

Reflecting on Hell in Anticipation of Armageddon: The Impact of Reflection and Adaptation on the Education of the US Army Officer Corps

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

Reflecting on Hell in Anticipation of Armageddon: The Impact of Reflection and Adaptation on the Education of the US Army Officer Corps, by LTC Michael J. Foote, 49 pages.

The Command and General Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth has served as a hub for adaptability that has time and again resulted in strategic change for the US Army. Designed to standardize education of the officer corps to increase professionalism and effectiveness, World War I increased the importance of a Fort Leavenworth education in the profession of arms. This monograph looks at how the adaptation of the school's curriculum to new technologies and battlefield realities in alignment with the political environment during the inter-war years led to the development of officers trained for the mobilization, building, training, employing, and supporting the divisions, corps, and armies that resulted in victory during World War II and enhanced success during the Cold War. The Command and General Staff Course of the inter-war years and Cold War are then compared to the adaptations made after the beginning of World War I with the AEF General Staff Course at Langres, France and during the post-9/11 Command and General Staff Officer Course when the US Army found itself in a counterinsurgency fight in Iraq it was unprepared for.

In order for adaptation to be effective, it requires reflection. Reflection requires time. The Command and General Staff Officer Courses of the inter-war years and the Cold War were more effective because of the time invested in reflecting on the realities of historical lessons learned in conflict and applying those lessons in anticipation of a realistic future war. Pershing's establishment of Langres and the post-9/11 Command and General Staff Officer Course's adaptations were based on experimentation designed to survive the immediate situation. These lessons demonstrate the importance of ensuring the Command and General Staff Officer Course retains focus on its mission and purpose, implements a flexible curriculum modification system, and works to incorporate the basic elements of design theory into future courses in preparation to adapt appropriately to an anticipated future war.

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De Oppresso Liber.

Acronyms

AEF	American Expeditionary Force
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
FM	Field Manual
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
TRADOC	US Army Training and Doctrine Command
USCENTCOM	US Central Command

Introduction

For his immediate advisors Pershing had to turn to the Leavenworth men, who had been trained in the theory of a large organization and who had used it as the basis of intelligent observations of the operation of the French and British armies. A Leavenworth man believed in Leavenworth men. He had enormous capacity for desk work which he had developed as a student at Leavenworth. A scholastic preparation thus became the criterion for practice in organization. Leavenworth men believed in the gospel of hard work; of rewards for success, and merciless elimination for failure—which is the basic theory of successful war.

—Fredrick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle: The Meuse-Argonne*

In April 1898, the US War Department closed the Infantry and Cavalry School in preparation for the war with Spain. Following the war, Secretary of War Elihu Root initiated a campaign to increase and formalize the professional education of military officers. The war had exposed a lack of capability in mobilizing the nation's reserves, an ineffective command structure at the highest levels, and a lack of planning abilities at the strategic level. Reopened on September 1, 1902, the schools at Fort Leavenworth began the task of increasing officer effectiveness through structured staff officer education to increase the US Army's effectiveness in employing divisions and corps to win the nation's wars.¹ This mission has remained generally unchanged for over a century.

While the task was constant, the Command and General Staff Course has adapted significantly. Changes in technology, force structure, national interests and policies, and lessons learned on the battlefield have all caused or contributed to these adaptations. One constant through all the adaptations of the past century is the value of an officer educated at Fort Leavenworth. General John J. Pershing, the commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, could not have imagined the size and technological capabilities of today's

¹ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978), 137; Fredrick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle: the Meuse-Argonne* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919), 442-444.

three and four-star headquarters, but he would be very comfortable knowing the staffs of those organizations are manned and led by Leavenworth graduates.

The US Army has historically used lessons learned in a past conflict as a lens to anticipate the next conflict environment. The experience of the First World War shaped the officer corps' anticipation of war against another Great Power war through the inter-war years. The Cold War led to an Army educated to fight against the Soviet Union in a bi-polar world. The experiences of Operation Desert Storm formed the basis for the education of the commanders and staff officers who led the forces that invaded Iraq in 2003. These lessons in anticipation forced adaptation at Leavenworth and resulted in the emergence of increased capabilities and effectiveness based on learning from the past and implementing change.

Defined as a process that “leads to improvement according to some measure of success” by systems theorists Robert Axelrod and Michael Cohen, the notion of adaptation has been applied across the fields of medicine, economics, business, social sciences, politics, and military studies.² Carl von Clausewitz suggested “that war is simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means.” He also posited that war should always be thought of as “an instrument of policy” or a “branch of political activity.” The criticality of this observation is due to the requirement of a military institution to conduct warfare with the political motives and objective of the war in mind.³ This means the ability to adapt to the conditions of the time, space, and objectives of each new, specific instance of employment is critical. Militaries attempt to anticipate the future based upon its experiences of the past, and recognizes the need to adapt to the government's political objectives – objectives that can often be flexible and change during a conflict or even in reaction to the conflict itself. Incorrect estimations of the scale of a

² Robert Axelrod and Michael D. Cohen, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 7.

³ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 88, 605.

conflict and the resources needed, the appearance of a new technology or tactic employed by an opponent, a military's failure to understand the character of the conflict, or even the loss or gain of an ally can each result in the requirement for adaptation.⁴ The Command and General Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth has been a central point for adaptation within the US Army for the past century.

Military failures are never the fault of any single man. They are failures of an organization to understand the enemy, the environment, oneself, and even what was required to win.⁵ The US Army's adaptability based on reflection of past events, acknowledgement of current political realities, and anticipation of future conflict is critical to its success, or failure. The history of the US Army's Command and General Staff Schools at Fort Leavenworth provide the insight into the adaptability of the US Army as a whole. As the premier educational center for officers destined to serve as commanders and members of senior level staffs, does the US Army's Command and General Staff School possess the ability to effectively adapt to prepare officers to succeed in the next war? Demonstration of adaptability within the Command and General Staff Schools is evaluated through a historical examination of two case studies from diverse and distinct time periods in US Army history. The primary lens for evaluation is design theorist Donald Schön's theory on reflection *in* action and reflection *on* action.

One critical requirement for adaptation is reflection. Schön suggests adaptation is not possible without it. Reflection occurs when something that is "known," or usually brings a familiar result, produces an unusual outcome or surprise.⁶ Surprises are inevitable and come from

⁴ Theo Farrell, "Introduction: Military Adaptation in War" in *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan*, ed. Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga, and James A. Russell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 4.

⁵ Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 3.

⁶ Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987), 24-26.

limitations in knowledge and understanding of the environment and themselves. While science, technology, and organization have increased the ability to understand the environment, these innovations have actually increased the complexity of natural problems and the opportunity for surprise. Surprise can be caused by the growing need for information to control the environment or limitation in judgment. Surprise can also come from a deliberate denial of information or a purposeful introduction of false information in order to mislead.⁷ The organism or organization that experiences the surprise can either choose to ignore it or choose to reflect on it to discover the cause. Schön states that reflection occurs in one of two ways: reflection *in* action and reflection *on* action. Both types of reflection force critical thinking about the base assumptions thought to be true.⁸

Reflection *on* action is thinking back about what could have contributed to the unexpected outcome. Time is required for reflection *on* action and the resulting ideas to be tested, where the results of reflection *on* action can only be applied to future events. Reflection *in* action is a much more rapid process and results in an adaptation that directly changes the situation at hand without interruption. Schön states, “our thinking serves to reshape what we are doing while we are doing it.”⁹

The case study of the US Army’s Command and General Staff School during the inter-war years and the Cold War demonstrates adaptation through reflection *on* action. Following the end of the First World War, US Army leaders used the lessons learned from the battlefields of Europe and the anticipated future battlefield to modify and improve upon the pre-war course curriculum. Within the Cold War, the Vietnam experience and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War served as the catalyst for the US Army to adjust its doctrine, acknowledge a deficit in the officer corps to

⁷ Zvi Lanir, “Fundamental Surprises” (Ramat Aviv, Israel: University of Tel Aviv).

⁸ Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 24-26.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 26-28.

execute the new doctrine, and create the School of Advanced Military Studies as an adaptation to officer education to address the deficit. In both of these cases, reflection *on* action resulted in an increased effectiveness of the officer corps' ability to execute the nation's wars.

Adaptation through reflection *in* action is demonstrated with the case of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) General Staff Course at Langres, France and through the modifications of the Command and General Staff Course following the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The school at Langres met the need for general staff officers, but it produced officers with a shallow understanding of principles and application. As the environment in Iraq shifted from US victory over the regime into a chaotic power vacuum that proved to be fertile ground for insurgency, the US Army was slow to understand the changes in the threat and what was required to confront that threat. Denied the opportunity of peace and time to reflect *on* the situation in both cases, the organization had to reflect *in* action to adapt and survive the situation it was in. These adaptations provided a stop-gap solution that allowed the US Army to survive the current fight, but resulted in minimal long-term effects.

