

# JFQ



**Transforming  
the Air Force**

**Joint Special  
Operations**

**NATO, Europe,  
and Beyond...**

**The Trouble  
with Strategy**

**Conflict  
Termination**

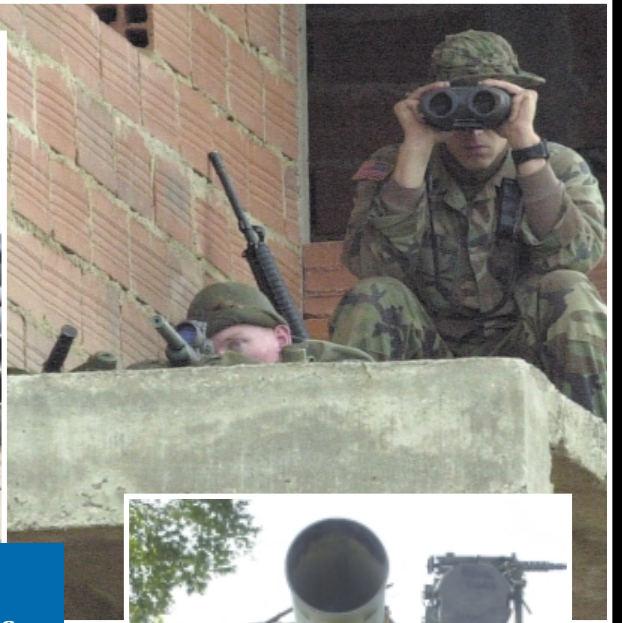
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*Winter*

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*Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction that is inconceivable unless one has experienced war.*

—Carl von Clausewitz



## A Word from the



Occupying forward base, Southern Afghanistan.

15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (Joseph R. Chenelly)

**D**uring my tenure as Chairman, I intend to use these pages in each issue of *JFQ* to explain my vision, the actions we need to take to improve jointness, and our progress in preparing the force to meet the challenges of the future. With that in mind, I want to begin by addressing my priorities: winning the global war on terrorism, enhancing joint warfighting capabilities, and transforming the Armed Forces. Achieving these goals demands that we challenge and redefine the intellectual foundations of existing operational concepts.

The war on terrorism is the most significant mission the military has faced during my years of service. With the assault of September 11 and others over the past several years, the al Qaeda network

and other terrorist groups have shown their willingness to attack the United States and its freedoms directly—and those of all civilized nations.

Our international partners in this fight are prepared to do what they can. Coalition members have participated through a variety of means, from providing intelligence and humanitarian assistance to contributing logistical support for combat troops. Some can do more than others and some help has been covert; but it has been a true coalition effort, and we are grateful for such widespread participation.

The fight in Afghanistan is just the beginning of a long campaign. Even as the United States is

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The cover of this issue shows F-22 undergoing test (Lockheed Martin/Judson Brohmer). The front inside cover features [clockwise from top left] KC-135 on flight line at Istres, France (31<sup>st</sup> Communications Squadron/Dave Ahlschwede); sniper and spotter, Joint Guardian (55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company/Martin J. Cervantez); watching Kosovo-Macedonia border (55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company/Vincent A. King); and firing 25mm machine gun aboard USS *McFaul* (U.S. Navy/Martin Maddock). The table of contents depicts Task Force Falcon color guard, Kosovo (55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company/Jessie L. Gray), and American troops moving in Burma during World War II (U.S. Army). The back inside cover captures USS *Winston S. Churchill* plying

the English Channel (U.S. Navy/Shane McCoy). The back cover finds soldiers on training exercise, Cabanas '01 (55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company/James P. Johnson); USS *Los Angeles* entering Apra Harbor, Guam (U.S. Navy/Alan D. Monyelle); live fire training at Shoalwater Bay, Australia (U.S. Navy/Jennifer A. Smith); and C-5 at Moron air base, Spain (786<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron/Pamela J. Farlin).

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**Joint Force Quarterly**

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(continued from page 1)

only one partner in the global coalition, the Armed Forces are only part of a much larger effort that encompasses all the instruments of national power. While the shooting war may capture the most attention, campaigns waged through the international banking system and diplomatic channels are just as vital. And most important are efforts to ensure homeland security.

The Department of Defense is part of a total interagency effort. The military plays a crucial supporting role on the home front, providing National Guardsmen to bolster airport security, protect critical infrastructure, fly combat air patrols, and assist state and local authorities in consequence management. Coordinating the interagency effort is analogous to joint warfighting. Just as a joint effort integrates the capabilities of all the services, an interagency effort must integrate all the tools at the government's disposal.

As the President and Secretary of Defense have pointed out, this is a new kind of war, and we must adapt to new circumstances. Our enemies are determined and have shown extraordinary patience through years of training and planning. They have crossed a significant threshold by using weapons of mass destruction. And they have been intellectually agile in searching out and attacking our weaknesses. Their use of civilian airliners to kill thousands of noncombatants illustrates the degree to which they think and act asymmetrically. They are thoughtful and adaptive. We must rely on a similar intellectual agility to understand new threats, anticipate unorthodox attacks, and seize the initiative to set the conditions for action—forcing terrorists to react to us.

The capabilities of the joint force form the foundation of operational agility and thus are key to victory in this war and in future conflicts. It is therefore imperative to improve joint warfighting capabilities. In accordance with their Title 10 responsibilities, the individual services provide forces for the fight. One matter I must facilitate is focusing their efforts—to maximize their capabilities and effects—without regard for the color of the uniforms involved. Jointness brings the core competencies of the services together in a way that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

Though jointness has improved markedly since the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, there is still much to do. For example, we must eliminate gaps and seams between the needs of CINCs and forces provided by the services. Shortfalls are often deficiencies in command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C<sup>4</sup>ISR)—the area where we are *least* agile. Improvement will require not only technological solutions, but also cultural change—a willingness to challenge standard practices and



305th Communications Squadron (Carlos Cintron)

question current organizational patterns and command processes. Jointness is a product of many factors, but its keystone is command and control. This issue is one of my top concerns.

Another area that will have my continued attention is interoperability. The force must have systems that are born joint—conceived, designed, and fielded with jointness in mind. But

**the joint force must have systems that are born joint**

improving interoperability goes beyond the technical aspects of ensuring that all the black boxes can exchange data. It is also critical to develop intellectual interoperability. Although we have made tremendous progress since I was a junior officer, continued improvement requires cultural change. Our military education system needs to promote an understanding of the strengths of all the services, an appreciation of their differences, and a commitment to the joint team. I expect leaders to be well grounded in the core competencies of their

respective services and bring that expertise to the joint fight. At the same time, we need to grow leaders who think in terms of joint capabilities, not service-specific weapons. Doctrine, organization, and training must therefore be focused not only on developing service expertise but also on creating experts in melding service capabilities.

Interoperability is essential to maximum effectiveness. We must think in terms of interchangeable modules that may be as simple as individual components (computers, radios, hydraulic pumps) or as complex as multiservice, networked C<sup>4</sup>ISR assets. Or they may be planning tools, processes, and organizations that are standardized across combatant commands. The goal is interoperable modules that *plug and play* in any situation. If we develop compatible information-gathering systems and enhanced knowledge management tools, joint force commanders will have the data they need when they need it. That means we will have the agility to respond rapidly to surprises and operate inside the decision loop of even the most capable foe, allowing us to win quickly and on our terms.

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U.S. Air Force (Terry Moultrup)

F-16 over New York City, September 12.



The Pentagon, September 11.

U.S. Marine Corps (Jason Ingersoll)

To ensure that the force retains its agility, another high priority must be transformation—an intellectual process that capitalizes on both existing and emerging technologies and concepts. Transformation requires a clear assessment of the security environment, an understanding of national strategy, and the development of supporting military strategy and appropriate capabilities. These are the foundation for service modernization and joint experimentation.

Transformation is often seen in terms of technological change. Intellectual change is necessary as well. Without intellectual adaptation, we simply apply new technologies to old ideas. Transformation must therefore extend beyond new weapon systems and matériel to doctrine, organization, training, education, leadership, personnel, and facilities. This is no simple task in an organization as large as the Armed Forces but such cultural change will enable us to take best advantage of new ideas and technologies.

