures); and,
- Military Cooperation.

Under the heading of anti-terrorism, the alliance concept noted the importance of intelligence sharing and, related to it, the necessity of "effective intelligence."⁴³ In order to help share intelligence as well as assess and analyze terrorist threats, the alliance also established a Terrorist Threat Intelligence Unit (TTIU) at the Prague Summit. The TTIU performed liaison functions between member-state intelligence services and national terrorism coordination centers.

However, the alliance has struggled to achieve an appropriate degree of effectiveness in terms of both intelligence content and the process of intelligence sharing. During a December 2005 workshop – four years after the Military Committee had completed its work, and three years after the alliance had formally declared the necessity of more and better intelligence sharing for the purposes of defending against terrorism – a group of transatlantic intelligence experts concluded the alliance needed to "increase co-operation and intelligence sharing among national intelligence agencies" in the context of fighting terrorism.⁴⁴ This same group noted a 'substantial' amount of sharing, but when it came to intelligence assessments (as opposed to source-derived, raw intelligence), there was still much room for improvement, especially in the following areas:

- Sharing intelligence related to NATO's clearly defined missions, including those in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and the Mediterranean.
- Improving organizational structures within NATO regarding intelligence.
- Providing for regular, informal personal interactions among intelligence operatives.
- Integrating law enforcement purposes in intelligence sharing.

The following year, the alliance took a major step forward when it created a NATO Intelligence Fusion Centre, thereby addressing

⁴² International Military Staff, "NATO's Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism," *NATO*, January 4, 2011, www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69482.htm.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ "The Changing Face of Intelligence: NATO Advanced Research Workshop – Report," The Pluscarden Programme for the Study of Global Terrorism and Intelligence, St. Antony's College, Oxford, December 9-10, 2005, www-old.sant.ox.ac.uk/centres/Nato_conf_report_0106.pdf.

concerns noted at the December 2005 workshop and elsewhere. Based in the United Kingdom, and initially operational in October 2006, the purpose of the fusion center is to provide intelligence to warn of potential crises and to support the planning and execution of NATO operations. In 2010-2011, the alliance attempted to better fuse civilian and military intelligence inputs by implementing a significant intelligence reform effort at NATO headquarters. This initiative saw the establishment of a new NATO Intelligence Unit, which subsumed the functions of the TTIU and provided the alliance with more crisis-prevention tools.⁴⁵

Most recently, at the alliance's Wales summit in September 2014, NATO member states pledged to increase the exchange of information regarding returning foreign fighters, and Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg regularly references intelligence sharing through NATO as a primary means of countering the foreign fighter threat.⁴⁶ Additionally, the alliance has committed to improving its performance in terms of intelligence sharing, especially when it comes to identification of likely problems before they metastasize into crises. Specifically, the commander of NATO's Allied Command Operations (ACO), General Phil Breedlove, has committed to changing what he calls the, "culture of intelligence sharing."⁴⁷

However, despite reform efforts, intelligence sharing through NATO in the absence of a named operation or a specific ongoing or impending crisis continues to be challenging due largely to the counterintelligence threat created by multilateral intelligence sharing. Widening the audience for intelligence products necessarily increases the risk the intelligence will be compromised in some way.⁴⁸ Another important reason is most of the intelligence sharing within Europe, as well as between the United States and its European allies, occurs bilaterally through national law enforcement agencies.⁴⁹ Additionally, there is no single civilian official in charge of intelligence within NATO. Instead, the Deputy Secretary General is typically saddled with intelligence oversight responsibility, among many other duties. This structure makes it easier for NATO's various intelligence-related entities, including the Intelligence Unit, to avoid transparency and adequate information sharing.⁵⁰ Finally, the aftershocks of Edward Snowden's revelations regarding US spying on its allies continue to be felt, inhibiting closer cooperation and coordination between the United States and some members of NATO such as

45 Jamie Shea, "Keeping NATO Relevant," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 2012, www.carnegieendowment.org/files/keeping_nato_relevant.pdf.

46 NATO Heads of State and Government, Wales Summit Declaration, Press Release (2014) 120, September 5, 2014; also see for example the joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, Brussels, April 29, 2015, www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_119074.htm?selectedLocale=en; and the press conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Brussels, January 30, 2015, www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_117022.htm.

47 Mike Corder, "NATO Military Commander: Alliance Needs to Improve Intelligence Sharing," *Associated Press*, March 27, 2015, www.bigstory.ap.org/article/b4158b2e44444024ad6129665ff12766/nato-military-chief-alliance-needs-better-share-intel.

48 Derek S. Reveron, "Old Allies, New Friends: Intelligence-Sharing in the War on Terror," *Orbis* 50, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 453-468.

49 Renée de Nevers, "NATO's International Security Role in the Terrorist Era," *International Security* 31, no. 4 (Spring, 2007): 34-66.

50 For example, the International Military Staff also has an Intelligence division (IMS-INT). Brian R. Foster, *Enhancing the Efficiency of NATO Intelligence Under an ASG-I*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, March 2013), www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA589230.

Germany.⁵¹ These challenges are unlikely to disappear overnight, and so it seems unlikely NATO will be able to improve intelligence sharing dramatically to counter the foreign fighter threat in the short run.

An Expanded Role for NATO?

Looking beyond intelligence sharing, could NATO also play a larger part, somehow better leveraging its unique capabilities and its inclusion of the United States? NATO is unlikely to play a significant role vis-à-vis the foreign-fighter challenge, especially if Western leaders and constituencies assess the threat is not significant. There are two primary reasons for this possibility. First, most European members of the alliance view the foreign-fighter threat as a challenge for domestic or state-level agencies to handle.⁵² They may therefore be reluctant to see yet another issue-area securitized and handed to NATO, or they may simply believe greater emphasis should be placed on preventative or civilian reintegration measures. Instead, the EU and the UN – not the North Atlantic alliance – are viewed as more appropriate intergovernmental vehicles for cooperation. In fact, NATO’s own “Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism,” approved by the alliance’s heads of state and government during the Chicago summit in May 2012, explicitly describes NATO’s role as one that supports “the broad, *UN-led* international effort to combat terrorism.” It further notes “most counter terrorism tools remain primarily with national civilian and judicial authorities,” and makes it clear “individual NATO members have primary responsibility for the protection of their populations and territories against terrorism.”⁵³

Alternatively, with its law enforcement-centric approach to counterterrorism and the importance it places on preventive measures, the European Union may be far better placed – at least in theory – than NATO to fulfill an intergovernmental role in support of state-level efforts.⁵⁴ However, even here, some argue the European Union may lack both the competencies and the capabilities necessary to play a major role.⁵⁵

Second, NATO has struggled to master the speed, agility, and creativity necessary for successful information operations and strategic communications.⁵⁶ If the alliance itself has difficulty mastering these

51 Anton Troianovski, “Germany Halts Some Intelligence Sharing With US,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 7, 2015, www.wsj.com/articles/germany-restricts-some-data-sharing-with-us-1431021158; and Richard Walker, “Intelligence Sharing: ‘A Necessary Fact of Life?’” *Deutsche Welle*, May 15, 2015, www.dw.com/en/intelligence-sharing-a-necessary-fact-of-life/a-18451009.

52 European Parliament Research Service, *Foreign Fighters*, 4; Letter to the Chairman from Lord West of Spithead, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office, October 22, 2009, as found in “The Home Office’s Response to Terrorist Attacks,” Sixth Report of Session 2009-10, Volume 2, House of Commons (UK), Home Affairs Committee, Ev51.

53 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “NATO’s Policy Guidelines On Counter-Terrorism,” Chicago Summit, May 20-21, 2012, www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/ct-policy-guidelines.pdf. Emphasis added.

54 Global Center on Cooperative Security, Human Security Collective and International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, *Addressing the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Phenomenon from a European Union Perspective: UN Security Council Resolution 2178, Legal Issues, and Challenges and Opportunities for EU Foreign Security and Development Policy*, Policy Brief (Goshen, IN: Global Center on Cooperative Security, December 2014), 14-15.

55 See for example, Oldrich Bures, *EU Counterterrorism Policy: A Paper Tiger?* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 2.

56 Andrew T. Wolff, “Crafting a NATO Brand: Bolstering Internal Support for the Alliance through Image Management,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 35, no. 1 (March 2014): 73-95.

skills, it seems unlikely it could play a leading role in helping its member states develop counter-narratives, which are collectively viewed as a primary center of gravity for ISIS and AQAP recruitment of European fighters.

Should the alliance expand its role in this issue area? Probably not, especially again if the threat is not deemed particularly significant. NATO is already dealing with an array of security challenges, at least one of which is far more existential than that posed by foreign fighters returning to conduct attacks in Europe. Specifically, the Russian annexation of Crimea and its invasion of the Donbas have fundamentally altered the security situation across the continent, and NATO members Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland feel particularly threatened and vulnerable.⁵⁷ Elsewhere, several allies in Southern Europe perceive migrant flows from North and Sub-Saharan Africa to be a growing threat, certainly economically and perhaps politically.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the alliance is engaged in a counter-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa, a ballistic missile defense mission in Turkey, a counterterrorism mission in the Mediterranean Sea, and a training mission in Afghanistan. In short, NATO has its hands full with an array of issues and missions, all during a time when it is under pressure to contain costs and reduce personnel strength.

Conversely, if the threat is determined to be significant, there may be some limited areas in which NATO can leverage its comparative advantages, including US membership. How and where the alliance might do this – and whether the US military and the Army in particular might contribute – depends on some of the unique characteristics of the threat, as described earlier in this article.

First, most experts, as well as some political leaders, acknowledge some foreign fighter and lone wolf attacks are inevitable.⁵⁹ A perfect defense is most likely impractical and certainly unaffordable. Hence, resilience – the ability to sustain and recover from an attack – is critical. NATO can help here by offering and continuing to refine its capabilities in providing support for civilian authorities, disaster mitigation, and command and control in crisis situations.

Within the United States, the US Army should continue to leverage initiatives such as the State Partnership Program (SPP). Through the SPP, the US reserve component – which is home to much of the US military's expertise in civil affairs and military support to civil authorities – engages foreign counterparts through exchanges, familiarization

57 John R. Deni, "NATO's New Trajectories after the Wales Summit," *Parameters* 44, no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 57-65.

58 It might be argued that the foreign fighter threat is a southern flank issue, given the geographic proximity of Syria, Iraq, and Libya to southern Europe (at least relative to northern Europe), and that NATO member states in southern Europe ought to naturally find the issue a more compelling one than northern or eastern European members of the alliance. However, this is not necessarily so. As shown in the table earlier in this article, foreign fighters come from all over Europe, not just the south, the north, the west, or the east. Furthermore, as discussed above, most recent foreign fighter attacks in Europe have occurred in western Europe. Therefore, the foreign fighter challenge is not easily categorized as a 'southern flank' issue, certainly not in the same way as instability in North Africa.

59 For example, see Ian Traynor, "Major Terrorist Attack is 'Inevitable' as Isis Fighters Return, Say EU Officials," *The Guardian*, September 25, 2014, www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/25/major-terrorist-attack-inevitable-isis-eu; and Byman and Shapiro, *Be Afraid. Be A Little Afraid*, 23.

events, and educational activities. Adding foreign-fighter threat scenarios and themes to the SPP agenda would be a wise step.

Second, NATO needs to develop a better understanding of the philosophies and theologies of the various violent extremist organizations, since it appears that the blowback rate varies significantly depending on the foreign extremist group in question. Hundreds of Western foreign fighters went to fight in Somalia in the previous decade, but few of them returned to conduct terror attacks. In contrast, those who went to Afghanistan and Pakistan during the same period had a higher blowback rate.⁶⁰ The difference lies in the fact that the latter region is home to al Qaeda's global leadership, which has emphasized attacking targets in the West. Hence, a key independent variable here is whether the group in question strategically targets the West.

However, this is but one variable of perhaps several that are collectively necessary to provide NATO member state security and law enforcement agencies with the ability to discern individuals who deserve arrest and detention from those who simply ought to be denied a travel visa. Beyond the sharing of intelligence content that NATO is already engaged in to some degree, the alliance can help here by leveraging its considerable convening power. Specifically, it can create forums, including formal "Article 4" political consultations, for the exchange of information and best practices among defense, security, and law enforcement agencies, to include those from the United States. This may be particularly valuable to smaller allies, which lack the intelligence gathering and analysis resources of larger allies like the United States, Germany, France, or the United Kingdom. The US Army can contribute here by reducing bureaucratic hindrances to multinational educational and professional collaboration and by incentivizing the sharing of best counterterrorism practices with and among NATO allies.

Finally, even after years of fighting and operating side by side in a number of operations, and as argued in the preceding section, the process of sharing intelligence remains challenging within the alliance. It is arguably the most daunting of the alliance's interoperability challenges. This challenge is especially difficult for the United States, which has a great deal of intelligence assets and information to offer, but which suffers from a decades-long culture of over-classification as well as the more recent hangover associated with the Edward Snowden revelations.⁶¹

Over-classification was identified by the 9/11 Commission as the leading reason the US Government failed to detect and disrupt the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. In order to try to overcome this problem, the US Congress passed the *Reducing Over-Classification Act* in October 2010, which was subsequently signed into law by President Obama and which requires, among other things, the Director of National Intelligence to produce annually an over-classification report for Congress. Despite

60 Thomas Hegghammer, "Will ISIS 'Weaponize' Foreign Fighters?" *CNN Online*, October 17, 2014, www.cnn.com/2014/10/16/opinion/hegghammer-isis-foreign-fighters/.

61 Steven Aftergood, "Telling Secrets," *Foreign Policy*, October 18, 2010; Ronan Farrow, "The Real Concern: Why are so Many US Government Documents Classified?" *The Guardian*, June 28, 2013, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jun/28/nsa-surveillance-too-many-documents-classified; and Elizabeth Goitein and J. William Leonard, "America's Unnecessary Secrets," *The New York Times*, November 7, 2011.

these measures, over-classification remains a challenge, for the United States and others. Member states could help here by changing personnel incentives so that sharing – by developing releasable intelligence assessments in the first instance, for example – is encouraged and rewarded on a consistent basis. NATO could play a part by pressing its existing intelligence entities, including the Intelligence Fusion Centre as well as the Intelligence Unit, to facilitate greater intelligence sharing among and between national security and national law enforcement agencies, further breaking down barriers and facilitating the *process* of intelligence sharing. The US Army could assist here by developing and promoting a culture of appropriate classification and intelligence sharing, and by working to eliminate the zero-defects mentality when it comes to classification decisions.

Conclusion

The fighter threat is potentially significant, as evidenced at least in part by several high-profile terror attacks and uncovered plots over the last year or more. It seems likely some number of unreported plots have also been thwarted. Disagreement remains over just *how* significant the threat actually is, or how it stacks up against other, seemingly more compelling threats confronting Western interests today.

If the threat is not terribly significant, it seems unlikely the West will call upon NATO to play a major role. Other intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations, and especially the European Union, have the necessary expertise, skills, and organizational culture to make tangible differences in how states manage the foreign fighter challenge. And given pressing security challenges in Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and beyond, it is difficult to argue that NATO should elbow its way into the room.

However, if the foreign fighter threat is deemed significant, the West should indeed consider leveraging NATO and its unique capabilities, assets, and attributes – not the least of which is US membership. Strengthening Western resilience against an attack by promoting effective military support to civil authorities, refining the content and sophistication of Western intelligence, and further chipping away at bureaucratic and cultural hurdles to intelligence sharing are all things NATO could assist with. Moreover, these are all areas in which the US military can also play a supporting role. To the degree necessary depending upon the scope of the threat, the West should seek to leverage all available tools at its disposal, including NATO.⁶²

⁶² The author would like to thank US Marine Forces Europe (MARFOREUR), as well as an anonymous reviewer for comments on an earlier draft.

Socio-Cultural Intelligence and National Security

Robert R. Tomes

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ABSTRACT: This article reviews, assesses, and makes recommendations relating to the provision and use of socio-cultural intelligence in support of national security policy. It details responses to gaps in socio-cultural intelligence during the 2000s, and reinforces the importance of socio-cultural intelligence in addressing challenges in the emerging operational environment.

The March 2005 report of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (The WMD Commission) concluded that America's inability to discern crucial aspects of Iraq's weapons program stemmed from failures to understand "the context of Iraq's overall political, social, cultural, and economic situation."¹ In other words, "the Intelligence Community did not sufficiently understand the political dynamics of Saddam Hussein's Iraq."² Given the state of affairs with US policy towards Russia, China, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and other current and potential points of friction one wonders if we have improved our ability to understand such political, social, and cultural dynamics.

The implications for failing to sustain and improve socio-cultural intelligence capabilities are manifold. The failure to understand the true nature of Iraqi deception about weapons of mass destruction reinforced biases and misperception, ultimately leading to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The deliberate heightening of Sunni-Shia tensions in Iraq during the mid-2000s by Sunni extremists who wanted a sectarian war created the conditions for the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Many analysts missed the social, economic, and political antecedents to the Arab Spring, including the relationship between increasing dissatisfaction with government corruption, rising food prices and unemployment, increased religiosity, and the emergence of new, organized factions willing to demonstrate against the government. It appears analysts also failed to recognize Russia possessed both the intentions and capabilities to wage a pseudo-war in Ukraine, and that China would increase its expansionism in the South China Sea and escalate its cyber attacks on the United States.

1 Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, *The Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, Report to the President of the United States*. Unclassified. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2005), 173-174.

2 Ibid.

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Throughout the 2000s, strategists, planners, and policymakers seeking the same socio-political context identified in the WMD Commission Report lamented a paucity of capabilities to understand what has been termed “socio-cultural intelligence,” an area of intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting that atrophied in the 1980s and 1990s.³ As former National Security Advisor Steven Hadley recently observed, “whether it’s Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, or the 2011 Arab Awakening, we are starting from scratch” and “after the kinetic phase against ISIS, there’s going to have to be some work done. How are we going to do that?”⁴

Indeed, post-Cold War intelligence programs undervalued social science disciplines as emphasis was placed on technical collection and reporting disciplines. While the 1990s witnessed an increase in the open, unclassified resources available to help policymakers understand foreign cultures, movements, and peoples, they were not considered as part of the baseline data collected and analyzed for defense, development, and diplomacy missions. Policymakers did not have access to the best assessments, data, or experts available to inform intelligence analysis, estimates, or policy formulation.

The United States has a long history of collecting and using demographic, cultural, and identity-related information in support of national security policy. But the record is mixed. When there is a national security crisis or war, socio-cultural intelligence efforts are funded, social scientists are mobilized, and policymakers have access to key insights into foreign populations. Lacking the imperative for such support or direct intervention by senior leaders, however, funding for socio-cultural intelligence activities atrophy. Too often the available resources for socio-cultural intelligence collection and analysis fall between the traditional intelligence organizations or, because they are deemed unclassified or “open source” activities, are relegated to lower priority. This paradigm must change.

For the present, local and regional instability related to a global economic contraction, climate change, water and food shortages, urbanization, and other socio-economic problems will trump efforts to counter the effects of failed and criminalized states, criminal syndicates, and other malign transnational actors. Much of the developing world seems destined for new waves of instability, begging the question: what have we learned about socio-cultural intelligence and the imperative to understand human dynamics when it comes to national security policy?

This article explores recent experience with socio-cultural intelligence and recommends key issues and challenges for national security

3 While there is no agreed on definition of socio-cultural intelligence the term connotes intelligence methods, processes, and analytic products that specifically integrate social, cultural, and human domain data into analysis to illuminate how identity-related, communal, cultural, and other factors influence decisions, perspectives, and behavior. Most US government activities informing and contributing to socio-cultural intelligence fall outside of the intelligence programs and budgets by design. They are often characterized as intelligence support or fusion activities to distinguish them from human intelligence activities, which require training, oversight, and formal association with intelligence operations that are ill-suited to leverage the expertise available through academic, research, and other non-government organizations. A controversial argument for making socio-cultural intelligence a separate discipline is made in Kerry Patton, *Socio-Cultural Intelligence: A New Discipline in Intelligence Studies* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2010).

4 Stephen Hadley, interview by Joseph Collins and Nicholas Rostow, October 7, 2014, *PRISM* 5, no. 3 (June 2015): 150.

policymakers and those that support them. The term “socio-cultural intelligence” addresses the nature of the intelligence and knowledge requirements that policymakers seek as input to decisions about preferences, ideology, behaviors, affiliations, and perceptions of individuals and groups.

Cold War Socio-Cultural Intelligence

Today’s socio-cultural intelligence programs have roots in World War II. Programs in that era included the Human Relations Area Files project at Yale University, the use of anthropologists to understand Japanese culture and governance, initiatives to inform the recruiting of “partisans,” and efforts to shape and help implement post-war occupation policies.⁵ Socio-cultural intelligence directly informed World War II operations, including those of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

OSS utilized anthropologists and other social scientists considered essential to strategic planning as well as tactical operations. As authors Max Boot, David Kilcullen, and others have argued, the underlying model for the OSS as an interagency, strategic services organization should be considered for adoption as a supplement to the expansion of special operations forces (SOF). While rightly considered a legacy of the famed OSS units, today’s SOF are not chartered or authorized to wage strategic warfare as an interagency activity in the same fashion as the civilian and military elements of the OSS. Information operations and the ability to focus “strategic services” on the human domain are critical to success in many twenty-first century international security challenges. Reflecting on interagency capabilities to integrate military, civilian, and academic expertise to deal with national security crisis in the 2000s, Stephen Hadley observed “we have not developed a systematic way to identify, train, exercise, deploy, do lessons learned, and improve.”⁶

During the early Cold War, assessments of foreign leadership, cultural issues, and the sentiment of foreign populations received periodic emphasis during times of crisis. Early in the Cold War, socio-cultural intelligence assessments deeply influenced the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) estimates of stability in postwar Europe. The CIA concluded that poverty and underlying social conditions of post-colonial areas and in some of the devastated cities rendered susceptible to Soviet influence, especially in areas where leftist or socialist sentiments existed.

Today’s approach to pattern of life analysis for counter-insurgency operations revisits population-centric methods used during the Vietnam War, including socio-cultural intelligence support to Operation Cedar Falls. Cedar Falls involved identifying enemy dispositions and behavior in the area known as the Iron Triangle around Saigon. Despite debate about the success of Cedar Falls and its follow-on Operation Junction City, historians widely agree on the success of intelligence preparation

5 For general history see US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics* (Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, 2009); on the Human Relations Area Files see Clellan S. Ford, *Human Relations Area Files: 1949-1969, A Twenty-Year Report* (New Haven, CN: Human Relations Area Files, LLC, 1970); see also Louise E. Hoffman, “American Psychologists and Wartime Research on Germany, 1941-1945,” *American Psychologist* 47, no. 2 (February 1992): 264-273.

6 Hadley, interview, 150.

involved, especially the layered, multi-dimensional application of socio-cultural intelligence.⁷

After Vietnam, the military revamped its doctrine and planning to wage combined arms warfare against the Warsaw Pact. An aversion to military interventions went much deeper than avoiding another small war. US defense strategy focused almost exclusively on countering the Soviet threat to NATO in Europe and on modernizing the nuclear force.⁸ The US military purged counter-insurgency doctrine, training, and force structure from its approach to preparing for war.⁹ Post-Vietnam, national security decision-making imperatives reversed the learning curve for American intelligence agencies when it came to human dynamics. Intelligence and information collection, analysis, and reporting processes gradually shifted to technical collection methods.¹⁰

By the 1980s, Army infantry officers received only the most simplistic introduction to counter-insurgency principles and doctrine during their officer basic and advanced courses. Intelligence capabilities were retooled, shifted from insurgency and winning the hearts and minds of local populations with boots on the ground to tracking Soviet military forces and waging a different type of strategic information warfare against global communism. Military doctrine barely addressed counterinsurgency operations. The only real planning or doctrine for urban warfare focused on armor and mechanized infantry forces by-passing cities, with limited planning doctrine written or considered for operations in “urban terrain.”¹¹ With the current resurgence in ethnic crisis, ideological conflicts, nationalism, and other identity-related challenges, we cannot afford to repeat the pattern of atrophy in socio-cultural intelligence.

Expertise in socio-cultural intelligence collection and analysis atrophied in the 1990s.¹² Lessons from intervention in the Balkans, Iraq, and Somali emphasized airpower, precision strikes, and rapid decisive operations to overwhelm and defeat adversaries in combat without the need

7 For an operational history of Operation Cedar Falls see LTG (Ret) Bernard William Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City: A Turning Point* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, 1989). The debate continues on the utility of the intelligence support to Operation Cedar Falls concerning the outcome of the larger effort, a quibble that does not dilute the innovation and “pattern of life” similarities to current conflicts.

8 Robert R. Tomes, *American Defence Strategy from Vietnam to Operation Iraqi Freedom: US Military Innovation and the New American Way of War, 1973-2003* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007).

9 Ibid.

10 Robert R. Tomes, “Informing US National Security Transformation Discussions: An Argument for Balanced Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance,” *Defence Studies* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 20-35; and Michael T. Flynn, Matt Pottinger, and Paul D. Batcherlor, *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, January 2010).

11 Tomes, *American Defence Strategy*, chapters 4-5.

12 For an overview of socio-cultural intelligence approaches see the conference report and briefings in LeeEllen Friedland, Gary W. Shaeff, and Jessica Glicken Turnley, *Socio-Cultural Perspectives: A New Intelligence Paradigm* (McLean, VA: MITRE Corporation Center for National Security Programs, 2006). Also see, US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*, chapter 2 and appendix D. For a survey of efforts to address socio-cultural intelligence gaps see Joel Lawton, “How the Military Intelligence Community Has Failed to Incorporate Sociocultural Understanding of their Operational Environment,” *Small Wars Journal*, April 23, 2014, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/how-the-military-intelligence-community-has-failed-to-incorporate-sociocultural-understandi>.

for post-conflict occupation and nation-building forces.¹³ These trends would not be reversed until after the first battle of Fallujah, which forced US planners to realize they may lose the strategic battle for the future of Iraq. One outcome was a push to integrate socio-cultural intelligence expertise from across the US government and an emphasis on stability and security operations across the defense, diplomacy, and development sectors.

Stability Operations in an Era of Persistent Conflict

Some of the important developments in socio-cultural intelligence in the 2000s involved the ascent of security and stabilization missions.¹⁴ The Department of State created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in July 2004, subsequently renamed the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations in November 2011. The creation of an Office and then a Bureau to coordinate and oversee policies and programs related to stability and conflict provided structure, resources, and processes to better integrate socio-cultural intelligence into State Department operations.

Another significant inflection point occurred in November 2005 with the publication of Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (often referred to as SSTRO), revised and reissued in 2009 under the shorter title, Stability Operations. DoD Directive 3000.05 made stability operations a core military mission. The document codified in Departmental guidance what many strategists had already observed in programming, budgeting, and training activities: stability and support operations should not be viewed as secondary activities from the perspective of readiness, doctrine, training, and acquisition priorities. Security and stability operations were henceforth to be considered co-equal missions alongside traditional military missions.

Also in 2005, Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson published an article in *Military Review* calling for an Office for Operational Cultural Knowledge that informed the creation of Human Terrain Teams by the US Army Training and Doctrine Command in 2006.¹⁵ The Army disbanded the Human Terrain System, the program managing Human Terrain Teams, in June 2015 in the wake of widespread criticism of its effectiveness and efficiency (although many brigade commanders had given the program high marks). Lessons learned from the Human Terrain Program will undoubtedly reinforce the need for similar efforts to provide combat commanders with socio-cultural intelligence in future conflicts.

13 On the use of airpower in the battles of Fallujah see William Head, "The Battles of Al-Fallujah: Urban Warfare and the Growth of Air Power," *Air Power History* 60, no. 4 (Winter 2013): 32-51. For a critical view of airpower doctrine and support to counterinsurgency see Kenneth Beebe, "The Air Force's Missing Doctrine: How the US Air Force Ignores Counterinsurgency," *Air & Space Power Journal* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 27-34; and Michael L. Downs, "Rethinking the Combined Air Force Component Commander's ISR Approach to Counterinsurgency," *Air & Space Power Journal* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 67-76.

14 Bernard Carreau, *Transforming the Interagency System for Complex Operations* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, 2007).

15 Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson, "An Organizational Solution for DoD's Cultural Knowledge Needs," *Military Review* 85, no. 4 (July-August 2005): 18-21; and US Army Human Terrain System, "History of the Human Terrain System," <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/history.html>.

Meanwhile, in 2006 the US Army published Field Manual (FM) 3-24 on Counter-Insurgency, promulgated doctrine for stability operations (FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*) in October 2008, and updated its foundational doctrine *Operations* (FM 3-0) in February 2008, defining “full spectrum operations” as the simultaneous application of offensive and defensive measures in concert with stability operations.

The same year, Army Chief of Staff George Casey described the future operating environment as an era of “persistent conflict.”¹⁶ In the United States Army’s 2008 Posture Statement, Casey argued:

We are on the leading edge of a period when an increasing number of actors (state, non-state, and individual) in a less constrained international arena, are more willing to use violence to pursue their ends...[S]even enduring trends exacerbate these sources of conflict: Globalization conjoined with Technological innovations; Demographic changes coupled with increasing Urbanization; rising Resource demands; Climate change and natural disasters; Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and the consequences of Failed or failing states.¹⁷

The changing nature of conflict and stability was also a central theme in the 2008 *National Defense Strategy*, which stated: “We face a global struggle. Like communism and fascism before it, extremist ideology has transnational pretensions.”¹⁸ Widespread recognition of the need for greater understanding of extremism, resurgent nationalism, and other identity- and culture-driven national security problems spurred then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to create Project Minerva in 2008, a research program to expand social science research in support of military operations.

A Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force assessed the challenges the national security community would face in an era of persistent conflict in a March 2009 entitled *Understanding Human Dynamics*. The report defined human dynamics as “the actions and interactions of personal, interpersonal, and social/contextual factors and their effects on behavioral outcomes.”¹⁹

The Task Force’s focus on human dynamics as a critical issue for national security was based on the need for deeper understanding of adversaries, the demographics in regions and countries where American military forces or development personnel were deployed, the unfolding of strategic narratives and how to influence them, and of how local instability or crisis might lead to wider conflict.²⁰ Understanding human dynamics is not simply about gathering ethnographic, demographic, or other information about groups, peoples, or cultures. Such understanding comes only from the systematic analysis, synthesis, and integration

16 Attributed to Chief of Staff of the Army General George Casey in Jim Garamone, “Gen. Casey Says Army Must Be Prepared for ‘Persistent Conflict,’” *American Forces Press Service*, May 11, 2007; and by Gregory Fontenot and Kevin Benson, “Persistent Conflict or Containment: Alternate Visions of Contemporary Conflict,” *Army* (September 2009): 74-80.