The US Army possesses the ability to adapt based on both reflection *in* and reflection *on* action. One is significantly easier than the other, but both are required to be effective in a profession where "men are trained to function efficiently and effectively in an environment marked by danger and the imminent prospect of death."¹⁰ During the inter-war years, reflection *on* action occurred because of a mixture of emotional and environmental circumstances. There was time; time to think about what had occurred, why it had been successful or not, what the next war would look like, and how to train the next generation of US Army officers. The lack of funding for anything else within the military improved the Command and General Staff Course by ensuring there were no other options to distract from the course's "map problems." The importance and success of the "Leavenworth men" during the Great War had also changed the

¹⁰ Cohen, *Military Misfortunes*, 3.

culture of the US Army with regards to the criticality of professional education of its officer corps. Reflection *on* action worked well here and had a long lasting effect.

Reflection *in* action does not bring the long term benefits gained from reflection *on* action, but it is required to find a solution for an immediate surprise. Pershing identified the issue of a critical shortage of trained general staff officers upon the arrival of the first US troops into France in 1917. His solution was the AEF General Staff College at Langres. While it directly changed the situation at hand and contributed to the AEF's victory, it was a less than optimal solution that created narrowly focused officers who lacked an ability to solve problems and improvise doctrine based on an understanding of military history and theory.¹¹

The 2003 Iraq War provides another example of the challenges of reflection *in* action. In a situation where time was critical, it took years of experimentation with counterinsurgency to change the situation on the ground. Information was available as to what the threat was and how to address it, but that information was misunderstood, misjudged, ignored, or altered. Even the Leavenworth men trained "to function efficiently and effectively in an environment marked by danger" were slow to reflect and adapt to surprise. The US Army has demonstrated the ability to adapt based on reflection *in* action from the school at Langres to the deserts of Iraq, but it comes at the cost of some level of effectiveness.

Langres

The US Government and the US Army were woefully unprepared for war in 1917. Even after war was declared, the General Staff had created no recommendations or plans for the employment of US forces in the conflict.¹² The beginning of World War I found the US Army

¹¹ Daniel W. Johnson, "Focused vs Broad in World War I: A Historical Comparison of General Staff Officer Education at Pre-war Leavenworth and Langres" (masters monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2016), 53-54.

¹² John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War* (New York: Stokes Company, 1931), 15-17.

with fewer than one hundred thousand soldiers, and wanting of every possible organizational, logistical, and educational requirement for modern state-on-state warfare. Only one officer, Brigadier General John J. Pershing, had commanded a force larger than a brigade in combat, during the Punitive Expedition in 1916—if that could be considered combat—since the end of the Philippine Insurrection in 1902. Organized and employed in garrisons of less than battalion strength, primarily across the southwestern United States and as well as in China, the Philippines, Panama, and Hawaii, the US Army had no organized field armies, army corps, divisions, or brigades.¹³ Of the 5,791 regular officers serving in April 1917, only 379 had attended either the Command and General Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth or the Army War College in preparation for service on a senior staff or as a high level commander.¹⁴

The increase in size of units required to fight on the European continent and the need to interact effectively with the British and French allies quickly illuminated the need for a general staff system from the war department to the division level.¹⁵ This was amplified by the additional complexities of employing inexperienced combat units with the new technologies across a battlefield while facing a veteran enemy. Following an inspection of the British and French staff systems upon his arrival in France, Pershing issued *General Order No. 8* in July 1917 formally establishing and organizing the General Staff for the AEF and all subordinate US Army formations into the G-1 (administration section), G-2 (intelligence section), and G-3 (operations section). The order was amended to include the G-4 (coordination section) and G-5 (training

¹³ Peter J. Schifferle, *America's School for War: Fort Leavenworth, Officer Education, and Victory in World War II* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 9-10; Mark Ethan Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War: The American Army and Combat in World War I* (New York: Cambridge Press, 2007), 10-12.

¹⁴ Allan R. Millet, *Well Planned, Splendidly Executed: The Battle of Cantigny May 28-31, 1918* (Cantigny Military History Series, 2010), 154.

¹⁵ Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, 16-17; Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 10-11.

section) less than a month later, but these sections would only exist at the AEF and army-level general staffs.¹⁶ *General Order No. 8* also provided a detailed description of the duties of the staff to include the Chief of Staff.¹⁷ With divisions expected to require over 25,000 officers and soldiers to be effective on the battlefield, filling the new general staff positions was critical.¹⁸ The need for officers with the training to lead, build, and employ these large units caused Pershing to turn to command and staff course graduates, the “Leavenworth men.”¹⁹

Pershing himself was not a graduate of the staff course, but he knew the additional education and training these men had received would prove invaluable. He filled his key positions with Leavenworth graduates. Nine of the twelve officers who served as AEF chief of staff, deputy chief of staff, and G-1 through G-5 were Leavenworth men. The sudden increase in authority and influence brought some resentment for the “Leavenworth clique” within the AEF, but their results were undeniable. A common outlook on tactics, problem solving, vocabulary, standard formats for orders, and often sheer survival resulted in an increased effectiveness across the AEF.²⁰

Even as the first American units were arriving in France in the summer of 1917, Pershing understood the critical shortage of Leavenworth men in the AEF. Not enough existed across the force and the school’s closure in 1916 meant their numbers could only decrease with time and

¹⁶ Thomas Shipley, *The History of The A.E.F.* (New York: Doran Company, 1920), 27.

¹⁷ James G. Harbord, “AEF General Orders No. 8, July 5, 1917,” in *General Orders, GHQ, AEF Vol. 16 of United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919*, ed. US Army Center of Military History, 1948 (Reprint, Washington DC: Center of Military History, 1988), 13-18.

¹⁸ Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, 154-155.

¹⁹ Schifferle, *America’s School for War*, 11.

²⁰ Edward M. Coffman, “The American Military Generation Gap in World War I: The Leavenworth Clique in the AEF,” ed. *Command and Commanders in Modern Warfare: The Proceedings of the Second Military History Symposium, U.S. Air Force Academy, 2-3 May, 1968* (Washington, DC: US Air Force Academy, 1969), 39.

hostilities.²¹ Frustrated with the War Department's lack of understanding of the need for well-trained general staff officers, Pershing sent this cable:

Urgency training general staff officers for particular duty at army headquarters cannot be overestimated. Their services are needed now to study details in connection with operations and other duties, Our staff officer generally have little conception of problems involved in directing armies or of strategic questions involved. We are now planning for spring campaign and success not possible without thoroughly efficient General Staff. Limited number of officers brought in June much overworked and unable to handle and fully consider many subjects requiring immediate action. Impossible to make this appeal and recommendation too strong and urgently request matter be taken up with Secretary of War without delay.²²

In classic fashion, Pershing worked to solve his own problem. As part of the significant system of schools created to train and prepare the very raw AEF upon arrival in Europe, his reflection *in* action led to the establishment of the AEF General Staff College at Langres, France.²³

The purpose of the course was to educate officers, selected for their aptitude, on general staff processes, terminology, logistics, and employment of forces to create a common doctrine and inter-unit cooperation.²⁴ It was modeled on the Leavenworth course and modified to the AEF. Because students would be applying the course curriculum immediately upon graduation, students focused on a single, specific staff function. Administration, intelligence, or operations became the focus for the course, and assigned officers went to G-1, G-2, G-3, or G-4 sections across the AEF unit staffs accordingly. The course design split instructional application with approximately half of the curriculum in class and lecture and half focused on "map problems." The map problems centered on problem solving exercises with students working as a general staff

²¹ US Army Command and General Staff College, *A Military History of the US Army Command and General Staff College: 1881-1963* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Fort Leavenworth Press, 1964), 20.

²² Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, 155.

²³ *Ibid.*, 155.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 155-156; Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 11.

to devise a plan or order for a division or larger unit. Course lectures included map instruction, staff organization, and division in the defense, division in the attack (open warfare), military use of railways, training, and trench warfare.²⁵

The school at Langres graduated four classes between November 1917 and December 1918 and was the only course in the US Army developing general staff officers due to the War Department's suspension of all Army Service Schools in early 1916.²⁶ 777 officers attended the course and 537 graduated.²⁷ Those 537 officers returned to their various AEF units to fill general staff positions. The school was credited with increasing AEF effectiveness as early as January 1918.²⁸ Langres, however, had been too little, too late. In a lecture to the Army War College in 1922, then COL George C. Marshall wrote of the staff officers employed across the AEF general staff that "under the circumstances they rose to their great responsibilities in an admirable manner, but their lack of adequate training and experience...intimately affected the troops."²⁹

While Langres did contribute to the AEF's success, the education fell short of creating officers with the effectiveness of the pre-war courses at Leavenworth. Langres was forced to train officers in singular and shallow tasks. Students were trained only at the division level in a specific staff section focused on a specific type of warfare (either trench warfare or open warfare)

²⁵ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools*, 137; Fredrick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle: The Meuse-Argonne* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919), 442-444.

²⁶ US Army Command and General Staff College, *A History of the US Army Command and General Staff College: 1881-1963*, 20.

²⁷ Headquarters, American Expeditionary Force, "Report of the G-5, Appendix 3, History of the Army General Staff College," 8. A total of 770 students are listed on page 8, but the sum of the separate course attendee numbers is 777.

²⁸ Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools*, 138.