Given these priorities as guidelines, my intent can be stated quite simply—to maintain the military superiority of the Armed Forces. That is the collective purpose of the Joint Chiefs. In fulfilling it, we provide forces to the CINCs so they can achieve the objectives outlined in the 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review*—to defend the homeland, assure allies, deter threats, and defend against and decisively defeat adversaries. Fulfillment of our purpose ensures that we are able to fight and win the Nation's wars and accomplish

Missile launching,  
USS John Paul Jones.



U.S. Navy (Ted Banks)

any other missions assigned by the President or Secretary of Defense.

Our ultimate goal must be to provide a capabilities-based military. This force must possess organizational agility based on superior knowledge and decisions and the ability to be task-organized to achieve desired effects in rapid, decisive operations. The Afghan campaign illustrates this idea. The use of the aircraft carrier *USS Kitty Hawk* to transport and serve as a base for Special Operations Forces is a perfect example of

organizing and employing joint forces based on the capabilities best suited for the mission.

Employment methods for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) is another example. UAVs have had a significant impact on rapidly expanding our theater C<sup>4</sup>ISR capabilities. That advantage is now being extended to strike operations. Fusing the ability to see and strike through interconnected systems, while at the same time reducing the vulnerability of operators, portends momentous changes in the nature of warfare. On the other hand, the complex task of extracting the Taliban and al Qaeda forces from difficult terrain and cave hideouts illustrates how much farther we need to progress in our ability to fuse knowledge, decisions, and action into a seamless combat process.

**our ultimate goal must be to provide a capabilities-based military**

Future forces will not necessarily be bigger or smaller than today's, but they will be better. We will strive to reach this goal by continuing to improve interoperability on the operational and strategic levels. My job is to provide the right tools, equipment, and knowledge to our joint commanders so they can put the right force in the right place at the right time.

I will elaborate on the ideas introduced here in future columns. And I look forward to reading and hearing *your* ideas on war winning, jointness, and transformation. We face a grave responsibility and have the privilege of serving our country at a time when we are most needed.

The Nation is threatened in a way never seen in its history. Defeating the threat will require the efforts of *every* member of *every* service. I know I can count on you. Throughout my career—through the ebb and flow of changing national policies, through expansion and contraction of our forces, and through peace and war—the one constant has been the professionalism, devotion, and sacrifice of soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and coastguardsmen and the DOD civilians who support them. Like your predecessors, your performance in today's war has been magnificent. As General Omar Bradley said, "Our military forces are one team—in the game to win regardless of who carries the ball. . . . Each player on this team—whether he shines in the spotlight of the backfield or eats dirt in the line—must be All-American." I know that each of you is an All-American, and I have great confidence in our joint team. Together we cannot fail.

RICHARD B. MYERS  
Chairman  
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

## Letters . . .

### LOST IN SPACE

To the Editor—Should space be a theater of conflict or simply a conduit of information? In “Space and the Theater Commander’s War” (*JFQ*, Winter 00–01), Thomas Doyle sidesteps that issue in arguing that “spacepower must be incorporated into campaign planning and conduct.” But his proposal that the director of space and information should be part of the joint operations center or under the joint force air component Aerospace Operations Center amounts to a decision that we expect to conduct space-to-space conflict.

Doyle delicately points out that every head of U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM) “since the mid-1990s has championed the idea of spacepower as a center of gravity, yet many planners have difficulty treating it as vital because space systems do not shoot bullets or drop bombs.” The problem with declaring spacepower as a center of gravity is that it represents no one’s center of gravity except our own. The argument that it is necessary to make doctrinal and organizational changes to attain “victory over space-savvy enemies” is weakened by the fact that, in comparison to U.S. dependence on space systems, there are no “space-savvy enemies.” Cooperation with NASA keeps the Russian space program afloat. Other potential antagonists do not have elaborate space architectures but employ commercial systems. Does anyone seriously believe that non-state commercial space companies would provide information to a regime conducting a war

against the United States—the nation that is the world’s greatest market for information? SPACECOM has argued such, but they have a bit of a parochial interest in demonstrating that they are a real warfighting command. Given the U.S. position in the world economy, the powers of the Security and Exchange Commission, Internal Revenue Service, and other agencies have considerable deterrent effect on potential trading with an enemy—even by supposedly multinational corporations.

It may be that we will need to conduct anti-satellite operations in order to blind future anti-access or area denial strategies designed to keep U.S. forces out of a region of conflict. A modest ground- or air-based antisatellite capability—along the lines of that developed and stored during the Cold War—should be retained both as insurance and a deterrent. Hardening satellites and enhancing our capacity for replacing them are also prudent steps. But my research indicates that two-way space-to-space conflict is unlikely in the next twenty-five years, and—given current conditions—it is better to continue to dissuade the development of space combat systems through deterrence and diplomacy than reorganize and plan to conduct war in space. The current space capabilities of potential enemies can be neutralized best by strikes against control facilities on the ground.

One of my fears about a comprehensive, essentially independent-minded spacepower doctrine is the potential for space capabilities to become separated from joint warfighting. If SPACECOM focuses on fighting the war in space rather than on

supporting the information needs of the CINCs, close space support might go the way of close air support—something the services are still convinced they must do by themselves.

—Captain Sam J. Tangredi, USN  
Institute for National Strategic Studies  
National Defense University

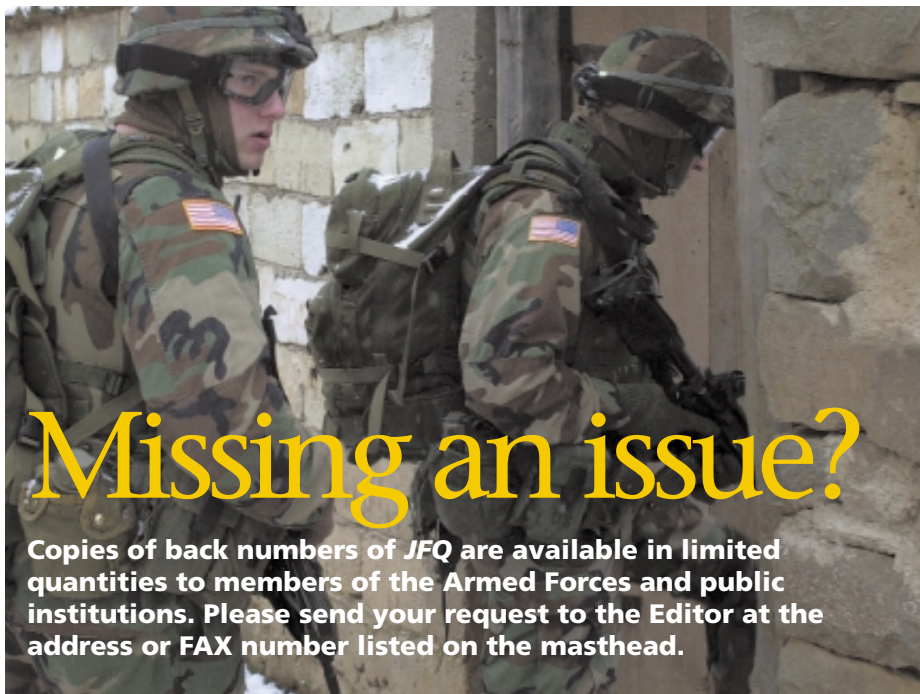
### CONTAINMENT POST 9/11

To the Editor—With the events of September 11 fresh in our minds, the distinction made between containment and deterrence by Paul K. White in “Airpower and a Decade of Containment” (*JFQ*, Winter 00–01) seems all the more important. Containment is possible in the case of Saddam Hussein because the United States and its allies maintain the initiative and are able to take the fight to the adversary. Deterrence, White rightly points out, is another thing entirely. The initiative is in the hands of an enemy, who can choose to suffer the consequences if it acts but cannot be prevented from deciding to act. Saddam is deterred so long as the United States is actively engaged in keeping him in the box. Containment may not be able to remove the threat he poses, but it can neutralize it.