17 US Department of the Army, “Information Papers: Persistent Conflict,” *2008 Army Posture Statement*, http://www.army.mil/aps/08/information_papers/prepare/Persistent_Conflict.html

18 US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, June 2008), 7.

19 US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*, vii.

20 *Ibid.*, 117.

of human-centric thinking into national security decision-making processes.

In 2009, former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy and one of her assistants, Shawn Brimley, argued “the US military will increasingly face three types of challenges: rising tensions in the global commons; hybrid threats that contain a mix of traditional and irregular forms of conflict, and the problem of weak and failing states.”²¹

The characterization of emerging security challenges as hybrid threats was fueled in part by widespread adoption of the term “hybrid wars” to describe conflicts in the twenty-first century. While the DOD has not officially defined the term, the prevailing view is hybrid threats incorporate the “full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder, conducted by both states and a variety of non-state actors.”²² Despite the proliferation of the terms “hybrid threats” and “hybrid wars,” many analysts and strategists failed to anticipate Russian military activities in Ukraine, despite indications that Russian President Vladimir Putin was planning operations to disrupt Ukraine’s accession into the European Union and to challenge NATO’s continued integration of former Soviet territory.

The 2010s are bringing the national security community full circle back to the dilemma faced by post-Cold War planners and strategists seeking to reduce spending on defense, intelligence, and other national security programs.²³ Unlike the post-Vietnam environment, the United States cannot shift its defense, diplomacy, and development strategies away from insurgency, terrorism, and similar forms of warfare.

In 2010, the office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence published *The Human Dimension: Analyzing the Role of the Human Element in the Operational Environment*, a concept paper that emphasized the changing requirements for socio-cultural intelligence. It called for increased “understanding of the human dimension among practitioners and consumers of intelligence, from the tactical to the strategic level” and outlined an approach to integrate “human domain awareness” into all aspects of military operations across the traditional warfighting domains (land, sea, air, space).²⁴ Despite five years of efforts to build capabilities for security and stability operations and repeated attempts to characterize the emerging era of persistent conflict and hybrid wars, little was done

21 Michèle Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, “The Contested Commons,” *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 135, no. 7 (July 2009): 16-21. On US Army adaptation in Iraq, Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom, May 2003-January 2005: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008).

22 Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007), 8.

23 See Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands, *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First Century Military* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014); Michael T. Flynn, James Sisco, and David C. Ellis, “Left of Bang: The Value of Sociocultural Analysis in Today’s Environment,” *PRISM* 3, no. 4 (September 2012): 13-22; Charles Ehlschlaeger, ed., *Socio-Cultural Analysis with the Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Intelligence Paradigm*, White Paper (Washington, DC: US Army Engineer Research Development Center, July 2014); and Sarah Canna, ed., *Operational Relevance of Behavioral and Social Science to DoD Missions* (Boston, MA: NSI Conference Report, March 2013).

24 Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, *The Human Dimension: Analyzing the Role of the Human Element in the Operational Environment* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, September 15, 2010), 3.

in the 2000s to institutionalize our capacity to provide socio-cultural intelligence at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

The Imperative for Socio-Cultural Intelligence

The 2011 uprisings in the Middle East and Africa refocused attention on improving socio-cultural intelligence capabilities. The so-called Arab Spring sprang from a number of related social, economic, and political challenges common to nations in what the US National Intelligence Council termed an “arc of instability” stretching from the northern parts of South Asia, across the Caucasus, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, and into the Andean region of Latin America.²⁵ The destabilization that followed led to increased oil prices, which in turn caused a price spike in world food prices, leading some governments to increase food subsidies in an attempt to prevent further unrest.²⁶ Internationally, food security experts are already warning of a repeat of the 2007-2008 world food crisis based on changes in oil prices, droughts, and other factors.²⁷

The Arab Spring was quickly recast as the Arab Winter as initial moves toward pluralism and liberalization faltered and extremism increased.²⁸ The explosion of new mediums of communication has simultaneously created more informed citizens and provided new tools for political mobilization, manipulation, and propaganda. Additionally, immigrants fleeing regional instability for Europe are aggravating an already stressed political and economic climate on that continent.

For some observers, the Arab Spring was a harbinger of coming instability.²⁹ Instability seems imminent in any state where more than fifty percent of the population is under thirty years of age, educated, increasingly aware of their poverty and lack of opportunities, resents government corruption, and can be mobilized into political action using new, pervasive social media and personal communication networks.³⁰ There is already a perceived “gap” in intelligence support to policymakers leveraging available social media sources. One of the goals of CIA Director John Brennan’s recent reorganization, which included moving the previously stand-alone Open Source Center into the CIA Directorate for Intelligence, is making social media analytics more responsive and relevant to policy customers.

25 National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, November 2008), iv.

26 On the Arab Spring’s causes and aftermath, see “Special Report: The Arab Spring,” *Economist* (July 13, 2013); David McMurry and Amanda Ufheil-Somers, eds., *The Arab Revolts: Dispatches on Militant Democracy in the Middle East* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013); Jean-Pierre Filiu, *The Arab Revolution: Ten Lessons from the Democratic Uprising* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011); Sarah Johnstone and Jeffrey Mazo, “Global Warming and the Arab Spring,” *Survival* 53, no. 2 (March 2011): 11-17; and Samah Ayed Ahmed, “The Impact of Food and Global Economic Crises (2008) on Food Security in Egypt,” *African and Asian Studies* 13, no. 2 (2014): 205-236.

27 Julian Cribb, *The Coming Famine: The Global Food Crisis and What We Can Do About It* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010); and Andrew S. Natsios and Kelly W. Doley, “The Coming Food Coups,” *Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (2009): 7-25.

28 For additional commentary on the rise of extremism and retreat from liberalism after the Arab Spring, see Howard J. Wiarda, “Arab Fall or Arab Winter?” *American Foreign Policy Interests* 34, no. 3 (2012): 134-137; Michael J. Totten, “Arab Spring or Islamist Winter?” *World Affairs* 174, no. 5 (January/February 2012): 23-42; and “Special Report: The Arab Spring,” *Economist*.

29 “Special Report: The Arab Spring,” *Economist*.

30 Jack A. Goldstone, Monty G. Marshall, and Hilton Root, “Demographic Growth in Dangerous Places: Concentrating Conflict Risks,” *International Area Studies Review* 17, no. 2 (June 2014): 120-133.

For much of the past decade debates on and discussions about US national security have been dominated by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the global war against terrorism and religious extremism. Fundamental to these discussions are questions about the nature of Islam, ideology, nation-building, and the roiling of identities from the cross-cutting pressures of globalization, Westernization, and liberalism. After struggling to design and implement an effective strategy to defeat counterinsurgency and extremism in Afghanistan and Iraq, a people-centric counter-insurgency strategy was adopted and deep understanding of “patterns of life” became a priority. This population-centric approach required “whole of government solutions” integrating defense, diplomacy, development and other domains across strategy, policy formulation, and exaction phases.

Adopting a population-centric approach as the overarching strategy to prevail in Afghanistan and against violent extremists presented a number of challenges. It was not a natural approach or orientation for the legacy intelligence and information support activities that underpin the defense, diplomacy, and development arms of the broader national security community. The organizational and institutional memory required for a population-centric strategy did not exist. And, as Gian Gentile argues, the emergence of “population-centric counterinsurgency has perverted a better way of American war which has primarily been one of improvisation and practicality...but is not a strategy” for prevailing in future conflicts.”³¹

Adopting a population-centric strategy as a national security policy imperative required changing how resources were allocated, what equipment was procured, how people were trained and evaluated, and how the interagency would collaborate to form whole-of-government solutions. This has not been entirely successful, as evidenced by ongoing debates about the importance of defining and addressing Islamic extremism, assessing the regional implications of increasing nationalism among ethnic Russians residing in Eastern Europe, and understanding Chinese strategic culture and its role in shaping Chinese foreign policy decisions.³²

Population-centric planning also altered expectations for the length of US (and Coalition forces) deployments, changed the rules of engagement for counter-terrorism and other operations, and shifted how US forces engaged with and related to the local population. When it appeared the prevailing approach was not working in Iraq and a “surge” was needed, socio-cultural intelligence programs were funded, made a national security priority, and the imperative to understand patterns of life and the ideational and motivational underpinnings of foreign leaders and group behaviors brought social science methods and analytic approaches into the mainstream of the national security decision making process.³³

31 Gian P. Gentile, “A Strategy of Tactics: Population-Centric COIN and the Army,” *Parameters* 41, no. 4 (Winter 2011-2012): 116-127.

32 See Graeme Wood, “What ISIS Really Wants,” *Atlantic*, March 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>; and for a recent assessment of China’s strategic culture, see Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China’s Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co., 2015).

33 US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*, chapters 1 and 2; and Wright and Reese, *On Point II*.

Meanwhile, the fight against terrorist and insurgent networks required the US government to build a stronger interagency, whole-of-government “network” able to share information and expertise at the level of detail and in the timelines required to degrade adversary networks. Sustaining constant pressure on insurgent and terrorist networks in Iraq and Afghanistan required deep insight into local (including tribal) politics, how local politics related to political dynamics in Kabul and Baghdad, how politics in both capitals were influenced by regional and international actors, and the myriad activities and events that influenced support for the government as well as for anti-regime forces.

More important for thinking about the future of human domain analysis were the changes required inside the US national security community with respect to thinking about security policy in the twenty-first century. Adopting population-centric strategies required fundamental changes in measures of effectiveness and in the very types of information and intelligence required to inform policy, decision-making, and operations decision-makers.³⁴

It is unclear whether this people-centered strategic focus will last in light of budget cuts and waning support for continued emphasis on counter-insurgency doctrine. The historical record, moreover, suggests our capabilities to understand socio-cultural dynamics and to apply that understanding to policy-making may once again atrophy in a post-conflict environment as priorities shift and budgets decline.

Human Dynamics

At no time in the history of American national security has it been more crucial to achieve greater insight into the social, cultural, political, and ideological factors underlying contemporary security crises. From Russian and Chinese nationalism to the Islamic State to reactions to the Charlie Hebdo shootings in France to mass demonstrations sparked by social media “mob” activity, international security affairs are increasingly dominated by issues that require deeper understanding of ideas, ideology, religion, societies, cultures, values, perceptions, and grievances, ambitions.

In the mid-2000s, the militant group Al-Qaeda in Iraq promoted sectarian violence to spark a Sunni-Shia civil war to mobilize Sunnis and recruit extremists. Since then Sunni extremists have promoted their radical interpretation of Islam and expanded their operations across the region. In 2014, the Syrian Civil war and a dysfunctional Iraqi government created a power vacuum ripe for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to seize territory and rename itself an Islamic State.

Elsewhere, as the world focused on the Olympics in Sochi, analysts failed to anticipate Russian plans to seize the Crimea and foment

34 For insights into population-centric warfare, see Gentile, “A Strategy of Tactics”; and Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2013). For insights into aspects of population-centric warfare see Hans Binnendijk and Stuart E. Johnson, eds., *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, 2004); Scott Atran, *Briefing to the US Defense Science Board on Countering Violent Extremism* (Washington, DC: ARTIS, February 2013), <http://cis.politics.ox.ac.uk/publications/images/DSB-CVE%20Briefing%2013FEB14%20-%20Final.pdf>; and US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*, chapter 2.

a separatist movement in Ukraine. Russian manipulation of ethnic cleavages in Ukraine to foment instability may be less about the status of ethnic Russians in former Soviet states than impeding Ukraine's near-term plans to join the European Union and long-term overtures to join NATO. Both the EU and NATO resist accession by states with internal conflicts. At home, Putin's actions in Ukraine seem to be part of a larger push to solidify nationalist support.

Looking forward, it is important to understand the dimensions of the human security landscape that will shape twenty-first century national security challenges and to improve our understanding of the human domain. A number of policy issues require additional study. Chief among them are projected changes in GDP in the developed world based on demographic shifts that may lead to overall changes in economic power and influence. The continued growth of "youth bulges" in many countries currently experiencing internal civil wars (e.g., Iraq, Sudan, Yemen, Somalia) will require additional policy innovation and regional initiatives to deal with chronic instability. Because innovation is demographically associated with youth, nations experiencing a population graying will find their economies progressively less innovative.

Across the globe, policymakers will have to deal with the interaction of macro-level changes in the environment, shifts in economic production, and additional waves of radicalism that, based on local and regional demographic changes, will create uncertainty and instability requiring a more flexible and adaptive range of policy initiatives.

The global population increases at a daily rate of around 200,000 people with the fastest growth occurring in the fifty least developed, poorest countries which collectively account for or enable a large percentage of the world's current security challenges. For the first time in human history, over fifty percent of the world's population lives in cities. There are some 500 cities with populations over one million people with a projected doubling of the global urban population every thirty-five to forty years. Soon, sixty percent of the global population will reside in cities, with most of these cities in the poorest, least-developed countries and over thirty of the cities categorized as mega-cities (having a population of ten million or more).³⁵

Many of these locations lack levels of governance, justice, police, sanitation, medical, or other central infrastructure. In addition, over one-sixth of the world's population lives in shanty-towns or slums, a population that is growing more rapidly than the overall growth of cities. Cities and slums are the ungoverned spaces of the future, the places where terrorists and anti-Western extremists may find sanctuary. National security planners will have to become more adept at crafting and pursuing long-term strategies to moderate instability and crises in large cities, many with ungoverned areas.

Even seemingly subtle changes in things like dietary preferences have larger implications for global affairs. Food prices and the stability

³⁵ On the future of global population and related demographic challenges see National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, 2012). See also Jack A. Goldstone, Eric P. Kaufman, and Monica Duffy Toft, eds., *How Population Changes are Reshaping International Security and National Politics* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2012).

of the global food market directly influence internal politics when governments are forced to adapt policies or quell internal dissent over food shortages, prices, or growing awareness of food inequalities. Climate change is an important factor influencing human security problems, with rice, corn, and wheat yields estimated to fall ten percent with every one-degree rise in temperature. An important area of research is the analysis of “spatial inequalities” that involve how geographic, social, and political conditions create inequalities in access to or the distribution of food, water, and energy resources in countries and regions and how these inequalities are controlled, and manipulated.

Managing food and water security issues requires more effective use of open source information on indicators of global food price changes as well as “big data” analytic methods to integrate open source, proprietary (or subscription), and other sources of information. Traditional intelligence approaches will be less effective, requiring additional funding and innovation to incorporate new intelligence methods into the policy- and decision-making arena.

While the 2000s witnessed an increase in open, unclassified resources available to help policymakers understand foreign cultures, movements, and peoples, they were not considered part of the baseline data collected and analyzed for defense, development, and diplomacy missions. Policymakers did not have access to the best assessments, data, or experts available. Sadly this is still the case. Despite significant investments in demographic data, cultural intelligence collection and assessments, and open source intelligence capabilities, policymakers and commanders still do not have routine access to available information and expertise, even for basic demographic realities of conflict-prone areas.³⁶

In addition to demographic realities, a generational change in key global leaders, such as Chinese state leadership, is shifting the calculus of strategic culture in important areas that require deeper understanding of leader perceptions, intent, and motivations.³⁷ With its continued population growth, “graying” population, and skewed male-to-female population ratio, understanding human dynamics is a prerequisite to understanding Chinese national decision-making, economic policy, and foreign policy.³⁸ The explosion in online “netizens” as more Chinese take to the internet directs us to an emerging area of research for socio-cultural intelligence: how the cyber domain can be used to influence nationalism and to mobilize the masses.³⁹

36 See Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor, *Fixing Intel*; and US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*.

37 Pillsbury explores the roots of Chinese foreign policy in Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015).

38 For an extended discussion of graying populations and related issues, including how the graying of Russians may be fueling Russian nationalism, see Jennifer Dabbs Sciubba, *The Future Faces of War: Population and National Security* (New York, NY: Praeger Security International, 2010).

39 On online activism and general assessments of protest in China, see Ya-Wen Lei, “The Political Consequences of the Rise of the Internet: Political Beliefs and Practices of Chinese Netizens,” *Political Communication* 28, no. 3 (July-September 2011): 291-322; Xiao Qiang, “The Battle for the Chinese Internet,” *Journal of Democracy* 22, no. 2 (April 2011): 47-61; Rebecca MacKinnon, “Liberation Technology: China's ‘Networked Authoritarianism,’” *Journal of Democracy* 22, no. 2 (April 2011): 32-46. For general socio-cultural intelligence issues related to online communication see Leigh Armistead, *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Information Warfare and Security* (Washington, DC: George Washington University, 2011), section 4.

Changes in global immigration and migration patterns are also critical to understanding global affairs. For the present, over two million people will migrate annually from underdeveloped to developed nations, many illegally, creating new diasporas that are more connected politically and economically with their home countries than any other time in history, with the flow of remittances back to their home nations becoming an important dimension of the global economy. Migrations, especially forced migration due to war, famine, disease, or other human security deficit, continue to disrupt patterns of political and social life.

Even in Western Europe, migration and immigration patterns have altered domestic politics, sparked riots and violence, and created international crises in the case perceived mistreatment of migrant workers. Understanding the interplay of social, political, economic, and ideological dynamics is critical to understanding and anticipating the regional crises likely to face Europe in the years to come.

Research on Social-Cultural Dynamics

In response to requirements for socio-cultural information there have been numerous, albeit fragmented, efforts to collect data about humans, groups, activities, behavior, and perceptions; to analyze that data using methods, tools, or techniques; and to report findings or conclusions focused on the actions of behaviors of specific individuals all the way to groups (clans, tribes, sects), entire regions, and seemingly non-geographic or global networks. There has also been a dizzying array of terms to describe these efforts, including human terrain, socio-cultural intelligence, human socio-cultural behavioral modeling, human factors, social media monitoring, patterns of life analysis and, more recently, activity based intelligence. It is time for discipline, integration, and programmatic rigor to assess these efforts, develop doctrine, harmonize the lexicon, and institutionalize the development of capabilities for socio-cultural intelligence.

Improving socio-cultural intelligence requires broader, deeper, and more sophisticated approaches drawing on the latest research from communications, social movement, and other disciplines. Predictions of more sustained local and regional instability related to a global economic contraction, climate change, water and food shortages, urbanization, and other socio-economic problems suggest that much of the developing world seems destined for new waves of violence that will, inevitably, compel the United States to act. Research provided by human geographers and other social scientists are critical for understanding international security challenges in the coming decades.

To understand the full range of requirements for human domain analysis we must do more than “map” the human terrain. The capabilities to leverage surveillance systems are now in place that capture millions of tracks a day, including dismounted objects (pedestrians), create national biometric databases accessible to police and tactical units with real-time biometric and facial recognition technology, and provide very accurate geo-location on almost anything that emits a signal, connects to a cell tower, or touches the Internet. We are collecting huge amounts of data that can provide enormous insight when combined with appropriate methods.

Understanding how to leverage all of this data, to what effect, and for what users is not a new problem. At least the challenge of knowledge management solutions for big data is not a new problem. What is new, perhaps, are orders of magnitude increases in the expectations we now have on fusing or integrating all of this data in a fashion that satisfies requirements for accelerated timelines, more detailed and accurate predictions about complex events or trends, and for more automation in analytic workflows to enable analysts to spend more of their time doing analysis and less time finding and retrieving relevant information from disparate databases.

At the very least, the interdependence of global affairs requires American national security planners to improve their ability to anticipate, understand, and mitigate the consequences of regional instability. This requires sustaining the level of support for innovation in human domain analytics (including social media analysis), continued support for experimentation using interagency, multi-disciplinary approaches that remove barriers to information sharing, and recognition that emerging or future national security challenges will require as much or greater capacity than we currently possess to understand the human domain of global affairs. Critical to the success of future socio-cultural intelligence programs will be building data science and data analytics capabilities.

Military planners must have the capability to develop a deep, sustained understanding of local politics, perceptions, and behaviors at the level of detail required to identify, understand, and influence local leaders and actors. Sustained emphasis on social science research and analysis within the national security community, especially from senior policymakers, is critical to help shape research agendas and to preserve government engagement with academic and research communities.

Reforming the US national security planning process presents a number of challenges. It is difficult to adapt and reform processes that are operating at or near capacity without fundamentally changing priorities, adapting organizations, and having the leadership and political support to “sunset” current offices or programs. It is hard to enact reforms, or to “rebalance” resources, to borrow from former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, if one does not know the appropriate place to apply leverage.

In a 2008 speech to the Association of American Universities then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated “we must again embrace the eggheads and ideas” to inform national security policy and implementation.⁴⁰ Across the national security community – and indeed across American society – there are calls for increased funding for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education, research, and solutions. Recently many have argued to include “Arts” to capture the imperative to also increase funding for social science or liberal arts programs and research. This includes language and cross-cultural awareness programs which are increasingly perceived to be critical to US defense, diplomacy, and development efforts around the world.

40 Robert M. Gates, “Address to the Association of American Universities,” Washington, DC, April 14, 2008.

Conclusion

While there is evidence strategies incorporating cultural analysis have been used with success in moments of crisis, there is less evidence these lessons are being assimilated and institutionalized within the infrastructure of US intelligence and security policy. American national security planners and strategists have a mixed record when it comes to predicting and preparing for future conflicts.⁴¹ We become Proteus, creating new strategy, military doctrine, and defense programs in the ashes of initial setbacks or defeats.

This pattern has been repeated though conflicts in Korean, Vietnam, Iraq, in the so-called Global War on Terrorism. In each case America's vast resources, ability to adapt, and technological prowess have been brought to bear to overcome challenges. Yet we revert back to being Sisyphus soon after each crisis passes, believing that we will have the time, resources, and capacity to adapt in the future.

This approach is no longer sufficient when it comes to prevailing in identity-related, ideological conflicts of the future or when it comes to fully understanding changes in the strategic environment.⁴² As former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff observed in the *2015 National Military Strategy of the United States of America*:

Today's global security environment is the most unpredictable I have seen in 40 years of service...We now face multiple, simultaneous security challenges from traditional state actors and transregional networks of sub-state groups – all taking advantage of rapid technological change.⁴³

It also appears the broader national security policy community is connecting stability and prosperity in particular parts of the world to the existence of particular forms of data and particular social science expertise. Many of the places experiencing patterns of crisis and instability are also “data poor” from the perspective of geospatial data about socio-cultural dynamics.⁴⁴

The ability to collect, to aggregate, and to make sense of information derived from social media and other unclassified sources is impeded by the lack of comprehensive open source intelligence capabilities, fragmentation of open source intelligence requirements management, and a general failure to integrate available sources and analytic methods from commercial and academic experts into intelligence production.

For students of American defense strategy and foreign affairs, mapping the future of US national security requires gaining additional perspective on the nature of the emerging era of persistent conflict. In nations as diverse as Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Libya, Egypt, Mali,

41 Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Preparing for One War and Getting Another* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2010); and Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, eds., *America's First Battles, 1776-1965* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986).

42 For additional arguments see the essays in Juliana Geran Pilon, ed., *Cultural Intelligence for Winning the Peace* (Washington, DC: Institute for World Politics, 2009); and John D. Kelly, Beatrice Jauregui, Seant T. Mitchell, and Jeremy Walton, eds., *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010). See also Patton, *Socio-Cultural Intelligence*, chapters 1-2.

43 US Department of Defense, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2015* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, June 2015), i.

44 US Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics*, chapter 7; and Armistead, *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Information Warfare and Security*, 19-20.

Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen the realization of American policy and security objectives are entirely dependent on 1) the US government's ability to understand complex social and cultural dynamics, 2) avoiding the problem of mirror-imaging (assuming they view problems or solutions similarly to the US government), and 3) creating long-term stability and security solutions by working with and through local leaders who may have different long-term objectives than we do.

To start, the Department of Defense should revisit and expand efforts to create Foreign Area Officers, to improve cross-cultural understanding, to increase language proficiency in Special Operations Forces, further expand joint duty assignments and interagency rotations, and refocus efforts to integrate ethnography, human geography, and cultural expertise. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey amplified the need for increased integration across the national security community in a July 2015 retirement speech, adding the requirement for integration with international partners. He stated that success in current and future conflicts will “increasingly depend on how well our military instrument supports the other instruments of national power and how it enables our network of allies and partners.”⁴⁵ But integration needs to extend beyond organizations. As was pointed out in a *Special Operations Journal* article on complex operations, “Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan exposed the truth that the military forces are not well prepared to carry out operations requiring more than a basic understanding of indigenous perceptions and their potential impact.”⁴⁶ We need to integrate academic and outside expertise as well.

Additionally, the Combatant Commands should integrate and align their requirements and capability needs regarding socio-cultural intelligence to increase their priority during the planning processes used by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Military Services to allocate funding.

Finally, additional funding should be provided to combat support agencies and defense intelligence components to assess, procure, and provide open source and unclassified socio-cultural intelligence support. For example, the recent push by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to revamp and expand its use of open-source human geography, social media, demographic, and other data provides an opportunity to enrich and render more useful the operational baseline of both geospatial data and tailored socio-cultural information products that commanders will rely on to plan for and prevail in future conflicts. Reflecting on his experience with post-Iraqi invasion planning and the current crises facing national security planners, former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley recently pondered, “are we working now to develop information about these conflict-prone societies and the various actors so we can design reasonable strategies to bring some stability to these counties once (and if) we get through the kinetic phase?”⁴⁷

45 Marcus Weisgerber, “Dempsey to Pentagon: Prepare for the Never-Ending War,” *National Journal*, July 2, 2015, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/defense/dempsey-urges-preparation-never-ending-war-before-retiring-20150702>.

46 Matthew P. Dearing, James L. Jeffreys, and Justin A. Dupue, “Entry Point: Accessing Indigenous Perspectives During Complex Operations,” *Special Operations Journal* 1, no. 1 (2015): 9.

47 Hadley, interview, 153.

Intellectual Capital: A Case for Cultural Change

Everett S.P. Spain, J.D. Mohundro, and Bernard B. Banks

ABSTRACT: Statistical analysis indicates recent US Army promotion and command boards may actually penalize officers for their conceptual ability, which raises concerns over our transition to the Army of the future. If Army leaders emphasize the need for intellectual human capital (IHC), understand the intellectual capital system, and stress critical thinking while continuing to value the other domains of officership, the Army can capture the human capital it requires for Force 2025 and Beyond.

Selecting officers for early promotion and determining which ones will have opportunities for battalion command are among the most important decisions made by the US Army. Yet, statistical analysis indicates recent US Army promotion and command boards may actually penalize otherwise equivalent officers for conceptual ability, which should warrant concern with regard to how we transition to the Army of the future. If Army leaders at all levels emphasize the need for intellectual human capital (IHC), understand the intellectual capital system, and actively emphasize and role-model critical thinking while continuing to value the other major domains of officership, the Army can reverse this trend and capture the human capital it requires to meet the needs of Force 2025 and Beyond.

The primary intellectual engines of the US Army—such as Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and the US Army War College—have rightly predicted our future combined and joint operating environments will be more complex than ever before in history.¹ As such, the *2014 Army Operating Concept* implores the total Army to broaden its approach to learning.² Considering this context within the aforementioned promotion board trends, such an approach may require a fundamental shift in how our Army selects and develops our future leaders.

The future force will require leaders who possess the enhanced conceptual tools necessary to win in a complex world. The authors recommend the Army critically examine and potentially change the manner in which it accesses, develops, selects, and sets the culture for future leaders. Doing so is especially important in order to foster officers' conceptual abilities. We offer our recommendations with humility,

1 Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC), "Force 2025 and Beyond Directorate," June 1, 2014, www.arcic.army.mil.

2 US Department of the Army, *The US Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, October 31, 2014)

as grateful beneficiaries of the Army's current officer-talent management system. We acknowledge any criticism of the current system may also be a corresponding criticism of ourselves.

Although all "Army team" members—commissioned officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, junior enlisted Soldiers, and Department of the Army civilians—are critical to the success of the nation, we will focus our recommendations on active-duty commissioned officers, though we encourage follow-on analyses of each of the aforementioned populations. Also, by no means does this paper wish to minimize the importance of the many characteristics needed in Army leaders, such as job motivation, diligence, emotional intelligence, character, grit, and physicality. All of these factors, and others, contribute significantly to officership and must be developed.³ However, we believe the Army will also need to raise the profile of its intellectual human capital and the culture that empowers it in order to address the complexity inherent in *Force 2025 and Beyond*.⁴

Why is Intellectual Human Capital Important?

The US military wants and needs the best leaders possible. Human optimization requires the military to define what its leaders must accomplish in varied environments. Foremost, the military needs leaders of character who can honorably navigate complex moral-ethical situations. They must successfully lead diverse groups and solve important problems. Such activities require divergent thinking and creative problem solving; much like mission command requires agile and adaptive Army officers. However, recent force modernization studies routinely point to technological advances. Even those touting human performance optimization frequently list improvements in ability rather than how to optimize the intellectual human capital already available.⁵ Indeed, critical thinking will be among the most crucial tools for leaders in the future joint force.⁶

Intellectual human capital becomes more central to winning as security environments become increasingly difficult, especially as officers rise in rank and the complexity of their tasks increase. As technology and industry dominated the wars of the 20th century, intellectual human capital will likely decide many of the world's future security issues. Army officers are America's "boots on the ground" senior leaders in the middle of rapidly changing environments. Army officers must have the intellectual agility not only to survive, but to thrive in such environments. The aforementioned statement is articulated more precisely in the 2013 *Army Leader Development Strategy*.⁷

Real world complexities are moving Army strategists towards employment of design thinking, which is defined as "a methodology

3 Daniel Goleman, "Leadership That Gets Results," *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 2000): 78-93.

4 US Department of the Army, *Force 2025 and Beyond* (Washington, DC: US Army Training and Doctrine Command, October 2014).

5 US Army Combined Arms Center, *Human Dimension White Paper: A Framework for Optimizing Human Performance* (Fort Leavenworth: US Army Combined Arms Center, 2014).