²⁹ George C. Marshall, *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall vol. 1 The Soldierly Spirit: December 1880 – June 1939*, ed. Larry I. Bland (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1981), 215.

depending on when they attended the course.³⁰ A lack of foundation in military theory and history also prohibited students from understanding what they had been taught, when it was applicable, and how to improvise for success.³¹ The AEF needed Langres due to its lack of preparedness when it entered the war, but there was a noted difference between a Leavenworth man and a Langres graduate.³²

As the Great War ended, the officer corps took home an understanding that the command and staff course at Fort Leavenworth was critical to the future of American warfighting. In his book, *Our Greatest Battle: The Meuse-Argonne*, Fredrick Palmer summed up the impact of Leavenworth men upon the AEF when he asked the question: “What should we have done without them in France?”³³ The US Army didn’t have an answer, but the officer corps was well aware of two things: it needed more Leavenworth men and it was not convinced the end of the Great War had brought about the end of all wars.

The Inter-War Course

Following the war in Europe, the United States struggled to determine its place among the nations of Europe and how to approach world. Before the war, President Woodrow Wilson had pushed to decrease the importance of Washington’s Farewell Address as a guide and increase America’s global interaction. In an address on May 27, 1916, he stated, “We are participants...in the life of the world. The interests of all nations are our own also. We are partners with the

³⁰ Elliot L. Johnson, “The Military Experiences of General Hugh A. Drum from 1898-1918” (Ph. D. diss, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1975), 150; Johnson, “Focused vs Broad in World War I,” 32.

³¹ Johnson, “Focused vs Broad in World War I,” 54-56.

³² Marshall, *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall vol. 1*, 215.

³³ Fredrick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle*, 400.

rest.”³⁴ These interests and partnerships eventually led the United States to war under the guise of making the world safe for democracy, yet Wilson was unable to solidify his League of Nations and the world was left without leadership while embers of war continued to smolder in Europe.³⁵ The nation was left with the challenge of conflicting desires: embrace partnerships globally for “settled peace, concord, and cooperation” with the smallest possible standing army.³⁶

These politics directly influenced the US Army’s priorities during the inter-war years. The US Government now viewed war as massive, technologically advanced armies conducting state on state warfare focused completely on the defeat of the enemy. Carl von Clausewitz taught that the aim of warfare is to impose one’s will upon an enemy. The will to be imposed should be the political objective of the war.³⁷ The political goal of the US Government had been to bring peace to Europe and the world.³⁸ It had mobilized the entire nation and brought an end to the war, but the conflict in desire for increased global partnership and a decreased military forced the US Army to look to the Great War for lessons learned and to purposefully focus training on large formations and staff work.

The enormity of death and destruction of World War I provided numerous lessons to the militaries and their nations around the globe. Strategically, national mobilization had been witnessed during international conflict of the 19th century, but it occurred at an unprecedented level during the Great War.³⁹ Tactically, the introduction of larger formations employing new

³⁴ Thomas J. Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 76.

³⁵ Walter A. McDougal, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 122-124.

³⁶ Knock, *To End All Wars*, 76.

³⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*, 75-80, 595.

³⁸ McDougal, *Promised Land, Crusader State*, 122-124.

³⁹ Jeremy Black, *The Great War and the Making of the Modern World* (London: Continuum International, 2011), 237.

technologies, such as machine guns, rapid fire and indirect artillery, poison, tanks, and aircraft changed the realities of the modern battlefield.⁴⁰ These lessons changed the US Army and how it would educate its officer corps for these new realities.⁴¹ The curriculum of the Command and Staff School at Fort Leavenworth was modified on these lessons through doctrinal changes based on principles and experience in anticipation of the realities of the next war's battlefields.

At a time when most Americans considered the war with Germany to be a thing of the past, the US Army's officer corps knew better.⁴² The fact that hostilities had ended without "the victory with the disarmament of the German troops, and thus have avoided the effect on the German populace of having their armies march home claiming that they had never been defeated" left the sense that Germany did not see itself as having lost.⁴³ The officer corps had learned many new lessons during the struggle and it began to determine the best methods to teach, test, and adapt in anticipation of their application during the next war.

The US Army had to prevent the lack of preparedness it had suffered at the beginning of the war. Sheer size and numbers was the first area it turned to. It had grown from an army of less than one hundred thousand soldiers and extreme shortages of modern warfighting materials into the two million man AEF organized in two armies, ten corps, and twenty-six divisions over the

⁴⁰ Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War*, 9, 358.

⁴¹ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 9.

⁴² William Pencak, *For God and Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), 42.

⁴³ George C. Marshall, *Memoirs of My Service in the World War, 1917-1918* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), 203-204.

course of only eighteen months.⁴⁴ It had also become increasingly effective at employing forces of this size in combined arms actions.⁴⁵

Pershing himself visualized that the next war would require mobilization of the entire nation, not just the army, as he experienced in the mobilization and deployment of American combat forces to France. Congress also seemed to understand the country's resources would be required to win another world war. Yet congress had no desire to part from the historical norm of a small peacetime army, and with no perceived threat to national security, it passed the National Defense Act of 1920. The National Defense Act altered the structure of the US Army, establishing it as a preparatory force to serve as a base of expansion during a time of national mobilization, rather than as a force prepared for immediate employment in war.⁴⁶ The US Army's primary role as determined by Congress was to serve as a small professional core to train the National Guard and Reserve Forces for an emergency requiring mobilization. With the National Defense Act of 1920 dictating force size, the US Army turned to an area it could influence: the officer corps' professional competence.

The adaptations implemented within the Command and General Staff School by the US Army demonstrate Schon's "reflection on action." Officers spent countless hours thinking back on their experiences in the war and working to discover any and all possible lessons.⁴⁷ These reflections could not change the past actions of the US Army, but they were used to prepare for the immense war and national mobilization Pershing and the US Army were anticipating in the future.

⁴⁴ American Battle Monuments Commission, *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1938), 502.

⁴⁵ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

Professional incompetence in the essential tasks of modern warfare (organization, planning, and logistics) resulted in creation of the General Staff College at Langres and now the desire to prevent a reoccurrence emphasized the need to formalize training across the force to maintain competence in these areas in preparation for the next war.⁴⁸ Fort Leavenworth was reopened in the fall of 1919 with the same mission it had before the war: educate and train staff officers.⁴⁹ Several changes were introduced based on the experiences of the Great War and anticipation of the next war. The biggest shortcoming of Leavenworth during the war was the shortage of graduates. Class size grew from seventy-five in 1922 to approximately 250 by the mid-1920s due to an increased desire to enhance professional competence by veteran officers, and because the National Defense Act of 1920 made it law that an officer had to be a General Staff School graduate to be eligible for duty on the War Department Staff and promotion to general officer.⁵⁰

The Army modified the curriculum to realize the staff lessons learned on the battlefields of Europe and to ensure each officer was equipped with a new level of professionalism never before seen in the US Army. Pershing highlighted the importance of professionalism in a graduation speech given at the Army War College in 1923.

In no other army is it so imperative that the officers of the permanent establishment be highly perfected specialists, prepared to serve and instructors and leaders for the citizen forces which are to fight our wars. The one-time role of a Regular Army officer has passed with the Indian Campaigns and the acquirement of colonial possessions. Our mission today is definite, yet so broad that few, if any, have been able to grasp the possibilities of the new fields opened up by the military policy now on the statute books...There are officers, fortunately in constantly diminishing numbers, who cannot turn their minds from concentration on a diminutive regular army, successfully, and gallantly fighting the country's battles as in Cuba and the Philippines, or serving at isolated stations along the Mexican border. Those days have not entirely passed away,

⁴⁸ Ibid., 12-13.

⁴⁹ Timothy K. Nenninger, "The Fort Leavenworth Schools: Postgraduate Military Education and Professionalization in the U.S. Army, 1880-1920" (doctoral thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1974), 364.

⁵⁰ Nenninger, "The Fort Leavenworth Schools," 365-366.

and probably never will pass, but they are now of secondary importance in the general scheme of National Defense.⁵¹

Army leaders knew they had to prepare their force for the challenges ahead. They understood the design forced on them by the National Defense Act of 1920 and had seen firsthand the costs in human sacrifice from the sin of unpreparedness. They witnessed the budget shrink and priority shift to schools, the reserves, the National Guard.⁵² They also accepted that professionalizing the officer corps through education would be critical in the US Army's combat performance in the next war because the officer corps would serve as the foundation upon which the mass force would build. Army Regulation 350-5, issued in July 1925, formally tasked Leavenworth to

Prepare officers for command and general staff duty by training them in the following:

1. The combined use of all arms in the division and in the army corps.
2. The proper functions of commanders of division, army corps, and corps areas and the techniques of exercising command.
3. The proper functions of general staff officers of divisions, army corps, and corps areas and the technique of general staff concepts.⁵³

The General Staff School was now required to produce a new generation of Leavenworth men with the skills to command as well as staff the organizations in the combined arms fight at the division and corps level to win the next war.