The United States is currently able to contain Iraq because of its overwhelming superiority in aerospace power. That superiority will not last forever. Baghdad is acquiring new capabilities in an attempt to defeat our strategy, recently downing two unmanned Predator surveillance vehicles. The failure to modernize our forces by acquiring new capabilities such as the F–22 and joint strike fighter, space-based radar, and unnamed aerial vehicles as well as improving the strategic bomber force and upgrading electronic warfare systems, including the venerable EA–6B, will eventually compel the United States to abandon its containment strategy. More important, it will weaken the U.S. deterrent and make the next war both more difficult and costly.

These same capabilities will be critical in the war on terrorism. The perpetrators of the September 11 atrocities should have been deterred by our overwhelming superiority in military, intelligence, and police/security capabilities. They were not. We can no longer rely on deterrence to protect us against the new threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Containment means carrying the fight to the enemy. We may soon be required to act again against not only terrorist networks but against the countries that support them. To prosecute this new kind of war, we will need the greatest advantage in aerospace power we can achieve.

—Daniel Gouré  
Lexington Institute



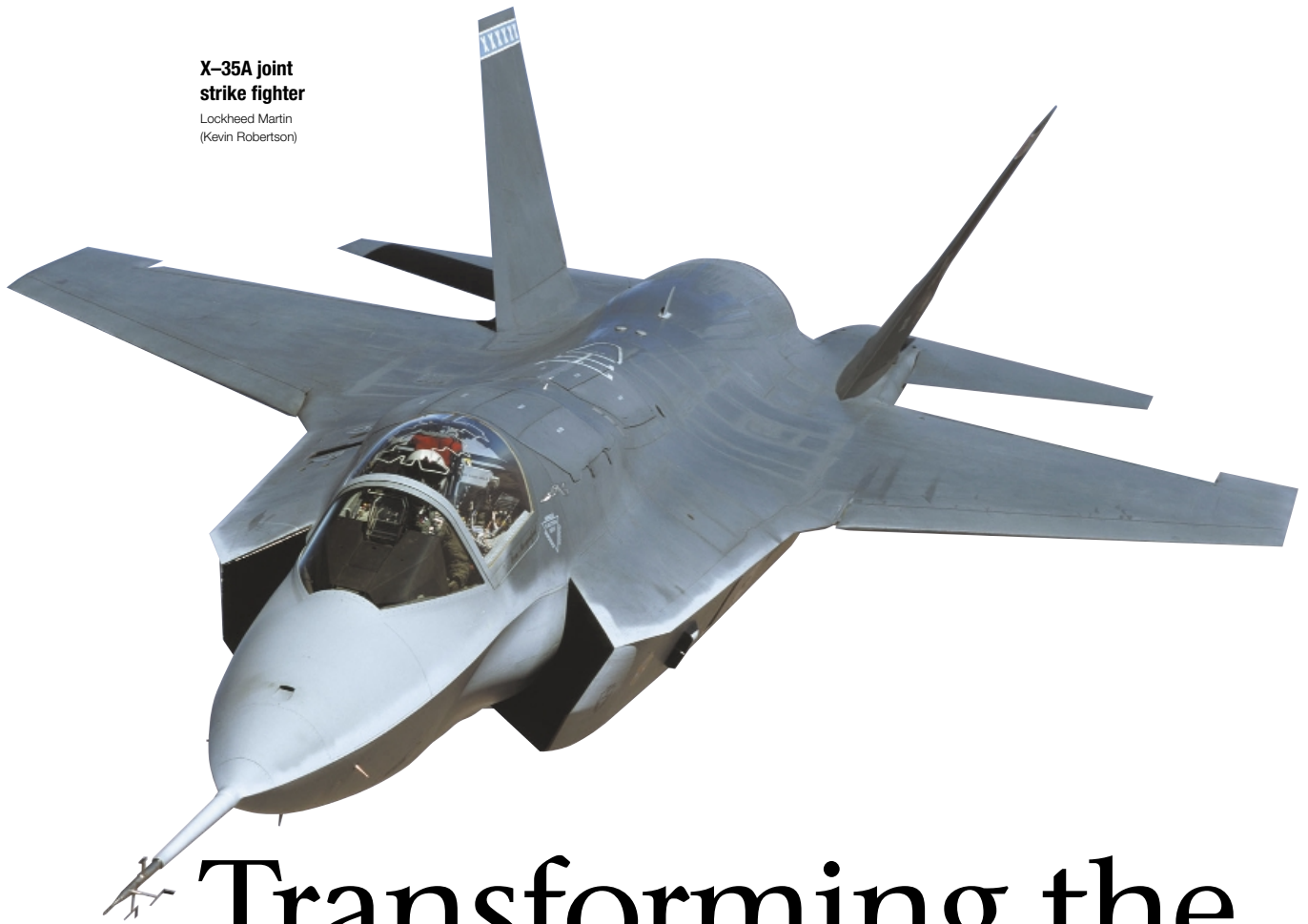
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**X-35A joint  
strike fighter**

Lockheed Martin  
(Kevin Robertson)



# Transforming the Air Force

By JAMES G. ROCHE

**A**s America continues to prosecute its first war of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is useful to recall that the Air Force was born in wartime and bred for joint operations. Today, along with the other services, it is engaged in a determined effort to adapt to a new era. The current campaign against global terrorism is providing critical lessons about the application of airpower and spacepower. It is important to get those lessons right, be agile, and build on the strengths of the past without being tied to past glories.

---

**The Honorable James G. Roche is the 20<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Air Force; a retired naval surface warfare officer, he previously served as President, Electronic Sensors and Systems Sector, Northrop Grumman Corporation.**

Every day the Air Force continues to fly, launch, orbit, track, communicate, secure, refuel, transport, and support national interests around and above the globe. And while it is busy meeting the current needs of unified commands, it is applying new operational concepts and information technologies to maintain dominance in air and space. From precise, long-range strikes and humanitarian missions in Afghanistan, to persistent surveillance over Iraq and the Balkans, to contributing to homeland security, the service is working to identify the demands that will transform future roles, missions, and strategic priorities.

Although the service is committed to a transformational path, challenges remain. Considering the number of aircraft and airmen devoted to



1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Scott Pleed)

**the Air Force is accelerating its commitment to expanding global reconnaissance and strike capabilities**

homeland security, along with the forces deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Enduring Freedom, the Air Force is supporting the equivalent of operations in two simultaneous major theaters of war. At the same time, maintenance of aging systems and quality of life and work initiatives for personnel compete with modernization requirements. Their cost is compounded by unprecedented requirements for air and space forces at a time when legacy systems are nearing the end of their life cycles. Still, the future demands that the service meet the President's mandate to renew and rebuild warfighting concepts, organizational constructs, and force structure.

**Enduring Freedom**

The Air Force has always evolved along with a changing environment and advancing technology. American forces with Afghan and coalition partners have recently routed a well-dug-in enemy on one of the world's least accessible battlefields. Enduring Freedom combined the best forces, regardless of service, in previously untried ways. Navy and Air Force pilots, with Army and

Air Force Special Operations Forces personnel, invented new tactics that improved munitions accuracy and increased the flow of targeting data to strike aircraft. They demonstrated how U.S. forces are working more closely together than ever before, from refueling, to combat search and rescue, to joint targeting.

Enduring Freedom is only the most recent example of Air Force commitment to joint operations. The key to that contribution was the continuous integration of air and space capabilities enhanced by rapid advances in information technology. Whether dropping rations to starving civilians or precision-guided bombs on Taliban tunnels, the service worked with land and naval forces to achieve planned effects. As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld declared, "It's a cooperative effort."

Beyond current operational demands, the Air Force is accelerating its commitment to expanding global reconnaissance and strike capabilities. Thus it is placing special emphasis on providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) to joint operations. Additionally, it is pursuing the horizontal integration of manned, unmanned, and space platforms to reduce time in the find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess decision cycle.

During Enduring Freedom, a variety of strike platforms aided by air and space reconnaissance assets, in concert with Special Operations Forces

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Cecilio M. Ricardo, Jr.)

**MH-53 emerging  
from C-17,  
Enduring Freedom.**

and intelligence support, repeatedly struck at the heart of the Taliban and al Qaeda network. Among the greatest U.S. asymmetric advantages proved to be the ability to strike quickly from great distances with precision weapons, rapidly stand up a global air bridge, and persistently reconnoiter emerging targets.