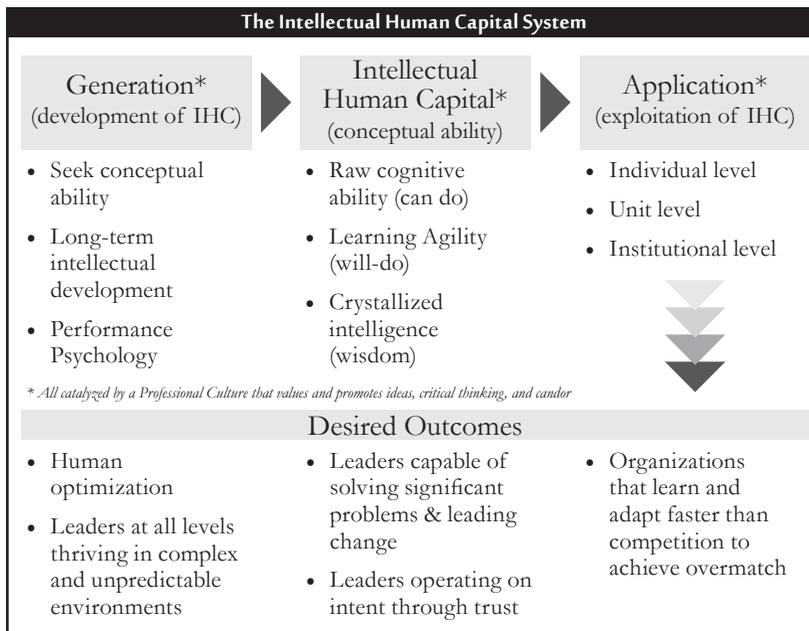
6 US Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, US Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2005).

7 US Department of the Army, *ALDS: Army Leader Development Strategy* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2013), 5.

for applying critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe problems and approaches to solving them.”⁸ TRADOC, the Army’s proponent for *Force 2025 and Beyond*, lists “develop agile and adaptive leaders” as one of its major warfighting challenges.⁹ This need is also one of the Army Chief of Staff’s top five strategic priorities. To wit, TRADOC has reached out to leading researchers in the field of learning engineering to find ways to improve officer cognitive performance. Therefore, it is imperative the Army identify those officers possessing the heightened conceptual ability indicative of superior potential for continued expansion of critical and creative reasoning competency.

As the largest single institution that produces Army officers, West Point has nested these requirements into its Strategic Plan 2014-2020, which includes the priority of developing leaders who “thrive in tomorrow’s complex security environments.” The plan also recognizes an “effective Army response to this challenge will require a greater degree of intellectual capability derivative of critical thinkers and creative problem solvers,” who, “... have the military, intellectual, and physical talent to excel in combat.”

Defining Intellectual Human Capital



Capital is any resource (economic, infrastructure, political, social, or intellectual) with the potential to create value. Although intellectual capital is embedded across individual (soldier/leader), organizational (unit), and professional (Army) levels, intellectual human capital resides only inside people. Specifically, an organization’s intellectual human capital is the sum of conceptual assets of its people and represents the

⁸ School of Advanced Military Studies, *Art of Design*, Student Text, Version 2.0 (Fort Leavenworth: US Army Combined Arms Center, School of Advanced Military Studies), http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/CGSC/events/sams/ArtofDesign_v2.pdf.

⁹ US Department of the Army, *Force 2025 and Beyond*, vii.

organization's potential to create value. Subcomponents include cognitive ability, learning agility (ability to learn), and crystallized intelligence (wisdom). Although we will examine each of these subcomponents in detail, it is important first to conceptualize the complete intellectual human capital system.

An organization that wishes to maximize its intellectual human capital must understand that it, like other types of capital, operates as part of a system with different impact points and levers. This system includes: generation (production and development), the intellectual human capital itself, and application (exploitation). Each of these three major components is influenced by a professional culture that does, or does not, value intellectual human capital. When such a system is optimized, it contributes significantly towards achieving its organization's desired performance outcomes. For the Army, optimization means leaders and soldiers mastering operations in dynamic environments with honor.

To generate human capital, organizations should consider recruiting and developing cognitive ability. Cognitive ability is described as "the ability to understand abstract concepts and ideas, to reason accurately, and to solve problems."¹⁰ Synonyms of cognitive ability include analytical ability, intellectual horsepower, IQ, Spearman's "g," and brainpower. Cognitive ability enables intellectual agility (i.e., the ability to understand and apply many conceptual things simultaneously) and intellectual adaptability (i.e., the ability to stay ahead of the rate of situational and environmental changes). Hundreds of studies have demonstrated that cognitive ability is a strong predictor of job performance.¹¹ One meta-analysis of over 1,000 studies found cognitive ability predicted both measurable output (objective performance) and an employee's ratings (subjective performance). A recent organizational behavior overview concluded "there is now no question that cognitive ability" is the strongest predictor of job performance, including being more than twice as predictive as the most predictive personality trait.¹²

Cognitive ability may be even more important when predicting leader performance. The cognitive ability-to-job performance link was even stronger in high-complexity jobs, as employees age, and when serving in managerial roles.¹³ Consequently, it follows that cognitive ability should be even more predictive for positional leaders. Supporting research demonstrates that leader behaviors such as patience, prudent risk taking, emotional intelligence, and strategic decision making ability are similarly predicted by cognitive ability.¹⁴ Additionally, leadership

10 Jone L. Pearce, *Organizational Behavior: Real Research for Real Managers* (Irvine: Melvin & Leigh, 2009), 75-76.

11 John E. Hunter, "Cognitive Ability, Cognitive Aptitude, Job Knowledge, and Job Performance," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 29, no. 3 (December 1986): 340-362; John E. Hunter and Frank L. Schmidt, "Intelligence and Job Performance: Economic and Social Implications," *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 2, no. 3/4 (1996): 447-472; and Malcolm James Ree and James A. Earles, "Intelligence is the Best Predictor of Job Performance," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 1, no. 3 (June 1992): 86-89.

12 Hunter and Schmidt, "Intelligence and Job Performance: Economic and Social Implications."

13 Ree and Earles, "Intelligence is the Best Predictor of Job Performance."

14 Stephen V. Burks, Jeffrey P. Carpenter, Lorenz Goette, Aldo Rustichini, and Avinash K. Dixit, "Cognitive Skills Affect Economic Preferences, Strategic Behavior, and Job Attachment," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 106, no. 19 (May 2009): 7745-7750.

researcher Stephen Zaccaro has illuminated cognitive complexity as one of, if not the most, important variable in successful executive-level leadership.¹⁵

Research has demonstrated that aptitude tests can proxy cognitive ability, including sub-components.¹⁶ Since aptitude tests such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) also measure verbal and quantitative ability, scholars have shown SAT test scores, in the study of large groups, are highly correlated with individuals' cognitive abilities.¹⁷ Subsequent research demonstrated that this correlation also holds for the American College Test (ACT).¹⁸ Within the officer production pool, a recent study estimates that ACT or SAT scores strongly predict ROTC scholarship recipients' academic success leading to commissioning.¹⁹ Acknowledging the objections to the applicability of standardized tests for large groups, the authors are not suggesting it is the perfect tool. This essay merely posits what research has shown, that ACT and SAT scores are useful proxies when measuring trends of workers' conceptual potential, even though these measures, like most predictors, have some reliability and validity limitations.

Undergraduate course grades (GPA) are also correlated with cognitive ability, but academic GPAs have the challenge of also being conflated with motivation. In other words, it is impossible to tell which portion of high academic GPA achievement is due to motivation (such as studying hard, pursuing extra credit assignments, and overall propensity to apply themselves towards conceptual tasks) and what portion is due to cognitive ability. Therefore, aptitude tests are a commonly accepted primary measure of raw cognitive ability, while academic GPAs are more nuanced and may be better interpreted as complementary markers of conceptual ability.

Since most research has shown cognitive ability is only slightly malleable in adults and is very portable (valuable to other professions if an officer resigns), the most direct method to increase the amount of cognitive ability in an organization, especially one reliant upon leaders (such as the US Army), is to recruit people with high cognitive ability into the supervisory labor pool. We argue organizations have a critical need for conceptual ability—the function of its leaders' raw cognitive ability and propensity to behave in ways that enable their cognitive ability (i.e. Learning Agility)—since they exist to produce outcomes that would not naturally occur otherwise. There are multiple indicators of someone's learning agility and they include: proclivity to engage in critical thinking behaviors, propensity for seeking new knowledge and challenging

15 Stephen J. Zaccaro, *The Nature of Executive Leadership: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis of Success* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001).

16 Robert Thorndike, *Personnel Selection: Test and Measurement Technique* (Hoboken: Wiley, 1949), 24-50.

17 Meredith C. Frey and Douglas K. Detterman, "Scholastic Assessment or *g*? The Relationship Between the Scholastic Assessment Test and General Cognitive Ability," *Psychological Science* 15, no. 6 (June 2004): 373-378.

18 Katherine A. Koenig, Meredith C. Frey, and Douglas K. Detterman, "ACT and General Cognitive Ability," *Intelligence* 36, no. 2 (March-April 2008): 153-160.

19 J.D. Mohundro and Adrian T. Bogart, "Cadets in Strategic Landpower: Managing the Talent We Need," *Military Review* 94, no. 4 (July-August 2014): 5-11.

experiences and inclination to actively reflect for conceptual or leader growth.²⁰

To be sure, it is not the intent to select for high intelligence at the expense of the whole-person concept. Rather, performance still carries the day. We argue that, when evenly matched, officers' conceptual ability, traits and behaviors should be considered as informative datum to make determination. This performance-first decision framework holds for most current situations, yet loses some validity when considering US Army officers' span of control and responsibilities become larger at the same time the world they operate in grows more and more unpredictable. At some point in this future world, it is likely that leaders' conceptual ability (rooted in character), versus past performance in simpler jobs in simpler times, may actually carry the day.

An organization interested in long-term development and human optimization will also recruit and work to retain members who show strong internal propensities to engage in the aforementioned learning agility behaviors. Professor Warner Burke at Columbia University's Teachers College is currently finalizing a Learning Agility psychometric survey that could help the Army identify junior leaders whose behaviors, versus traits, identify them as lifelong learners and leaders of the future.²¹ Additional research has shown that learning agility may be personality-based, and therefore testable. For example, researchers found that people who score an NT (intuitive-thinking) profile on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) are more likely engage in learning-agility type behaviors than those who score otherwise.²²

Another potential reason to recruit and develop cognitive ability is inclusiveness. The US military strives to be a diverse organization that provides equal opportunity and access for historically underrepresented groups. Since recent meta-research has shown that people with lower-cognitive ability often have greater prejudice, organizations can promote inclusiveness by recruiting leaders with strong cognitive abilities and develop their leaders to have strong conceptual propensities.²³

Crystallized intelligence, commonly called wisdom, is another important construct related to intellectual human capital. It is the summation of retained and usable frameworks, mental models, knowledge, and ability to communicate that knowledge to others. This type of intelligence can be developed and is the target of most long-term intellectual development programs and performance psychology. Job experiences may also add to crystallized intelligence.²⁴ The development

20 Owen Jacobs and Elliott Jaques, "Military Executive Leadership," In *Measures of Leadership*, by Kenneth Clark and Miriam Clark (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1990), 281-295.

21 Loretta M. Church and Raymond E. Alie, "Relationships Between Managers' Personality Characteristics and their Management Levels and Job Foci," *Akron Business and Economic Review* 17, no. 4 (1986): 29-45.

22 Adam Mitchinson, Nathan Gerard, Kathryn Roloff, and Warner Burke, "Learning Agility: Spanning the Rigor-Relevance Divide," *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* 5, no. 3 (September 2012): 287-290.

23 Kristof Dhont and Gordon Hodson, "Does Lower Cognitive Ability Predict Greater Prejudice?" *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 23, no. 6 (December 2014): 454-459.

24 John Horn, "The Theory of Fluid and Crystallized Intelligence," In *Encyclopedia of Intelligence*, by Robert Sternberg (New York: Macmillan, 1994), 443-451.

of intellectual human capital is inexorably linked to the growth of crystallized intelligence.

The military currently owns some of the most well resourced long-term intellectual development programs, both internally and externally. Internally, each of the services has their respective academy and ROTC partner schools to develop civilians into officers through undergraduate education. The Army's Officer Education System (OES) programs of instruction vary over time based on career field and seniority. The OES programs typically focus on Army-related topics and an Army-centric writing style. Critical thinking is taught at some of the career fields' officer career courses (CCC), at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), and at the Senior Service Colleges (SSC). These schools all require scholarly writing. However, only the SSC requires officers to research a topic in depth (i.e., masters theses at US Army War College and research papers at SSC fellowships). Anecdotally, many officers cite full-time advanced civil schooling (ACS) as their most significant long-term intellectual development experience. In terms of frequency of ACS participation, the Army leads the way across all the military services. That being the case, we believe all branches of service might benefit from an enhanced effort to maximize ACS opportunities for their officers.

Applying Intellectual Human Capital

As with any resource, the Army's intellectual human capital is only as important as its application. Scholars claim every organization has a "coefficient of efficiency" that measures how effective they are at applying intellectual human capital.²⁵ There are ways in which the Army is both efficiently and inefficiently applying, developing, and grooming its intellectual human capital.

Promotions and Selections

The people organizations select and promote are perhaps the most visible artifacts of their view of intellectual human capital. Do they apply their intellectual human capital to their most appropriate needs, or do they have a mismatch? In the Army, the most appropriate need for intellectual human capital is in its leaders, especially its most senior leaders.²⁶

Given the understanding that conceptual thinking is important for Army officers, recent research may be a warning of a potential systemic bias against cognitive ability in the US Army officer promotion and selection process. Examining 13 years of recent USMA graduates, a talent management study hypothesized that cognitive ability would predict officers' success.²⁷ Yet, the study found the opposite to be true. To wit, it unexpectedly showed officers with one-standard-deviation higher cognitive abilities had 29 percent, 18 percent, and 32 percent lower odds, respectively, of being selected early (BZ) to major, early to lieutenant colonel, and for battalion command than their one-standard-deviation lower cognitive-ability peers. This analysis was controlled

25 Leif Edvinsson and Michael Malone, *Intellectual Capital: Realizing Your Company's True Value by Finding its Hidden Roots* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997).

26 Jacobs and Jaques, "Military Executive Leadership."

27 Everett Spain, "Finding and Keeping Stars: The Leadership Performance and Retention of High Potentials" Doctoral Thesis, Harvard Business School, June 2014.

for gender, ethnicity, year group, recruited athletes, months deployed, commissioning branch, attending the USMA Preparatory School, high school geographic region, and cumulative cadet academic and physical performance scores.

Additionally, this analysis holds for all promotion/selection analyses when conditioned on motivation. Based on a cadet's motivation for military things (i.e., his or her cadet military GPA—made up of 11 force-distributed cadet term or semester job performance ratings over four years), the study found significant evidence that regardless of what motivation/diligence category officers were in (low, medium, or high) there was a lower likelihood the Army would select the officers for early promotion or battalion command the higher their cognitive ability, despite the fact that the promotion and selection boards had no direct information indicating each officer's cognitive ability. It is important to note the same study found that USMA cadets' military GPA (made up of primarily cadets' 11 job grades) was extraordinarily predictive of their later early promotion to major, early promotion to lieutenant colonel, and battalion command.

Even though the senior leaders of the Army are saying the Army needs leaders with intellectual ability, agility, and adaptability at all levels, the Army's promotion and selection boards (perhaps unintentionally) are holding-back the officers who show the most promise and interest in these regards. For example, if two candidates for early promotion or command have the same motivation, ethnicity, gender, length of Army experience, time deployed, physical ability, and branch, and both cannot be selected, the board is more likely to select the officer with the lower conceptual ability.

Four possible explanations might explain the aforementioned phenomenon. The first is purely structural: promotion boards make their selections based on officer record briefs (ORBs) and officer evaluation reports (OERs). Many officers with high conceptual ability have pursued broadening assignments and advanced civil schooling (many of which require high GPAs and standardized test scores), resulting in those officers generating fewer OERs and fewer tactical-experience ORB entries than their peers. Additionally, even though ORBs list academic degrees earned, they are devoid of most other conceptual markers, such as SAT/ACT/GRE scores, undergraduate GPA, quality of undergraduate school rankings (such as the Peterson Index), and order of merit rankings at Army Officer Education Schools, even though the Army possesses such data for most of its officers. While the authors argue for including conceptual ability and propensity markers on information given to future promotion and selection boards, we are quick to note that until there is a cultural change in the Army towards valuing the conceptual component of its line officers, such markers could result in holding strong conceptual performers back.

Second, some of the Army's current senior raters (battalion and brigade commanders) are biased against intellectual ability. Perhaps this is due to a similarity bias perpetuating itself, or perhaps it is due to high-conceptual-ability junior officers' questioning being interpreted as disloyal. Recent research has shown that US Army War College students scored lower in openness (one of the attributes that is most correlated with success at the strategic level) than the general US population.

Furthermore, brigade command selectees scored even lower in openness than the overall average of US Army War College students.²⁸

Third, the Army may not incentivize a culture where doing anything other than “taking the hill” (diligence and physicality) is seriously valued. Perhaps high-conceptual-ability officers sense that cognitive ability, ideas, and intellectual topics, or some components of them, are undesirable in modern Army officer culture (or at least not as desirable as traditional hyper-compliance and low-conceptual level tasks). Indeed, officers with higher intellectual ability and/or intellectual interests may recognize this bias. Consequently, they may be rated lower because of having lost the motivation to perform at their highest ability level.

A fourth possibility is that officers with higher intellectual abilities may actually make worse junior officers than their average peers. Perhaps hyper-compliance, as opposed to conceptual qualities, drives success in junior officers. Though this situation would be diametrically opposed to the prediction of both business leaders and academic literature, the military is a different industry and context than business. So, this possibility is conceivable. One explanation is if the gap between a leader’s and his or her followers’ intelligence is too great, the followers might not be able to identify with their leader, and leadership effectiveness may suffer.²⁹

Even if this fourth possibility is valid, it is almost inconceivable to imagine cognitive ability being anything other than highly predictive of the success of the strategy development, statesmanship, and decision making required of general officers. It follows that the Army may have some junior officers who may not be the best at running a rifle range. But, if placed in the most complex roles available at each strata of their careers, high-cognitive ability officers might be the most likely to provide outstanding strategic-level leadership.

Knowledge Production and IHC Retention

An organization’s Intellectual Knowledge Production is the applicability, quality, and rate of creative ideas an organization generates and shares with its stakeholders, typically through writing. An organization with effective knowledge production understands and asks important questions, rigorously studies them, and communicates the findings to its stakeholders through professional publication. Some of the larger organizations that actively contribute to intellectual knowledge production include CGSC and the US Army War College.

Retaining officers with high cognitive ability is critical for the armed forces because there is no lateral entry except at the bottom. The most binding way for the military to retain top talent is through advanced civil schooling, which requires officers to commit to additional service in exchange for the opportunity. When given to the best and brightest junior officers, this option influences them to stay for a career, maximizing the military’s overall intellectual human capital. An additional, but

28 Stephen J. Gerras and Leonard Wong, *Changing Minds in the Army: Why It Is So Difficult and What To Do About It* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press, Strategic Studies Institute, 2013).

29 Leta Hollingsworth, *Gifted Children: Their Nature and Nurture* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1926); and Edwin E. Ghiselli, “Intelligence and Managerial Success,” *Psychological Reports* 12, no. 3 (June 1963): 898.

essential, component of the retention of the Army's best and brightest is for leaders at all levels to build unit cultures that value and exploit the conceptual component of officership. Officers with conceptual talents and inclinations will be more likely to remain in the Army if they believe such talents are valued by their organizations. This starts with the culture set at the senior Army leadership level. Though changing the culture of a large organization is hard and takes time, research has shown that leader behaviors influence organizational culture.³⁰ Further, it is a leader responsibility to effect culture to meet unit demands.

Unfortunately, the Army can lose its professional requirement to invest in education when operationally stressed. This was expressly evident in the decision to change OES requirements for promotion and selection during the Iraq and Afghanistan surges in the mid-to-late 2000's. In fact, while speaking at the Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs, General Martin Dempsey stated that during this same period the military went from a profession that valued education to a point where it was undervalued and "being in the fight" was more important.³¹

An organization's professional culture is the extent to which an entity's actual beliefs, norms, and behaviors foster an adherence to their espoused values. The Army's ADRP-1 lists stewardship as one of the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession. Stewardship includes the duty to increase the profession's body of knowledge. Hence, a culture supportive of intellectual growth is essential to stewarding the Army Profession.³²

Based on the empirical evidence presented earlier, the more fundamental question is, "What are the Army's underlying assumptions of what makes a great Army officer?" If senior leaders believe motivation and conceptual abilities are tradeoffs along a single continuum, force-distributed ratings require senior leaders to choose which of those two competencies is more important when allocating top evaluation ratings. This debate has often been described as Athens versus Sparta.³³ Contextually, Athens represents an institutional preference for intellectual ability, critical thinking, education, etc. Conversely, Sparta represents an institutional preference for motivation, tactical-ability, action-bias, diligence, intensity, physicality, etc. Many in the Army may generally associate the Spartan descriptions as more in line with the expectations of the combat-arms' culture(s), and the Athenian descriptions as more in line with the expectation of the other-than-combat arms culture(s)—which may notably also apply to female officers due to their current ineligibility to branch Infantry, Armor, and Special Forces. The reality is that being a Spartan and/or Athenian are independent decisions/concepts. Officers can be varying degrees of both, one, or

30 Edgar H. Schein, "Organizational Culture," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 2 (February 1990): 109-119.

31 Martin E. Dempsey, Jeffrey D. McCausland, Joanne J. Myers, "A Conversation with General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," *Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs*, November 6, 2014, <http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/multimedia/20141106/index.html>.

32 US Department of the Army, *The Army Profession*, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP 1) (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, June 2015).

33 Lance Betros, *Carved from Granite: West Point Since 1902* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012).

neither. The two constructs are actually differing talent/preference buckets, versus competing components. The authors argue that both are essential in our officers.

Researcher Steven Kerr established that an organization cannot reward one thing while hoping for something else. Indeed, the empirical evidence discussed previously suggests the Army rewards Spartans. This priority is understandable, as all leaders are expected to generate positive results. However, leaders' motivation levels and cognitive ability levels are independent of each other. If Army leaders consider motivation and intellect to be opposite competencies along one continuum, but prefer motivation over cognitive ability, senior officers who see signs of intellectual ability and/or interest in their junior officers will necessarily assume that the junior officers' motivation must be lacking. Subsequently, they will likely punish such officers on their OERs. In other words, if an organization assumes an officer cannot be both an Athenian and a Spartan, and prefers Spartans, any sign of Athenians will be discouraged. If these assumptions are left unchecked for a number of years, when the Army needs senior officers who are Athenians, there will be only Spartans remaining to choose from. This situation is called a Criteria-Needs-Mismatch.³⁴ The Criteria-Needs-Mismatch does not mean there will not be any conceptually-oriented officers selected for early promotion and command. Such a mismatch just means it is likely there will be fewer of them remaining in the talent pool which sources our strategic leaders than what is needed by the organization.

A recent conversation with a commander of a top-tier special operations selection team highlights the hazard of the Army's underlying assumption of either-or and motivation preference. In addition to field and physical fitness testing, the organization also puts its officer candidates through a multitude of psychological testing, including an IQ (cognitive ability) test. The recent commander noted, "We shy away from the candidates who are high on that test; they take too long to make a decision." On the contrary, research has shown that brighter people come up with alternatives faster than their average-conceptual-level peers.

An Intellectual Culture Assessment of the Army

MIT researcher Edgar Schein's organizational model is useful as a tool to assess the intellectual culture of the Army.³⁵ Schein's model presents cultural artifacts as those things that are easily seen and heard in organizations, while actual values and underlying assumptions are the hidden portions of the cultural iceberg.

Some of the Army's current artifacts and espoused values include the official Army motto of "Army Strong," not "Army Smart." While innocuous alone, it fits with the previous OER (DA Form 67-9), which required raters to choose one leader skill between conceptual, interpersonal, technical, or tactical, and being selected as anything other than tactical was generally not interpreted well. To be fair, the new junior officer OER lists six competencies that must be described individually, including intellect (although the new field grade OER does not).

34 Spain, "Finding and Keeping Stars."

35 Schein, "Organizational Culture."

More obvious are the seven Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. None of these has any direct reference to the value of thinking or ideas, while unchecked loyalty can block critical thinking and the propagation of new ideas. Lastly, an officer who scores 90 percent in each of the APFT's events receives a badge, yet we do not regularly give unit-level awards for intellectual tasks.

As shown previously, the higher an officer's cognitive ability, the lower that officer's chance at early promotion and battalion command selection. As a curious anecdote, the promotion rate to colonel for officers with PhDs was lower than the Army average from 2011 to 2013. Surprisingly, the Army does not actively invest in advanced civilian education for its personnel managers or OES instructors. In the 1980's, the Army sent as many of 7,000 officers per year to graduate school. The Army reduced that to 415 in the 1990s. Currently, the Army sends 600-700.³⁶ A not-so-long ago discussion at the joint flag officer orientation course, typically referred to as "Capstone," revolved around how much education "was too much" for senior officers. The quorum of newly selected flag officers from all services concluded that a public school or distance learning masters was fine, but certainly not a PhD or Ivy League masters.

Also, Army conventional wisdom sees CCC/ILE/SSC as times to "take a knee, reflect, and think deeply." Though this is certainly true, it implies that thinking is separate from doing. If this is the case, over a typical officer's 24-year career, he or she is only thinking for a grand total of 24 months. Perhaps in *Force 2025 and Beyond*, critical thinking will be normalized as part of the everyday profession of arms.

The two underlying assumptions, derived from the artifacts and actual values, are as follows: 1) the Army prefers a particular type of officer to command and 2) officers are either tactical/motivated *or* conceptual, but not both. Since Army leaders may believe they have to choose between these two false categories of officers, many assume motivated officers are better leaders. This leads to a belief that junior officers who show strong conceptual ability/interest cannot also be diligent and high-performing. Therefore, the valued scarce resources (highest ratings) are given to the motivated officers who do not show intellectual ability/interest. This may mean that intellect is considered by many to be a "hygiene factor" for Army officers—where a basic amount is required for competence, but anything above that level may not be valued, or, even worse, be considered to be against the best interest of the profession.³⁷

Changing the Culture for Force 2025 and Beyond

Given the vast amount of intellectual human capital at the military's disposal, there are many changes that can be implemented to develop a culture where people think deeply and effectively to win in a complex world. Without cultural intervention, the current underlying

³⁶ Statistics provided by LTC David Lyle, Director, Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis, September 1, 2014.

³⁷ Frederick Herzberg, "The Motivation-Hygiene Concept and Problems of Manpower," *Personnel Administration* (January-February 1964): 3-7.

assumptions will continue to drive our organizations' values, which will continue to drive its artifacts and realities.

The foundational mechanism to engender a culture that values ideas and critical thinking is for leaders to make formal statements attesting to the value their organization places on critical thinking and idea generation at all levels of their commands. Subsequently, leaders must embody those attributes as they exercise their roles. A few of the ways to create a culture of learning include making critical thinking one of the institution's or unit's core values, encouraging and rewarding candor and ideas from all levels, and deliberately setting an after-action-review (AAR) culture where all are encouraged and expected to speak up. In an effort to return the "cool" factor to thinking in the Army, local commanders could regularly host ideation sessions where ideas are debated and encouraged openly by all ranks, where junior leaders are encouraged and expected to challenge ideas from senior leaders. In short, to optimize the IHC in their organizations, commanders should actively role model the learning agility behaviors: critical thinking, seeking new knowledge and challenging experiences, and actively reflecting on that new knowledge and his or her experiences for conceptual and leader growth. These formal statements include the Secretary of the Army's promotion and selection board guidance. If the Secretary emphasizes conceptual ability and propensity, so will board members. Additionally, senior leaders should prioritize conceptual ability and propensity in their formations.

As part of this cultural emphasis, the Army could also encourage lieutenants and captains to write learning essays based on their observations, perceptions, and intuitions. These essays could be based on local training procedures, ideas for force design, emerging technologies, historical studies, or any other topic germane to officership. These essays would not only revive the idea generation and debate within our unit newsletters, post newspapers, doctrine houses, and professional journals, but they would also greatly improve our officers' ability to create, communicate, and defend cogent thoughts – skills that will serve them and the Army well at senior ranks.

In addition to establishing a culture that values critical thinking, the Army could change how it generates intellectual human capital. To accomplish this better, the Army could prioritize its officer recruiting for conceptual ability. Accession procedures could strongly value raw cognitive ability and test for the learning agility behaviors. After officers are initially recruited, the Army should continually develop and re-evaluate their leaders' conceptual abilities. By considering existing cognitive ability and propensity markers (such as the academic evaluation report) during selection and promotion boards while putting safeguards in place that prevent favoritism, the Army can ensure our leaders are up to the challenges ahead, while simultaneously fostering inclusiveness.

Additionally, the Army can invest more in the long-term intellectual development of its leaders. First, the Army could ensure a high-level of intellectual rigor is embedded in its commissioning programs and officer education system, where cadet and officer academic performance becomes a part of the officers' records and has can inform organizational selection and development decisions beyond just their initial choices of branch or post.

Another example is that the Army can begin to change its culture by sending 50 percent of its officers to earn advanced educational degrees from civilian institutions. Not only will this seed the force with higher-level thinking, it has the added effect of influencing its conceptually focused officers to remain in the active Army longer. Included in these cohorts, most G-1 and Human Resource Command assignment officers should be sent to attend human resource management or labor economics programs, and officer educational system (OES) instructors should pursue degrees directly related to the field they will teach other officers.

Even with the potential shortcomings in the officer promotion system, the authors believe it does an admirable job of capturing motivation and diligence, two very desirable traits of officership. Since the existing Army promotion system selects diligence, the Army can prioritize the intellectual development of the early-selected officers by sending them to top civilian graduate schools. This would ensure the Army takes those it has identified as the most motivated and helps them become more intellectual. This way the Army can emphasize both the diligence and the conceptual components of officership, versus prioritizing or developing one component over the other, as may be occurring now. Also, in order to directly target the top conceptual ability officers for retention, the Army can offer these advanced civilian schooling opportunities to officers who score in the top percentages on standardized tests (GRE, etc), Learning Agility instruments administered as part of the OES curriculums, and Army OES schools.