Without large formations to exercise or opportunities to physically incorporate new technologies, including mechanized forces, into the battlefield, Leavenworth focused appropriately on increasing staff effectiveness across the US Army. Even as late as 1928, the US

⁵¹ Current Field Artillery Notes, "General Pershing on the United States Army," Field Artillery Journal 13, no. 4 (July-August 1923), 360-362, accessed on 7 April, 2016, http://sill-www.army.mil/firesbulletin/archives/1923/JUL_AUG_1923/JUL_AUG_1923_FULL_EDITION.pdf.

⁵² Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 21.

⁵³ US War Department, "Army Regulations, No. 350-5, Military Education," Washington, DC, July 1925, 8.

Army focused on mitigation of the effects of the inability to conduct large unit, tactical maneuver training. Without actual, physical maneuver experience, innovation was slow and the integration of mechanization was only tested and proofed in map problems. The Army G-3 stressed this in a 1928 lecture to the Army War College. Brigadier General Frank Parker discussed future war between two “great” nations: “The lesson learned in the World War has taught us the importance of mobilizing in accordance with a well prepared plan. There were three elements which gave to the World War a very different character from those of the past, to wit: National mobilization, modern armament and modern transportation.” He went on to highlight the need for an increase in the more technical and mechanized arms of artillery, tanks, and aircraft, but diminished their individual potential and emphasized the need to learn their incorporation into the combined arms fight because, “The unwieldiness and relative size of a great mechanized unit will prevent these organizations from being either numerous or large...the most that can be expected of them is usefulness in reconnaissance in force, in some local attack, in exploitation, etc.”⁵⁴

The post-World War I curriculum was similar to pre-war 1916 curriculum in that it utilized the applicatory method and focused on enhancing staff function procedures through large unit tactical problem solving. Leavenworth was still conducting two schools: the School of the Line and the Army Staff College. The School of the Line focused on division level command and staff duties. The Staff College concentrated on corps, field army, and theater level problems focused on tactical military subjects. By 1922, these courses had merged into a single course known as the Command and General Staff School.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Parker, Frank, Brigadier General, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, Lecture delivered at Army War College, September 11, 1928, *The G-3 Division of the War Department General Staff and its Problems*, 3-5, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. This source was provided by Dr. G. Stephen Lauer.

⁵⁵ Nenninger, “The Fort Leavenworth Schools,” 364-365; USACGSC, *A History of the US Army Command and General Staff College: 1881-1963*, 366-367.

The differences between the pre and post-war curriculum demonstrate the focus on higher level staff officer and commander functions. There was no longer time for classes on military sanitation and hygiene. Languages (French and German) were removed from instruction and other subjects, including map reading, signaling, and military engineering were decreased significantly.⁵⁶ Leavenworth also pushed to shift the “staff” label away from the courses by stressing the command to staff subject ratio of approximately 65% to 35%. Regardless of the ratio, it demonstrated the need for commanders to be as aware or even more so of their staff’s functions and processes as their staff officers.⁵⁷ According to Colonel Drum, the assistant commandant of the school, “the efficient commander must know general staff work and the efficient staff officer must know and have the commander’s viewpoint.” Drum continued to stress that variation in training of command versus staff training, was not based on “theoretical knowledge or training, but, rather, on personal qualities and mainly on the factors of experience, judgment, personality, leadership, determination and aggressiveness. However, the fundamental training should be the same for both classes of officers.”⁵⁸

Leavenworth’s curriculum focused on creating officers competent in command and control of divisions, corps, and armies and ensuring those officers possessed a high level of problem solving skills. It was the only place in the US Army where proficiency in the application and employment of large formations was consistently conducted due to the lack of funding and

⁵⁶ Nenninger, “The Fort Leavenworth Schools,” 364-365; USACGSC, *A History of the US Army Command and General Staff College: 1881-1963*, 17-18.

⁵⁷ Nenninger, “The Fort Leavenworth Schools,” 364-365.

⁵⁸ *Annual Report*, Assistant Commandant, 1921-1922, 23-24.

troop assignments.⁵⁹ The applicatory method was the tool utilized to train Leavenworth men since the late 1890s and was used to train the interwar generation as well.⁶⁰

The applicatory method was defined in a 1924 General Staff School circular as, “the basis for all instruction.... Instruction is imparted by conferences, lectures, tactical rides, map problems, terrain exercises, map maneuvers, and demonstrations.” It emphasized tactical problem solving through a multi-angled educational approach.⁶¹ Just as Clausewitz wrote about critical analysis and the study of military history, this pedagogical technique was critical to the student officers due to the lack of opportunity in peacetime to lead and facilitate large formations.⁶² Focused on applying theoretical truths to actual events and scenarios, it equipped Leavenworth students with the education that would allow them to form, train, and employ the forces needed for a major conflict.⁶³

Modification of the Army Officer Culture

Prior to the Great War, US Army officers had predominantly dismissed education in the art of war. Focused on service as a frontier constabulary force following the end of the US Civil War and an imperial force after the turn of the century, postgraduate education was not emphasized in the least.⁶⁴ The successes of West Point mediocrities such as Ulysses S. Grant and George Armstrong Custer seemed to highlight that personal bravery, determination, and luck had

⁵⁹ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 63.

⁶⁰ T.R. Brerton, *Educating the U.S. Army: Arthur L. Wagner and Reform, 1875-1905* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 59-61, 104-105.

⁶¹ Nenninger, “The Fort Leavenworth Schools,” 364.

⁶² Clausewitz, *On War*, 156.

⁶³ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 100, 121-122.

⁶⁴ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 9; Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War*, 10-12.

more impact on professional success and promotion than academics. Officers rarely studied their profession due to the belief that expertise could only be obtained through experience in organizations with troops. Changing the culture within the organization that “natural ability, not intellectual prowess” was key to success in warfare, required the brutal lessons of the First World War.⁶⁵

American social psychologist Edgar Schein’s theory of organizational culture highlights the importance of cultural values and artifacts in an organization. Values are the social principles, goals, and standards that cultural members believe have intrinsic worth.⁶⁶ The US Army had not embraced professional education as a significant value prior to World War I. Artifacts are manifestations or expressions of the same culture that produces the values. They included objects (logos, uniforms, memorabilia), verbal expressions (speeches, legends), and activities (rites of passage, tradition, rewards). The importance and tradition of education and the Leavenworth course was not a significant artifact of the US Army culture before 1917.

According to Schein, true change only occurs when members of a culture see benefit in adjusting their values and modifying the importance of artifacts.⁶⁷ The US Army had seen the performance of Leavenworth men in the Great War. The value of formalized professional education was among the most impressive lessons of the war. Officers focused on professional scholarship and study during the inter-war years more than most of their seniors had before the war.⁶⁸ According to General Omar Bradley, “The greatest difference in the army before and after

⁶⁵ T.R. Brerton, *Educating the U.S. Army*, xii-xiii.

⁶⁶ Mary Jo Hatch and Ann L. Cunliffe, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 187-189.

⁶⁷ Hatch, *Organization Theory*, 189.

⁶⁸ Edward M. Coffman, “The American Military Generation Gap in World War I: The Leavenworth Clique in the AEF,” ed. *Command and Commanders in Modern Warfare: The Proceedings of the Second Military History Symposium, U.S. Air Force Academy, 2-3 May, 1968* (Washington, DC: US Air Force Academy, 1969), 46.

the war was the school system.”⁶⁹ The anti-intellectual culture of the old army had fallen on the battlefields of Europe, and from those same fields arose a new culture that valued education.

Application in the Next War

World War II found the US Army wanting for a second time. It faced problems on a scale never before imagined – problems as great in administration, supply, logistics, and training as in tactics.⁷⁰ While several senior officers, like Generals Lesley J. McNair and Albert C. Wedemeyer, worked to design, build, and test systems to address these challenges, most senior officers did not comprehend the enormity of the ground and air forces that would be required to win the fight against the Axis powers.⁷¹ Leavenworth men were once again in short supply, but their direct impact on the US Army’s effectiveness was again undeniable.⁷² Their familiarity with the necessary staff requirements to effectively lead and employ large elements mitigated the lack of experience across the force in maneuvering units above the company level. The conflict also rapidly highlighted two areas the inter-war curriculum had failed to properly prepare students to incorporate: logistics and air power.⁷³

⁶⁹ Omar Bradley quoted in Edward M. Coffman, *The American Military Generation Gap in World War I: The Leavenworth Clique in the AEF*, ed. *Command and Commanders in Modern Warfare: The Proceedings of the Second Military History Symposium*, U.S. Air Force Academy, 2-3 May, 1968 (Washington, DC: US Air Force Academy, 1969), 46.

⁷⁰ Robert R. Palmer, Bell I. Wiley, and William R. Keast, *United States Army in World War II: The Army Ground Forces: The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, United States Army), v.

⁷¹ Mark T. Calhoun, *General Lesley J. McNair: Unsung Architect of the US Army* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2015); Charles E. Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present: Writing of the Victory Plan of 1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1990).

⁷² Schifferle, *America’s School for War*, 170.

⁷³ Headquarters, Services of Supply, European Theater of Operations, “Notes of Command and Staff Conference, 1 November 1943,” 17-18. Document located in Combined Arms Research Library.