While just a decade ago only 3.5 percent of the bombs dropped during Desert Storm were precision-guided, that figure is 60 percent for the Afghan air campaign. This increase in lethality and efficiency is the cumulative result of many initiatives that have also advanced joint interoperability. Comparatively few Navy and Air Force strike aircraft could employ precision munitions ten years ago; now nearly all can. During Desert Storm, the daily schedule of bombing strikes—the air tasking order—had to be physically flown out to aircraft carriers. Today the order can be sent anywhere in the world, including naval ships, in a matter of minutes via satellite—accompanied with additional gigabytes of precision targeting imagery. Advanced laser targeting pods on F-16s and F-18s are enabling pilots to automatically strike any target located by ground forces or other

airborne assets such as the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

One of the most important and challenging transformational efforts is the horizontal integration of command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C<sup>4</sup>ISR) assets. This synthesis includes the conversion of raw information from different platforms into targeting data for operators and information for commanders. For example, various platforms in Afghanistan, such as the Global Hawk and Predator UAVs, RC-135 and U-2 reconnaissance aircraft, E-8Cs, Navy E-2s and P-3s, and space assets, were linked to resolve ambiguities over target location and identification. This permitted long-range strike platforms to receive updated data en route to the target area.

The array of weapons available to the force has also been expanded. Joint direct attack munitions (JDAMs) are so-called dumb bombs retrofitted with an electronic brain and fins for steering and are guided by signals from global positioning system satellites. These have enabled large-scale precision bombing. Available in limited numbers

192<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing (Michele Misano)

Guardsmen preparing for Noble Eagle.

just two years ago for Kosovo, to date they have constituted three quarters of the precision munitions dropped in Afghanistan. Unlike World War II tactics, with hundreds of bombers dropping thousands of bombs on a single strategic target, JDAMs allow the Air Force to use a single aircraft with only a few munitions to strike several targets with devastating results. And unlike air operations over Kosovo, friendly forces on the ground in Afghanistan have enabled us to employ these weapons to best effect by identifying targets and directing precision attacks.

### A Bigger Tool Box

While improvements in C<sup>4</sup>ISR and attack systems demonstrated their worth during Enduring Freedom, they remain only the foundation for dealing with future enemies. The security environment will continue to evolve and will be influenced by asymmetrical threats from both state

and nonstate actors. However, basing a strategy on threats alone would cause planners to miss the mark in posturing for tomorrow. Air Force planners are focusing on coupling accelerated technological advancements with new conceptions of the future battlespace. The

goal is to look past uncertain, dynamic needs. Threat-based strategies were suitable for the bipolar Cold War era but no longer offer the best framework for understanding the world. Instead, the Air Force must develop a capabilities-based force, identifying and refining future global reconnaissance and strike requirements even while continuing to evaluate how to best deal with immediate needs. Through this process, the service will define the terms on which future battles will

be fought and then organize, train, and equip forces accordingly—retaining strategic flexibility and averting strategic surprise.

By reorganizing as an expeditionary air and space force and through operational concepts like the Global Strike Task Force, the Air Force has used current systems to provide new capabilities for CINCs. The Global Strike Task Force, for example, leverages technology to create asymmetrical advantages on the macro level—providing a force that can ensure access for U.S. forces to remote theaters. As future operational concepts are identified and developed, the Air Force will move ever closer to maximizing its fundamental competencies—global reconnaissance and strike.

An essential component of future operational concepts will be air and space superiority, exploiting such capabilities as those provided by the F-22, an air-dominance fighter with substantial air-to-ground strike capabilities. Its stealth and supercruise will allow airmen to penetrate enemy battlespace regardless of attempts to deny access, enabling follow-on joint forces to operate with relative freedom. These leap-ahead capabilities will allow F-22s to defeat the most sophisticated surface-to-air missile systems under development. It will be able to loiter over the battlefield, responding quickly to mobile targets; and it will be better able to work with ground forces. The fighter also expands our overall precision strike capability by further enhancing legacy stealth systems, B-2s and F-117s, enabling them to conduct daylight strikes for the first time.

Just as precision munitions provide the joint warfighter a significant increase in lethality over Afghanistan, the small diameter bomb (SDB) under development will add new flexibility. This 250-pound weapon is projected to have a stand-off of 60 to 70 miles when employed at high altitude. This stand-off will dramatically increase aircraft survivability. Envisioned for use on both manned and unmanned systems, it will also provide joint warfighters a low-yield, precise weapon, thus lowering collateral damage. Perhaps its greatest benefit is that more of them can be carried on a given sortie, enabling fewer aircraft to hit more targets.

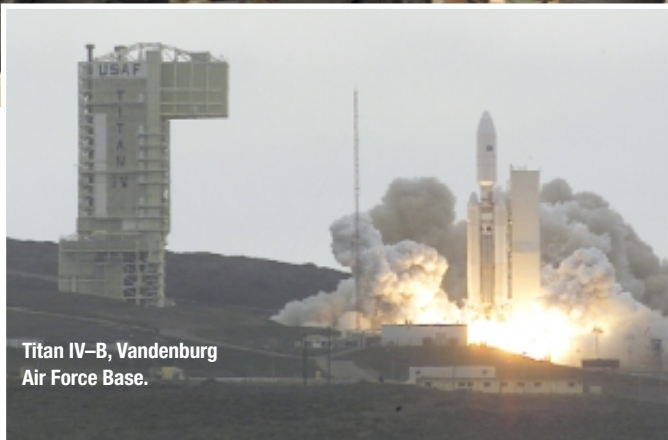
The Air Force also has a comprehensive plan to modernize current aircraft, which includes replacing legacy F-15s, F-16s, and A-10s with F-22s and joint strike fighters. C-17 procurement is bringing revolutionary strategic airlift capabilities to warfighters and the Air Force is pursuing a two-phased modernization approach for the C-5. Furthermore, the fleet of

**an essential component of future operational concepts will be air and space superiority**



786<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron (Heather Zokel)

Shifting humanitarian aid, Ramstein air base.



Titan IV-B, Vandenberg Air Force Base.

30<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron (Pamela Taubman)

**space systems are integrated into virtually every aspect of military operations**

707 tankers and C<sup>4</sup>ISR platforms must be replaced with a new class of aircraft to meet future commitments. Additionally, the Air Force is examining the potential of transforming single mission platforms into multi-mission assets. For example, the plan to replace the aging 707-based fleet includes the innovative idea of placing passive sensors or data links on future smart tankers.

**The Great Beyond**

As the DOD-designated executive agent for space, the Air Force is working with the other services and appropriate agencies to establish a comprehensive approach to national security space management and organization. This effort involves a cradle to grave process to design,

develop, acquire, and operate space systems. The Air Force is also leading the development of a national security space plan that for the first time will provide a comprehensive document that links both Department of Defense and intelligence community space-related requirements to budgeting, allowing for the detailed projection of future capabilities.

The Air Force is committed to improving the air and space capabilities it provides to joint warfighters. It is pursuing the investments needed to sharpen the teeth of long-range strike, surveillance, mobility, UAV, and space assets. The service is making critical investments to improve the capability of current weapon systems and at the same time bringing new capabilities to the fight. In direct support of the CINCs, it continues to modernize space forces to further enhance joint operations and the ability to monitor global activities. Several payloads have been launched into space in the past year, enhancing precision location and navigation, reliable and secure communications, and global surveillance and warning. Space systems are now integrated into virtually every aspect of military operations.

Modernization of the missile warning system is underway with the space based infrared radar system (SBIRS) comprising two programs referred to as SBIRS-high and SBIRS-low. The first



U.S. Air Force (Dustin A. Tyson)

Secretary Roche  
in Southwest Asia.

constellation, responsible for alerting officials of missile launches around the world, will consist of payloads in geosynchronous and highly elliptical orbits. The second, a constellation of near-Earth satellites, will track missiles in mid-course following booster separation. Both programs will share a common ground-based control and exploitation network. The first increment for SBIRS-high, the consolidation of existing defense support program sites into a single new state-of-the-art mission control station, has already occurred. The systems design review for the SBIRS-low component has also been completed. Although there are development issues that still require attention, this system remains essential to the defense of the Nation.