Similarly, while outside the scope of this essay, the Army should strongly pursue similar intellectual human capital building programs for warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and Department of the Army civilians, including building critical-thinking training into professional curricula. Allowing our personnel, and especially those who show both signs of overall motivation and motivation towards conceptual tasks, to pursue professional certificate or degree programs would increase the overall Army's intellectual performance needed in *Force 2025 and Beyond*.

The Army's current talent management system has produced legions of quality officers and senior leaders. But, if our promotion and command selection systems punish junior officers for their conceptual ability, can it take our Army into an ever more complex and changing world? By developing, promoting, and selecting the most conceptually agile officers while building an Army Culture that promotes idea generation and critical thinking, the Army will ensure it has a future force that will win in the world of tomorrow.

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Intellectual Capital: A Cautionary Note

Anna Simons

ABSTRACT: *Parameter's* Editorial Board Member Anna Simons responds to the preceding article in this issue, "Intellectual Capital: A Case for Cultural Change."

I am all for Spain, Banks, and Mohundro's idea of Army Smart. I like to think any academic teaching in a professional military education (PME) institution would agree: brains should trump brawn. However, it is not clear to me that GPAs or, worse, standardized test scores accurately capture who is capable of daring thinking or sage leadership. Nor do I think having more PhDs or Masters-level officers in the force is altogether wise, or even necessary. As it is, too many officers and soldiers are earning diplomas from what are, for all intents and purposes, degree mills. They are doing so because education now counts for promotion. No question, being able to tally up pieces of parchment enables units to brag about how smart their soldiers are. But – if we sample just some of the written work turned in to earn those degrees, we would (or rather, should) be appalled.

More troubling than the money and time being wasted, however, is the assumption that academic credentials signify talent. Yes, attending a 10-month Masters program or earning a PhD in 3 years (the military standard) exposes individuals to subjects they might not study on their own, which can be very valuable. But as anyone who has been around PhDs should recognize, just because someone possesses an advanced degree does not guarantee he or she is a particularly quick, deep, or profound thinker. Nor does it guarantee he or she can communicate effectively.

To be sure, in our 18-month-long in-residence degree-granting program at the Naval Postgraduate School, we too have problems with students who can not express themselves particularly well in writing. We also graduate officers who would not be able to organize a Masters-level argument without considerable assistance. However, that does not mean our students are not smart – or curious, or able to absorb information by means other than reading and writing.

I invoke our students because there are multiple kinds of intelligence, and while I am counting on the authors' argument to provoke a long overdue debate, my biggest quibble is with their criteria – which are stacked in favor of only one particular type of intelligence. In the not so hoary past, when reading books and not just emails was an avocation, people used to distinguish between "book" smarts and "street or people" smarts. It was often thought that anyone with the former tended

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to lack the latter. Such a binary view seems of a piece with thinking women can not be both smart *and* beautiful, but it also lines up with the authors' contentions about motivation and intellect.

Let's consider their motivation-intellect juxtaposition for a moment. I can not tell from the article whether the authors think this opposition informs people's choices consciously or subconsciously, is a by-product of Army conditioning, or what else. But if I have read them correctly, they believe the Army right now privileges the wrong thing (motivation) over the right thing: intellectual human capital. Even if we accept that Army leaders weight these two competencies against each other in favor of motivation, the authors' preferred means for assessing cognitive agility are puzzling. Especially when we consider neither standardized tests nor GPAs probe an individual's ability to assess novel or unfamiliar situations accurately. Nor is either designed to reveal who might be unconventional in their approach to learning, never mind problem solving.

Consider GPAs. At most institutions, grades reflect little more than who has the mental acuity to absorb, regurgitate, or (at best) *maybe* synthesize information passed down in transmissible form via a teacher, books, or from some other authoritative source. Grades rarely reveal an individual's capacity for discovering information independently, let alone for generating new or different ideas.

In fact, standardized tests and GPAs end up measuring the very thing the authors take issue with: namely, motivation, specifically, who has the motivation to excel in the classroom, and who has been motivated to acquire good test-taking skills.

Meanwhile, what does good officership require? Based on what I have seen commanders wrestle with over the years, a good portion of every day is spent managing other humans, which requires an intelligence that can not be gleaned from books. Officers have to be able to read other people and the dynamics among them. This need is compounded in places like Afghanistan and Iraq where they also need to be able to "read" non-Westerners, especially non-Westerners for whom history matters. Here, actually, book smarts can help since, if nothing else, being familiar with what has been written can help commanders accurately vet what subject matter experts (SMEs), cultural advisers, interpreters, and others are telling them.

In other words (and to state the obvious), any one officer needs to be the master of multiple intelligences. As for the Army overall, it needs a variety of types – everything from big picture, conceptual thinkers to detail-oriented perfectionists. Though, ultimately, what the Army most needs is a "smart" mix, while to ensure it has that mix requires it to develop a healthy respect for variation, not just at junior levels but up through the highest levels.

I would be surprised if anyone were to argue against developing officers' critical thinking. But if we are talking about fostering (and identifying) true agility, then there should be no set metrics for what constitutes "intellectual human capital," while *real* talent management should eschew set path(s). Career-long-learning would instead be tailored and re-tailored *for* individuals based on *their* interests and affinities,

their experiences, and their recognized strengths and weaknesses (along with a host of other considerations – to include family needs).

Advanced civilian schooling might be suitable for some. But surely the Army can be more original than this. For instance, why create a military-educational complex that encourages everyone (officer and enlisted alike) to scramble to get into whatever degree-granting program they can? Instead, why not offer everyone who is, say, in a regionally aligned brigade, a set of “for credit” classes *specifically* designed to make them smarter about their area of operations (AO) (*and* about politics, economics, history, and anthropology, at the same time)? There are innumerable ways the Army could put together relevant and useful short courses taught by world-class faculty to benefit the force, and not just individuals. I know degrees serve as an important retention tool these days. But even so, earning credit should be the bonus from education, not the point in seeking it.

Of course, in an ideal world, the Army would also operate an eHarmony-like program to synch individuals’ capabilities with the service’s needs, adjustable over time since individuals grow and mature at different rates. However, realistically speaking, and just given the Army’s size, it is unlikely the Army can treat individuals this individually – which is why it is also imperative to proceed with some amount of caution when coming up with new ways to identify and manage the talent within. I say this because the US military loves to metricize. It will turn anything it thinks is important into a benchmark, and then make that a gate for everyone to try to pass through. Yet, doing so flies directly in the face of fostering what will make the Army *Army Smart*.

Every smart officer I know is desperate to see the Army promote and place those who can think deeply and creatively into strategic positions. They want to work for leaders who are smarter, wiser, and better informed than they are. Spain, Banks, and Mohundro offer many suggestions for how the Army might better assess, identify, grow, and treat such individuals. In principle I am with them. But when it comes to credentialing, I would ask them to reconsider fetishizing academic credentialing which unduly privileges only one type of talent.

Yes, absolutely: officers (everyone, actually) need to be granted more time to stretch their thinking – and to be able to indulge in thinking. This is why stints at corporations, at non-profits, in Washington, in Silicon Valley, and abroad on exchanges also have to be on the table. Knowledge no longer resides exclusively in top-tier schools.

Ultimately, who then should end up where—whether in command because they can lead and listen, or on staffs because they are smart planners and implementers—is, I would say, the challenge beneath the challenge that “Intellectual Capital: A Case for Cultural Change” highlights. As for what the Army might look like if it could get this right: at a minimum, the silly pride that certain officers currently exhibit in being “knuckledraggers” would disappear, while big thinkers would not.

Kick the Door Down with AirSea Battle...Then What?

Martin N. Murphy

Power projection is a stated aim of our armed forces. It is the distillation of much of what our armed services exist to do. We vaunt our ability to intervene powerfully almost anywhere we choose to and win once we are there. Power on that scale is quintessentially American. Its roots, however, can be found in Antiquity. What, after all, were the Greeks doing at the gates of Troy but projecting power? Yet before the Industrial Revolution power could only be projected on a small scale. Afterwards power projection on a large scale became possible and flowered in response to the demands of Western imperialism. As Aaron Friedberg noted in an earlier book, from a military perspective “the most important product (of the Industrial Revolution) was a marked improvement in the ability of European states to project and maintain military power far from their own frontiers.”¹ The United States is the inheritor of that experience.

AirSea Battle (ASB), now subsumed into the wider Joint Operational Access Concept, is the latest tool for projecting US power. To be accurate, ASB is an “anti-access” concept not necessarily an invasive one. It is designed to take down an enemy’s defense ensuring the access we have enjoyed since 1945 to threaten invasion or destruction of critical infrastructure in pursuit of our national objectives continues. The US Navy proclaims Alfred Thayer Mahan to be its defining strategic thinker. However, in its pursuit of power projection it is acting not as his disciple but as the disciple of his near contemporary, Sir Julian Corbett, the architect of what became known subsequently as the “British Way of War.” Corbett viewed what we would now call access operations as the acme of naval operations; the ability to project power around an opponent’s periphery wounding, confusing and weakening him preparatory to landing the final and mortal blow; which may very well also arrive by sea as America was poised to do against Japan in the summer of 1945. Although Mahan and Corbett agreed broadly on most aspects of naval practice, they differed sharply on the benefit of amphibious operations. Mahan, who had a much more insightful view of the critical economic dimension of maritime power than Corbett, saw what we now call power projection as highly risky and a wasteful distraction from the Navy’s primary purpose of sea command.

Given power projection’s deep roots in history and military thought, most accounts of ASB, when they suggest it is a new response to a new problem are wrong, or at best only right in part. Troy may have failed to keep the Greeks at bay but as Sam J. Tangredi shows, anti-access strategies were practiced as far back as the wars between ancient

Books Reviewed:

Beyond Air-Sea Battle: The Debate over US Military Strategy in Asia.

By Aaron L. Friedberg

Fire on the Water: China, America and the Future of the Pacific

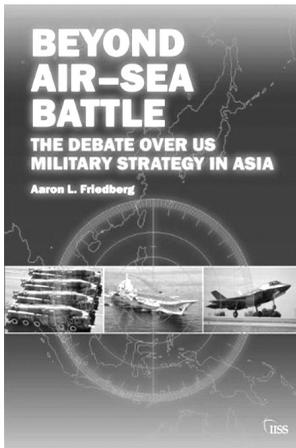
By Robert Haddick

Anti-Access Warfare: Countering A2/AD Strategies

By Sam J. Tangredi.

Dr Martin Murphy is a political-strategic analyst and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax and Visiting Fellow at the Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies at King’s College, London. His newest book, *On Maritime Power*, is due for publication in 2016.

¹ Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2011): 14.



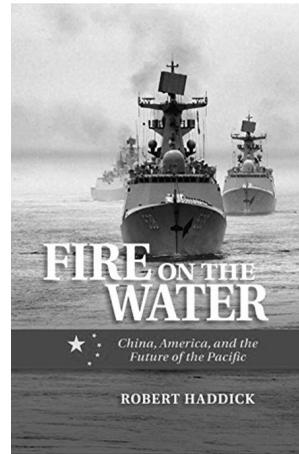
Aaron L. Friedberg, *Beyond Air-Sea Battle: The Debate over US Military Strategy in Asia* (New York & London: Routledge for the International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2014). 155 pages. \$14.99

Greece and Persia. However, in line with its supreme industrial power and expansionist ideology, the most relevant precursors are all American, starting perhaps most obviously with the determination to maintain access to the Pacific in the face of Japan's rise after World War I. That rise led Marine colonel Pete Ellis to undertake his pioneering studies and analyses of island landing grounds and bases in the early 1920s. The second major criticism of ASB—that it includes attacks against the homeland of a nuclear adversary and therefore takes unprecedented escalatory risks—is also misplaced. It is the lineal descendent of Navy thinking going back to Admiral Forrest Sherman's post-World War II naval strategy, a strategic formulation that led to the Maritime Strategy of the 1980s which is still hailed as the most complete statement of offensive military intent ever laid down by this country's navy; one which by threatening the Soviet homeland and its nuclear deterrent anticipated the possibility of a nuclear exchange. Consequently, ASB is only new in the sense it is a new response to an old problem manifested anew as a result of technological change, the peculiarities of East Asian (and to a lesser extent Persian Gulf) geography, and changing legal and social perceptions of the sea.

Forrest Sherman's strategy and operational plan were drawn-up in 1947 in a political-strategic environment already influenced by George Kennan's "Long Telegram" and President Truman's growing realization the Soviet Union was an enemy not a friend. It was based on the belief that any conflict with it would be global and protracted, necessitating forward, offensive conventional operations. Attacks by Soviet submarines lay at the heart of Sherman's concerns and as adequate defensive ASW measures were not available in the short-term, the Navy had no other choice than to look to destroy Soviet bases, airfields, submarine pens, factories and shipyards, launching conventional, and atomic precision strikes from carriers with Air Force support. Although the influence of Sherman's strategy with its emphasis on attack-at-source varied over the intervening quarter-century, it remained an underlying constant in Navy thinking and its reappearance in the Maritime Strategy of the 1980s should have come as no surprise. Even after the collapse of the Soviet empire, its influence and the perceptions that shaped the US Navy during that the Cold War never lost their grip. Presence and influence gained some importance. Les Aspin, when he was Secretary of Defense, institutionalized their value. Nonetheless, the conceptual framework that has governed the US Navy since 1945 has barely been altered.

The Chinese curse which is "to live in interesting times" characterizes the period we are living through now. What makes it extraordinary is we may be living a period of transition between one great power and another; between one global order and another.

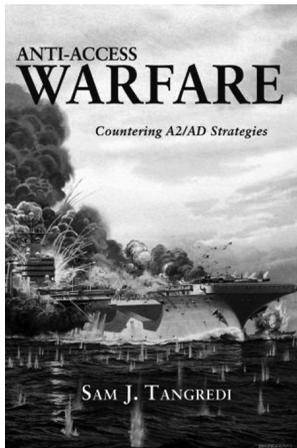
America has assuredly experienced this feeling of existential vertigo before. Time and again its decline has been predicted, more often than not by Americans themselves, and once again the question has arisen as to whether or not we are sufficiently convinced to believe in our exceptionalism or if even saying it makes us cringe with embarrassment. We are imbued with a sense of exceptionalism but little sense of entitlement. Before in our history we confronted defeatism with faith in our physical and intellectual vigour, inventiveness, risk taking, commercial acumen, boundless horizons, technology, immense productivity and, ultimately, ourselves. Is that still true? Or has our self-belief been replaced by a sense that the other guy's point of view is as valid as our own, and that our actions are morally tainted by aspirations of empire? Is our faith in power projection, the capability that underpins our global power, infected by such doubts?



Robert Haddick, *Fire on the Water: China, America and the Future of the Pacific* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2014). 288 pages. \$37.95

These questions are relevant to what the military calls “access” because ever since the United States became the global hegemon in 1944, its strategic position has rested ultimately upon its ability to project power over great transoceanic distances—as Samuel Huntington described it in his seminal 1954 paper—and once the traverse is complete, be able to invade foreign lands and stay there using whatever military force is required, implanting liberty, democracy, and the rule of law. It is this capability which underpins the US alliance system, giving allies and partners the reassurance they need to commit to our cause and us the confidence they share our moral vision. “Should China,” as Aaron Friedberg writes in his book under review here, “someday become a liberal democracy, the US would probably accept it as the preponderant player in East Asia.” Until then it cannot let down its guard because if China “could counter US conventional power projection capabilities and neutralize its extended nuclear deterrent,” it may at some stage be able to force the United States to surrender its preeminent position in East Asia against its will. What he does not go on to say is if this came about China could conceivably, from its vantage point as the East Asian hegemon and the control it would exercise over all maritime movement in the economically most productive region in the world, be able to change the dynamics of the global economic and political system to its advantage. Therefore, whatever the circumstances, the US must retain access to East Asia’s coastal waters; on the other hand, a liberal-democratic China would not prevent that. David Ochmanke, another contributor to the debate about possible US responses, writes the “extent to which the United States and its leading security partners will be able to develop capabilities and concepts adequate to the challenge will be critical factors shaping future dynamics in the international system.”²

² David Ochmanek, “Sustaining US Leadership in the Asia-Pacific Region,” *RAND Perspective* (2015): 1.



Sam J. Tangredi, *Anti-Access Warfare: Countering A2/AD Strategies* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2013). 230 pages. \$49.95

However, it is the economic dimension of China's challenge that makes it so different from the Soviet Union, and which makes facing it down so dissimilar from the largely military power and subversive political influence America faced down during the Cold War. Certainly breaking down the barriers China raises (and others by less significant states such as Russia and Iran) is critical to the survival of the US, not as a great power—which it will almost certainly always be—but a global power leading a democratic and free market-based global system. Nonetheless, it is fair to ask whether or not an operational concept built largely on foundations laid down half a century ago to defeat an autarkic land power are entirely relevant to confronting a growing economic power that seeks not to

destroy the international system but to change it in its favor and to do so ideally without going to war.

Finding the political will and intellectual insights necessary to mount an appropriate strategic response to China's challenge is already shaping up to be an immense undertaking. When asked "why and what for?" the answer that matters is not just one about the US finding the political will to defend its interests, but about finding the national will to continue to advance its values. Only these can justify the investment of intellectual and financial capital—and the potential sacrifices—that will be required in the battles that lie ahead.

None of the three books addresses this concern directly, although the issue of political will arises repeatedly when the discussions turn to resources, the support of allies, or the wisdom of attacking the opponent's homeland. Nor are these books about strategy. They cannot be when America has no settled policy towards China, or Iran for that matter. Russia also appears to leave the US policy community perplexed. This despite the widespread understanding that China presents us with a challenge on a scale we have never confronted before. Its history fascinates us but its economic promise seduces us. We are drawn to the alluring promise of its 1.2 billion consumers like moths to a flame but seem unable, for the most part, to recognize that its government will only allow foreign companies to satisfy its peoples' economic needs provided they offer no affront to the dignity and power of the Chinese Communist Party.

This mixture of awe and self-delusion has undermined our capacity to reach a settled judgement about the mutability of its political system and, consequently, the fungibility of its political intentions. Some commentators ascribe that to deliberate deception on the part of the Chinese; others to the narrative begun when Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon made common strategic cause with China against the Soviet Union which gulled us into believing China would eventually absorb many of our values; perhaps not everything we stand for but enough to save us from viewing each other with enmity. Whatever the merits of these two

positions, the first which is burdened with the label of “panda slugger” and the second with the equally vacuous “panda hugger,” they are both provisional because the debate within China itself has reached no firm conclusions about what its policy should be towards the United States or about its role in the world order the US largely created, manages, and protects – but from which it has benefited immensely. Where the line lies between indecision and deception remains a matter of speculation on both sides of the Pacific.

It is against this background that the authors make their assessments of America’s military options in East Asia. Aaron Friedberg’s perspective is well-known. The title of his 2011 book, *A Contest for Supremacy*, makes clear his view of what is at stake, while in a recent article he concluded “the era of Chinese assertiveness appears to be entering a new, more complex, and potentially more challenging phase.”³ His aim is to chart the actions of the US and the technological developments which made them possible, leading China to build an anti-access and area denial complex, the reasons why the US responded to this challenge so slowly, and the debate now underway over the possible responses which he divides between two categories – direct and indirect.

Robert Haddick, who served as an officer in the Marine Corps, is now a contractor at US Special Operations Command. He has also contributed regularly to several defense debates. From January 2009 to September 2012 he was Managing Editor of *Small Wars Journal* during which time he also wrote the “This Week at War” column for *Foreign Policy*. Like Friedberg he views an inadequate response by the United States to the rising challenge of China as potentially catastrophic. “The stakes,” he writes, “are immense.” He recognizes the impact of any conflict on the global economy could be crippling, but views the potential damage largely in terms of what it will do to the domestic US economy rather than on America’s international economic and financial leadership. He sees clearly, however, if China succeeds in excluding the US from East Asia, America’s ties to its allies there will be severed – almost certainly calling into question its global worth as a partner – and failure to defend freedom of navigation will contribute to those doubts. Similarly to Friedberg, Haddick views the US as coming late to the problem and slow to appreciate the military potential that China is on track to achieve in the 2020s, two missteps that could open a window of vulnerability for America and its allies in Asia. He suggests that the current US military policy in the region is inadequate to deter Chinese adventurism and needs to be reformed. *Fire on the Water* is his argument for change.

Sam J. Tangredi, a retired Navy Captain and PhD, is already a renowned student of globalization and future warfare. His two studies for National Defense University, *Globalization and Maritime Power* and *All Possible Wars?* are pretty-much essential reading on both topics. It is therefore not a surprise that his book places anti-access warfare in historical context and provides what amounts to an intellectual history of the evolution of more recent anti-access and area denial thinking within the US defense establishment.

3 Aaron Friedberg, “The Sources of Chinese Conduct: Explaining Beijing’s Assertiveness,” *The Washington Quarterly*, 37, no. 4 (2015): 147.

His basic argument is anti-access warfare is not a modern concept; it has been used throughout history. The modern term A2/AD – which was coined in 2003 by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), a Washington think tank with close ties to the Office of Net Assessment (ONA) – refers specifically to a strategic approach intended to defend against a superior opponent. The defender fears defeat if the opponent is able to exert its superiority close to the defender’s center of gravity (whatever that may be). Consequently the aim of A2/AD is to prevent an attacker bringing its operationally superior force not just into proximity with the defender’s coast but even into its region. Japan’s war against the US in the Pacific was based on an anti-access strategy designed to defend its territorial acquisitions in Asia. It failed; America’s counter-anti-access strategy prevailed.

Tangredi draws upon a series of case studies of important anti-access campaigns in the past, such as the Spanish Armada (a victory for anti-access forces), the 1982 Falklands War (a defeat for anti-access forces) and the Pacific campaign, to draw lessons for today. These, he argues, can be broken down into five categories: 1) the defender’s perception that the attacking force is superior; 2) the primacy of geography; 3) the predominance of the maritime space; 4) the criticality of information and intelligence; and 5) the determinative impact of events outside the battlespace.

When it comes to geography, Tangredi is not suggesting it throws up insurmountable barriers but terrain does limit the type, direction, and scale of what is possible militarily. That anti-access operations will take place in, on, and over the maritime space is a given and the author expresses concern that the concept of Jointness, which he remarks now carries the connotation all combat domains and all armed services are equal, could mislead leaders and distort programmatic decisions by diminishing the importance of the maritime space and the areas above and below it. The criticality of information and intelligence is also a focus for Friedberg. He points to the work of the then-RAND analyst Mark Stokes who wrote in 1999 that the foundation of China’s emerging anti-access doctrine was information dominance. The PLA recognized it would need to win the reconnaissance battle at the start of hostilities if it was to carry out strikes on US forces while securing its own territory. Finally, Tangredi is right to draw attention to outside events: anti-access warfare is based on the premise of military asymmetry, but asymmetry may well be re-balanced and potentially eliminated by political, diplomatic, legal and propaganda moves, and economic incentives undertaken elsewhere.

Both Tangredi and Friedberg point to the 1992 Gulf War as the starting point for A2/AD strategies. Friedberg argues the First Gulf War confirmed China’s worst fears about the inadequacy of its armed forces compared to its competitors and, above all, the growing gap between the United States and every other country. Most chilling for its leadership was the recognition that much of the PLA’s military equipment was the same as Iraq’s. The war demonstrated the importance of technology but also instilled the recognition it would take years for China to catch up. In the meanwhile it had to counter and off-set US advantages asymmetrically: it had to find ways for the “weak to defeat the strong.” It also castigated Iraq for making no attempt to impede the build-up of

US forces in the region, a failing even DOD noted in its post-operation report.

However, while anti-access may have deep historical roots, it was the peculiarities of the Cold War and the isolated, almost autarkic, economy of the Soviet regime that enabled power projection to gain such a firm hold over naval thinking post-World War II. For much of the first two decades of the Cold War, the US Navy had the world's oceans almost to itself. Soviet submarines were a serious concern but the Navy built a fleet of super-carriers – the Forrestal-class – designed to carry nuclear-enabled bombers capable of destroying Soviet bases around the Soviet homeland. From a peak of perceived superiority the US plunged into the dark years following the Vietnam War during which time the Soviet Navy emerged as a global presence, forcing the US Navy to place more emphasis on sea control and less on power projection.

In the 1980s the Navy recovered its poise and returned to what it has always seen as its core mission: power projection in the manner of its victory in the Pacific War. The Maritime Strategy of 1986 was billed as radical and revolutionary; a new departure made all the more risky because it proposed attacking the Soviet retaliatory force in its coastal bastions. In reality – and as explained already - it was a return largely to the naval strategy of the late 1940s, albeit based on new intelligence which delivered a far clearer understanding of Soviet priorities and planning. It demanded the Navy drive its cruise-missile firing submarine force and carrier battle groups (CBG) deep enough into the marginal seas surrounding the Soviet Union to bring them within range of their targets. To reach its launch positions the fleet would have needed to fight its way through a layered Soviet anti-access defense consisting of submarines and long-range Backfire bombers firing long-range anti-ship cruise missiles with the first engagements possible as far as 2,500 nautical miles for the Soviet coast.

The Maritime Strategy, while it remains the lodestar of naval thinking, was never tested in battle. In a crucial sense this is also true of the Army's equally radical AirLand Battle plan, which while its effectiveness was demonstrated against Iraq, remains untested against a world-class opponent.

Almost before the ink was dry on the Maritime Strategy, the Office of Net Assessment (ONA) led by Andrew Marshall, began to question whether the Navy-Marine Corps team could actually operate effectively against the Soviet periphery. The studies that emerged were skeptical (and, in fact, became known as “anti-Navy”). Because the focus was on the ability of the Soviet Union to negate such operations, it was agreed that “anti-access” was the most suitable term to describe its actions. This, Tangredi suggests, was the first time this description was used. More importantly the naval study coincided with, and was over-shadowed by, ONA's first investigations into what the Russians termed the military-reconnaissance strike (MSR) complex, which has since become known in the US as the revolution in military affairs (RMA). Tangredi's account of how the core ideas of anti-access and the RMA influenced each other as they evolved in papers prepared for ONA, other parts of DOD and CSBA is essential reading.

So, too, is his judgement as to why anti-access—despite the huge and very public effort put into it and the resultant outpouring of positioning and strategy papers—is considered to present such a significant challenge to the existing Joint force that too few substantive changes have been put in place to meet this new challenge effectively. The first and foremost obstacle is what he describes as the “assumption of access” that settled into US military planning post-Cold War; an assumption that generated acquisition programs and Joint structures that could be undermined by anti-access capabilities. Friedberg similarly suggests each armed service had a reason for downplaying the risks in order to preserve its existing role and force structure. He adds, however, the military was not challenged by the nation’s political leadership about this reluctance as there was a general unwillingness across the higher reaches of all administrations to call-out China’s arms build-up. Robert Haddick is equally critical; directing much of his ire at the Air Force and Navy he points out alongside the metasystem the Navy created to support carrier operations has grown up an institutional culture that guards and protects carrier operations even while the favorable conditions that made such operations feasible are deteriorating rapidly.

The risk comes at a time when major weapons systems can take a decade or more to bring into service, meaning any failure to embrace necessary change could leave US forces with little choice but to concede littoral space to the opponent. Tangredi also suggests assumptions about oceanic sanctuary for naval forces and the security of East Asian land and island bases, overlain by the need to reduce costs and squeeze budgets, led the DOD to accept considerable risk in combat programs and operational procedures. Some of the vulnerabilities he identifies concern the viability of high-technology systems and networks, including the dependence of all branches of the US armed forces on satellites for communications and ISR and others about the inadequate range of air and missile systems when compared to the vast space of the Pacific theater. Haddick agrees, providing a detailed analysis many of these vulnerabilities on his way to suggesting alternatives.

The lessons Tangredi draws from his survey of historical examples mirror the conclusions China drew from its own analysis of the anti-access environment as described by Friedberg. For Tangredi, counter-anti-access forces must be tailored to the task, pursue their objective with determination, be willing to commit significant resources, and suffer possibly heavy casualties in what is likely to be an attritional battle; that external factors could be highly influential and disruptive; pre-emption is a common factor—the side that shoots first can gain an unassailable advantage in the *battle* but not necessarily in the war; information, intelligence, deception and camouflage will be critical to both sides but perhaps especially to the counter-anti-access force; technological superiority played less of a role than many assume and this may well be as true today as it was in the past; and the forces which emerged victorious were those able to master cross-domain synergy, which is to say those able to strike the enemy simultaneously from dominant positions in all combat mediums.

Friedberg reports China arrived at a similar list; it assumed it would fight with inferior weapons; and needed to strike the first blow regardless of its assertion it would not fire the first shot; technology was important

but not decisive; it needed to win the reconnaissance battle; and the US might be superior militarily but not politically, diplomatically, geographically and logistically. In particular the vast distances of the Pacific would create supply difficulties and a critical dependency on forward bases that China could exploit. Furthermore many issues which could give rise to conflict, including Taiwan, were less important to the United States than to China, given its currently prevailing worldview, and US determination to win would therefore be correspondingly less.

The point which US anti-access planning has reached and the direction it has taken are largely classified. To the extent to which information about it has entered the public domain, most references are to what Friedberg categorizes as direct approaches. The two with the highest profile are the Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC) and AirSea Battle (ASB) which nests within it on the chain that leads upwards to the Defense Strategic Guidance. Robert Haddick's recommendations are more broadly-based. He argues JOAC and ASB envision blocking an adversary's area denial capabilities so as to allow US armed forces, constituted and organized in large part as they are now, to maneuver as freely as they did during the Pacific War and in the years since then. JOAC and ASB aim to achieve this by blinding the anti-access power's surveillance capabilities, disrupting its C2 and intercepting its aircraft and missiles before they can prevent the US fleet from achieving a position from where it can launch attacks on the Chinese homeland.

Haddick's approach is broader and less specific. America, he writes, needs to mobilize a comprehensive range of persuasive and dissuasive capabilities covering the spectrum from diplomacy, through economic dislocation, to conventional and unconventional military means strong enough to convince China's leaders that they cannot profit from coercion. The strategy he puts forward is based on persuading and dissuading the country's leadership cadre by denying it a worthwhile first strike option, imposing costs on all forms of coercive behavior, stimulating resistance to Chinese gains and threatening crucial national and Party assets, *not* by rolling back China's anti-access capability. When it comes to striking targets within China, Haddick is understandably cautious about the deep and extensive strikes argued for in CSBA's study of AirSea Battle which is seen by many, rightly or wrongly, as the as the closest publically-available approximation to the DOD's own position. He calls instead for more limited strikes to "suppress China's land-based 'anti-navy' air and missile sources [while] holding at risk other assets and conditions valued by China's leaders." (212) Where he draws the line between the two is unclear as are the assets and conditions which he believes China's leaders may value.