The rapid and mass expansion of the US Army and effective use of the resources from the industrial base's mobilization to provide material demonstrated the effectiveness of the inter-war education of Fort Leavenworth. The Leavenworth course had successfully taken the historical lessons of World War I and applied them within the inter-war curriculum to create officers who could employ effective command and staff procedures within divisions, corps, and armies.⁷⁴ Formations they had never actually seen, were trained, led, and employed effectively on four continents by men who understood procedures, principles, and how to solve problems. These were the exact reasons the school had been reopened in 1919 with curriculum adapted to emphasize and train for the new realities of modern warfare.

The Cold War and the Birth of SAMS

Change came slowly to the Command and General Staff Course in the years and decades following the Second World War. Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, numerous factors contributed to the lack of adaptation: fluctuation in the national security policy, decreasing budgets for ground forces, and an unclear vision of how the US Army should operate on the atomic battlefield. Each of these contributed to the failure of US Army civilian and military leaders, school commandants, and the faculty to re-establish the rigorous academic environment of the inter-war years that had produced the Leavenworth men of the World War II army.⁷⁵ Even the self-designed organizational structure within the school would impede change and growth.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Schifferle, *America's School for War*, 186.

⁷⁵ Michael D. Stewart, "Raising a Pragmatic Army: Officer Education at the US Army Command and Staff College, 1946-1986" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 2010), 7.

⁷⁶ "Command and Staff College is Capstone of Army Ground Forces School System," *Fort Leavenworth News*, April 7, 1947, 3.

The experience of the Korean War generated minimal change within the Staff Course in early 1950s.⁷⁷ When significant change did come, it often came at a long-term detriment to the course and officer education. The curriculum shifted radically in 1957-1958 in the attempt to adjust to the atomic battlefield. The school reacted to the technological changes of the atomic battlefield without reflecting *on* how those changes would impact the future of ground combat operations.⁷⁸ While the school had succeeded in looking toward a future battlefield, it failed to understand the implications of these changes on the future and that there were more possible futures than just an atomic battlefield. The result was a curriculum overly focused on ground combat in a nuclear environment where atomic battles were the norm and not the exception.⁷⁹ The curriculum slowly found a balance between conventional and atomic warfare through the end of the decade.

The Vietnam War brought change to the way the nation utilized its army, but it brought relatively little change to the education of that army's officer corps.⁸⁰ There were, however, changes made during this time that resulted in the increased professionalism of officers through the adoption of the elective system. The elective system allowed for the increased specialization of the officer corps and a broadening of what was considered relevant professional knowledge. The electives came at a cost. The core curriculum that had always been the foundation of the course now had to be decreased to accommodate the inclusion of the electives. Electives included military subjects such as logistics and military history and courses that resembled those seen at

⁷⁷ Stewart, "Raising a Pragmatic Army," 158.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 158.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 132; Willard G. Wyman, "New and Old Tasks of CONARC," *Army* 8 (December 1958), 41.

⁸⁰ Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 258; McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State*, 189.

universities such as writing, statistics, and automated data processing.⁸¹ They even included subjects that had been dropped from the course in the inter-war years such as French, German, and Spanish.⁸² The changes in the Command and General Staff Course between 1965 and 1972 were significant not just because of the increased professionalism of the officer corps, but because they set the conditions that would allow Fort Leavenworth to hold a central position in the revolution the US Army would experience in 1973.

As the US Army was withdrawing from Vietnam, it was entering a world that was growing more complex. The global power of the United States was perceived by both allies and enemies to be a low point. The US Army had been defeated by North Vietnam.⁸³ It was a broken and confused force wrought with poor morale, racial strife, and narcotics use.⁸⁴ In the desire to expunge the experience and lessons of the Vietnam War, the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 provided the impetus to create and implement a new doctrine focused on defeating the Soviet Union.⁸⁵

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War shocked US Army officers with its rapid tempo and high lethality. While the US Army had been focused on a war against the Soviet Union since the end of World War II, the Arab-Israeli conflict provided a realistic and harsh visual model of war against the Warsaw Pact.⁸⁶ Arguably something the US Army had needed since the defeat of

⁸¹ Stewart, "Raising a Pragmatic Army," 226.

⁸² Harry P. Ball, *Of Responsible Command: A History of the US Army War College* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: The Alumni Association of the United States Army War College, 1983), 392.

⁸³ Kevin C.M. Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi: The School of Advanced Military Studies and the Introduction of Operational Art into Army Doctrine 1982-1994" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 2010), 4; Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (New York: Presidio Press, 1995).

⁸⁴ Robert H. Scales, Jr., *Certain Victory: The US Army in the Gulf War* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: US Army CGSC, 1994), 6-7; Summers, *On Strategy*.

⁸⁵ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 260; Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi," 4.

⁸⁶ Stewart, "Raising a Pragmatic Army," 237.

Germany and Japan in 1945. In the short and violent eighteen day war, the Egyptians and Syrians lost 1500-2000 tanks and 500 artillery tubes, numbers nearly equal to the US Army's entire inventory of tanks and artillery in Europe at that time. General William E. DePuy, then Commander of TRADOC, stressed the impact of these numbers within comparison to the US Army in a presentation titled "Implications of the Middle East War on US Army Tactics, Doctrine and Systems" stating, "if the rate of loss which occurred in the Arab-Israeli war during the short period of 18 to 20 days were extrapolated to the battlefields of Europe over a period of 60 to 90 days, the resulting losses would reach levels for which the United States Army is not prepared in any way."⁸⁷ The shock of the war and the lessons learned resulted in the creation of a new doctrine known as "active defense" that would eventually grow into the combined arms doctrine of Air-Land Battle.⁸⁸

Change in doctrine was captured in the 1976 Field Manual (FM) 100-5 *Operations* and then again in the operations manuals released in 1982 and 1986. The US Army spent a considerable amount of time after the Yom Kippur war reflecting on the war and overlaying those lessons upon its self and the Soviet forces arrayed across Europe. The doctrine focused on the basic problem laid out in the introduction of the FM 100-5 from 1976:

Because the lethality of modern weapons continues to increase sharply, we can expect very high losses to occur in short periods of time. Entire forces could be destroyed quickly if they are improperly employed. Therefore, the first battle of our next war could well be its last battle....This circumstance is unprecedented: we are an army historically unprepared for its first battle. We are accustomed to victory wrought with the weight of materiel and population brought to bear after the onset of hostilities. Today the U.S. Army must above all else, *prepare to win the first battle of the next war.*⁸⁹

⁸⁷ William E. DePuy, *Selected Papers of General William E. DePuy*, compiled by Richard M. Swain (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1994), 77-79.

⁸⁸ Stewart, "Raising a Pragmatic Army," 241-242.

⁸⁹ Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1976), 1-1.

The new Air-Land Battle doctrine provided a potential solution to confront and defeat the enemy. It was aggressive, exciting, and maneuver oriented.⁹⁰ The 1982 manual stressed the destruction of an opponent by employing “decisive maneuver..., deep attack..., and surprise” applied rapidly, unpredictably, and with violence.⁹¹ The offensive mindset was continued in the 1986 FM 100-5 with the inclusion of the operational level of war.⁹² All of these doctrinal changes were focused on reviving the US Army from the empty shell that remained following Vietnam, but the US Army would have to face up to concerns that the officer corps had lost its ability to plan and conduct tactical operations in order to properly apply the doctrine.

Senior leaders were concerned the Command and General Staff Course and its elective system had become an orientation course for majors rather than a course that created officers prepared to serve as commanders and general staff officers on the modern battlefield.⁹³ Along with numerous changes designed to focus Leavenworth back on the profession of warfighting and “how to fight,” came a desire to teach students “how to think about how to fight.”⁹⁴ This desire resulted in the creation of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) because the Command and General Staff Course had evolved in the mid-1980s into a course that “did not teach the unique knowledge required by the profession.”⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Robert M. Citino, *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm: the Evolution of Operational Warfare* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 264.

⁹¹ Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1982), 1-5, 2-1, 4-1.

⁹² Citino, *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm*, 264; Richard M. Swain, “Filling the Void: The Operational Art and the US Army” in *The Operational Art: Developments in the Theories of War* ed. B.J.C. McKercher and Michael A. Hennessy (London: Praeger, 1996), 147.

⁹³ Stewart, “Raising a Pragmatic Army,” 262-263.

⁹⁴ John H. Cushman, Major General, quoted in Stewart, “Raising a Pragmatic Army,” 245-246.

⁹⁵ Stewart, “Raising a Pragmatic Army,” 291.

The mission of SAMS to increase judgment and application of operational art by creating a deep knowledge base of history and tactics varied significantly from the Command and General Staff Officer Course. In the report to TRADOC that would ultimately result in the creation of SAMS, COL Huba Wass de Czege outlined the importance of professional excellence in the officer corps, the requirement for officers to think creatively about war, the increase in the level of battlefield perspective on the modern battlefield (current division commanders and staff operate akin to World War II corps commanders with regards to complexity and geography), and the decrease in an officer's time to learn how to integrate and employ increasingly complex weapons and hardware.⁹⁶ Wass de Czege argued that creating a second year of study for selected officers would create a group of officers better prepared for the demands of general staff work at the division, corps, and higher levels of command with the result of providing influence on the Army through their competence.⁹⁷ Based on an acknowledged shortfall in education and training of the officer corps, the complexity of the modern battlefield, and the requirements of the operational level of war, the TRADOC commander approved the creation of the SAMS course.