Preparation for the first launch of the new expendable launch vehicle in 2002 is on track. It will ensure reliable and cost-effective access to space well into the new century. It is anticipated that the vehicle will save up to 50 percent over legacy launch systems.

There is also progress in the space control area with the multi-year space surveillance network recapitalization effort. In another space control-related action, the Air Force has begun integrating potential enemy space capabilities into wargaming exercises, ensuring preparedness to react to attacks on space-related infrastructure.

In addition to developing the national security space plan, the Air Force is also leading the effort to conduct the first national security space program assessment, which will compare the plan to the current program objective memorandum and identify space-related recapitalization challenges over the five-year defense program for both the Department of Defense and the intelligence community.

The Air Force and National Reconnaissance Office, working together, have identified numerous best practices associated with the integration of space acquisition and operations processes. These procedures will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of space-related activities and facilitate the further integration of classified and unclassified space systems.

### Sound Fundamentals

The Air Force is embracing efficiency and innovation across the full spectrum of operations. In particular, it is determined to adapt acquisition policies and processes to ensure innovation and competitiveness. The service has begun a concerted effort to provide incentives for defense contractors, large and small, to become more efficient and innovative. Savings achieved through excellence can be reinvested in warfighting capabilities.

The most critical long-term challenge for the Armed Forces remains retaining skilled people. The Air Force is known for attracting and keeping the best individuals, both civilian and military, and caring for them and their families. A high-technology Air Force cannot operate without such people. For example, as it pioneers the increased integration of UAVs into operations, it must reexamine its force structure and ensure proper organization to not only effectively employ UAVs, but also provide career-rewarding experiences to those supporting such operations.

The events of the last few months have placed great demands on the total force—active, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and civilian. The new homeland security mission and the requirements of fighting a new kind of war require prudent measures to preserve combat capability. They call for highly trained, educated, and motivated personnel. Together with the other services, the Air Force is steadfast in developing a seamless military in which resources, effort, and strategic planning coalesce into truly unified capabilities.

While the Air Force will continue to exploit air and space to national advantage, new demands will alter how its people accomplish these missions. The service faces the dual challenges of engaging in war while fundamentally reshaping its warfighting capabilities. Yet this is not an insurmountable task. Protecting the United States from further attack while taking the fight to the enemy necessitates resolve and patience. Transforming the military requires creativity, ingenuity, and vision. America's airmen are equipped for both challenges. They remain guided by the words of one of their founders over half a century ago, General Henry ("Hap") Arnold: "It's got to be done and done quickly, so let's get it done." **JFQ**



# Joint Special Operations in Support of

# Earnest Will

By DAVID B. CRIST

**O**n the night of July 23, 1987, there was news of an unusual amount of naval activity around the small Iranian island of Farsi in the northern Persian Gulf. Rear Admiral Harold Bernsen, commander of Middle East Force, found the reports disquieting. The first convoy of Operation Earnest Will was due to arrive in a few hours. It consisted of two oil tankers accompanied by three naval warships. The next morning, twenty miles west of Farsi, Captain Frank Seitz of *SS Bridgetown* heard a sound like

“a 500-ton hammer hit us up forward.”<sup>1</sup> The ship had struck one of nine contact mines laid by the Iranian vessel *Sirjan* on the previous night. It blew an eight-and-a-half by ten-foot hole in the tanker, halting activity in the northern Gulf to the embarrassment of Washington.

The United States launched a unique effort in response, forming a joint special operations task force based aboard two converted oil barges. For more than a year this force engaged in a daily struggle with Iranian small boats and mine layers for control of the sealanes in the channelized area north of Bahrain. In every respect, this operation was a remarkable effort and a blueprint for crafting unconventional responses to unconventional threats.

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## The Tanker War

As the eight-year Iran-Iraq conflict stalemated, the countries began preying on each other's oil industries. Iran also began attacking shipping by Iraq's chief financial supporters, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Many early Iranian attacks were by fixed wing and helicopter, but spare parts shortages and operational losses virtually eliminated any credible air threat, forcing a change in strategy. Small boats, a combination of fast Swedish-built Boghammers and Boston



Iranian Boghammer.

Whaler-type craft manned by Revolutionary Guards, roamed the sealanes attacking shipping in September 1986. Armed with 107mm rockets, RPG-7s, and machine guns, this mosquito fleet rarely sank a ship but could inflict serious damage on tankers or their crews. Their favorite tactic was to approach a target, swarm around it, then rake its bridge and superstructure with automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades. Some 43

**helicopters and small boats could range over a wide area and were better equipped to deal with unconventional threats**

attacks included the sinking of the 42,000-ton bulk carrier *Norman Atlantic*. Mines, in conjunction with sea raids, added another deadly threat. Kuwait formally inquired about reflagging its oil tankers under the Stars and Stripes on December 23. Three months later the United States agreed to place 11 tankers under American registry and provide them with armed protection from Iranian attack.

Washington rushed additional assets to the region following the *SS Bridgetown* incident. But even countermine vessels were not enough. The dangers in the northern Persian Gulf were not a classic blue water threat. The shallow passages forced the shipping into a narrow corridor constricted by islands, shoals, and oil platforms, which provided concealment for hostile boats. Any vessel needed a shallow draft to avoid mines located 12–18 feet below the surface. Ships made tempting targets. This area was assigned to Iranian 2<sup>d</sup> Naval District in Bushehr, which used Farsi Island as a forward operating base. American warships were not designed or equipped to deal with the combination of small boat attacks and mines employed by the Iranians.

Middle East Force developed a plan that provided for constant patrolling to prevent attacks. Bernsen sent an outline of his concept of operations to General George Crist, USMC, Commander in Chief, Central Command, on August 6, 1987: "In my view, to be successful in the northern Gulf we must establish intensive patrol operations to prevent the Iranians from laying mines."<sup>2</sup> Rather than using regular naval vessels, he concluded, the area could be better patrolled by a mixture of helicopters and small boats, augmented by SEALs and marines. They could range over a wide area and were better equipped to deal with unconventional threats. These assets would also be far less expensive than additional warships.

Because of political sensitivities, neither Kuwait nor Saudi Arabia would grant U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) basing rights for combatants who might engage in offensive operations against Iran. Thus American forces required an operating base, ideally in the center of the patrol area, positioned astride the sealane and close to Farsi Island. Attention quickly focused on two oil platform construction barges, *Hercules* and *Wimbrown VII*, located at a shipyard in Bahrain and owned by Brown and Root. The company had extensive business dealings with the Kuwait Oil Company and agreed to lease the barges. Both were strong, compartmentalized, and surrounded by a floodable tank which would protect against a mine strike. They had large support facilities and helicopter flight decks. *Hercules* was immediately available. At 400 by 140 feet, it was one of the largest oil barges in the world. *Wimbrown VII*, 250 by 70 feet, required extensive repairs to be made habitable.

To guard the 100-mile stretch, each barge would be deployed to cover a 50-mile section, with their helicopters and patrol boats operating in a 25-mile radius. While patrol boats maintained a 24-hour presence, preventing penetration by small craft, helicopters would provide a quick reaction force as well as night surveillance. Each



Source: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, "Arabian Gulf Lessons Learned Report: April 1987" (1988), p. 11.

barge would have a mixture of patrol craft, including Vietnam-era riverine patrol boats (PBRs), Navy SEALs, and a Marine platoon. Should the Iranians directly challenge the barges, positions would be reinforced with metal plating and sandbags while the marines manned various weapons: 50 caliber machine-guns, MK-19 grenade launchers, a TOW missile, 81mm mortars, and Stinger missiles. With the addition of an explosive ordnance team and a Marine Corps radio reconnaissance linguistic and communication detachment, *Hercules* and *Wimbrown VII* would carry complements of 177 and 132, respectively.

Barges would be moved randomly every few days among the Saudi islands and oil platforms and have a layered defense. Helicopters would interdict any target out to 50 nautical miles while MK-III patrol boats covered the mid-distances and smaller Seafoxes and PBRs safeguarded for the first five miles. If all else failed, the Marine security force would man the decks with machine guns, rifles, and side arms.