Whatever the advisability of his specific recommendations, Haddick offers pertinent and detailed criticisms about the suitability of current US military equipment and organization for the Pacific anti-access mission. The two most important are the lack of long-range weapons, and dependence on satellites for communications, intelligence, and command. He joins Tangredi and Friedberg in criticizing long-ingrained service cultures and defense acquisition practices that have, in his view, over-emphasized weapons systems that are too short-legged for East Asia and an approach to air warfare by the Navy and the Air Force that depends on high sortie rates which are no longer sustainable. The

assumption all through the Cold War was US forces could mount tactical operations from bases and aircraft carriers located around the Eurasian periphery, and particularly from bases in Europe and Japan located close to the Soviet Union. By remaining faithful to short-range systems the United States has left itself no option but to acquire new bases and sail its fleet into harm's way. The bases will be located on vulnerable Pacific islands—Guam, Tinian and Saipan—none of which are likely to survive under intense and repeated Chinese bombardments using land-based intermediate range and submarine-launched ballistic missiles and air- and submarine-launched cruise missiles. When it comes to attacking naval forces, aircraft carriers and their associated naval surface platforms, China's hugely more successful economy compared to the Soviet Union, coupled to the falling cost of high technology, means it has been able to extend and develop the anti-access tactics the Soviets pioneered forty years ago. Then the Navy was confident it could defeat the Soviet anti-access threat, while ONA was sceptical. The great unanswered question is whether or not the Navy's largely carrier-based anti-air and anti-missile systems have stayed ahead of the anti-access threat or not; the Navy is publically confident that they have while Haddick and other outside observers are not.

When Robert Haddick reviewed Aaron Friedberg's *A Contest for Supremacy* he praised it as like "tossing a dead skunk into a garden party." Each book reviewed here can stand alone but taken together the three can be recommended collectively as the skunk works of the military anti-access debate. They make sense of the concept, they trace its intellectual history, they pinpoint the service interests that have shaped (or misshaped) it, display its inner workings and recommend changes and improvements. Moreover each one recognizes overcoming China's A2/AD challenges will require a mix of direct and indirect approaches and not just direct and indirect military approaches but a wide range of non-military means as Haddick makes clear. All-domain must involve consideration of political and economic domains previously viewed as marginal or even until now largely beyond consideration as venues for conflict. Success, in other words, will arguably demand a willingness to stretch the definition of war and warfare, beyond even the concept of competitive strategies that was articulated by ONA during the Soviet era and which has been resurrected recently. It requires, equally, a clearer appreciation of how concepts of war and warfare are understood and applied by China (and Iran and, based on recent evidence from the conflicts in the Crimea and Ukraine, by Russia). It will also mean, as Sam Tangredi argues, developing the vision and acumen to master cross-domain synergy—the ability to strike the enemy simultaneously from dominant positions in all combat domains, conventional and unconventional. Finally they criticize the failure to locate counter anti-access in an overall strategic context. The Maritime Strategy of the 1980's was framed by the overarching strategy of containment. What policy or strategy guides ASB: we kick the door down...then what?

Two further points: All three writers discuss what Friedberg calls "indirect" anti-access approaches; that is to say approaches that could be taken in the waters surrounding China such as blockade that aims to exploit China's exposure to – and dependence upon – global and regional markets. All three are uncertain of the possible effectiveness of

such an approach. Nonetheless, it demands closer examination as part of a wider economic warfare campaign that seeks to exert pressure beyond the obvious target of China's energy dependency.

The second point is that *none of these books touches on the Army's role in Asia*; in fact there is a scarcity of coherent discussions generally on its potential contribution. This is unfortunate because the Army is clearly determined to carve out a role for itself in East Asia over and above its commitment to South Korea. One concern must be that it will use its leverage in Joint forums to make this happen, something that could interfere with US strategy in what is an overwhelmingly maritime domain (on, under, and over the surface of the sea). Sam Tangredi's concern this "could mislead leaders and distort programmatic decisions" could come to pass. Of course, the Army's command of missile forces make it an essential element in maritime East and Southeast Asia. However, the Army's role in continental Asia—as opposed to maritime Asia—balancing the Navy and Air Force role in the Western Pacific by working with allies and partners in an arc anchored at one end in the heartland and at the other in Vietnam and Thailand, could—in addition to its presence on the Korean Peninsula—complicate Chinese defense and foreign policy calculations on a much greater scale than anything it could achieve supporting a Pacific rim operational concept alone. It seems hard to believe that the US would, for example, consider withdrawing from Afghanistan given its pivotal position between China and Iran as it has from its other outposts in the region. Afghanistan is the cockpit of the Great Game. Every world-historical power from Alexander the Great onwards has had to play it and the United States, if it is to retain its global position, must learn to play it too.

Commentary & Reply

On "Fighting the 'Islamic State' The Case for US Ground Forces"

Dakota L. Wood

This commentary is in response to David E. Johnson's article "Fighting the 'Islamic State' The Case for US Ground Forces" published in the Spring 2015 issue of Parameters (vol. 45, no. 1).

I am writing to commend Dr. David Johnson on his superb essay "Fighting the Islamic State: The Case for Ground Forces." He asks the key question "does our strategy fit the war we are in," clearly explains why it does not, and then cogently makes the case why more should be done. At the heart of this issue is, or should be, the central objective of accomplishing war aims that lead to achieving national political objectives. If destruction of the Islamic State is indeed an objective, as has been stated by the White House, whether for its own value or as a necessary step to securing Iraq, then competent ground forces of sufficient capacity to accomplish the job must be committed. Anything less simply undermines the credibility of policies issued by the White House and supported by Congress, wastes resources, and incentivizes the very groups and behaviors our policies and efforts are meant to combat.

Making the case for a minimalist approach, as many do, based on the argument others should "step up" to see to their own interests misses the point. US interests should be considered first, and securing those interests should not be critically dependent on the competence of others. Conditions in Iraq and Syria affecting US interests have evolved well beyond the problems of insurgency and terrorism. The real issues are America's role in global affairs, and the perceptions of friends, allies, competitors, and enemies about America's competence and reliability. In simpler terms, the advances by the Islamic State in Iraq and the ripple effect they have in the Middle East, raises the question whether America is still a force to be reckoned with.

Withdrawing completely from Iraq would save America the cost of the blood and treasure needed to change conditions on the ground in a substantial way. But other costs would be incurred, costs measured in loss of an ability to influence outcomes, the tragic loss of life being reported on a daily basis, the entrenchment of an odious regime, and loss of reputation the United States has previously enjoyed in standing up to such brutality. Remaining minimally involved risks all the previous plus the added costs in treasure and (potentially) casualties, with little likelihood of success. Islamic State forces, and actors from Iran to Hezbollah, can then earn propaganda points by gaining victories even with the United States "involved." Increased US commitment, along the lines proposed by Johnson, though it incurs risks, offers an opportunity for the United States to reassert itself, change the conditions enabling and incentivizing Iran and others in the Middle East, and to send clear

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messages to Russia, China, North Korea, and a host of friends/allies that the United States remains the preeminent power and must be accounted for in their calculations.

Per Johnson's call for strategic clarity, there is an urgent need for such signals well beyond our immediate interests in Iraq. Like a matryoshka doll, individual incidents, though small in their local context, actually nest within larger matters that ultimately have profound, strategic importance. We may not care whether the Islamic State or the Iraqi government controls some small border town, but placed in the larger context of regional stability, competitions for power and influence, and the deterrent value of perceived power, our interest and involvement in the battle between the Islamic State and the Iraqi government have far-reaching consequences. Thus, our involvement should be assessed within this larger strategic context.

In light of the above and his call for action, I am curious whether the author has considered the vexing question: "What then?" Even if the United States found the will to commit ground forces for the purpose of "removing the Islamic State from Iraq," what strategic end would it serve? Does the author presume the United States would unilaterally withdraw—satisfied with "mission accomplished" vis-à-vis the Islamic State ejected from Iraq; continue operations into Syria to destroy the Islamic State as a viable conventional military force; and/or perhaps sustain some sort of military presence in Iraq for some larger purpose? Destroying the Islamic State has value if only to rid the region, and the world, of its evil. But absent some larger purpose, it will be a hard sell to convince anyone in Washington or the American public at large that it is worth hazarding the lives of their sons and daughters to revisit a place that does not seem to worry much about its own long-term interests.

On "Fighting the 'Islamic State' The Case for US Ground Forces"

Michael Spangler

I was dismayed by David Johnson's article on "Fighting the Islamic State." Because the article contains strong implications for US foreign policy, it deserves a serious counterargument to the commitment of US ground forces to Iraq (and Syria).

Initially, it is hard to refute David Johnson's argument that the United States needs to commit US ground forces to defeat and not merely degrade ISIS. Johnson makes a clear case for ISIS to be considered a proto-state that will continue to exploit serious deficiencies in the Iraqi Security Forces stemming from their lack of basic "enablers" such as air, artillery, intelligence and logistics support. In addition, ISIS benefits from its blitzkrieg seizure of several Iraqi and Syrian cities and

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their financial resources, largely due to the military leadership of many of Saddam Hussein's former senior officers. The US failure to keep intact much of Saddam's civilian and military bureaucracy as well as later abandoning the largely Sunni "Sons of Iraq" partnership which formed in 2006-2007 directly undermined the US strategic intent for Iraq and now Syria. Finally, Johnson reminds us Iran-backed Shia militias and the Kurdish Peshmerga are hardly disinterested security providers but constitute often virulently anti-Arab Sunni elements in the fight. Thus, Johnson makes his case for US ground forces as the "last man standing" to defeat ISIS.

Despite the cogency of Johnson's argument, I believe the commitment of US ground forces would be a strategic mistake for three main reasons. First, a US intervention would likely attract greater numbers of recruits and money to the ISIS cause. The United States remains highly unpopular in many Muslim countries for a number of reasons, but its entry at this time would only strengthen ISIS's claim that it is the vanguard advancing the Islamist cause against non-believers and crusaders. Secondly, a US ground force commitment, as we all know, must be sized and financed. How many ground forces are required in Iraq and Syria and for how long? Estimates range from 150,000 to 300,000 troops, depending on the model used, costing about 150 to 300 billion dollars per year. This posture is simply politically and financially unsustainable for the United States over the long term. Finally, the commitment of US ground forces is likely to fall into another "dependency" trap where host-nation forces cannot stand on their own feet because we assume they can never be adequately recruited, trained, and equipped. Hence the United States would be trapped in what Dexter Filkins calls the "forever war."

As military commentaries, books, and articles proliferate on the ISIS fight, I am concerned so few of them discuss the shortfalls and mistakes the United States made in providing initial assistance and advice to the Iraqi Security Forces. I encourage a dialogue to discuss what the United States and its allies did, both right and wrong, and how it can improve on such efforts in the future. It is only through more effective train-and-equip programs standing up more socially inclusive, locally based, and resilient security forces that the United States can truly help "defeat" extremist proto-states such as ISIS.

Of course, the starting point of this security assistance dialogue must include the formulation of clear strategic goals for the purpose of identifying and developing capabilities to support those goals. In other words, what is the strategic effect (both political changes and security-related partnerships) pursued by the United States in the region? Without this consideration, the United States may find itself elevating a supporting strategy as a strategic goal, just as it did during the Vietnam conflict.

The Author Replies

David E. Johnson

Let me begin by thanking Colonel Wood and Dr. Spangler for their thoughtful replies to my commentary. Indeed, they have strengthened my argument for greater US involvement against the Islamic State by placing it in a larger strategic context.

Both ask the obvious question if my call for action is heeded: “What then?”

The answer is: In the aftermath of the destruction of the Islamic State, the United States should maintain its training efforts to create Iraqi Security Forces competent to suppress the resurgence of the Islamic State, without the future need for US ground forces.

My reasoning is as follows. I believe the administration needs to put the fight against the Islamic State in the broader context of what its existence means for the region, our allies, and—most importantly—our own security interests. In my view, Iraq is a secondary issue—it is where the Islamic State has chosen to establish a large part of its so-called caliphate. It is a cancer in the region that is spreading. The Islamic State is also beyond the capacity of the Iraqi Government and current US efforts to eradicate. Thus, the burden of defeating the Islamic State must be taken up by US ground forces.

Combined US and Iraqi forces faced a similar situation in the 2004 Second Battle of Fallujah and the 2008 Battle of Sadr City. In each case, terrorists had concentrated themselves in urban areas and created conditions that enabled their apparent destruction. In reality, the al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Shi’a militias were not eradicated, although many fighters were killed. The Islamic State, the successor to AQI, and the Shi’a militias have returned. The Shi’a militias are challenging the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq, while the Islamic State is a growing threat to the region and the broader world as it expands its proto-state and becomes a base for terrorist attacks, radicalization, and encourages lone wolf attackers world-wide.

Our current strategy reminds me of the sad story of Steve Jobs, Apple’s CEO. In October 2003, Jobs was diagnosed with a rare form of pancreatic cancer that could have been arrested if he had agreed to undergo immediate surgery and chemotherapy before the cancer could spread further. According to Walter Isaacson, Job’s biographer, “To the horror of his friends and wife, Jobs decided not to have surgery to remove the tumor, which was the only accepted medical approach.” Instead, he pursued homeopathic remedies he found on the internet and through personal contacts.

Jobs finally had surgery nine months after initial diagnosis. The cancer had spread to his liver; his doctors believed that if they had operated when the cancer was first detected, “they might have caught it before it spread.” After extended medical interventions, including a liver

transplant, Jobs died on October 5, 2011 at age 56, from complications from pancreatic cancer.

A friend of Jobs recalled that “He has that ability to ignore stuff that he doesn’t want to confront.” This situation is not unlike our current reluctance to introduce US ground forces into the fight against the Islamic State. The relevance of Steve Jobs’s ordeal to the question of “What then” may seem a bit strained, but I believe it is relevant. The rapid conquest of key areas of Iraq—and the totally ineffectual performance of the Iraqi Army—was a tremendous shock to the US security apparatus. But, what was to be done? As I outlined in my commentary, the United States, as did Steve Jobs, has tried everything it could to avoid the hard choice of life-saving surgery. In the case of the Islamic State, competent US ground forces are needed to eliminate its presence in Iraq before it spreads further. US policy-makers have avoided this difficult choice, even though the American people (57% according to a February 2015 *CBS News* poll) seem to be increasingly supportive of sending US ground forces to fight the Islamic State.

What would follow a US ground intervention is a reasonable question that must be answered. I believe competent US joint air-ground forces would present the Islamic State with an existential crisis. The advance of US ground forces would force the Islamic State fighters to react, much like they did in Fallujah and Sadr City, in ways that would make them visible and vulnerable to destruction by direct or indirect fires from ground or air systems. I also believe the Islamic State cannot cede large swaths of territory in Iraq and maintain its proto-state and appeal. It would have to send reinforcements from Syria to attempt to maintain its territory in Iraq, which would open these reinforcements to air and other attacks. As I wrote in my original essay, the Islamic State is not an insurgency, it is proto-state. Destroy the state, and there is no base for receiving recruits or radicalizing foreign would be jihadists. This would be, in my view, the ultimate and larger strategic purpose for the US ground intervention.

Book Reviews

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/FOREIGN POLICY

The Global Village Myth: Distance, War, and the Limits of Power

By Patrick Porter

Reviewed by Steven Metz, Director of Research at the US Army War College

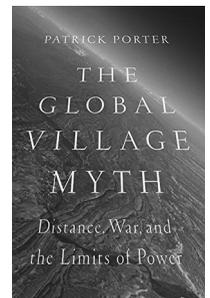
The Global Village Myth is short, tightly-argued body blow to contemporary American security policy. In it Patrick Porter takes on an important but often overlooked aspect of strategy—physical distance—and critiques the popular notion that technology has diminished its importance or even rendered it irrelevant. This is a seemingly simple idea with big implications.

Porter believes underestimating the importance of physical distance has an insidious effect on American strategy by stoking what he calls “globalism.” This idea emphasizes the intricate connectivity of the world today and concludes this gives the United States a stake in stability and security everywhere. Americans fear “enemies from afar could force a sleeping America into a fight,” and thus must be defeated while still distant. (90) As President George W. Bush expressed it, “We will fight them over there so we do not have to face them in the United States of America.”¹

Globalists, as Porter puts it, “perceive a transformed, dangerous environment, a shrinking world where technology trumps terrain, where the offense has advantages, where America’s security interests are virtually limitless and on which American power can be imposed, if only its leaders had the will. An imperial and restless ideology, globalism is a potential force for belligerence as well as cosmopolitanism.” (216)

Although globalism in some way shaped American strategy for a century, September 11 gave it a huge boost and temporarily quelled its opponents. The American public and its elected leaders came to believe their security “rested on the security of others” and this made even remote dangers intolerable. Insecurity could—and would—spread. The only logical response from this perspective was to embrace “the projection of power far beyond its hemisphere with no obvious limit, and tame the world back into order.” (216-217) America, in other words, was “both uniquely threatened and uniquely powerful.” (113)

Porter believes the globalist position vastly overstates the extent to which conflict and threats around the world are connected, and underestimates the extent to which physical distance still matters. He demonstrates his position with three case studies: “netwar”—the idea that technology and connectivity empower weak organizations like al Qaeda against traditionally strong ones like the United States—amphibious invasions operations using a hypothetical Chinese invasion of Taiwan, and the combination of cyber warfare and drones.



Washington, DC:
Georgetown University
Press, 2015

240 pages

\$49.95 (hardcover)

¹ President Bush Addresses the 89th Annual National Convention of the American Legion, Reno, Nevada, August 28, 2007.

Porter's argument matters greatly to Army strategists and strategic leaders. "Deterritorializing" the concept of security, he writes, "has led to the neglect of limits, an insensitivity to strategic costs, a boundless conception of interests, and the pursuit of absolute security at almost any price." (217) As a result, policymakers overestimate the ability of the American military to impose its will on adversaries. The burden of this chronic miscalculation falls heavily on the Army since committing it makes disengagement politically difficult. This difficulty can lead policymakers to "double down" on failed operations or those whose cost exceeds their benefits rather than writing off the effort. Think Afghanistan today.

Porter also argues the further military force is projected, the more elusive success becomes because advantage shifts to defenders. "In the unending cycle of offense versus defense," he argues, "the military-strategic balance for some time may favor weapon systems used skillfully for defensive purposes against would-be expansionists." (155) The observation that projecting military power long distances lowers the chances of strategic success affects the Army directly, particularly in a time when the qualitative advantage of the US military over potential opponents is shrinking as technology disperses and the size of the American armed forces shrinks.

Porter's assessment leads him to advocate a more restrained security strategy, particularly when considering the use of military force. The United States should "proceed on the basis that it can place limits on threats, curtail adversaries' ability to operate, and wait patiently for them to wither into an irrelevance or nuisance." (224) Like other authors, such as Andrew Bacevich and Christopher Preble, Porter believes, "we are less powerful, but more secure than we think." (224) That is a vitally important idea: if his assessment is accurate and if American political leaders accept it, the case for robust, expeditionary landpower weakens. The logical shape for the US Army would be something like the pre-World War II model of a small, professional force capable of modest expeditionary operations and of supporting partners; reserves would be on call for major war or those entities posing a direct rather than an indirect or theoretical threat to the United States.

This position is at odds with the thinking of the Army's current leaders. But Porter's assessment deserves and demands serious consideration by them: unlike calls for dramatic cuts to the Army which are motivated more by inter-service rivalry, his is based on a cold and penetrating assessment of the global security environment. The argument may or may not be right, but it must be understood by the architects of the future US military.

Thinking Beyond Boundaries: Transnational Challenges to US Foreign Policy

Edited by Hugh Liebert, John Griswold & Isaiah Wilson, III

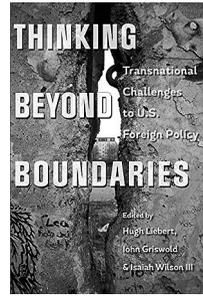
Reviewed by Dr. Robert J. Bunker, Adjunct Research Professor, US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute

Thinking beyond Boundaries: Transnational Challenges to US Foreign Policy is an edited work produced by Hugh Liebert, John Griswold, and Isaiah Wilson III—faculty linked to the Department of Social Sciences at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. All three of the editors are PhD-level scholars presently, or previously, teaching in that Department, with two of them also serving as US Army officers. The work itself is primarily drawn from papers utilized at the 63rd Student Conference on US Affairs (SCUSA) held in November 2011 and subsequently modified based on participant feedback.

The original intent of these papers—eighteen of which are showcased in this book and written by twenty-six authors primarily affiliated with the Academy—was meant to facilitate numerous small-group discussions among West Point cadets and a few hundred select undergraduate delegates from civilian universities attending SCUSA. The mission of these conferences is not only to bridge military and civilian divides but to help bond cohorts of America's future military, policy making, and civilian leaders by looking at real world US foreign policy issues and producing collaborative policy recommendations (based on each table grouping theme). Along with these showcased papers, the work also includes a contributor listing, foreword, acknowledgements, introduction, conclusion, epilogue, and index.

The book is divided into three parts: tracing domestic issues in US foreign policy; distinguishing regional dynamics in US foreign policy; and turning global challenges into foreign-policy opportunities. Each part of the book is then divided into six chapters, each with a theme and specific title. These themes as they relate to transnational challenges—which together may result in “*compound* security dilemmas” (220)—are presented as follows. Part I includes institutions and US foreign policy, US foreign policymaking, federalism and education policy, federalism and immigration policy, thinking beyond civil-military boundaries, America's wars. Part II contains China, Middle East, South and Central Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Part III is composed of cyberspace, foreign aid, proliferation, international political economy, the environment, and strategic resources. Each chapter is typically laid out with an introduction to the theme in question, a body of text addressing it along with related issues, and challenges it represents, and then a number of questions for deliberation. Various combinations of recommended readings, additional readings, and recommended resources (websites) are provided, always in addition to a notes section.

Quite a few exceptional chapters exist in the work. Chapter 18 by Anne Pope, which concerns phosphate rock as a strategic resource needed for fertilizer creation, is one example. Morocco, it turns out, holds most of the world's high-quality phosphate reserves. As world-wide reserves are depleted, its importance—along with that of other



Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2014

256 pages

\$24.95

source nations of this component of food production such as Tunisia and Algeria—will only continue to increase. In fact, these countries will represent a concentrated area of production far more exclusive than that which has ever been the case for oil production. (205)

Another chapter that should be highlighted is by Jeanne Godfroy and Bryan Price; it focuses on civil wars as a form of persistent conflict that has “national, regional, and global repercussions.” (66) In fact, per former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in February 2011, across the larger spectrum such conflict extends well beyond terrorism and insurgency. These and other chapter contributions are meant to challenge readers by inviting them to be policymakers and subsequently to reflect on policy by utilizing “a dialogue between theory and practice.” (220)

The work is an excellent resource for undergraduate American foreign policy courses—especially those attempting to get some of the SCUSA experience. An issue, of course, is the lack of freshness of material that roughly originates from the later 2011 period. Since the contributions in the work are unlikely to be updated and new challenges will emerge, their foreign policy relevance will have a limited shelf life. Additionally, while this is a superb book, it has somewhat marginal utility at the graduate level and therefore is not well suited to war college seminars. Still, this is a very useful work for facilitating undergraduate American foreign policy seminar interactions and, quite possibly, another book may be produced from a future SCUSA event to replace this work when it becomes outdated.

MIDDLE EAST

Psychological Warfare in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

By Ron Schleifer

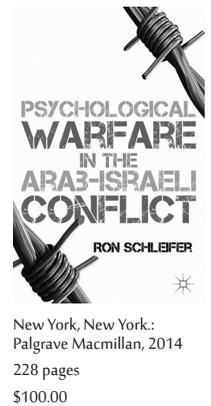
Reviewed by Dr. Eado Hecht, independent analyst and Research Fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies

The conduct of war is a collision of material and will between rival communities. Most studies of war focus on the strategy and tactics: force ratios, maneuvers, projection of fire power and logistics. However, given that most wars, especially, but not exclusively, low intensity wars, are decided long before one side runs out of material capability, many would argue that the psychological aspects are in fact much more important than the material ones. Psychological Warfare is a specific effort to influence the result of a war via the psychological aspects. It has three separate but complementary branches: strengthening the resolve of one's own people to stay the course despite the pain inflicted on them; weakening the resolve of the enemy's leaders, people and combatants; and convincing outside spectators to support one's own side in the conflict whether by playing to their cultural preferences or to the benefit they would accrue from this support or both.

Dr. Ron Shleifer is one of the few academics who studies Psychological Warfare in general and is certainly the leading expert on psychological warfare in the Arab-Israeli conflict. His previous books and articles, describing and analyzing specific events or periods, have successfully piqued the interest of professional readers. His purpose is not merely to describe what happened but also to learn lessons and to suggest principles on how to conduct psychological warfare in the future. His previous books and articles each focused on a specific chapter of the Israeli-Arab conflict – especially prominent were a very successful book focused on psychological warfare in the 1987 – 1993 Intifada, an article on psychological warfare during the fighting in Lebanon from 1985 to 2000 and another on the 2006 war in Lebanon.

As its title suggests, this book purports to cover the entire Arab-Israeli conflict. It provides abbreviated chapters from his previous books and articles and adds new ones covering the period from approximately 1945 till 1982, the misnamed Second Intifada (2000 – 2006, branding of the name itself being a psychological warfare success for the Palestinians), Operation 'Cast Lead' (2008 – 2009) and the Mavi Marmara affair (2010). Alongside the historical description of psychological warfare methods employed by the rivals, Schleifer deduces lessons useful for psychological warfare operators in other conflicts.

Rightly or wrongly, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been and continues to be viewed internationally as a dominant global issue since 1948. This interest in itself testifies to the importance of psychology in determining the actions of rivals and spectators in any war and emphasizes the need of any community engaged in war to invest energy in winning the psychological front. Over the past four decades, despite achieving its political goals in most of its military confrontations, many of Israel's



purely military difficulties actually stem not from the material aspects of conducting war but from the difficulty in ‘selling’ its policies and military methods in Israel and abroad. Conversely, Israel’s rivals’ ability to paint events in colors suitable to their goals and methods has been gradually improving. Schleifer analyzes the methods applied by Israel and the Arabs and attempts to explain why the Israelis are gradually losing ground on this front.

Unfortunately, though the added historical information is important, the book suffers from some serious authorial and editorial mistakes. First and foremost is that the title is misleading – in fact the book really covers the period from the 1980s till 2010 and focuses on only two fronts of this conflict – the Palestinian and the Hizbullah. The entire period from the mid-1940s to the mid-1980s is merely glossed over – 7 pages from 1948 till 1982. Even without changing the content, a more appropriate title should have been chosen. Secondly, the content itself varies in quality – the best chapters are those which were published previously on the first Intifada and on the fighting with Hizbullah. Finally, there are many editorial errors. Two typical examples: leaving the captions to a number of photographs of leaflets without the photographs themselves (pp 24 – 25), thus rendering some of the information in the captions meaningless; the first paragraph of the Epilogue, begins – “This book went into print after the Second Gaza War...” but then discusses the Second Lebanon War instead. This paragraph is a literal translation of the equivalent paragraph in a book published in Hebrew in 2007 – except that there it was written Second Lebanon War...

To summarize, a useful book about an important topic, unfortunately marred by the quality of presentation.



The Rise of Turkey: The Twenty-First Century's First Muslim Power

By Soner Cagaptay

Reviewed by W. Andrew Terrill, PhD, Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

Soner Cagaptay’s study on Turkey delivers significantly more than the title implies. While the author unquestionably addresses Turkey’s rising global role and vastly strengthened economy, he also provides insightful analysis of Turkish social and political transformation since the Justice and Development Party (AKP) took power in 2002. This transformation centers on what the author describes as the end of Kemalism as the Turkish guiding ideology. Kemalism is the vision of Turkey’s modern founder, Kemal Ataturk, for his country’s social and political future. It is best described as a European-oriented, top-down Westernization and secularization approach, which also includes a special domestic role for the military in protecting secular democracy. According to Cagaptay, the AKP has now moved Turkey into a post-Kemalist phase as Ataturk’s political vision is increasingly set aside, and the government establishes a greater role for Islam in the public sphere. He describes some of the new AKP policies as government-imposed social conservatism and top-down social engineering. To illustrate this point, the author notes government institutions now openly discriminate against secular Turks

Dulles, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2014,
168 pages
\$25.95

in hiring and promotions, and this situation is particularly problematic for women who choose not to wear the headscarf.

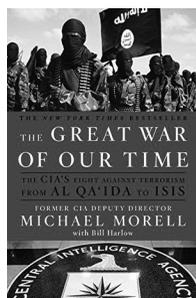
The architect of this vastly changed Turkey is Tayyip Erdogan, who served as prime minister for 11 years and then became Turkey's first elected president in August 2014. Erdogan and his party have been able to win a series of consecutive national elections by drawing on the strong support of voters from struggling low income neighborhoods, where religion is often taken very seriously. Many residents of these neighborhoods find Erdogan an appealing figure due to both his policy positions and his childhood in Kasimpasa, a tough, low income, Istanbul neighborhood. Unsurprisingly, many AKP supporters also resent their country's secular and Westernized elites epitomized by the Republican People's Party (CHP). Moreover, the increased strength of the economy allows the AKP government to invest in education, health care, and other social programs that benefit the poor, thereby consolidating the loyalties of many low income voters. In this environment, Erdogan is poised to remain the dominant figure in Turkish politics despite his decision to change offices in response to internal AKP rules on term limits for prime minister.

As prime minister, Erdogan, like Ataturk, used the force of his personality to impose his worldview on Turkish society. He has also governed in an increasingly authoritarian manner, and the AKP leadership has targeted some of its most assertive critics including media figures and court officials for whatever punishment it can direct at them. Steep fines have been leveled at the independent media on fairly flimsy grounds, while Turkey has now surpassed China and Iran as the country with the highest number of journalists in prison. The AKP government has also eliminated the military's role in Turkish politics through mass arrests and intimidation of officers, often involving illegal surveillance supposedly implemented to prevent a coup. The Turkish military has been one of the most Westernized segments of Turkish society since 1826, and its leadership viewed the protection of Ataturk's vision of a secular Turkey as one of its most important duties from the 1920s until the recent successful AKP's moves to break the military's political power.