The unwanted lessons of the Vietnam War, the harsh surprises of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the time to reflect *on* each within their own context and when juxtaposed onto a NATO-WARSAW conflict in Europe allowed the US Army the opportunity for increased understanding of self and the enemy. The results included adaptation of an improved and appropriate doctrine, an understanding of the requirements the US Army would need to employ that doctrine, and modification to the professional education system to create officers educated in the history, theories, and doctrine to enhance the US Army's warfighting formations.

⁹⁶ Huba Wass de Czege, "Army Staff College Level Training Study: Final Report 13 June 1983" (US Army War College, 1983).

⁹⁷ Benson, "Educating the Army's Jedi," 7-8.

Adapting to Chaos: The Command and General Staff Course and Iraq

The early 1990s found the US Army simultaneously in a very familiar and yet, very new place. The primary threat of the Soviet Union had disintegrated and victory had just been secured in the Middle East against the fourth largest army in the world.⁹⁸ A large standing force facing drawdown was not unfamiliar ground, but now there was no clear national threat; no German Reich; no Japanese Empire; no Warsaw Pact. The presence of a well-defined and visible enemy to focus on benefitted the military in preparation and planning from the end of the First World War until the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁹⁹ The doctrine of Air-Land Battle had emerged from decades of lessons learned confronting and analyzing the Soviet war machine and now the USSR was gone.¹⁰⁰ As the US Army modified and adapted itself to a smaller force with increased operational commitments, the Command and General Staff Course adapted as well.¹⁰¹ TRADOC focused on adapting doctrine to meet new strategic realities and technology as the US Army found itself in places like Somalia and Bosnia. The events of September 11, 2001 and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq put the Leavenworth men, and women, leading the way as commanders and general staff officers. Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom brought new challenges and lessons. The Command and General Staff Course, as it had for generations before, modified curricula to meet the demands of the current battlefield.

⁹⁸ William J. Perry, "Desert Storm and Deterrence in the Future" in *After the Storm*, edited by Josef S. Nye and Roger K. Smith (New York: The Aspen Institute, 1992), 241-263.

⁹⁹ John L. Romjue, Susan Canedy, and Anne W. Chapman, *Prepare the Army for War: A Historical Overview of the Army Training and Doctrine Command 1973-1993* (Fort Monroe, VA: Office of the Command Historian, 1993), 115.

¹⁰⁰ Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1982).

¹⁰¹ Tom Clancy with Fred Franks, *Into the Storm: A Study in Command* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1997), 492.

Downsizing and Adaptation to New Strategic Realities

We have slain a large dragon. But we live now in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes.”

–R. James Woolsey, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency

The disintegration of the Communist Bloc shifted America’s national security strategy from containment of communism along borders to deterrence of smaller, less defined threats in non-linear locations.¹⁰² Deter and defeat aggression, ensure global access and influence, promote regional stability, stop the flow of illicit drugs, and combat terrorism remained essential tasks the US Army had to be prepared to conduct.¹⁰³ However, by 1997, the US Army’s operational deployment tempo had increased by 300% with a force and budget that had both decreased 36% and 38% respectively.¹⁰⁴ Just as in the inter-war period, officers began to think about the next war. They had to analyze their own force and the potential operational environments of the future. Technologies continued to improve and had to be incorporated into doctrine. Goldwater-Nichols made the joint fight a legal requirement and Desert Storm had solidified its importance.¹⁰⁵ The US Army confronted these challenges by using six “fundamental imperatives” to create a “ready, versatile force, capable of projecting power.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Romjue, *Prepare the Army for War*, 119.

¹⁰³ Center of Military History, *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1997), 4.

¹⁰⁴ US Department of the Army, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army: Fiscal Year 1997 Presented to the Committees and Subcommittees of the United States Senate and House of Representatives*, by Togo D. West and Dennis J. Reimer. 104th Cong., 2d Sess.

¹⁰⁵ Public law 99-433, Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, 1 October 1986.

¹⁰⁶ US Department of the Army, *Posture of the United States Army: FY 1997*, x.

The imperatives included quality people, improved doctrine, as appropriate force mix, realistic training, modern equipment, and deliberate leader development. Leader development was identified as key to Army success in both wartime and in the increasingly common “operations other than war.”¹⁰⁷ Just as during the inter-war years at Leavenworth, the Command and General Staff course became an essential element in this effort as emphasis was placed on creating professional and competent leaders to serve as commanders and staff officers.

The expectations of the future battlefield drove the focus of the course. The decrease in forward garrison locations forced the course to train officers in the skills required to be a “power-projection army” capable of rapid response to crisis. This required focus on transportation, joint operations, and logistics.¹⁰⁸ Officers had to understand how to get a force to a given operations area at the correct time and space to execute the operation appropriately.¹⁰⁹ While joint operations had taken place during conflicts since World War II and were seen throughout Air-Land Battle, doctrine now captured the joint requirement in Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Pub 1 (1991), JCS Pub 3.0 (1992), and the US Army’s FM 100-5 (1993). Officers not only had to be educated in US Army staff procedures at the division, corps, and army levels, but on fleet and wing organization, procedure, and the combined and multinational application of force as well.¹¹⁰ Logistics were as critical for the next fight as they were in World War II, but the future battlefield brought the possible challenge of no local garrisons or supply hubs from which to provide support.¹¹¹ Strategic and operational logistics to supply and support a rapid deployment force increased the need for commanders and staff officers to understand and train on how to support the next

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., x-xi.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., x.

¹⁰⁹ Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 499.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 501-503.

¹¹¹ *Posture of the United States Army: FY 1997*, 13.

fight.¹¹² These areas provided the core focus of the curriculum the Command and General Staff Officer Course would teach student officers as the US Army entered the 21st century.

Modification of Curriculum based on Unanticipated Battlefield Realities

On September 10, 2001, the Command and General Staff Course mission was to “educate officers in the values and attitudes of the profession of arms and in the conduct of military operations during peace, conflict, and war with emphasis at corps and division levels.” The course was designed to produce officers proficient in combined arm warfare, who can prepare, fight, and sustain forces across the spectrum of conflict, who understand joint force employment, who are instilled with joint attitudes and perspectives, and who understand how the Army builds a capable force by structuring, manning, equipping, training, sustaining, stationing, deploying, and funding organizations.¹¹³ The attack on the United States on September 11 and the subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq would again test the importance of the Leavenworth course, its curriculum, and its ability to adapt.

Afghanistan and Iraq both demonstrated the effectiveness of the US Army as the “power projection force” designed in the 1990s. Destruction of the Taliban regime in a matter of weeks through the joint combination of special operations forces, precision guided munitions, and an indigenous ally brought about success in a much more rapid manner than anyone in US Central Command (USCENTCOM) had anticipated.¹¹⁴ Barely a year later, Saddam Hussein’s regime would fall to a US-based coalition employing conventional ground and air forces, special

¹¹² Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 505.

¹¹³ CGSC Circular 351-1 Academic Year 2000-2001, 3-1.

¹¹⁴ Walter L. Perry and David Kassing, *Toppling the Taliban: Air-Ground Operations in Afghanistan, October 2001-June 2002* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2015), 31; Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2002), 1.

operations forces, precision guided munitions, and space based technologies.¹¹⁵ Both of these fights utilized and stressed the importance of the core lessons taught at Leavenworth that “jointness,” the close interaction of fire and maneuver, and logistics are critical to success.¹¹⁶

Unlike the Leavenworth men of World War I who were able to think and theorize on the lessons learned during their war throughout the 1920s and 1930s or the veterans of World War II who applied the lessons of Europe and the Pacific in a cold war, the Leavenworth men of the 21st century found themselves in unfamiliar yet violent territory immediately following the cessation of the invasions and conventional military operations. This violence was due to the growing insurgencies the US Army was now facing in both theaters.

The fall of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime and a slow US response created the chaos in the summer of 2003 that allowed for an insurgency to grow and flourish within Baghdad and across Iraq. The US Army was slow to identify this and to acknowledge the insurgency’s existence.¹¹⁷ The US forces that had so adeptly defeated the Iraqi Army just months before were now unable to comprehend what it was they were fighting against and how to effectively confront the threats. Part of the confusion came from a seemingly slight shift of the political objective of the conflict. The original goal of regime destruction had shifted to establish democratic governance¹¹⁸. The importance of a military understanding the political objectives of their

¹¹⁵ Walter J. Boyne, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: What Went Right, What Went Wrong, and Why* (New York: Doherty Associates, 2003), 48.

¹¹⁶ Perry, *Toppling the Taliban*, 119-120; Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare*, iii; Boyne, *Iraqi Freedom*, 48.

¹¹⁷ Thomas E. Ricks, “Rumsfeld’s War Plan Shares the Blame,” *The Washington Post*, 25 August 2004, accessed April 20, 2016, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/409643714?pq-origsite=summon>.