### Stovepipes, Rice Bowls, and Home Turf

The mobile sea base concept was essentially complete by mid-August. The CENTCOM plan was forwarded to the Joint Chiefs for approval. The proposal touched off a storm of debate. Admiral Lee Baggot, Commander in Chief, Atlantic Command, argued along with the commanders of Sixth and Seventh Fleets that the bases would be lucrative targets for air and naval attacks. They had no effective air defense. Command and control would be impossible due to the hodgepodge of multiservice Special Operations Forces (SOF) on board. Some critics referred to these barges as floating "Beirut Barracks."

CENTCOM convened a conference to address the rising chorus of criticism and work out the details of essentially designing a ship from scratch. Representatives from 2<sup>d</sup> Marine Division, Mine Warfare Command, Naval Sea and Air Systems Commands, U.S. Atlantic and U.S. Pacific Commands, and the Joint Chiefs met on September 9–11 in Tampa. Every relevant operational issue was discussed—tactics, ammunition storage, barge defense, firefighting, damage control, and

electromagnetic concerns. Then there were bureaucratic worries. Food service areas had not passed a Navy health inspection. Moreover, a detailed certification program was needed to allow Marine pilots to land on the barges even though they were already carrier qualified. The conference did little to change the opinions of those opposed to the plan.

Bernsen countered that the critics failed to understand the threat in the northern Gulf. The Iranians had no real air capability, with only twenty operational F-4s which were occupied with fighting Iraq. Their navy had only one working Harpoon anti-ship missile. The threat

was unconventional. Nothing in Tehran's arsenal could sink the barges. The mobile bases offered the best, least expensive means to support the patrol craft and helicopters required to control the sealanes. "Unless *in extremis*," he maintained, "the Iranians will continue to avoid a direct confrontation."<sup>3</sup>

Crist countered JCS arguments by asking, "Would you rather risk losing two oil barges or a billion dollar ship?"<sup>4</sup> The threat of mines or an errant missile from an Iraqi aircraft simply made the northern Gulf too risky for a gray hull. He also worked behind the scenes, specifically with Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, to overcome resistance and get the plan approved.

The Chairman, Admiral William Crowe, threw his full support behind the plan after examining *Hercules* on September 17. While recognizing the perils, Crowe concluded that the barges were the best means to control the northern sealanes without unduly risking lives. With his support, the operation went forward.

### Iran-Iraq Conflict (1980–1988)

**O**n September 22, 1980, Iraqi fighters struck air bases across Iran, the first blow of a protracted war that resulted in over half a million military casualties. The precise reason for Saddam Hussein's decision to invade Iran remains unclear, though the two countries had long-standing religious, border, and political disputes.

In the first phase of the conflict, six Iraqi divisions launched a surprise offensive on three fronts, rapidly overrunning Iran's border defenses. The high water mark of Iraqi territorial gains was reached on November 10, 1980, during house-to-house fighting for control of Khorramshahr. The government in Tehran rejected a settlement and began a series of counteroffensives in January 1981. By 1984 Iran had regained all its lost territory and the remaining years of the conflict were a bloody war of attrition fought across a relatively static front.

Iraq lost virtually all its capacity to export oil during the first years of the war. Iran's exports also suffered when its major export facility on Kharg Island was severely damaged. In the Tanker War of 1984–87, each side attempted to block the other's remaining oil exports through the northern Persian Gulf, employing missiles, small boat raids, and mines. These operations also threatened the commerce of neutral suppliers, attracting the attention of the United States and Western countries who relied on oil exports from the region. Before the end of the war, ten Western navies and eight regional naval forces were operating in the narrow waters of the Persian Gulf. An Iraqi missile struck *USS Stark* on May 17, 1987, killing 37 crewmen. Baghdad apologized for the attack, but the incident proved a catalyst for a new initiative, reflagging Kuwaiti tankers as American ships under Operation Ernest Will and thus affording them U.S. protection.

Another unique feature of the war was the use of chemical weapons and short-range ballistic missiles by both sides.

Iraq launched a devastating series of counterattacks from April to August 1988. After these setbacks, Iran accepted a U.N. resolution on ending the war, and a ceasefire went into place on August 20, 1988. In the event, none of the major issues cited at the outbreak of the conflict were resolved.

JFQ

### Fortresses at Sea

In the meantime, men and matériel destined for the bases flowed into theater. The first two MK-IIIIs arrived by ship on September 3 along with Lieutenant Commander Paul Evancoe, designated as the first barge commander. The aluminum-hulled patrol boats could only operate in the open ocean with difficulty, but they were the only assets available in the inventory. Additional weapons stations were added. A stabilized 40mm bow-mounted Bofors gun, 50 caliber machine guns, and MK-19 grenade launchers proved more than enough firepower to deal with any Iranian boat, but they reduced the maximum speed of the boats to 25 knots, slower than most enemy counterparts.

The Marine Corps wanted the helicopter mission, but their craft were too large and their pilots lacked extensive night flying training. At Crowe's insistence, and over the objections of the Department of the Army, Task Force 160 from Fort Campbell was tasked to provide helicopters and night surveillance capability for the barges. Its A-6 (attack) and M-6 (command and control) helicopters were designed to operate exclusively at night, being outfitted with forward-looking infrared (FLIR) and night vision goggles. Army pilots had thousands of hours flying time with night vision goggles as opposed to, at most, a couple of hundred common in most Marine squadrons. In addition, with their small airframes, three helicopters could be accommodated on each barge.



**Hercules with MK-III  
and UH-60 on deck.**

Evancoe outfitted *Hercules* before the ships arrived, ordering 20,000 sandbags to surround the gun positions. Old crew quarters and drilling equipment were replaced by steel ammunition bunkers, an aircraft hanger, and a communication van. At one point 40 welders were busy 24 hours a day. At the same time, work continued to get *Wimbrown VII* ready by December.

Two MK-III patrol boats went on the first patrol north of 27°30 parallel on September 9. The first presence mission ended after five days and 530 miles, which included escorting a convoy from north of Bahrain to Kuwait. It revealed significant problems. The rough seas took a heavy

toll on the hulls and crews because the boats were not designed to operate in the open ocean for extended periods. They also had difficulty keeping up with the convoy. Additionally, while the concept of operations in the northern Persian Gulf had been well articulated up the chain of command, the same was not true for those tasked to execute it. Evancoe bitterly complained that they were not even given a simple mission statement, let alone a basic operational concept. It was not until December that Middle East Force published guidance.

As *Hercules* neared completion in late September, intelligence closely monitored the massing of some seventy small boats near Bushehr and Farsi Islands following an Iranian exercise menacingly called "Martyrdom." Concern heightened on October 1 when satellites imaged small boats massed along a 45-mile front, perhaps for an attack on the Saudi Khafji oil complex. The assault failed to materialize. However, U.S. forces still believed the Iranians were up to something in the northern Gulf.

*Hercules* deployed into this environment on October 6 with welders still installing ballistic metal plates. As the northernmost American unit, many on the barge had the distinct feeling of

**many on the barge had the distinct feeling of being "hung out to dry"**

being "hung out to dry." The nearest warship was *USS Thach*, a frigate which provided air warning while remaining 20 miles to the south.

### **First Blood**

A frustrated and increasingly worried Evancoe launched three patrol boats two days later to gather intelligence on the Iranians at Farsi. He planned to establish a listening post at Middle Shoals Buoy, a navigation aid 15 miles west of Farsi and 8 miles northeast of *Hercules*. One Seafox boat had Marine Farsi and Arab linguists from the barge's radio reconnaissance detachment.

The Seafox would be dropped off, with its radar signature hopefully blending into that of the buoy as the patrol boats passed close to Middle Shoals. The three Army craft, controlled by a light airborne multipurpose system (LAMPS) helicopter from *USS Thach*, would fly a different route, arriving to scout out the buoy ahead of the patrol boats.

The operation began at 2100 hours. With the boats still four miles from the buoy, the Army

*Wimbrown VII.**OH-58 on Hercules.*

helicopters flew ahead to reconnoiter. To their amazement, Army pilots, looking through FLIRs, observed that three small boats were already at the buoy. Realizing that it was impossible for the U.S. boats to have arrived, one pilot approached to take a closer look. He found an Iranian Boghammer and two smaller craft.