Against the AKP tide is an opposition that Cagaptay characterizes as, "the other Turkey" (76). This group includes secularists who often back the CHP, and comprise a significant segment (but not a majority) of the electorate. In recent elections, the CHP has often done well with middle class and upper middle class voters (especially women) and also with Turks descended from families expelled from former Ottoman Empire territories in Europe. The liberal, minority Islamic Alevis sect was granted political freedoms by Ataturk, and overwhelmingly tends to support secular parties such as the CHP. Despite these advantages, the CHP has faced crippling difficulties due to its failure to modernize and present a more inclusive vision for the country. Cagaptay states the CHP needs to recognize and take advantage of the distinction between government-sponsored social conservatism and non-political religious devotion if it is ever to regain power. Cagaptay also includes many Kurds (especially from the southeast) as part of the "other Turkey." He suggests this group is becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the leading political parties since it has witnessed Iraqi (and to a lesser extent Syrian)

Kurds become more autonomous, albeit in response to internal disorder in those countries. Accordingly, many within the Kurdish community support the secular Democratic Regions Party (BDP), which is a Kurdish nationalist party. Kurdish opposition to the AKP is not total however, and the party has maintained a respectable showing among conservative religious Kurds in recent elections.

Cagaptay asserts both secularists and Islamists need to find common ground if Turkey is to avoid becoming hopelessly polarized and increasingly authoritarian. He is particularly concerned about differences over possible plans to write a new constitution. The author further maintains the 1982 Constitution, written by the military, “reads like a boarding school’s ‘don’t do list’” (149), and many Turks would like to replace it. Yet, an Islamist constitution would almost certainly be a disaster for Turkey, producing massive anger among large segments of the population. Instead, Cagaptay calls for a constitution with a strong emphasis on individual rights, allowing people to express Islamist or secular ideals as they see fit. He contends a future Turkey embracing its Muslim identity while maintaining its ties to the West could emerge as a powerful global player, but this will not occur if the country is polarized by poisonous, winner-take-all attitudes towards the country’s future.



New York, NY: Twelve,
2015
362 pages
\$28.00

The Great War of Our Time: The CIA'S Fight Against Terrorism from al Qa'ida to ISIS

By Michael Morell

Reviewed by W. Andrew Terrill, PhD, Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

Michael Morell has written an important memoir of his 33 years in the CIA with a special emphasis on events occurring after the 9/11 strike. He was in a number of key positions during this time frame and had already assumed the plum job of CIA briefer to President George W. Bush in December 2000. The remainder of his career (including later positions as associate deputy director and the head of the CIA's main analytic arm, the directorate of intelligence) was often focused on the struggle against terrorist organizations. Later, he rose to the rank of Deputy Director and twice to Acting Director before retiring in 2013. Unsurprisingly, Morell's book conveys a pro-CIA viewpoint on such controversial topics as the Iraq War, Enhanced Interrogation Techniques (EITs), drone warfare, the bin Laden raid, the Benghazi controversy, the Snowden affair, and a variety of other issues. A central focus of the book is the CIA's struggle against al-Qa'ida and its subordinate offshoot organizations such as the powerful Yemen-based al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

Morell does not criticize President Bush's decision to invade Iraq and states that the president, “thought [the war] was necessary to protect the American people.” (78) He also states the CIA provided the president with wrong information on the issue of Iraqi chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and this flawed intelligence helped Bush decide to invade Iraq.

Morell maintains the CIA's conclusions on Iraqi issues immediately prior to the war were one of the most important intelligence failures in the history of the agency and even uses his book to issue a public apology to former Secretary of State Colin Powell for misleading him. Such statements seem like a huge admission of failure, but they are also offered to rebut the even more serious criticism of being bullied into endorsing politicized intelligence when placed under massive political pressure to do so. Morell admits such pressure did exist on issues related to Iraq and it was severe. According to Morell, Vice President Dick Cheney's staff was relentlessly pushing for hardline reports that could be used to justify a war with Iraq. Morell further states the degree of amateur intelligence analysis being conducted by political appointees during this time frame was unprecedented in his career. He mentions that Cheney's Chief of Staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby literally yelled at one CIA official over an intelligence document in which CIA analysts refused to endorse his favored hardline conclusions. In Morell's account, the person experiencing Libby's anger behaved like a hero and stated he would resign before withdrawing the offending report. In a similar incident, Morell recounts how another senior Cheney aide attempted to impose a great deal of unreliable information on CIA experts in a further attempt to improve the case for war. In response to this pressure, Morell claims CIA analysts always acted with integrity and won every battle over the contents of their reports. One hopes that is the whole story, although it would seem wickedly difficult for these people to avoid at least a certain level of self-censorship when faced with what former Bush Press Secretary Scott McClellan called "our campaign to sell the war."¹

In an especially controversial section of the book, Morell provides a strong defense of the Bush Administration's detention and intensified interrogation policies, the latter of which were designated with the innocuous name Enhanced Interrogation Techniques (EITs). He had hoped that EITs would be allowed to continue under President Obama, but the new president banned them on his second full day in office. Additionally, although Morell likes and respects his former boss, CIA Director Leon Panetta, he was unhappy when Panetta stated that waterboarding was torture, a statement Morell saw as confrontational with the CIA old guard. Morell insists individuals subjected to EITs provided significantly better information than in situations where they were interrogated with more conventional techniques. He also states EITs helped alert the CIA to the importance of courier Abu Ahmed as a lead to find Osama bin Laden. Morell maintains any intelligence on bin Laden was important since he was so difficult to find. Moreover, even with intelligence gathered through a variety of means, Morell believed the case was "thin" for bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad on the eve of the May 2, 2011 raid. While the CIA leadership was delighted with the outcome of the Abbottabad raid, Morell indicates the president chose to authorize it on the basis of very limited intelligence.

In one of the most compelling discussions in the book, Morell provides a strong defense of drone warfare, and calls these systems, "the single most effective tool in the last five years for protecting the United

¹ Peter Baker, *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House*, New York: Doubleday, 2013, 224.

States from terrorists.” (137) He makes a strong case that drones are among the most precise weapons in the history of warfare and that collateral damage from their use is often “highly exaggerated.” (138) Morell effectively notes the success of drones in Yemen and Pakistan, but he does a much weaker job of discussing the reemergence of AQAP in Yemen during the mid-2000s, stating this comeback occurred primarily because of a 2006 jailbreak by AQAP prisoners in that country. This jailbreak, while brazen and clever, involved only a limited number of individuals, all but six of whom were killed or recaptured over the following year. Another factor of potentially greater importance to AQAP’s success involved the flight of significant numbers of terrorists from Saudi Arabia to Yemen bringing their connections to terrorist financing with them. Likewise, around this time, a number of battle-hardened Yemeni jihadists were returning from the fighting in Iraq and were interested in waging war against the government of their own country.²

Morell also discusses the controversy over the 2012 deaths of four US government officials in Benghazi, Libya. He is especially offended by charges that the CIA collaborated with the White House to cover up key facts about the attack, and he understandably does not enjoy being called a liar over his actions related to this incident. Morell puts forward what he views as the relevant evidence on events in Benghazi, but fears the entire episode has entered into a discussion where facts do not matter. He emphatically denies charges he doctored documents relating to the attack and methodically refutes a number of reckless statements about a White House/CIA conspiracy. In a separate discussion, he also looks closely at the Edward Snowden affair and maintains that Snowden released information that helped enable the rise of the Islamic State. He unequivocally calls him a traitor.

In sum, this is a book of strong opinions by a CIA loyalist and committed organization man. The author puts forward his perspective because he believes many CIA actions have been unfairly criticized by irresponsible elements within the media and by political leaders who have attacked his agency as a way of getting at their political opponents. Morell is critical of these individuals in polite and respectful language, but he gets his message across. All this is not to say Morell does not have an important point of view, or that he fails to provide a well-reasoned defense of many controversial CIA activities, but this book is clearly designed to persuade as well as enlighten the reader.

2 I have examined this issue in a monograph written for the US Army Strategic Studies Institute. See W. Andrew Terrill, *The Conflict in Yemen and US National Security*, Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, 2011, 54-57.

ETHICS

In Defence of War

By Nigel Biggar

Reviewed by Dr. David L. Perry, Professor of Applied Ethics and Director of the Vann Center for Ethics, Davidson College, and former Professor of Ethics, US Army War College

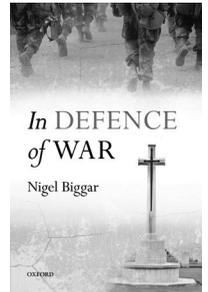
The author, Dr. Nigel Biggar, is Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and Director of the McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics and Public Life at the University of Oxford. He has published several books and dozens of scholarly articles on Christian ethics, serves on the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Military Ethics*, and has lectured at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.

I became acquainted with Professor Biggar over thirty years ago when we both studied ethics at the University of Chicago Divinity School. I do not share all of his Christian convictions, but I have always been highly impressed by the quality of his scholarship and analytical skills. *In Defence of War* is a tremendously impressive book, which I am happy to recommend strongly.

In chapter one, Biggar persuasively shows three influential Christian ethicists—Stanley Hauerwas, John Howard Yoder, and Richard Hays—failed to prove the New Testament to have consistently promoted strict pacifism. Chapters two and three explore whether soldiers can plausibly exhibit Christian love of enemies and right intention in combat situations. Drawing extensively on the reflections of combat veterans, Biggar demonstrates soldiers frequently do exhibit love toward their fellow troops and the innocents they protect, as well as respect for at least some enemies. (78-91) But he does not convincingly prove killing or maiming enemies can plausibly reflect love *for them*, leaving me unsure how soldiers, *while* employing deadly force, could possibly uphold Jesus' command to love their enemies.

Then again, Biggar also insists warriors do *not intend to kill or wound enemy combatants at all*, “insofar as ‘intend’ means to ‘choose and want as a goal’ rather than to ‘choose and accept with reluctance,’” i.e., as a necessary and proportionate side effect “of intending something good—say, the protection of the innocent.” He recognizes that his view “tests the patience of those who have first-hand experience of war-fighting,” but insists nonetheless that it is “more Christian” than its alternative, “better calculated to restrain violence,” and “sufficiently realistic about military psychology” (103, 110). However, I frankly believe his ethical standard here is set so high almost no Christian (or anyone else) could satisfy it, and moreover, it would be unfair to expect soldiers to uphold it or blame them for failing to do so.

Chapter four by itself is well worth the price of the book. There the author examines the just-war principle of proportionality in both its *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* modes, focusing on whether Britain's decision to go to war against Germany in 1914 and General Douglas Haig's attack at the Somme in July 1916 were proportionate in those respective senses.



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366 pages
\$28.27 (paper)

His answers in both cases are yes, but readers owe it to themselves to see how he arrives at them. Consistent with the teachings of Christian theologian Thomas Aquinas, et al., Biggar notes “a war that lacks just cause or right intention cannot be proportionate, since none of the evils that it causes can be justified.” (147) But one of his most startling claims in defense of Haig and others is that “a certain kind of callousness is a military virtue, and the fact that a commander’s chosen plan involves the foreseeable annihilation of whole bodies of his troops need not be culpably disproportionate.” (148)

Chapter five is devoted primarily to addressing several criticisms of just-war theory made by the philosopher David Rodin in his influential book, *War and Self-Defense*. While agreeing with some of Rodin’s concerns about international law, Biggar systematically refutes Rodin’s arguments against just-war principles. Along the way, Biggar offers many nuanced insights on the historical development of that tradition, especially from Augustine to Grotius.

Controversies regarding humanitarian military interventions, specifically NATO’s 1999 war against Serbia to stop its ethnic cleansing of Kosovo, are addressed in Biggar’s sixth chapter. NATO’s intervention has been criticized as violating the UN Charter, since Serbia did not pose a direct threat to neighboring countries and the Security Council did not authorize an intervention as permanent members Russia and China would surely have vetoed any such resolution. Biggar counters that NATO’s actions may *not* have violated the UN Charter, though that interpretation seems weakly supported; he thinks it unlikely those drafting the Charter would have ruled out humanitarian interventions absent Security Council approval, given Nazi atrocities were so fresh in their minds. (221-222) But he forgets (here at least) Hitler had claimed humanitarian motives in annexing the Sudetenland and invading Poland, examples which must also have worried those writing the Charter. Biggar is on more solid ground in citing humanitarian precedents in customary international law and in stating compelling moral reasons for protecting basic human rights even if international law is infringed or ignored.

In chapter seven, the author opens with concise and lucid summaries of the standard just-war criteria, and then spends seventy pages carefully applying each one to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. He reaches the rather unorthodox conclusion that it was justified overall. I would only fault him in failing to consider pre-war US claims that Saddam Hussein was producing biological weapons in mobile labs and had tried to import aluminum tubes to use as centrifuges in his nuclear weapons program. Both claims were later shown to be ridiculously false and in my view, the Bush Administration deserves grave moral blame for making them, given that they were vital in persuading the American people and Congress to support the invasion.

Unlawful Combatants: A Genealogy of the Irregular Fighter

By Sibylle Scheipers

Reviewed by Dr. David L. Perry, Professor of Applied Ethics and Director of the Vann Center for Ethics, Davidson College, and former Professor of Ethics, US Army War College

Dr. Sibylle Scheipers is a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and was previously Director of Studies for the Changing Character of War Programme at Oxford University. She earned a PhD at Humboldt University in Berlin and was a post-doctoral fellow at Chatham House. This is her second solo-authored book in addition to editing three others including *Prisoners in War* (Oxford, 2010) and several articles published in scholarly journals.

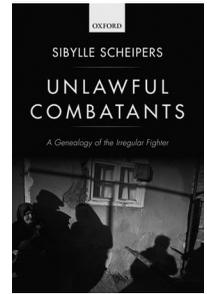
Early in *Unlawful Combatants* the author reminds us, “Under the law of armed conflict, irregular fighters such as insurgents, guerrillas, and rebels are largely excluded from the privileges and protections of prisoner-of-war (POW) status.” Her primary intent in this book is to explore “the ambiguity of the status of irregular fighters, the political opportunism entangled with categorizing someone as an irregular fighter, and...the stark consequences of such a categorization.” (2)

To a great extent Scheipers admirably succeeds in illuminating those topics through a detailed study of several specific periods in military history and related developments including international law (primarily Europe and North America from 1740 to 1815), the American Civil War, the Franco-Prussian War, the Second World War, colonial wars in Haiti, Malaya and several parts of Africa, and recent struggles against Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Iraqi insurgents. I am impressed with the myriad examples of irregular fighters Scheipers identifies through her wide-ranging research, the careful distinctions she makes among them, and the frequently problematic interpretations of those combatants she teases out of the writings of generals, politicians, and lawyers.

An intriguing theme running throughout *Unlawful Combatants* is irregular warfare often occurs at the edges of conventional war, and even as an authorized auxiliary to it, e.g. in the American Civil War and Franco-Prussian War (ch. 3). Scheipers also conveys how difficult it can be to establish stable and robust legal rules regarding irregular warfare, given that it includes widely disparate forms ranging from organized insurgent groups, semi-official partisans, and widespread popular uprisings against occupying uniformed troops.

One drawback of Scheipers’ approach is that by focusing on opportunistic uses of the term “irregular” and its synonyms from state apologists, she ignores ways in which typical irregular war tactics—stealth, surprise, raiding, looting, rape, indiscriminate killing etc.—were standard procedures (i.e. “regular”) throughout much of human history. For example, while discussing North American conflicts in the late eighteenth century (ch. 1), she claims:

What Europeans encountered as “Indian warfare”—that is, the conduct of Native Americans on the battlefield—was an adaptation to the new weapons technologies that Europeans had brought to America. Native American



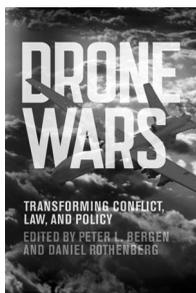
New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015
288 pages
\$79.86 (hardcover)

warfare before the arrival of the gun had been mostly limited, ritualized, and rather low in mortality. (39)

But such claims are overly sweeping and misleading, as Lawrence Keeley demonstrated in his fascinating book, *War before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). While Native Americans surely did adapt *some* of their tactics after being introduced to European weapons, Keeley proved that mortality rates in violent conflicts between Native American cultures prior to contact with Europeans were usually much *higher* than mortality rates from wars waged between modern industrialized countries. Moreover, human beings most likely inherited violently aggressive tendencies and even some war tactics from the common ancestor species that also produced chimpanzees, according to Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson, *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996). To be sure, Scheipers could not possibly write about every case of irregular warfare in human history, but it would be interesting to know whether her approach in *Unlawful Combatants* would have been modified by exposure to these works.

On America's "War on Terror," Scheipers is right to criticize the Bush Administration for denying, post-9/11, that the Geneva Conventions applied to Al Qaeda detainees. (195) She also perceptively points out the United States has supported some Afghan and Iraqi irregular fighters without clearly articulating how they differ legally or ethically from enemy irregulars. (217-221) But I am not persuaded by her claim the concept of "unlawful combatant" in itself "suffers from internal inconsistencies," (190, 222) since that term can simply refer today to a fighter who does not satisfy all of the Geneva Convention criteria required to be accorded full POW status.

Overall, I recommend *Unlawful Combatants* enthusiastically as a detailed and thoughtful history of irregular warfare.



Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy

Edited by Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg

Reviewed by Ulrike Esther Franke, Doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford, supervised by Prof. Sir Hew Strachan

So many books on drones and "drone warfare" have been published in the last few years that a new drone book needs a good answer to the question "is there something new in it?". Drones have become the hot topic in international relations and security studies, not least because of the substantial public interest in the matter. This has led to a plethora of news reports, newspaper articles, academic papers, and increasingly books, to be published in the last few years. Not all of them deserve to be read or reviewed.

Drone Wars, Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy, edited by New America's Vice President Peter L. Bergen and New America Fellow and Professor at Arizona State University Daniel Rothenberg certainly deserves both. In 22 essays over 512 pages, the authors – most with a background in academia, law, journalism, or politics – offer fascinating insights into different aspects of the US drone programme.

Cambridge, England, UK:
Cambridge University
Press, 2014
512 pages
\$34.99

The essays are ordered into four somewhat loose sections; ‘Drones on the Ground’, ‘Drones and the Laws of War’, ‘Drones and Policy’, ‘Drones and the Future of War’. Each section begins with fascinating first-hand accounts. A journalist who was held captive for several months in Waziristan reports on having lived under constant drone surveillance. A US drone pilot, in a particularly fascinating essay, shares his experiences of fighting “war at a very intimate level”. A Special Forces commander describes his use of UAVs in Afghanistan and gives rare insights into the Afghan populations’ view of drones. A Pakistani from North Waziristan shares his fear of – but also his gratefulness for – the US drone programme, giving the reader a glimpse of the complex situation on the ground.

Depending on their previous knowledge of the topic, readers are likely to enjoy different essays. No review can do justice to an edited volume, particularly not one containing that many essays. While all the chapters are good, some offer more unique and novel insights than others. I particularly enjoyed four essays.

In “What Do Pakistanis Really Think About Drones?”, Saba Imtiaz gives an excellent overview of the US drone operations in Pakistan. This is a brilliant paper even for those familiar with the topic. Particularly, it puts the US-Pakistan drone campaign in a broader context of US-Pakistani relations, an aspect usually lacking in the discussion. Imtiaz shows how the (US-backed) Pakistani policy of allowing the strikes in secret, while publically condemning them, has created major backlashes in Pakistani-US relations and has negatively influenced Pakistani citizens’ view of both the US and Pakistani domestic politics. “The use of drones in Pakistan has become the face of US foreign policy in the country” (90), Imtiaz argues. Ultimately however, “drones are not the core problem in US-Pakistan relations, but rather a symbol [...] of what is wrong with American interventionism in general” (100).

Naureen Shah offers fascinating insights into Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and its drone operations in “A Move Within the Shadows“. With most of the public and political attention being focused on the better-known CIA ops, JSOC’s role is often neglected, its extensive involvement in US drone operations notwithstanding. Shah analyses JSOC’s development, arguing that the organisation’s novelty and the political support it enjoys means that it “remains unencumbered by many of the oversight processes and reporting requirements that developed, over time and in response to scandals and public pressure, for the CIA and conventional military forces” (175). Accordingly, it is questionable whether handing over the drone programme from the CIA to the military – and JSOC – would indeed signify an improvement in oversight as many have argued.

In the expertly researched chapter “Predator Effect”, Megan Braun discusses the development of the iconic Predator drone. She asks how revolutionary drones have really been and argues that they were transformative only in the context of the ‘War on Terror’, as they were “so ideally suited to the post 9/11 vision of the CIA” (277). Braun believes that “the current Predator program is unlikely to be replicated in the near future” (255).

Werner J.A. Dahm, previously Chief Scientist of the US Air Force takes on the claim that increased automatization will be the next logical step in the development of drones. Dahm explains the 'F2T2EA' kill chain ('find, fix, track, target, engage, assess'), and argues that one of the public's biggest concerns, namely, "removing humans from the engage part of the F2T2EA process", provides "essentially no strategic gain" (351). His paper will not settle the debate on automatization and autonomy, but it represents an informed contribution to a debate rigged with speculation.

Overall, *Drone Wars* offers many new insights and approaches that are much needed in the drone debate. The book's essay structure makes it particularly suited for teaching, also because there is quite some disagreement between the authors on several questions, such as whether drones are revolutionary, whether the US strikes are legal, or what the future of drone operations will look like.

The book's main flaw is its US-centric approach. Based on the premise that drones "have become a lens through which US foreign policy is understood" (1), the authors make it seem as if US foreign policy is the only lens through which drones can be understood. Other countries' uses of drones are largely ignored, only drone proliferation is discussed. This means that the authors run the risk of seeing drones uniquely in the context of the 'War on Terror'. Counterbalancing this US-centric view would have made the analysis stronger.

STABILITY OPERATIONS

Mission Revolution: The US Military and Stability Operations

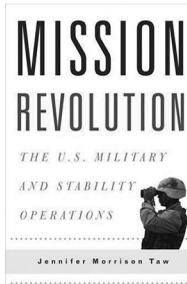
By Jennifer Morrison Taw

Reviewed by Dr. James H. Embrey, Professor of Stability Operations, US Army
Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, US Army War College

A recurring debate within US military affairs is whether change within military operations is “revolutionary” because they are a profound, distinct departure from the past, or they are “evolutionary” as the next logical steps in adapting to complex, recurring and somewhat intractable problems. In “Mission Revolution,” Professor Jennifer Taw asserts over the past two decades Defense Department civilian and military leaders have made a revolutionary shift in accepting and integrating “stability operations” as a core mission for US military forces. Faced with wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and “persistent conflict” in coming years, issuance of DoD Directive 3000.05 was the pivotal point where progressive defense leaders mandated reform and improvements of doctrine, organization and training whereby “stability operations” – the capability to establish order advancing US interests and values – were put on equal footing with offense and defense capabilities. In doing so, progressives began purposefully moving military forces from a warfighting focus on delivering “decisive force” into areas traditionally civilian-dominated efforts due to the rise of complex threats of international criminals, terrorist, and jihadists. Taw offers alternative reasons beyond the past two decades of peacekeeping and counterinsurgency experience as to why such “infamously stubborn institutions” such as the US military would adopt such changes, asserting they are mostly pragmatic and self-interested: that Pentagon leaders now embrace new, non-standard missions reinforcing the utility of military efforts in policy accomplishment in order to retain force structure during future austerity.

Taw provides an interesting overview of the historical context and doctrinal development for stability operations throughout US history, noting land forces have been constantly involved in a variety of lesser contingencies and post-war commitments exceeding the capacity and acceptable risk of civilian USG efforts. However, “warfighting” preparation has dominated readiness efforts while assuming the risk that a military prepared for conventional conflict could readily adapt to lesser contingencies where security and stability were the focus of USG efforts. These perspectives ran counter to the needs of post-Cold War Administrations who complained the Pentagon’s “all or nothing” to using military force created an expensive military with little utility in shaping and maintaining international order. Much to Secretary Rumsfeld’s frustration (who also believed the military shouldn’t “do windows”), Iraq and Afghanistan post-conflict requirements again highlighted military *force* in itself is rarely decisive, and significant skilled and capable military *forces* are required in insecure environments to accomplish sustainable political outcomes.

After this insightful analysis, Taw’s explanation of why change occurred is more problematic as she echoes popular criticisms of

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University Press, 2012

280 pages

\$26.00

“militarizing of foreign policy.” She proposes this “mission revolution” results from both “securitized instability” — with each Administration’s obsession with rising global violence as the preeminent threat to US global interests — providing “institutional privileging” for preserving DoD and military capabilities necessary to counter threats to world order by pernicious jihadists, terrorists, narco-criminal activities. She proposes DoD dominance diverts resources, atrophies other agencies capabilities and weaken long-term efforts to build resilient societies that reject violent radicalism, but she does not sufficiently explain Defense’s sister “3 D’s”— Diplomacy and Development — have not instituted their own “mission revolutions” in adapting to the challenges of an unsecure, volatile world. In all, the past decade of war has shown the opposite; DoD and military leaders are willing to divert significant funding, manning and training resources and support increased Congressional funding for civilian deployment, planning and coordination capabilities to work alongside security assistance efforts in vital, higher risk environments.

In considering military efforts from Vietnam through the Balkans to the present, many of the changes identified are less a revolution than mission-required evolution. The requirements of DoDD 3000.05 then generate capabilities to “support” and not supplant under-resourced civilian efforts operating in conflict environments — an enduring, traditional military mission. Additionally, requiring the military to devote equal emphasis to generating capabilities to “establish order” and “develop indigenous capacity” in violence prone areas is a necessary institutional reminder to military and Congressional leaders — capable and flexible forces are constantly needed by US leaders to accomplish strategic success beyond fighting and winning wars, including efforts to build partner capacity. Finally, in a world of fragile states, increasingly threatened by non-state actors, efforts appearing to be militarizing foreign policy are pragmatically the “best, worst option” given the dearth of civilian capacity to work in high-threat environments as well as countering challenges to host nation legitimacy and stability which are the foundation for long term development success.

Nevertheless, Mission Revolution is a valuable analysis of the last decade’s efforts to balance military capabilities while concurrently enabling US success across a broader range of political and military needs. It highlights the challenges of integrating the organizational cultures across the defense, diplomatic, and developmental communities to improve interagency coordination. Her informative insights provide guideposts for future decision making on how far we should move toward security-dominated solutions abroad. As a colleague recently noted, US leaders are seeking a way out of resource intensive counterinsurgency and stability operations while adversaries work their way into them. Given traditional institutional preferences across all of the 3Ds, it will be interesting as the decade of war fades into the past to see how permanent DoD’s changes will be, and whether a “revolution” will occur within civilian agencies to enable better coordination and planning with military security assistance and capacity building. As in any true revolution, we will only know when the uncertain future becomes the discernible past.

Violence After War: Explaining Instability in Post-Conflict States

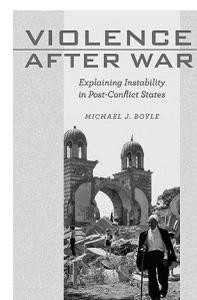
By Michael J. Boyle

Reviewed by James H. Lebovic, George Washington University

Michael J. Boyle's new book offers a welcome look at *post*-conflict violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Rwanda, East Timor, and Iraq. Despite its title, the book sensitizes readers more generally to the fallacy of assuming that countries have graduated to post-conflict status with the ostensible end in fighting. Conflict can persist when parties seek to "renegotiate" the terms of a peace through violence, new parties arise to stake their claim to power, or coalitions dissolve in disputes over the division of the spoils.

The book focuses accordingly on "strategic violence" which is "designed to transform the balance of power and resources in a state" (8). Such violence is most obvious when one or more of the contending parties seeks to challenge the terms of a settlement having agreed to them, perhaps, under duress or false pretenses. But strategic violence sometimes has a more complex explanation with ambiguous evidentiary support. It can occur when groups fragment to pursue their own (unclear) agendas by capitalizing on ethnic, religious, or political conflict and engaging in criminal activities by employing criminal gangs to mobilize resources and target opponents for "strategic" purposes. "Not only can such violence be unconnected or only indirectly related to the cause of the war itself, but it can also provide a space for opportunists to pursue a variety of personal or criminal vendettas, some of which will be detached from the fighting that preceded it." In consequence, "the violence of the post-conflict period will often appear as an inchoate mix of personal attacks, criminal violence, and political-strategic violence significantly different from violence in the war that preceded it" (5). In Boyle's terminology, strategic violence mixes with "expressive violence," an emotional response to loss or suffering, and "instrumental violence," undertaken for criminal or personal gain. The analytical challenge is met, as Boyle recognizes, by ascertaining the collective (not individual) motives behind the violence, as discerned from tell-tale, aggregate patterns. For that effort, Boyle marshals revealing quantitative and qualitative evidence to portray trends over time in the various conflicts.

According to Boyle, the key to understanding the role of strategic violence in post-conflict countries is appreciating the distinction between the "direct pathway" to violence in which the parties, targets, and issues in contestation remain relatively constant (from the conflict through the post-conflict periods) and the "indirect pathway" in which groups splinter and violence is a function of "multiple and overlapping bargaining games between new and emergent claimants for power and resources" (12). In discussing these pathways, Boyle's central argument reduces to four hypotheses that derive from a "2-by-2" table, structured around two binary variables. These variables are: a) whether the original parties have accepted a settlement and b) how much control these parties exercise over their membership. Simply put, strategic violence emerges through the direct pathway when a party refuses to accept a



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448 pages
\$69.95

settlement and through the indirect pathway when the level of control is low. Consequently, strategic violence can occur simultaneously through the direct and indirect pathway when a party refuses a settlement and when the level of control is low.