¹¹⁸ George W. Bush, “Presidential Address to the United Nations General Assembly” (Presidential address, United Nations, New York, September 12, 2002) accessed May 3, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/sep/12/iraq.usa3>; Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 117, 254.

government and constantly monitoring those objectives for change is captured in Carl von Clausewitz's discussion that states, "the original political objects can greatly alter during the course of the war and may finally change entirely since they are influenced by events and their probable consequences."¹¹⁹ The US Army designed for combined arms maneuver warfare in state on state war now found itself in facing a growing insurgency without an obvious opponent and unsure of what it could or should do to support the new political objective.

The US Army was struggling to assess its self and how to approach the conflict in Iraq, but leaders began the process of adaptation through experiment. In 2004, General George Casey, Jr. assumed command of all US forces in Iraq. He understood there were issues with his force and their effectiveness and began to implement changes. He developed a campaign plan focused on achieving the political objective of the conflict focused on protection of the Iraqi people. The next year, Casey established a "counterinsurgency academy" for US officers in Iraq. Based on observations of units arriving in country focused solely on conducting combat patrols and raids, the academy stressed the differences in counterinsurgency and combined arms maneuver.¹²⁰ The ideas of "second and third order effects," "alienation of the local population," and assessment of a solution that appears counterintuitive to past military training began the process of adaptation across the US Army as a whole.

Adaptation to the US Army and the Command and General Staff Course occurred through Donald Schön's "reflection *in action*." An individual or organization is using reflection *in action* when their thinking reshapes what is currently being done, while it is being done, and that thought modifies an action within the current situation. Reflection *in action* highlights the need to question the assumptions that put the individual or organization into the given situation. The

¹¹⁹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 75-80.

¹²⁰ Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2009), 8-9.

individual must now begin to experiment and test understanding. The US Army began to realize it did not understand the fight it was in as early as 2004 and despite its strengths and skills at fighting a conventional foe, it was failing.

The reflection in action resulted in the US Army reframing its opponent and how it should approach the fight. This experimentation led to the US Army revitalizing the knowledge base it had tried to forget, yet it had utilized in its earliest days: insurgency and counterinsurgency. Evident by its exclusion from doctrine for over thirty years, the US Army had avoided the topic of insurgency and counterinsurgency since the end of the Vietnam War.¹²¹ Created by a small team of military and academic professionals, FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* was designed to provide the US Army an understanding that counterinsurgency is not won exclusively by capturing and killing an enemy.¹²² Turning again to both history and current lessons learned the hard way on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US Army and the Command and General Staff Course adapted its approach to the current fights.

FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* examines insurgency and counterinsurgency by listing various related aspects and traits, motives, key participants, intelligence nuances, and numerous templates that assist in a successful counterinsurgent fight. It states the purpose of the publication is to serve as a tool for planners, trainers, and field commanders to begin the learning process on the subject of counterinsurgency sooner and compress the learning curve.¹²³ While this is arguably an effective means for the US Army as whole to spread as much tactical knowledge as possible in a rapid manner, the Command and General Staff Course is not a tactics course. In order to provide the US Army the type of officer it would need to be successful in the

¹²¹ Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), vii.

¹²² LTC John A. Nagl on CSPAN, accessed April 5, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuDIrrRDfUw>

¹²³ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, ix.

counterinsurgency fight, Leavenworth shifted its focus much more methodically and specifically onto training officers in solving problems in an ambiguous environment. “How to think versus what to think” became the mantra of the course as the creation of “agile and adaptive leaders” able to use experience, judgment, and reasoning to find creative effective solutions that will be faced on any battlefield became the purpose. Critical thinking, imagination, and design were adopted and encouraged.¹²⁴ This was supported by FM 3-24’s constant theme of “the side that learns faster and adapts more rapidly – the better learning organization – usually wins.”¹²⁵ It also provided a capability that would be useful in the next conflict rather myopically focusing on the current fight.

It must be noted here that problem solving has always been present within the curriculum of the Leavenworth courses. At the turn of the last century, COL Arthur L. Wagner wrote to the commandant of Leavenworth in 1903 stating the solving of “practical military problems” was one of the primary purposes of the course.¹²⁶ The curriculum during both the inter-war years and World War II focused on getting officers to think and find solutions in a methodical manner. Military history and tactical case studies provided information and *kriegspiels* and “map problems” were the testing ground for a student’s ability to apply lessons and defend his actions.¹²⁷ The variation here comes from the types of problems focused on based on the realities of battlefields the army faced. Beyond the normal military problems of seizing terrain or

¹²⁴ CGSC Circular 350-1 US Army Command and General Staff College, November 2005, 4; CGSOC CC Academic Year 2005 Syllabus. The author acknowledges this source could easily be seen as propaganda and is not scientific in the way it presents data.

¹²⁵ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, ix.

¹²⁶ Brerton, *Educating the U.S. Army*, 103-104.

¹²⁷ Phillip C. Cockrell, “Brown Shoes and Mortar Boards: US Army Officer Professional Education at the Command and General Staff School Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1919-1940” (PhD diss., University of South Carolina, 1991), 360-362; Schifferle, *America’s School for War*, 108-109.

identifying logistics requirements, the challenge of counterinsurgency introduced problems such as integrating civilian and military activities and development of basic services and economic opportunity to increase popular support.¹²⁸ These were situations the course at Leavenworth had not included during instruction or map problems.

In comparison to the Command and General Staff Officer Course mission and goals from 2001 where learning and critical and/or creative thinking are not mentioned, the 2005 and 2012 course goals list learning and/or critical thinking three separate times.¹²⁹ Defined as a deliberate cognitive process that serves higher-level tasks such as decision making in a the examination of a problem, emphasis on critical thinking from the highest levels was pushed down to ensure its inclusion in officer education.¹³⁰ Then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, issued a directive that stressed the importance of “education [that] fosters breadth of view, diverse perspectives and critical analysis, abstract reasoning, comfort with ambiguity and uncertainty, and innovative thinking, particularly with respect to complex, non-linear problems.”¹³¹ Lieutenant General David Petraeus, the Command and General Staff College Commandant from 2005-2007 and co-author of FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*, appears to have been a significant proponent of increasing critical thinking within the curriculum. Critical thinking and an emphasis on education

¹²⁸ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-1.

¹²⁹ CGSC Circular 351-1 Academic Year 2000-2001, 3-1; CGSC Circular 350-1, November 2005, 33-34; CGSC Circular 350-1, January 2012, 31-32.

¹³⁰ Susan C. Fischer and V. Alan Spiker, *Critical Thinking Training for Army Officers, Vol. One: Overview of Research Program* (Alexandria, VA: US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2004), 12.

¹³¹ Department of Defense, *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction, CJCSI 1800.01C 22 December 2005, Officer Professional Military Education Policy* (2005), A-1, A-2, accessed March 1, 2016 at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/opmep/cjcsi1800_01c-cancelled.pdf.

are repeatedly included in Petraeus' Command and General Staff College (CGSC) vision, philosophy, and curriculum.¹³²

Emphasis on teaching critical thinking skills to junior field grade officers continued to increase throughout the conflicts. In 2007, students received six hours of education and training. In 2009 and 2012, this increased to eight and ten hours respectively.¹³³ The CGSC Catalog for 2016 shows each student receives twenty-five hours of critical and creative thought training across seven lessons in the initial "Foundations" block of the course. The adaptation of including this capability into the current curriculum and synthesizing critical thinking into the traditional command and general staff course focus on employing command and staff procedures within divisions, corps, and armies highlights why the command and general staff course has consistently been the core of Army officer education.

One question brought forth by the sudden increase in hours devoted to critical thinking is brought forth by James N. Rosenau and Moritmer Adler. In each of their respective articles, they consider the ability to learn and teach creative thinking. While both admit that developing the human mind's ability to think is critical, both doubt the effectiveness of specially devised programs to increase or enhance critical thinking separated from other education. Alder argues that quality education should include discussion and interaction between students and teachers alike and that the discussion must involve thinking because creative thinking comes from making and defending arguments, examining and questioning evidence, and weighing presuppositions and implications.¹³⁴ This model is notably familiar from the previous discussion on the

¹³² CGSC Circular 350-1, November 2005, 1-6.

¹³³ Command and General Staff School, Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) Academic Year 2009-2010 Course Map (2009); CGSC Circular 350-1, January 2012, 54.

¹³⁴ Moritmer Adler, "Critical Thinking Programs: Why They Won't Work."

applicatory method. So can it be taught? Rosenau states his doubts as well, but claims that “for all the difficulties it entails,” it is worth the effort.¹³⁵

The command and general staff course also adapted to the requirement for an increase in the number of officers trained. Just as the AEF’s school at Langres was created to meet the demand for officers in general staff processes and the course at Leavenworth was shortened and class size expanded to meet the needs of the force for World War II, Leavenworth adjusted to the US Army policy that all majors will attend the command and general staff course.¹³⁶ Implemented in 2005, the Leavenworth ran two concurrent courses for 1,057 students (a summer and winter class) and increased instructors to 226. These numbers had increased to 1,439 students and 373 faculty members by the 2010-2011 academic year.¹³⁷

Study and analysis of the successes of operations in Panama and Desert Storm and the political environment of the 1990s resulted in the US Army adjusting to a joint environment as a power projection force.¹³⁸ The commanders and staff officers who filled the ranks of the US Army formations during the initial responses to the attacks on the United States took these lessons from their days at Leavenworth and applied them with vigor. Following the early successes in Afghanistan and Iraq, the command and staff course once again adapted to the new realities faced on the battlefield. Curriculum was modified to increase officer effectiveness in the fluid and ambiguous environment that is counterinsurgency by striving to enhance problem solving skills by teaching officers how to use experience, judgment, and reason to find creative effective solutions. The size of the two conflicts again resulted in the US Army looking to

¹³⁵ James N. Rosenau, “Thinking Theory Thoroughly” in *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (London: Francis Pinter, 1980), 37.