An Iranian leaped up to open fire with a 12.7mm machine gun. As tracers flew by, the aviator vectored in the two A-6 helicopters following close behind. They responded with a hail of high explosive and flechette rockets and machine gun fire. The smaller boats were quickly

dispatched in dramatic fashion as their gasoline engines exploded, spreading burning fuel across the water. The Boghammer maneuvered, trying to get up to speed while firing a 107mm rocket in the general direction of U.S. forces. As an A-6 closed in to finish off the Boghammer, the Americans were greeted by an anti-aircraft missile. The warhead did not have time to arm because of the helicopter's close proximity. The second A-6 closed in and its last high explosive rocket hit the Boghammer squarely on the port side, killing several of its crew including the commanding officer. It sank in 30 seconds. At the first sight of the tracer fire, clearly visible eight miles away, Evancoe ordered general quarters.

The remaining patrol boat was lowered into the water as the Marine security platoon manned its positions, joining the other already serving as a local protection and reaction force. Shortly thereafter, the three A-6s returned and were quickly rearmed and refueled.

The two patrol boats closed on Middle Shoals Buoy in search of other vessels or survivors. Six Iranians were pulled from the water, all grievously wounded. Two succumbed. A petty officer noticed a floating Styrofoam case and dived in to retrieve it. Inside was a battery for an American-built

Stinger. It was later learned that the Iranians had obtained the missile from Afghanistan.

The Iranian mission had been commanded by a Revolutionary Guard officer and crewed by a motley collection of landlubbers, including an illiterate cook and an AWOL soldier who had been impressed by the Revolutionary Guards in Bushehr on the previous day. They had left Farsi shortly after sunset, the commander telling them they were "headed on a great mission."

Radar picked up 20–40 small craft heading south toward the base a short time later. To those aboard *Hercules*, it appeared the Iranian vessels at Middle Shoals Buoy were part of a larger coordinated strike. Marines dropped hand grenades off

### hostile operations virtually ceased following the engagement at Middle Shoals Buoy

the side to forestall boarding by swimmers as Evancoe arrayed his forces for the impending attack. He ordered the two patrol boats that had just returned from Middle Shoals to head north, with the ominous words "Turn and engage." Meanwhile he requested support, and shortly three additional A-6s arrived from the southern Gulf, followed by *USS Thach*, which came steaming north at a speed of 30 knots.

Once again an attack failed to develop. It appeared to Evancoe that the enemy turned and went back to Bushehr. Other intelligence sources confirmed that the Iranian boats were there and likely broke off the attack following the action at Middle Shoals Buoy. However, the commanding officer of *USS Thach* later concluded that the reported Iranian boats were a radar anomaly and never existed. The true nature of the threat that night remains a mystery to this day.

### Fighting an Unconventional Conflict

The Army and Navy forces on the barges perfected their tactics over the following months. While the original concept called for the MK-IIIs to operate 25 nautical miles out, radar problems and limitations on crew endurance reduced the practical range to 16 miles. Operating in pairs and at night, patrols lasted from 4 to 12 hours, moving along predetermined routes. All the while, small riverine boats provided local security until they were withdrawn as unsuitable for operations in rough open water.

Helicopter tactics evolved as well. The Army craft operating in groups of three, one M-6 and two A-6s, went on one and sometimes a second two-hour patrol every night. All patrols proceeded to a predetermined set of checkpoints from a list of 25 identifiable sites. They often operated in conjunction with MK-IIIs, where speed

and range complemented patrol boat endurance. Meanwhile, the Navy LAMPS helicopters, with their excellent surface search radar, perfected their techniques of command and control over the Army craft, vectoring them in from a safe distance on suspected Iranian boats.

*Wimbrown VII* became operational in December. Although the original plan called for it to be deployed farther north, it remained ten miles away to provide mutual support for *Hercules*. Not as large or capable, its presence doubled the patrol area and relieved overstretched *Hercules* assets.

In February 1988, Middle East Force merged with JTF Middle East, which had been charged with controlling all Earnest Will operations inside and outside the Gulf. This entailed a greater degree of control by the JTF staff. The barges began filing flight plans and patrol routes prior to operations. Improvements continued on the barges at the same time. More metal plates and sandbags were added until the *Wimbrown VII* decks were awash in high seas. In addition, 25mm naval chain guns augmented 50 caliber weapons on all four corners, and in July two of those were replaced by Army 20mm anti-aircraft guns. Newly developed anti-missile radar reflectors were also deployed around both barges. Most notably, overtaxed A-6 and M-6 helicopters were replaced by Army OH-58s from Task Force 118. While not as small or quiet, the new craft possessed a greater FLIR capability and much greater firepower, including Hellfire missiles.

Hostile operations virtually ceased following the engagement at Middle Shoals Buoy. The Iranians occasionally tested the defenses by approaching at high speed, then withdrawing at the first challenge from a helicopter or patrol boat. They tried to blend in with numerous fishing boats off the Saudi coast while advancing. Only once did they challenge the barges. Two high speed surface craft commenced a run on *Wimbrown VII* on the night of March 4. The barge and nearby *USS John A. Moore* warned them off with machine gun fire and the boats returned to Farsi.

The Iranians attempted their only attack on a tanker in the patrol area on July 12, 1988. Small boats assaulted the Kuwait-bound Panamanian *Universal Monarch* in international waters. Then, to escape American retribution, they went back across to their exclusion zone, where the rules of engagement did not permit U.S. warships or aircraft to operate. *Wimbrown VII* and *Hercules* launched two OH-58s, and the JTF commander, Rear Admiral Anthony Less, gave the helicopters permission to enter the exclusion zone near Farsi. One helicopter received machine gun fire. The Americans returned fire, striking the boat with a high-explosive rocket and leaving it dead in the water.

MK-IIIIs in northern Persian Gulf.



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With northern Gulf operations effectively shut down, the Iranians moved their small boats to the south, around Abu Musa Island. The idea of redeploying one of the barges there was rejected because it spread forces too thin. Shortages within the SOF community prevented standing up another mobile base. But retaliation for the minestrike on *USS Samuel B. Roberts* in April 1988 eliminated half of the operational Iranian fleet and destroyed the two major oil platforms used to coordinate mining and small boat attacks. With few platforms and islands to use as hiding places, and the vast number of U.S. warships operating in the southern Gulf, the Iranians became a minor annoyance more than a serious threat to the shipping lanes.

The barges remained operational after a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq War took effect on August 20. A gradual reduction in forces in the north coincided with a general withdrawal of forces throughout the Persian Gulf as the ceasefire held. *Wimbrown VII* reverted back to Brown and Root on Christmas Eve. *Hercules* remained in place. The Saudis expressed interest in leasing it for their forces, but they shelved the option as the situation cooled down. *Hercules* was returned to Brown and Root in July 1989 after being deployed for 21 months.

The unorthodox mobile sea base force succeeded in shutting down Iranian operations in the northern Gulf. The development of the bases demonstrates remarkable ingenuity, taking just 60 days from initial concept to deployment. And in the end, even the most ardent detractors admitted that it was a radical and successful approach to sea control. Mobile sea-based operations will likely become more common. They will be joint, oriented to unanticipated threats, and employ assets in innovative and unexpected ways.

Some lessons were immediately noted after operations in the Persian Gulf as others were stubbornly resisted. While Army helicopters operating from Navy vessels have subsequently become more common, these were the first such ventures in years. New tactics were needed. Problems of corrosion and the effects of shipboard electronic emissions on ordnance were unexpected. Many of these issues were worked out aboard the barges. For the Navy, the problems confronting their patrol boats led directly to the development of a new generation of craft to replace the MK-IIIIs, the Patrol Craft Coastal. Its hull length, for example, had to be at least 100 feet so it could better ride the rough seas of the Gulf.

The entire mobile sea base concept had been strongly opposed by traditionalists within the Navy who simply could not grasp that the barges were not ships but were more akin to islands or the fire support bases in Vietnam. Further, the leadership viewed the Iranian threat through a Cold War prism, though the Iranian fleet was hardly the Soviet navy. The bases represented a strongly resisted move away from blue water to brown water operations. While the littorals are at the heart of current naval doctrine, that was not the case in the 1980s. Yet on this occasion the Armed Forces managed to break through the logjam of traditional thinking and field the right force for the task at hand. Proving equally facile will be the great challenge of future joint task forces. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Frank C. Seitz, Jr., "SS Bridgetown: The First Convoy," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 114, no. 5 (May 1988), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> COMMIDEASTFOR message, Subject: MEF Force Levels, 062107Z August 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Harold Bernsen, Memorandum for the Commander in Chief, Central Command, Subject: GULF OPS, September 18, 1987, in George B. Crist, Personal Papers, Marine Corps Historical Center.