In positing these hypotheses and testing them against the case evidence, Boyle moves beyond the largely descriptive focus of the early theoretical chapters to explain the occurrence of strategic violence. In its illuminating detail, the case-study analysis provides support for Boyle's provocative arguments. Yet it also serves to highlight the book's limitations, which are as follows:

First, the utility of Boyle's approach rests on the viability of a 2-by-2 table that assumes implicitly that the loss of control and nonacceptance of a settlement by *any* side produces the same outcome. But do the effects of a loss of control depend, instead, on whether a group has accepted the status quo? If so, additional cells are required in the table. The splintering of the Mahdi Army under the leadership of Moqtada al-Sadr in Iraq, for example, testifies to the challenges for group leaders who pursue "moderate" goals – in this case, tacitly accepting a US troop presence through a declared cease fire – that alienates extremist elements. Would the same result occur, however, if "rejectionist" goals were widely shared within a group? Under these conditions, factions might engage in one-upmanship – challenging one another through competitive violence – yet operate nonetheless in broad alignment to achieve common goals. That question alludes, then, to an underlying problem in Boyle's analysis. Despite his ostensible focus on motivation, Boyle simply assumes that a loss of control by a group over its members results (through the indirect pathway) in strategic violence. That assumption requires justification. After all, these subgroups might choose instead to defer to the existing group leadership out of fear of isolation or loyalty to a political agenda; they might try to work themselves into positions of influence to wrest power from within; they might challenge the control of leaders only when the leadership or goals of the subgroup changes; or they might channel their discontent into lucrative criminal activities.

Second, the variables in Boyle's analysis are defined so generally and inclusively that the underlying logic is arguably circular. Boyle depicts the level of internal control as the capability to achieve compliance by inflicting costs (punishment) and distributing benefits (political positions, jobs, and profits). The analysis does not focus on any one tool or any set of mechanisms. Instead, it identifies a loss of control in the case evidence when "new" groups engage in strategic violence, and then backtracks to the reasons. A similar problem results when Boyle discusses the opportunity structure – the "cluster of features in the external environment" (90) – that facilitates or suppresses strategic violence in a country. These features include geographical barriers, the visibility and proximate presence of a target community, the flexibility of institutions, and the presence of an external force that can keep the peace. Given his broad conception of the opportunity structure, claims of an unpermissive environment could deflect any evidence that disconfirms a hypothesis. For that matter, viewing institutional flexibility as a feature of the opportunity structure (91-92) begs the question of where that structure "ends" and internal control "begins." The validation and

invalidation of hypotheses can hinge on whether a factor is deemed to represent one or the other.

Third, Boyle could have done more to disclose the processes through which conflicts change. He contends conflicts are complex and fluid but provides little guidance for predicting if and when one pathway might give way to the other, strategic violence might give rise to instrumental violence, or expressive violence might build to the point that it becomes a strategic force, when channeled effectively by newly emergent group leaders. Thus, Boyle's use of the phrase "as predicted" is somewhat misleading when he discusses the fit between the book's arguments and case evidence. Boyle presents a variety of scenarios through which a conflict can unfold but, apart from his general hypotheses, he does not predict outcomes based on a set of prior conditions. His actual focus is on the dependent variable – levels and types of violence – which explains his great attention to gathering, filtering, and categorizing evidence on violence; lengthy descriptions of trends in violence in the various countries; generation of a typology for mass, scattered, occasional, and residual violence; and brief chapter conclusions. Boyle is correct that "the reasons why experts so often get it wrong when predicting violence in post-conflict states is that they underestimate the changes in the incentives and organizational structures of the combatants, which can alter the character of the violence in subtle and unexpected ways" (305). He would have well served his reader had he provided clearer guideposts as to when and where these changes might occur. "Expect the worst" is, of course, a useful guidepost but it is also reason for inaction, or overreaction, and is of little help for building predictive social scientific theory.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies, Boyle's book offers valuable insights on an understudied phenomenon of great importance to academic researchers and policymakers. The conflict in Iraq offers powerful lessons to policymakers who anticipate a post-conflict phase that amounts to a "post-hostilities" period, with naive disregard for the jockeying for position, unresolved tensions, emerging grievances, and new-found resources that could lead to a continuation of violence. Boyle's book is perhaps most useful, then, if read as a sophisticated and well-argued admonition to policymakers who view military intervention as a quick fix to a security or humanitarian problem. Policymakers tend to focus on proximate causes and effects and give far less attention to the unintended and long-term consequences of policies. Reminders of these decisional failings are painfully apparent in Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and elsewhere around the world where interventions were orchestrated, some with the best of intentions.

Shaping US Military Forces for the Asia-Pacific: Lessons from Conflict Management in Past Great Power Eras

By Michael R. Kraig

Reviewed by LT Robert "Jake" Bebber, USN, PhD, Information Warfare officer, US Cyber Command

How should the United States address a rising China in an era where "the use of conflict management and strategic reassurance before

SHAPING
U.S. MILITARY
FORCES FOR
THE ASIA-PACIFIC

LESSONS FROM CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
IN PAST GREAT POWER ERAS

MICHAEL R. KRAIG

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Littlefield Publishers, 2014
348 pages
\$83.00

and during crises is likely to be as crucial as war-winning capabilities in a system where states are, in fact, *competitors* rather than *all-out enemies*? (20) This becomes the central question in Kraig's important book, *Shaping US Military Forces for the Asia-Pacific: Lessons from Conflict Management in Past Great Power Eras*. His argument can be summarized as follows:

- The modern international order has much in common with the era known as the Concert of Europe (1815 – 1914), “given that today’s ‘complex interdependence’ ties the financial, trade, and manufacturing wealth and individual quality of life within the sovereign states to the daily functioning of the ‘global common’ as a whole.” (22) This is worrisome when one considers “territory and values have more often than not been rightly linked since the rise of nationalism in the last 1700’s.” (75) Nationalism, both between states—and between groups within states—can create a volatile mix that threatens the rule of existing elites and can escalate to war.
- The “American Way of War” must be reconsidered in light of modern, 21st Century Great Power competition. Military doctrine built on such concepts as “decisive battle,” “full-spectrum dominance,” and air and naval supremacy are incompatible with an international order where strategic competition demands pragmatic management of core national interests between states.

Clausewitz’s principle of strategic defense should underpin a military force structure built on the goal of defensive denial of the adversary achieving its objectives rather than a vague notion of “victory” and enemy capitulation. (75, 200)

However, for a book whose title begins with “Shaping US Military Forces,” one must reach page 300 to find a detailed discussion of the recommendations on the nature and type of military forces. (Indeed, this discussion concludes the book and is a mere four pages long.) If the reader is familiar with many of the on-going debates among naval and air power theorists, these recommendations are not particularly new, but they remain no less important to the author’s underlying theory. Forces will be required to have the ability to “deny permanent military advantages within and even beyond the third island chain without immediately threatening strategic levels of destruction.” (300-301) Kraig characterizes this as a “medium-range force” that relies not on a few, large platforms (such as carriers and attendant support vessels or a long-range strategic bombing force) but rather a large number of smaller vessels of “modest but operationally significant stealth and self-defense characteristics.” He recommends forces be built around two operational concepts: theater sustainment and escalation control. This would include “smaller, quicker, much more numerous, and stealthier” versions of *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers which possess “significant antisubmarine warfare, surface-to-surface, and surface-to-air attack capabilities” while still retaining the *Burke*’s missile and ISR capabilities. Long range stealth bombers like the B-2 should be replaced with “dozens if not hundreds of highly stealthy, medium-range, medium-carrying-capacity bombers” which are designed primarily to attack targets at sea rather than penetrate and attack targets on land. (301, 303) Importantly, this “medium-range force” will not be designed to denude “China’s credible and capable nuclear retaliatory forces, nor for decapitating leadership circles.” (304)

Kraig's medium-range forces will face a daunting problem of geography and distance. It is nearly 4,000 miles from the American military bases in both Guam (an American territory) and Yokosuka, Japan (a key ally) to Hawaii. Small and medium sized surface combatants and air platforms will be hard pressed to cover such wide expanses without sufficient logistical support. One need only consider the massive extent to which the United States had to develop logistical trains to support its Pacific campaign during World War II. The reader may have appreciated this topic covered in more detail by Kraig, to include the number and type of support ships, projected costs and defense of lines of communication. Where would the medium-fighter/bomber forces he proposes be based, what sort of effective range do they need and what type and amount of air-refueling and tanker capabilities are needed? What land power capabilities are necessary to conduct forcible entry (if necessary), base hardening, ballistic missile defense and air defense? Finally, how can US military forces be assured of command-and-control in a contested electro-magnetic environment? These operational questions demand answers if we are going to reconfigure (or even maintain) military forces to operate in the Western Pacific.

These operational considerations run head-long into the geopolitical realities of permitting the entire first-island chain to come under Chinese control. Kraig argues US military forces should not be configured to threaten China's core national interests and sovereign territory. Setting aside Taiwan, what are we to do about the fact that China has declared the entire South China Sea as its sovereign territory? China is building a navy and air force capable of enforcing these territorial claims and imposing *de facto* control over the objections of her neighbors and maritime disputants like Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia. What will be the strategic and geopolitical cost to the United States if it does not possess credible military deterrence capabilities in the first and second island chains? These should probably be considered.

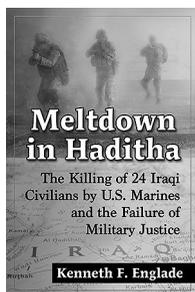
Kraig's book is an important contribution to our understanding of what the future twenty-first century international environment may look like, and he raises necessary points on the posture of America's future military capabilities. While he seems comfortable letting the "professional aviators and naval officers" deal with the detailed operational, fiscal and acquisition requirements his proposed force structure would require, further analysis of that effort would also have been helpful.

USMC

Meltdown in Haditha: The Killing of 24 Iraqi Civilians by US Marines and the Failure of Military Justice

By Kenneth F. Englade

Reviewed by Jeff A. Bovarnick, Colonel, Staff Judge Advocate, United States Army Special Operations Command



Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2015

276 pages

\$35.00

In November 2005, after an improvised explosive device killed one of their squad members, a number of United States Marines killed 24 civilians in Haditha, Iraq. Compounding the tragedy, the chain of command failed to report or investigate the deaths properly. Investigations started months after the incident led to courts-martial charges ranging from murder to dereliction of duty for the eight Marines involved in the killings and aftermath. In early 2012, after years of legal proceedings, all the Marine Corps had to show for its immense prosecutorial efforts was one conviction for one Marine who pled guilty to one specification of negligent dereliction of duty after initially being charged with 18 specifications of unpremeditated murder. How this “failure of military justice” occurred is the author’s primary focus in *Meltdown in Haditha*.

Meltdown is an indictment of the Marine Corps, those involved in the killings, the cover-up, and lengthy legal proceedings, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). There was a time after the killings when the word “Haditha” equated to negative connotations for the Marine Corps. If that time has passed, Kenneth Englade revives that negative image with his all-out assault on the Corps. His thesis is clear: the Corps botched the investigations, mishandled the prosecutions, and engaged in a systematic suppression and obfuscation of information from the public. The author also makes the following conclusory statement, and serious accusation, up front: *Meltdown* does not determine *why* the Corps acted as it did, it tells “*how* the Corps achieved its apparent purpose of burying forever (or at least the foreseeable future) particulars that would have helped fill gaps in the history of this country’s misguided attempts to bring an American solution to a Middle East problem.” (3)

If the use of numerous legal terms thus far have wearied the reader, perhaps *Meltdown* is not for you. Part I covers the background leading up to the Marines’ deployment to Anbar Province and the reconstruction of the 19 November 2005 ill-fated convoy, the killings, and the cover-up. The remainder of the book is devoted to the details of the investigations and numerous legal proceedings for the eight Marines charged that stretched from February 2006 to April 2012. For readers who enjoy such details, there are few non-fiction books that match Englade’s skill at describing the courts-martial process. Remarkably, with no prior experience covering military justice matters, Englade met the daunting challenge with minimal errors and omissions. For example, he provides incorrect maximum punishments for some of the accused Marines (64) and he appears to consider “customary dead shots” (double-tapping dead bodies) as acceptable while omitting any discussion of war crimes. (136)

A veteran journalist and an accomplished author, Englade has 14 books to his credit including five historical fiction novels and nine true

crime books. This first foray into the military justice arena may disappoint his true crime fans as *Meltdown* is not a legal thriller. Englade's experience with civilian cases likely led to his frustration with military lawyers and spokespersons who are limited in what they can disclose to the press in on-going cases. When information is divulged, it will not include insight into a commander's deliberative process or a lawyer's prosecutorial strategy. No one involved in Haditha agreed to an interview with Englade, surely prompting these unabashed comments:

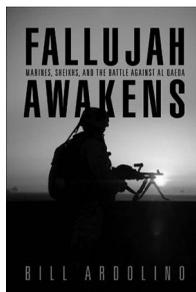
[Marines] may become cliquish, insular, obnoxiously boastful, and openly mistrustful of anyone who is not or never has been a Marine. As an institution, the Corps is infamous in some circles for its inscrutability, its detestation of the media, its arrogance, and its refusal to divulge information that it does not consider in its own best interest. (217)

Englade's persistence yielded key documents that enabled him to reconstruct the legal proceedings from the charging decisions and pre-trial investigations through the case dismissals and courts-martial. For fans of detailed legal processes and analysis, including appellate court opinions on issues such as Unlawful Command Influence, a qualified reporter's privilege, and writs of mandamus, *Meltdown* is replete with informative explanations.

The author's treatment of the convening authority for the Haditha cases, a three-star general at the time, is unrelenting in its criticism and yet, unwittingly, offers facts to paint a different picture. Consider that the general read over 9,000 pages of evidence and for four months, he held one to two strategy sessions per week with each session lasting from two to five hours. (180-81) Any suggestion that the convening authority did not exercise due diligence and make informed decisions is unwarranted. Admittedly unfamiliar with the Corps culture, Englade still offers this perplexing analogy: "An officer with four stars is like a prince, maybe the closest thing in contemporary American society to royalty." (180) With more insight on the issue, one wonders if Englade might consider Chief Executive Officer of a Fortune 500 Company to be a more apt analogy.

While Englade states it as fact, it is for the reader to decide if the Haditha cases were a "failure of military justice." Englade serves up this controversy with one of the most divisive issues in combat – the killing of civilians alleged to be aiding, mistaken for, or simply near the enemy. Second-guessing combat troops in the heat of battle shrouded by the fog of war is an unforgiving task for all involved in the court-martial process. Yet, it is the courts-martial process and involvement of commanders, prosecutors, defense counsel, and judges that ensure the procedural and substantive rights of military personnel are protected and they receive due process of law. Englade presents a convincing argument that there were some flaws in the Haditha cases. However, there is an equally effective (and prevailing) counter-argument that the eight charged Marines benefitted from the due process rights afforded by the UCMJ and the US Constitution. Englade's suggestion that the Haditha cases alone will lead to an examination of the courts-martial process conflates the issues. More realistic is the acknowledgment that *Meltdown* is an important book for those engaged in the military justice debate. Military justice practitioners and those interested in courts-martial books should consider Judge John Stevens' *Court-Martial at Parris Island: The Ribbon Creek Incident*

(2007) about Drill Sergeant Matthew McKeon's 1956 trial and Michael Belknap's *The Vietnam War on Trial: The My Lai Massacre and the Court-Martial of Lieutenant Calley* (2002) about 1LT Lieutenant Calley's 1970-71 trial. Engalde's *Meltdown in Haditha* makes this a worthy triumvirate of courts-martial literature and enhances the dialogue on the validity of the UCMJ since its enactment in 1950.



Annapolis, MD: Naval
Institute Press, 2013

290 pages
\$36.95

Fallujah Awakens: Marines, Sheikhs, and the Battle Against Al-Qaeda

By Bill Ardolino

Fallujah Redux: The Anbar Awakening and the Struggle with Al-Qaeda

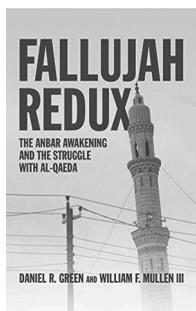
By Daniel R. Green and William F. Mullen, III

Reviewed by Robert L. Bateman, Lieutenant Colonel US Army (Ret.)

Some military historians adhere to a fairly rigid set of standards, one of the key elements of which is the definition of what constitutes history. Stated in the simplest terms, anything written within 25 years of an event really cannot be construed as history. It may be a first-person account, or it may be very good reportage, but it does not rise to the level of history. The reasons for this are easy to understand; in less than a quarter-century there is not enough room for consideration. Emotions are still raw, sources are still sketchy or classified, and there are usually insufficient resources to analyze an event from more than one perspective. All of which is to say these two books, worthy as each is in its own way, are not “histories” of the events in and around Fallujah. They are accounts, one journalistic and one by participants, of those events. Someday they may well become part of the narrative written by historians, but for now, they are limited by the tyranny of proximity.

Bill Ardolino is what one might consider a “new journalist.” He has never been employed by a conventional news organization and does not claim to have any traditional journalistic training, or for that matter historical education or training. That being said, he is pretty damned good at what he does and demonstrates the truism that what you need to do to be a writer is to write a lot. As an “associate editor” for the online non-profit *Long War Journal* Adrolino has certainly done that. More to the point, along the way he has been redefining what it means to be a journalist, if not a historian. That is an objective observation with significant implications. Ardolino is dangerously close to being a cheerleader, which is the opposite of what journalism is supposed to be.

That being said, his account of events in the Fallujah peninsula, the narrow strip of land within the bend of the river southwest of Fallujah, is seriously good reading. It is not history, mind you, but in decades to come Ardolino's account, meticulously researched and extensively documented will form a part of the core when historians take up this story. It is not a story about the big picture; it is a micro-story in the finest sense of the term. Ardolino gets in, deep, and tells a story he also documents; and no historian can argue with that, despite his likely bias.



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Institute Press, 2014

157 pages
\$37.95

Green and Mullen, on the other hand, are telling the story of what was happening in “town” at nearly the same time. If Ardolino’s is a “micro-tactical” story, then Green and Mullen are telling a tactical story at a slightly, very slightly, higher level. Of course, this being the tale of marines, there are obligatory swipes at the US Army. But one comes to expect that from marine stories. Green is a lieutenant commander in the Navy, Mullen was a battalion commander in Fallujah in ’07. Although their writing is a tad turgid, their story bears the weight of history quite well. At the tactical level they come through with the personal story of the men who really won Fallujah, the Iraqis.

That is a pretty admirable thing which both books share. They give credit where credit is due, to the Iraqis who fought, and died, and made things right for a couple of years. Rightly so as well, they give credit to some truly heroic marines who had the courage to trust, which all of us who have been downrange and in questionable situations, understand is a lot scarier than getting shot at. When they shoot at you, the questions disappear. It is when you do not know – that the heart beats a triple tango.

Both of these books will be, in the canon, minor points. But as primary sources, each will endure. Ardolino’s work is better, but narrower. Green and Mullen wrote a broader and fascinating work, which is not as well sourced, and so should be seen as the account of first-person participants, with all that implies. In both cases the lesson is loud and clear: “Listen to the locals.”

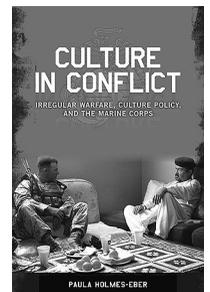
Culture in Conflict: Irregular Warfare, Culture Policy, and the Marine Corps

By Paula Holmes-Eber

Reviewed by Priya Dixit, PhD, Assistant Professor with the Department of Political Science at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Challenges faced by the United States Marine Corps as it confronted different, and often contradictory, government policies regarding culture is the central point of this engaging and extensively-researched book. The author, Paula Holmes-Eber, Professor of Operational Culture at Marine Corps University, has written an in-depth ethnographic study of the Marine Corps, one which will be extremely useful to academics, policymakers and the general public. This book should be mandatory reading for government officials who are deciding and enacting culture-related policies.

As Holmes-Eber writes, “the book is about cross-cultural problem solving—about the messy process of translation, interpretation, and program implementation as two different worlds struggle to make sense of one another. The focus is not upon the answer, but the process” (xvii). This is the central core of the book. She goes on to clarify the “two different worlds” are not just how the Marines interacted with locals overseas, but also how they had to deal with new US government policies regarding culture and language. Thus, Holmes-Eber directs attention to how there can be, and often are, cultural differences within the United States military and in its relations with the government.



Stanford University Press,
Palo Alto, CA: Stanford
University Press, 2014.

272 pages
\$24.95

“Cross-cultural,” here, does not just mean “how do we (United States) deal with others overseas?” but also how the Marine Corps culture is understood and formed, and how Marines understand external government directives and policy changes.

To illustrate the culture of the Marine Corps and its reactions to new policies, Holmes-Eber divides the book into two parts. The first outlines the ethos of the Marine Corps. Chapters are titled according to key Marine phrases and self-understandings. For example, Chapter 2 is called “Every marine a rifleman” and describes the egalitarian ethos of the Marine Corps. Similarly, the emphasis on being a leader is in Chapter 5 “Tip of the spear.” After outlining the culture of the Marine Corps in Part I, the second part of the book focuses on the specifics of how the Marines incorporated and, sometimes, resisted the “new culture policy” of the US government (5). Holmes-Eber claims the Marines “Marinized” the policy through simplification, translation, processing, and reshaping. Each chapter in Part II explicates one of these methods. As such, the book is very well-organized for the reader.

This work would not have been possible without Holmes-Eber’s unique access to her research participants—the Marines. Her wide-ranging research includes observations at Marine Corps educational facilities, training sessions, bases and in-depth interviews with over 80 Marines. This is supplemented by an online survey (with 2,406 responses) on “attitudes toward culture and language learning” (23). She uses the words of the Marines themselves in order to portray their world, as they see it. The results can be noted in Part I, wherein the challenges and difficulties but also the sense of accomplishment of those who pass through Marine Corp training is detailed. The Marines’ self-image is as ready and adaptable to support the “guy on the ground,” as a “hard, lean Spartan” (51), with leaders who are capable of quick decision-making in difficult situations.

Part II, however, is where much of Holmes-Eber’s wideranging research is utilized. In describing how the Marines have responded to a post-9/11 environment of a different way of war (long-term insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq) and new policy directives (needing to learn and understand the culture of where the Marines are fighting), Holmes-Eber describes how the Marines first simplified the policy directives and then reshaped them to fit their way of doing things. They did so by learning-by-doing, a practice embedded in Marine Corps culture. The discussions regarding how “throwing away the playbook” (which was often filled with outdated information, written by people who had little or no experience of the Iraqi and Afghan cultures) as well as how interpreters and “subject matter experts” were incorporated by the Marines (Chapters 6-8) are some of the best in regard to cross-cultural interactions.

If one were to ask for more information in a book already filled with wonderful anecdotes and narratives from its research participants, I would have liked to have seen more of the tensions and challenges—and the frustrations—the Marines felt at these new government directives. Holmes-Eber’s Marines are capable and practiced in simplifying and reworking culture, but surely there must have been resistance internally? Were there criticisms of government policies or frustrations at what seems like often contradictory or incomplete guidance provided by the US government? There is a wonderful statement by an interviewee on

page 111 which hints at these issues and more perspectives would have provided a fuller account of Marines' reactions to policy changes. It would have been helpful to see more on-the-ground relations between Marines and foreign civilians. What about Marines who did not fit the Corps' self-image of honor, adaptability and warrior-ness? Holmes-Eber claims the actions of some "young Marines"... "potentially tarnished the image of the Marine Corps" (130). How did such actions impact the larger cross-cultural relations between US Marines, civilians, and officials in Iraq, Afghanistan (and elsewhere)?

Overall, this is an excellent addition to the scholarship on the Marine Corps and also on organizational learning, ethnography and military histories. The question whether organizations, in general, reshape external directives to fit their existing culture (as the Marine Corps did here) is a fascinating one deserving of further research. What about other branches of the US military? How have foreign militaries responded to their countries' new directives on culture and language acquisition? Holmes-Eber's book sets the foundation for further research on this topic.

One Million Steps: A Marine Platoon at War

By Bing West

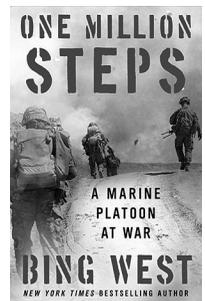
Reviewed by Benjamin M. Jensen, PhD, Assistant Professor of International Relations, American University, School of International Service

How do we make sense of war? At what level of analysis do we tell the story? Is the tale one of larger power competition and bureaucratic intrigue in the formation of campaign strategy, or a story about individuals and their comrades-in-arms coming to terms with a daily fight for survival?

Bing West's *One Million Steps* uses the experience of a Marine Corps infantry platoon to conduct what might best be called an ethnography of war. Through patrolling with one unit and locating its experience within a larger debate on counterinsurgency campaigns, West writes a book that operates on three distinct levels.

First, the book captures the tactical dilemmas and stories of individual heroism and tragedy in the struggle to secure Sangin District in Helmand Province. In early October 2010, Colonel Paul Kennedy ordered 3rd Battalion of the 5th Marine Regiment to seize key terrain in Sangin and attack the enemy. As part of this mission, the battalion conducted distributed operations, establishing multiple, small patrol bases from which squad-sized formations sought out and engaged Taliban fighters. The fighting pitted arrays of Taliban improvised explosive devices and complex ambushes against the Marines' superior marksmanship and firepower. In the struggle, one unit, 3rd Platoon Kilo Company suffered the highest casualty rates.

Throughout the experience of 3rd Platoon, West tells the story of the enduring aspects of warfare at the small-unit level. He shows the resiliency of tactical formations, how individuals pull together in the face of extreme adversity. West also highlights the "push-and-pull" of adaptation. The reader witnesses 3rd Platoon using detached snipers



New York, NY: Random House Publishing, 2014

320 pages

\$27.00

and maximizing close air support to destabilize the adversary and deny terrain. We see the Taliban reaction, engaging Marine patrols with harassing fire from further afield and changing how they employ IEDs to attrite foot patrols. In the narrative, adaptation appears as a bottom-up quest for survival completely separate from the larger operational and strategic debates in Kabul.

Second, the book locates 3rd Platoon's struggle within the larger strategy in Afghanistan. West moves from the story of individual Marines to a debate about ends, ways, and means at the heart of the counterinsurgency campaign. The book characterizes a failure of strategy as misaligned objectives, the divergence between a Marine Corps focused on a "big stick approach" to counterinsurgency emphasizing breaking the will of the Taliban and an ISAF leadership advocating population-centric approaches that limit tactical engagements and focus on winning the proverbial (and elusive) "hearts and minds."

In these passages, the book is not partisan or parochial and attacks multiple administrations and senior military leaders. West characterizes a fundamental failure to review assumptions in the formation of strategy. He lambasts the approach taken in Afghanistan as a "quixotic strategy of benevolent war" which devolved into a battle of attrition as the "absence of strategy." And the tragedy is not over. West sees future failures on the horizon, claiming a similar lack of strategic thinking and appetite for reviewing assumptions persists. He saves his harshest comments for the US Commander-in-Chief, stating, "in place of an exit strategy, [President] Obama simply exited [Afghanistan] without a strategy." Against this backdrop of failed leadership, West contends any tactical "success was in spite of, rather than because of, the counterinsurgency strategy."

Third, ghosts haunt the pages. Bing West's interactions with 3rd Platoon become a vehicle for remembering his own combat experiences in Vietnam and role of mythology in helping Marines make sense of war. These remembrances emerge, often at random, giving the narrative an almost surreal quality at times. The reader is pulled from a detailed, empirical account of tactical action to West's memory of fighting in Combined Action Platoons, an earlier Marine experiment with distributed operations in a counterinsurgency fight. The reader sees West's first encounter with family members who served as Marines in World War II and the stabilizing role that tales of "Marines past" provide the generations that follow. While at times disjointed, the net effect of these remembrances is to provide a portrait of how the individual makes sense of war. In the end, *One Million Steps* is as much about Bing West coming to terms with the tragedy and complexity of war as it is about the later stages of the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan.

BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIRS

Fighting the Cold War: A Soldier's Memoir

By General John R. Galvin USA (ret.) Foreword by General David H. Petraeus, USA (ret)

Reviewed by Richard Halloran, former military correspondent for *The New York Times*, author of *To Arm a Nation*, and onetime lieutenant of airborne infantry

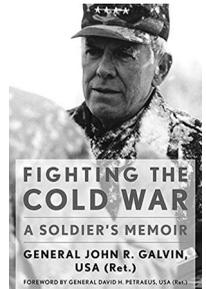
This engaging memoir of a soldier's service is an altogether superb work. The author is candid, lucid, meticulous in research, and writes with verve on a wide canvas. He is forthright in assessing the political leaders, diplomats, government officials, scholars, and military officers he respected and liked—and discreet about those he didn't. He occasionally relied on his memory to shape his narrative but mostly drew on, literally, thousands of 3X5 cards on which he scribbled notes. General Galvin also appears to have saved every scrap of paper that came into his hands over four decades, plus copies of those he originated.

This is the chronicle of a Boston Irish-American who served in the National Guard as a private, graduated from West Point, fought twice in Vietnam, and helped edit the famous Pentagon Papers. He attended the usual military schools, taught at West Point, wrote three books, and commanded a brigade in Europe. The essence of Galvin's leadership was perhaps best illuminated by instructions to his battalion commanders. "I want to command in such a way," he told them, "that you will feel glad you served under me. You get to command your battalion. I get to command you, not your battalion."(241)

As a lieutenant general, Galvin commanded a corps of 83,000 soldiers in Europe before becoming a four star general with command, he notes wryly, of a joint force of 9,154 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the Southern Command.(298) Galvin capped his service as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, or SACEUR, the top NATO assignment, during the last years of the Cold War. General Colin L.Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, liked to address General Galvin as "Charlemagne." (347) After retiring, Galvin served as Dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University in Boston.

Sprinkled throughout this memoir are dozens of examples of military leadership that any officer aspiring to wear stars would benefit from reading. Moreover, Galvin suggests ways to deal with the cumbersome Army bureaucracy and how to operate in an often-charged political-military sphere. He was mentored by General Andrew Goodpaster, then SACEUR, as the general's speechwriter. Galvin points to Goodpaster's "gentle, roundabout, but very encouraging way of telling you that you had made a mistake." (237)

Others who could benefit from this memoir are political leaders who don't know which end of the rifle the bullet comes out. The same is true for many diplomats in the State Department, officials in government departments other than the Pentagon, the press and so-called



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568 pages

\$39.95

defense intellectuals. Lastly, for the American public that doesn't know much about soldiering, dipping into this memoir could be eye opening.