¹³⁶ Schifferle, *America’s School for War*, 11, 152.

¹³⁷ James D. Sisemore, “Fort Leavenworth and its Education Legacy; Recommendations for ILE” (Masters monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2012), 59-60.

¹³⁸ US Department of the Army, *Posture of the United States Army: FY 1997*, x.

Leavenworth to create more officers trained in the general staff skills that have increased effectiveness for over a century. It adapted and answered the call.

Conclusion

In no other army is it so imperative that the officers of the permanent establishment be highly perfected specialists, prepared to serve and instructors and leaders for the citizen forces which are to fight our wars. The one-time role of a Regular Army officer has passed with the Indian Campaigns and the acquirement of colonial possessions. Our mission today is definite, yet so broad that few, if any, have been able to grasp the possibilities of the new fields opened up by the military policy now on the statute books...There are officers, fortunately in constantly diminishing numbers, who cannot turn their minds from concentration on a diminutive regular army, successfully, and gallantly fighting the country's battles as in Cuba and the Philippines, or serving at isolated stations along the Mexican border. Those days have not entirely passed away, and probably never will pass, but they are now of secondary importance in the general scheme of National Defense.

—General John Pershing

General John Pershing understood in 1923 the US Army would never return to the pre-World War I force that had been focused on small campaigns and territorial control in the service of a government focused on isolation. The US Army's senior leaders were cognizant of the impact Leavenworth men had made within the AEF and the officer corps had realized the importance and value of professional military education. For over a century, Fort Leavenworth has been tasked to increase officer professionalism and effectiveness through structured staff officer education to increase the US Army's effectiveness in employing divisions and corps to win the nation's wars.¹³⁹ Its effectiveness in accomplishing this mission over time is partially due to adaptation.

Adaptation leads to improvement within a measure of success.¹⁴⁰ It is critical within a military context because it is required for survival and even victory within warfare. It is also

¹³⁹ Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools*, 137; Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle*, 442-444.

¹⁴⁰ Axelrod, *Harnessing Complexity*, 7.

critical because any military institution must conduct warfare with the political motives and objective of the war in mind.¹⁴¹ Because both the political environment and the battlefield are everchanging, the US Army must remain adaptive. Inspection of the US Army's adaptation based on the education of the its General Staff Courses across four different time periods through Schön's theory of reflection *on* action and reflection *in* action provides insight to the importance of and necessity for adaptation through both types of reflection.

Reflection *in* action is reactionary by nature. It is form of triage and most often results in a solution that is "good enough" to deal with the current situation through a rapid adaptation to buy time for additional reflection. Reflection *in* action resulted in both the establishment of the course at Langres and the significant modifications to the Petraeus course. It must be noted that reflection *in* action always occurs after the "surprise" has presented itself. In both of these cases, the US Army found itself with no time, but forced to experiment in search of a solution.

Pershing knew his force would reach at least one million men and needed capable general staff officers immediately.¹⁴² To change his current situation, Pershing directed the establishment of Langres Course to replicate as much of a Leavenworth education as possible as quickly as was feasible. The balance between depth of knowledge and time resulted in general staff officers trained on one specific staff function in one specific type of environment.¹⁴³ During its short existence Langres graduated four classes. None of the classes had the same curriculum. However, the graduates did provide significant contribution to the AEF's effectiveness in the war.

Aware of the growing crisis in Iraq, US forces began to experiment to find solutions. The Command and General Staff Officer Course looked to include additional counterinsurgency instruction and increase focus on critical thinking. The effects these subjects would have on the

¹⁴¹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 88, 605.

¹⁴² Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, 95.

¹⁴³ Johnson, "Focused and Broad in World War I," 53.

battlefield was unknown when they were implemented, but the course worked to adapt to the needs of the force and provide officers who could think critically in a non-linear fight against a non-combined arms maneuver enemy.

Denied the opportunity of time and peace to reflect *on* the situation in both cases, the organization had to reflect *in* action to adapt and survive the situation it was in. The experimentation and triage resulted in adaptations that provided short term solutions and allowed the US Army to survive the current fight, but resulted in minimal long-term solutions. As solutions neither, Langres or the modifications of the Petraeus Course were long lived. However, both provided a significant knowledge point for successive Command and General Staff Officer Courses.

Reflection *on* action is often easier than reflection *in* action. Time is always critical in reflection. But unlike reflection *in* action, time is available during reflection *on* action. The US Army had time during the inter-war years and spent it wisely reflecting on both the lessons of the Great War and how to apply those lessons in a future conflict. The Cold War provided the US Army time to reflect during the 1970s and 1980s as technology changed and the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict provided harsh and important lessons learned about the lethality and speed of the modern battlefield.

These cases and the long term impact on how the US Army fights the nation's wars. The US Army's effectiveness in fighting those wars shows the importance of adaptation within the Command and General Staff Officer Course. These impacts on the US Army and the Command and General Staff Officer Course seem to come from two critical areas of focus: a realistic and accurate anticipated future and a clearly identifiable core mission.

The inter-war course was focused on creating professional general staff officers who understood how to employ divisions and corps. The officer corps believed it would face Germany again and their anticipated future battlefield proved extremely accurate. As a result, the officer corps was prepared when World War II began. Overlaying the lessons of the 1973 Arab-Israeli

War upon the USSR and Europe, gave the US Army a clear and realistic anticipated future battlefield. It resulted in the creation and implementation of Air-Land Battle and the Command and General Staff Officer Course adapted. Beyond simply adjusting the curriculum to the new doctrine, the emergence of the School of Advanced Military Studies resulted in filling a operational gap in higher level planning and operations.

The core mission during these time periods was no different than it had been when Secretary of War Elihu Root reopened the schools at Fort Leavenworth in 1902: increase officer effectiveness through structured staff officer education to increase the US Army's effectiveness in employing divisions and corps to win the nation's wars.¹⁴⁴ During both the inter-war course and the Cold War course, focus on winning wars and staff functions at the division level were stressed. Ensuring this core focus remains at the core is critical because the continual theme from Pershing in France to Casey in Iraq is the need for general staff officers grounded in the fundamentals of history and doctrine with the ability to think and apply US Army forces effectively and appropriately.

Recommendations

The examination of the Command and General Staff Officer Course in varied periods of the past century provides lessons applicable to current and future general staff officer education. The curriculum should constantly be inspected to ensure it retains focus on the courses mission: to educate and train field grade leaders to serve as staff officers and commander with the ability to build teams, lead organizations, and integrate Unified Land Operations with Joint, Interagency,

¹⁴⁴ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978), 137; Fredrick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle: the Meuse-Argonne* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919), 442-444.

Intergovernmental, and Multi-national partners in complex and uncertain environments.¹⁴⁵ The Command and General Staff College currently maintains three accreditations. The Higher Learning Commission accredits CGSC to grant the Master of Military Art and Science degree to eligible Command and General Staff Officer Course graduates. The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff accredits CGSC to award Joint Professional Military Education Phase I to graduates of the Command and General Staff Officer Course. TRADOC accredits CGSC to teach the Army Primary Military Education and award Military Education Level 4 (MEL 4) to all CGSC graduates.¹⁴⁶ While the value of education can never be argued, Fort Leavenworth can not allow the requirement for accreditation processes degrade the focus of educating and training officers to fight the wars of the future as effective members of general staffs and commanders at the division and higher levels.

The CGSC Commandant should have increased ability to adjust and manipulate the curriculum in a rapid manner. The current system is overly bureaucratic making adaptation slow and inefficient. The Commandants of the inter-war years had significantly more control, if not total, to inject change as required by environmental changes. This is not to say there should not be some form of check and balance. A monitoring process must exist within the system to prevent a mistake such as the course saw in the late 1950s in reaction to the atomic battlefield, but that process should allow the Commandant significant leeway to respond quickly to a surprise in national policy or a future conflict.

In order to allow the US Army the ability to better identify and anticipate various futures regarding political and operational environments, the officer corps should be introduced to the study of design. The Army Design Methodology is captured in doctrine, but an important area of

¹⁴⁵ US Army Command and General Staff College, *CGSC Circular 350-1, US Army Command and General Staff College Catalog* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: 2016), 7-11.

¹⁴⁶ *CGSC Circular 350-1 (2016)*, Ch. 6.

future study is how to increase its understanding and increase its inclusion within the Command and General Staff Course without mitigating the essence of design to templates and checklists. Having the ability to reflect on various futures while considering lessons from the past can only increase the effectiveness of the US Army officer corps and the soldiers they lead.

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