General Galvin's rise was not straight up. As a major during his first tour in Vietnam, he got fired as a brigade operations officer in the 1st Infantry Division when his brigade commander, Colonel Sydney Berry, told him: "The chemistry is not there. We're not a good combination." (140-141) Galvin was sent to an administrative job in Saigon, a demotion many officers would consider career-damaging or career-ending. But he thrashed around and got the chief of staff of the 1st Cavalry Division, Colonel Herbert E. Wolff, to assign him as an extra hand in operations. Galvin found that the division commander, Major General John Norton, "did listen, a characteristic not too often found in commanders." (153)

In contrast to his first tour, Galvin's second was remarkable, first as an intelligence officer and then as a battalion commander. His chapter about that year is filled with examples of good soldiering. As an intel operative, Galvin sounds like an experienced war correspondent: "I became a circuit rider, traveling from one unit to another, thumbing rides to anyplace where I could pick up news and fit the pieces into a mosaic." (180)

Early in his command of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry in the 1st Cavalry Division, Galvin ran into a dicey disciplinary problem, eleven black soldiers accused of insubordination. He met with them alone and said: "Tell me what happened." One by one, Galvin writes, the soldiers spoke "with frankness, clarity, and balance." They pointed to "missed communications, unfairness, and frustration" but agreed there "were better ways to resolve problems than the routes they had taken." Galvin told them: "I can get you a chance, a new start, but that's all. You have to do the rest." They all did. (189-190)

After a battle in which several of his soldiers died, Galvin promised himself: "I would do my best to go to them and look them in the face, and let that moment register in my mind. Then I would know more about the cost of the decisions that I made." (192) Over the next six months, twenty soldiers in his battalion were killed and fifty-four were wounded, relatively light casualties.

A surprise running through Galvin's memoir is his concern with nuclear weapons, not something expected of infantry commanders. From the beginning, he was exposed to nuclear issues. As he rose in rank, that became all the more evident, especially in Europe. An intense experience as SACEUR was an exercise in 1989 intended, Galvin writes, "to make sure that all senior political and military leaders of the Alliance were familiar with what would happen in the event, far-fetched or not, that nuclear weapons might be employed." (372) The outcome: "It opened our eyes, broadened our understanding, took away much of our posturing, changed our mechanical approaches, and broke through the group think that bound us." (379)

When the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, Galvin was anxious to learn what Soviet units in East Berlin would do. An Air Force officer suggested asking a Soviet colonel in Berlin what he had heard. The Russian said: "We have orders to stay in barracks." (391)

Even though the end of the Cold War set off a fundamental revision of NATO, General Galvin's attention was soon turned to the Persian Gulf as the US and its allies prepared to drive Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator, out of Kuwait. Leading US forces would be Central Command, with European Command in support. Galvin set a tone, telling his staff that whenever Central Command asked for something, "our answer will be 'yes.' The details can come later, but the answer is always yes." (405)

The Accidental Admiral: A Sailor Takes Command at NATO

By ADM James Stavridis, USN (Ret.)

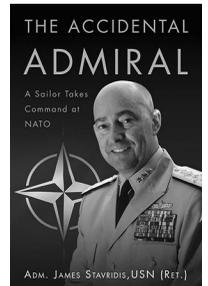
Reviewed by Nathan K. Finney, US Army Strategist, founder and managing editor of *The Bridge*, an online publication focused on policy, strategy, and military affairs

In *Accidental Admiral*, ADM James Stavridis weaves personal narrative, recent historical events, and senior-level recommendations into a fairly compelling story about the first naval officer to *simultaneously* lead European Command and the military elements of NATO. One of the most prolific and recognizable senior leaders in the military, ADM Stavridis turns his formidable knowledge of recent conflicts into an informative account of the types of issues the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) must manage, as well as management principles he used to address them.

Accidental Admiral is written for a general audience, covering basic issues of military organization and the life of those who serve in uniform. For the reader well-versed in the military, such as those reading *Parameters*, these details weigh down the first two chapters, in which Stavridis sets the stage for his rise to SACEUR and the dynamics he found at NATO. Of interest, however, was his description of his job as SACEUR, namely, he was the organization's operations officer; the basics of the job he likened to those he learned as the operations officer on a Navy ship many years before. The process typified NATO's production of best military advice Stavridis described – series of meetings of "two hundred-plus committees that meet in [NATO's] endless and ultimately self-defeating search for 'consensus'" – was fairly reminiscent of any military organization's operations process.

Once Stavridis turns to the regional issues afflicting his time at NATO, however, he hits his stride. The core areas run the gamut of those experienced by many who served in uniform for the last decade-plus, from Afghanistan to Libya (both out-of-sector missions for EUCOM and NATO, but because they were NATO-led, the SACEUR was a key stakeholder in the efforts), Syria and Israel to Russia and the Balkans. In these chapters, Stavridis' narrative arc peaks, addressing the most important issues in Europe and those associated with NATO.

Of most interest to me was Stavridis' use of Libya and Syria as discussion points on the value (or dangers, as the case may be) of intervention by foreign military forces in failed countries around the world. In the case of Libya, in which Stavridis was intimately involved, the near-term tactical and operational successes led him to provide possible lessons to be applied elsewhere, with the caveat that all interventions are "dangerous, politically and militarily risky, and hard to justify under



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Institute Press, 2014
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international law.” These lessons include a pressing humanitarian need demands intervention must be considered; interventions should be a coalition affair; an understanding of the culture and region is crucial – and more importantly, acting in a way which doesn’t exacerbate said cultures; casualties must be minimized; it will be expensive; and enablers like lawyers, strategic communications, and public affairs are crucial to accurately portray the event. Stavridis summed up the political and moral ambiguity of interventions with a very pith quote, “in the case of intervention, as in that of revolution, its essence is illegality and its justification is its success.” How should this be applied to the current strategic context? Stavridis leaves that question unanswered.

The latter half of the book is a smattering of personal stories on leadership (including more famous military scandals during his time at NATO (namely McChrystal as the “Runaway General,” Petraeus’ personal indiscretions, Allen’s lack of wrongdoing, and even Stavridis’ own travel mistakes), recommended “tricks of the trade” for leaders, and the importance of innovation and diminishing need for strategic planning in Stavridis’ career. I was very gratified to see he addressed not only the leadership issues of those around him – which most well-read individuals will be already familiar with – but also the items he was accused of ultimately derailed his chances at being the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Stavridis handles the bureaucratic mess with what seems equal parts genuine regret at how it happened and acceptance for the way it turned out.

The two best chapters in *Accidental Admiral*, and those of most value to those serving and supporting the military today, are chapters 12 and 15 on strategic planning and “convergence” (or “What Keeps Me Awake at Night”), respectively. The former is a wonderful discussion by a well-experienced practitioner, in the staff and command roles, on the difficulties, and the ineffectiveness, of strategic planning in contemporary times. As you would expect from a walking library, Stavridis uses myths from Greek literature to describe the difficulties of long range planning in a dynamic age – including Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Prometheus – which admirably provide the necessary visual images of not quite being able to reach the desire goal, consistently pushing the rock uphill, and being subjected to eternal torment for doing the right thing. The point of these images in reference to traditional strategic planning for Stavridis is:

The pursuit of perfection, the potential for sudden catastrophic change, and the ill effects of forced transparency...made strategic planning in this brave new world grueling, frustrating, unending, and of less use than it once was.

For Stavridis, strategic planning should be much more like directing ships at sea (or troops on the battlefield) – there should be strategic guidance detailing the broad goals for five to ten years, then detailed annual planning based on this guidance. What he doesn’t cover is exactly how this would be done...or how, other than possibly being less bureaucratic, this new strategic planning could be implemented. How would this new approach be governed in a way would transcending the overly bureaucratic system we have today?

Finally, Stavridis addresses the item keeping him awake at night – convergence. This is the idea where the “sum of the danger...is far

greater than the individual threat posed by each alone.” According to Stavridis, the convergence of threats like non-state actors, cyber warfare, and weapons of mass destruction, while much less likely than each alone, would be devastating to the United States (and her allies).

Overall, *Accidental Admiral* is a quick and entertaining read. If readers of *Parameters* are unfamiliar with ADM Stavridis’ time as SACEUR, I recommend this book as a solid starting point for those new to the conversation about some of our most salient global issues. His chapters on leadership, strategic communications, and innovation are also useful words for all military leaders.

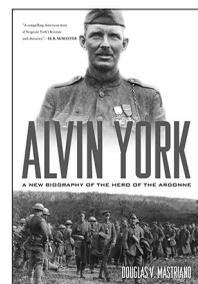
Alvin York: A New Biography of the Hero of the Argonne By Douglas V. Mastriano

Reviewed by Lt Col Mark E. Grotelueschen, USAF, PhD, Associate Professor of History, Chief, Military History Division, Department of History, USAF Academy

The prolific English writer, journalist, and historian GK Chesterton once wrote, “Religious liberty might be supposed to mean that everybody is free to discuss religion. In practice it means that hardly anybody is allowed to mention it.” Although each person is entitled to his or her own opinion about this assertion as it applies to general society, all scholars should be concerned if it suggests historians should shy away from discussing religion and spirituality when it must be addressed. In this thorough biography of Alvin York, the American hero of the Great War and Medal of Honor recipient, Douglas Mastriano avoids that mistake and allows the role and significance of York’s devout Christianity to take center stage, which is almost certainly the way York and those who knew him best would have wanted his story told.

According to Mastriano, York’s faith is the critical thread in his life’s tapestry, and a knowledge of his religious beliefs and his spiritually motivated actions are as essential to understanding York the soldier and veteran as they are to understanding York the conscientious objector. Mastriano offers compelling evidence in support of this approach. The fact that York’s faith and behavior—characterized by hard work, humility, kindness, generosity, selflessness, and extraordinary moral and physical courage—often seems too good to be true probably says more about us and our biases than it does about York.

Mastriano moves through York’s life in a traditional, chronological way, covering his pre-conversion years as a rowdy bar-hopping troublemaker, his Christian conversion in 1915, which dramatically changed his behavior, his failed efforts to receive an exemption based on personal pacifist convictions, and his change of heart on this matter after his company and battalion commanders convinced him that the Bible did not prohibit Christians from fighting in a just war (which they believed the war with Germany was). The story continues with descriptions of York’s general competence as a soldier in training, both in the United States and in France, and York’s initiation into combat in “quiet” sectors of the Western Front. As expected, the book thoroughly describes and examines York’s amazing—he and others would



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336 pages

\$34.95

say miraculous—actions in the Argonne on 8 October 1918, when he led a small group of comrades around the flank of a German strongpoint and knocked it out by capturing 132 enemy soldiers and killing a number of others. While York's conversion to Christianity was the fulcrum of his personal life, this combat success changed his public life beyond all recognition, making him arguably the most famous common soldier of the twentieth century.

For Mastriano, York's superb skill with firearms, his phenomenal bravery and cool-headedness, and his very survival are all best understood as an outgrowth of his extraordinary religious life and character. But so too was what happened immediately after: York asked for permission to go back and look for the wounded directly after he turned over his prisoners. He also made no mention of his accomplishments to family and friends, refused offers to parlay his new-found fame into lucrative business deals back in the United States, and ultimately devoted his own life to improve the lives of his neighbors by working to bring roads and schools into his impoverished and neglected valley near Pall Mall, Tennessee. Only when he was convinced the telling of his story would help his nation understand the threats from Germany and Japan in 1940—and the proceeds would bring resources to his valley—did he finally agree to cooperate on a film about his life (*Sergeant York*, with Gary Cooper starring as York). It really is a remarkable story of human development and virtue, and Mastriano tells it well.

In addition to more fully integrating York's faith into the story of his life as a soldier and veteran, this exhaustively researched biography gives readers the most detailed account of what happened in the Argonne in early October 1918 and exactly where in that hilly, tangled, disorienting forest York and his fellow doughboys accomplished their incredible martial feat. Mastriano's extensive use of US Army records, German sources, archeological fieldwork, and ballistic analyses enabled him to confirm the exact location of York's engagement. Additionally, the research that led to Mastriano's book also contributed to the creation of the Sergeant York Historical Trail in the Argonne, which can be walked today to understand better the location of the event (this reviewer had the privilege of enjoying the trail in the fall of 2011).

Scholars of the Great War, and especially of the US Army's experience in it, will benefit from discussions of York's unit's training regimen; the descriptions of small-unit battle in the Meuse-Argonne; and the clear explanation of the connections between York's attack and the giant battle's other most famous tale—that of the so-called "Lost Battalion." It also provides evidence for the German Army's continued effectiveness as a combat force as late as mid-October; like many other AEF units in the Meuse-Argonne, York's regiment suffered severely in attacks both before and after the 8 October event. This book is invaluable to both the general reader and the scholar.

Reconstructing a Shattered Egyptian Army. War Minister Gen. Mohamed Fawzi's Memoirs, 1967-1971

Edited by Youssef H. Aboul-Enein

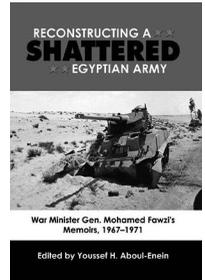
Reviewed by Greg Aftandilian, Center for National Policy, Senior Fellow for the Middle East

The author, US Navy Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, has done a commendable job translating General Mohamed Fawzi's memoirs (published in Arabic in 1984), first for the US Army's *Infantry Magazine* and later for this book. As an American of Egyptian background, he provides important cultural insights into Fawzi's thinking and places the memoirs in the broader context of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and its aftermath. That war, which was a disaster not only for Egypt but also for Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians, had profound consequences for the region. Many social scientists see it as the death knell of pan-Arab nationalism, contributing to the rise of political Islam. Of equal importance is how the defeat led military leaders like Fawzi (appointed as war minister by Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser) to restructure and rebuild demoralized Egyptian armed forces and turn them into an effective fighting force that would eventually score some impressive victories in the initial stages of the 1973 war.

Fawzi, a career military officer and a political ally of Nasser, is very candid about the problems facing the Egyptian military through the 1967 war. He was, for a time, Army Chief of Staff under Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, and explains how Amer's aggrandizement of power and his neglect of the army's training hurt the military's effectiveness. Fawzi gives a first-hand account of Amer's instability during the 1967 war when he impulsively ordered a full-scale retreat of Egyptian forces from the Sinai, without any planning, which led to chaos and the capture of thousands of Egyptian soldiers by the Israelis.

The memoirs provide a fascinating look into the "War of Attrition" (1967-1970) and the massive influx of Soviet military hardware and thousands of Soviet military advisors into Egypt. Fawzi explains how this Soviet assistance, plus extensive training of Egyptian military personnel, were able to challenge Israel's air supremacy (particularly with the deployment of SAM sites) and help to build Egyptian military morale. He also shows how the superpowers used the "War of Attrition" to test the effectiveness of their weapons systems (the US-supplied Israelis versus the Soviet-supplied Egyptians). Lacking from Fawzi's memoirs is any reflection on how Egypt's dependence on the Soviets may have compromised Egypt's independence. The presence of Soviet advisers eventually became highly controversial in Egypt, and Sadat ordered their expulsion in 1972. Fawzi was arrested by Sadat the previous year for his involvement in the attempted coup led by Ali Sabry. This leaves the reader to ponder whether Fawzi himself was pro-Soviet despite his nationalist credentials.

Unfortunately, the book contains only minimal direct excerpts from Fawzi's writings. Instead, Aboul-Enein summarizes these writings for the reader and adds historical and political context to them. For the non-specialist, this style may be useful (and a direct translation would



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320 pages

\$64.95

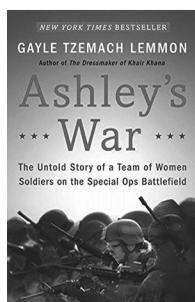
probably be overwhelming), but for the specialist, it leaves the reader wanting to hear more from Fawzi directly.

There are a few mistakes in the book that should be corrected in any new edition. For example, on page 11, Aboul-Enein writes Egyptian military leaders deployed a tank regiment to Iraq in 1961 to aid Iraq's efforts against the British in Kuwait, whereas Egypt deployed troops to Kuwait in 1961 to protect it against Iraq in large part because Nasser had become a bitter enemy of Iraqi leader Qasim. And on page 147, he writes that civil-military relations in Egypt in May 2012 "entered a critical phase with more fundamentalist Salafi groups challenging the armed forces, leading to hundreds of casualties," whereas that month was the time of the first-round of the presidential elections and was less violent than other post-2011 periods.

Ashley's War: The Untold Story of a Team of Women Soldiers on the Special Ops Battlefield

By Gayle Tzemach Lemmon

Reviewed by Ellen Haring, Colonel (USA, ret.)



New York, NY: Harper
Collins, 2015

320 pages
\$26.99

Ashley's War is destined to be the first *women's* war story in the classic tradition of action, adventure war stories. 20th Century Fox has already purchased the film rights and Reese Witherspoon is listed as a cast member. The story chronicles one of the first groups of service-women to volunteer for special operations missions in Afghanistan. Most Americans, indeed many servicemembers are completely unaware of the selection program, the training, and the missions these women were involved in as early as 2010.

The story follows First Lieutenant Ashley White, an unassuming force of nature whose physical abilities amazed many battle tested soldiers, on her journey to the battlefield of Afghanistan. It reveals the heart wrenching struggle she has getting her husband to accept her decision and how she hides her work from her twin sister and her parents. Lemmon gives the reader an insider's view of the team of "Alpha" women Ashley joined as it went through the rigorous Cultural Support Team selection and training program, dubbed 100 hours of hell, and eventually on direct-action night raids with Army Rangers. She examines the fear common to all soldiers when confronted with combat but more crucially the added, self-imposed burden these women experienced by their intense desire to prove women would not just succeed at this work, but would improve mission success.

As a story about the first women soldiers imbedded in elite ground combat units the story succeeds brilliantly. However, Lemmon misses an opportunity to delve into deeper issues surrounding the military's involvement in Afghanistan and its own treatment of servicewomen. What the book fails to do is to examine the role these women played in the overall conflict or the irony behind the Special Operations community's need to create this unique program.

After ten years of conflict in Afghanistan, the US military was casting about for new ways to reach the population in its never ending

quest to “win hearts and minds.” A number of groups, including Army civil affairs units as well as development and aide organizations had long recognized the subtle but important role women play in Afghan society. And, they knew Afghan women were not predisposed to support the Taliban. These groups had been engaging with Afghan women for years. Additionally, many support units, especially military police and intelligence units had long used their own servicewomen to search and question Afghan women. But the combat units and leaders who dominated all of the primary decision-making positions in the theater had failed to grasp the role women, from both sides, might play in the conflict.

The only reason the Cultural Support Team, (the incongruent name given to the initiative) was necessary was because the United States had no women in the combat arms community, due in large part to its obstinate rejection of servicewomen as equal partners.

But rather than highlight or even acknowledge these shortcomings in policy, strategy, and operations, Lemmon portrays the special operations community as one of innovative, critical, and creative thinkers who came up with new approaches to counterinsurgency operations. Ironically, when they finally realized the potentially important partner they had missed in Afghan women, they found their own discriminatory policies limited their tactical options for engaging with them.

Finally, and perhaps more importantly, instead of using US servicewomen in any new or truly innovative capacity they simply recruited female versions of themselves for their teams only to task them to play a stereotypically feminine support role. They thought having women on the team would not just allow them to search and question Afghan women and children but would also ease the impact of invading Afghan homes and communities.

However, it was unrealistic to think just because servicewomen were involved in direct-action night raids that residents were going to be any less traumatized by having their homes and communities raided. For a young Afghan boy or girl who has his or her home raided in the middle of the night, and has an uncle or father seized in the dark by Americans, no amount of young American servicewomen on the raid team would have made them any less fearful, or angry, or hate-filled.

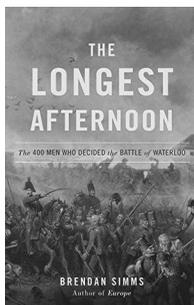
Despite the book’s shortcomings, it is a timely story since the Army is considering opening all combat specialties and units to women. *Ashley’s War* is the first war story of women heroes from the last decade of war. Every young woman who has ever aspired to being a war hero will want to read *Ashley’s War*.

MILITARY HISTORY

The Longest Afternoon: The 400 Men Who Decided the Battle of Waterloo

By Brendan Simms

Reviewed by Dr. James D. Scudieri, Research Analyst, US Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC), US Army War College



New York, NY: Basic Books, 2015

186 pages

\$24.99

This latest work on the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815 concerns the defense of the farm at La Haye Sainte by the Second Light Battalion, King's German Legion (2nd Lt Bn, KGL), under the command of Maj. George Baring at the time. This unit used the Baker Rifle, already made famous by the 95th Foot (Rifle Corps) with three battalions in the battle, but also wielded by the Fifth Battalion, Sixtieth Foot (5/60th), not at Waterloo. Simms has conducted admirable research to portray as complete a picture as possible, tapping into British, German, and French sources. The use of official Hanoverian material is especially refreshing.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the campaign and the events of the previous two days. There is a detailed explanation of the layout of the famous farmhouse, which stood forward of the middle of the Allied position, on the west side of the main road to Waterloo and Brussels. Chapter 2 describes the characteristics of the KGL not simply as a foreign unit in British service, but as an element of the British Army. Chapter 3 begins the events of June 18. Simms notes Baring's commanders, at every level, did not give La Haye Sainte "any great thought" on that day. The logistical failure of their ammunition resupply is still a topic of debate.

Chapters 4 through 6 supply blow-by-blow accounts of the soon desperate defense. The extensive research in Hanoverian sources pays rich dividends here, juxtaposed with British and some French views. Simms includes adjacent actions, especially noting the contributions of friendly, supporting units. The battle started on the extreme Allied right, around 11:30 AM, at the much larger chateau of Hougomont. The large French assault by d'Erlon's I Corps, from about 1:30 PM, on the Allied left also targeted La Haye. The KGL riflemen repelled several attacks, but lost some of the farm's environs. Ultimately, Baring decided to withdraw his survivors around 6:00 PM as the unit exhausted its ammunition without any resupply.

Chapter 7 articulates the book's thesis that the prolonged defense of La Haye Sainte by 2nd Lt Bn, KGL was the key to the battle. Earlier French capture would have provided the opportunity to smash a weakened Allied center. Simms further states both Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington failed to appreciate its importance.

The final chapter covers the aftermath of the unit and men during the peace, an interesting case study in the post-war fate of veterans. Their stories of the battle and the emerging historiography were more complicated for the KGL after they returned to Hanover. The accomplishments of German troops in British service in the midst of a new German nationalism and unification became complex issues.

The major issue is the thesis embodied in the subtitle: the 2nd Lt Bn of the KGL in effect won the Battle of Waterloo due to its prolonged, stubborn defense. Simms presents a reasonable case, but numerous questions remain. Space precludes a detailed discussion of tactical aspects, to include the speculation had La Haye Sainte fallen much earlier in the day. Moreover, rather than propose other possible turning points, this review emphasizes the specific sequence of certain key events, which in combination resulted in French defeat.

Perhaps the greatest credit belongs to the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Blücher. They understood coalition cooperation was critical, however tentative their commitment to it was. Napoleon had delayed the start of battle to allow more time for the ground to dry for the benefit of his artillery fire; in retrospect he used time he did not have.

The late morning, excessive French dissipation against Hougomont; the failure of d'Erlon's initial attack; French Marshal Ney's premature cavalry attacks; and the late capture of La Haye Sainte formed an important sequence. The Prussians had first appeared about 4:00 PM. They had been fighting at Plancenoit, less than a mile from Napoleon's headquarters at La Belle Alliance on the road to Brussels, since 5:00 AM. Furious French counterattacks, ultimately by elements of the Old Guard, stabilized the situation temporarily—when Ney sought infantry reinforcements to exploit the capture of La Haye Sainte. The assault by elements of the vaunted Imperial Guard around 7:00 PM, whose immediate British opponents were too late—and failed. The *Grande Armée* of 1815 could not deal with such a failure. Moreover, by the late afternoon and evening of June 18 over 72,000 Prussians had marched to Wellington's aid.

The Longest Afternoon is a superb case study. Simms' meticulous research has enriched the Waterloo literature with this detailed examination of one unit's determined fight. Whatever the decisiveness of the actions of the 2nd Light Battalion, at La Haye Sainte, of no doubt is the saying "Soldiers make a difference."

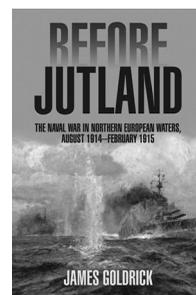
Before Jutland: The Naval War in Northern European Waters, August 1914-February 1915

By James Goldrick

Reviewed by Larry A. Grant, CDR USN (ret.), Research Associate at The Citadel Oral History Program and Adjunct Professor, Charleston, SC

Before Jutland: The Naval War in Northern European Waters, August 1914-February 1915 grew out of a project recommended to Goldrick by naval historian Stephen Roskill. Goldrick first published his work on the opening months of the First World War North Sea naval confrontation in 1984. Now, a more sophisticated historical understanding of the pre-1914 period led him to revisit it for this edition. Goldrick also cites another reason for updating his 1984 book; he says he grew up between the first edition and this latest. Each of these factors combined to change his outlook on the subject.

Before Jutland is arranged in seventeen chapters, and roughly the first third of them present useful background material. "The Beginning"



Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2015
400 pages
\$44.95

provides a summary of the events leading to mobilization. It offers a snapshot of the condition of the principal northern fleets as they set aside their peacetime summer pursuits. The Grand Fleet's movement to Scapa Flow and the Germans' retreat from their summer port visits is traced during the few short weeks in July 1914 as civilian and naval leadership came to realize that war was imminent.

Three subsequent chapters introduce the players. Goldrick examines British staff issues, technological challenges, leadership, wardroom and lower decks cultures, and the state of the fleet. His review of the German navy reminds readers that many of the men responsible for its modern existence and rapid expansion—Grand Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz and Kaiser Wilhelm II—were still in authority. Goldrick reviews the status of the *Admiralstab*, the officer corps, and the lower-deck sailors, and touches briefly on naval legislation and German technology.

The Russian navy rarely features in First World War naval histories, but given its position in the eastern Baltic Sea, Germany could not afford to ignore even a weak Russian navy at its back while it dealt with the British threat in the west. Goldrick reviews the state of Russia's force in the Baltic and the country's rebuilding efforts following the disastrous Russo-Japanese War. He also notes various obstacles, including a population that produced very few candidates suited to service in a modern navy.

Following a short summary of the war plans of the three nations, Goldrick shifts to a more traditional naval-war-at-sea narrative for the last half of the book, beginning with the August 5th sinking of the German minelayer, *Königin Luise*, by HMS Amphion and continuing through the battle of the Dogger Bank on January 24th, 1915. The larger engagements are well presented with good maps illustrating the movements of the ships involved, and Goldrick uses the lessons learned during those encounters as a basis for his penultimate chapter, "Seeking New Solutions," before closing with a brief conclusion.

Before Jutland is both enlightening, particularly in its discussion of "Operational Challenges," and entertaining in its narrative of the events during the various engagements. Anyone interested in naval history will find Goldrick's work valuable. They would do well to heed the advice he gives in the last line of his introduction: "Now read on." They will be glad they did so.

LEADERSHIP

Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World

By General Stanley McChrystal, with Tantum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell

Reviewed by MAJ Jason Howk, (USA, ret.) author of *A Case Study in Security Sector Reform*

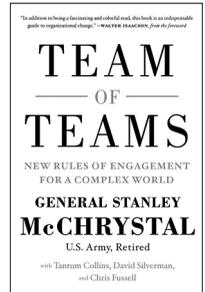
Team of Teams offers insights into the modern practice of leadership and management required to navigate and succeed in this complex world. The book is not a military history, but instead a concise and exceptionally engaging collection of insightful ideas told through entertaining stories ranging from industry to hospital emergency rooms. I recommend it for leaders and associates from all types of organizations who need to break down the effects of siloed teams in which information flow and decision making is ineffective in today's increasingly complex environment. If you are working your teams harder and putting more resources against a problem that isn't improving, read this book and be prepared to look closely in the mirror.

The discussions in the book are grounded in organizational management theory and leadership methods. This is not a book about the latest way to become a great leader. In fact, it is about becoming the kind of senior leader who can develop and sustain an entire workforce of great leaders.

I do not come at this review as a scholar of organizational management but rather as a participant and recipient of the *Team of Teams* approach in the military where I was a leader for over twenty years. General Stan McChrystal, along with his three co-authors, believes the world is now so complex (vice complicated) the old models of command and control are extinct. I have worked with some ninety American and international organizations and I cannot think of one that would not benefit from this study.

An alternate title to this book might have been *Trust and Purpose Meets Empowered Execution*. The Task Force's journey towards shared consciousness and smart autonomy starts in 2003 with the commander's stunning realization that it was losing the strategic war against Al Qaeda. From there, the authors interlace examples and case studies of organizational models, leadership techniques, and technological advances from a myriad of areas. These include weather forecasting, basketball and soccer, engineering marvels, big data, airline customer service, aircraft crews, NASA, SEAL training, plastic surgeons at the Boston Marathon bombing, GM versus Ford, MIT studies, and the enduring effects of Ritz Carlton and Nordstrom.

The discussions found in the various chapters of the book are wide-ranging but relevant to leading all organizations in this modern world. The following should be of interest to today's leaders: the difference between complicated and complex environments; how having more information available does not improve prediction nor lead to smarter



New York, New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2015

304 pages

\$29.95

decisions at the top; Taylorisms and efficiency ideals may actually cost more than they save; the “need to know” fallacy; the value of using your best people as “liaison officers” or “embeds”; how resilient people make organizations stronger because they can adapt to changing environments; learning from your adversary is time well spent—they might have a better organizational model not necessarily better people; how to delegate authority to take action until you are uncomfortable; how to build trust and a shared awareness of the big picture; “eyes on, hands off” leadership.

Missing from the book is a deeper discussion on the role of planning, plans, strategic thinking and strategy. While the *Team of Teams* approach allows organizations to be adaptable and resilient there is still a key role for planning and strategy. Maybe it is as simple as the old adage, “the plan is nothing but planning is everything.”

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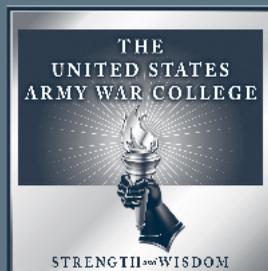


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