<sup>4</sup> George B. Crist, interview with author, March 18, 1994.



U.S. Army

# The Trouble with Strategy: Bridging Policy and Operations

By RICHARD K. BETTS

**N**o subject generates more concern within the military than strategy. Yet policymakers are often indifferent to it. Some find the demand for more and better strategy to be naive resistance to inevitable ad hocery. Why is the subject never settled enough to allow leaders to get on with other business? Why do senior officers insist on clear strategy more than do civilian officials?

**Richard K. Betts is the Leo A. Shifrin professor of war and peace studies at Columbia University and the editor of *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*.**

## Everything in War

What Clausewitz said of friction in war applies to strategy: it “is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”<sup>1</sup> The trouble begins with the term *strategy* which is a buzzword that covers a multitude of sins. Many were content with a limited conception in earlier times—planning and directing large-scale military operations. Clausewitz, however, injected politics when he defined strategy as “the use of an engagement for the purpose of the war.”<sup>2</sup> This wedge properly pushes the concept to higher levels. But some usages of the term become so broad that they are synonymous with foreign policy.

Military professionals tend to handle the ambiguity by differentiating between national and military strategy. The first is supposed to drive the second. This division is reasonable in some ways but on balance creates as many problems as it solves. It evokes a fundamental tension in civil-military relations. What is called national strategy in the Pentagon and grand strategy by many historians and theorists so overlaps policy that it is hard to distinguish them. The difference between ends and means becomes muddled from the outset. To keep concepts clear, it is less useful to think of three realms—policy, strategy, and operations—than to think of strategy as the *bridge* between policy and operations. A bridge allows elements on either side to move to the other. As a plan that bridges the realms of policy and operations, effective strategy must integrate political and military criteria rather than separate them.

Resistance to this notion has recurred frequently, especially among military leaders who seek to keep policy and operations in separate compartments. The objection is exemplified by Helmuth von Moltke (“the Elder”): “Strategy serves politics best by working for its aim, but by retaining maximum independence in the achievement of this aim. Politics should not interfere in operations.”<sup>3</sup> This is a common view among those in uniform, but it puts strategy on a slippery slope and tends to shove it downward, subordinating it to operations—the pathology that made Moltke’s successors complicit in the destruction of their own country as well as much of Europe as they piled up tactically brilliant successes at the price of strategic catastrophe in two world wars. When the integration of policy and operations is not resisted in principle, it is often resisted in practice, with the ends of the bridge—policymakers and military operators—each believing that strategic integration means simply doing it their way.

Civilian leaders rarely give conscious thought to whether objectives and operations should be integrated or separated. Some are happy to accept the view prevalent in the military that political decision and military implementation should be discreet functions, sequential and independent, so leaders can pronounce what they wish and unleash soldiers to do as they see fit. This is consistent with the Moltke view. Such an approach eases civil-military friction and sometimes works, but it risks rude surprises. Others believe in integrating political and military decisions but without grasping the ramifications for their own responsibilities. Political leaders who do justice to the view of strategy as integration must understand a fair amount about

military operations in order to judge what demands can reasonably be made. Hardly any politicians have such knowledge or the time and willingness to acquire it.

### The Body Politic

Military and civilian leaders have different expertise and duties. Professional soldiers often see politicians as irresponsible when policymakers prescribe strategy in a way that meddles in operational plans. The complexity of modern military operations evokes an engineering mentality—a compulsion to find formulas and axioms so that strategy can be carried out, in a sense, by the numbers. This is a natural urge in a business where mistakes from playing fast and loose can get people killed.

Formulaic strategy, however, is effectively antipolitical. It aims to nail things down and close options, while politics—especially in a democracy—strives to keep options open and avoid constraints. Politicians seek ways to keep divergent interests satisfied, which means avoiding difficult commitments until absolutely necessary and being ready to shift course quickly. Thus at its core, the notion of strategy by formula, strategy set in advance and buffered against demands to change course, is as naive as uninformed politicians acting as armchair generals.

Keeping national and military strategy in discreet compartments can become an excuse to avoid making real strategy. Such a split makes one part much the same as policy and the other much like doctrine and operations. This leaves open the gap between policy objectives and military plans—the gap that should be bridged by strategic calculation for exactly *how* to use force to produce a desired political result rather than just a military result.

This confusion is common. A military strategy that efficiently destroys targets is successful in operational terms but a failure in policy if it does not compel an enemy government. Or when professionals speak of a “strategy/force structure mismatch,” they usually mean a gap between forces and preferred operational plans rather than between capabilities and the *purpose* of a war. Relabeling policy and operations as national strategy and military strategy, and dividing responsibility, can leave the strategic gap unfilled while pretending something is there.

For a superpower like the United States, a strategic gap sets up the conditions for the lament that we won the battles but lost the war. The logical hierarchy of policy and operations all too easily becomes inverted when integrated strategy is absent or fails to provide a plan that works as its planners expect. Operations come to drive policy instead of serving policy. This inversion has by no



Pearl Harbor.

means been unusual. Historian Russell Weigley concludes that it has become typical, writing darkly that war has ceased to be the extension of politics and that it creates “its own momentum” and undermines the purposes for which it is launched, and that instead of the servant of politics, war has become master.<sup>4</sup>

There can be no easy formula for turning military action into political outputs. The purpose of war is to impose one’s will on an enemy. It is about who rules when the shooting stops. This is closely related to victory in military operations but is not the same. Unless one completely conquers an enemy’s territory, extinguishes its government, and rules directly as an occupying power, it is not a straightforward matter to translate operational success into desired enemy behavior in the postwar world.

### From a Different View

Despite the prevalent tendency of war to take on a life of its own, most still think of the classic model of a hierarchy of functions which proceed in sequence from one level to the next, from prewar planning, through wartime execution, to postwar activities (with policy governing strategic plans) which in turn drive operations and tactics, which win battles and campaigns—and finally produce victory and the policy objective. This standard conception might be called the linear model of war. The alternative is a circular model, where events in each phase generate feedback, altering the other functions. Results and unforeseen requirements of operations alter strategy, and changed requirements of strategy reshape political objectives. The circular model has more in common with chaos theory

than with the engineering orientation reflected in the linear model.

Practitioners usually think of strategy in terms of the linear model, but actual war usually resembles the circular. At its worst, straight-line thinking puts the operational cart before the political horse. Some divergence from the linear model is inevitable and sometimes has positive effects by allowing sensible adaptation to circumstances. In general, however, curtailing the degree to which the circular model takes over—limiting the extent to which military requirements override or deform initial political aims—is the measure of good strategy.

The U.S. Constitution is fundamentally anti-strategic. Strategy implies coherence, consistency, and direct translation of preferences and calculations into plans and action: decide what you want, figure out how to get it, and do it. The Constitution, in contrast, fosters competition and clashes among preferences, estimates, and plans. Through the separation of executive and legislative powers, it provides a structure of government that blocks any center of authority from imposing a coherent plan if the others disagree. This in turn encourages compromises that fudge choices and move in different directions at once.

The Constitution also ensures that political leadership will turn over frequently on the executive level while the agencies and services below remain in place. Bureaucracies have both longer time horizons and narrower conceptions of interest than Presidents, making them more oriented to pondering a limited range of concerns and committing to firm plans, while political leaders are more general in how they think and more ad hoc in how they operate.

**the military sees the political confusion of war not as the essence of democratic government but as an aberration to orderly ways of doing business**

All of this improves control in the sense of checks and balances, but not in consistency of action. It fosters the circular model once war is underway. Civilian politicians tend to operate instinctively by the circular model. They are accustomed to managing competing constituencies, building consensus, stitching together contradictory goals, and reacting to demands that emerge as policies unfold. Creative inconsistency is their stock in trade and they are adept at forging complicated alliances. They are not skilled at translating aims into outputs. That is why gaps between decision and implementation are chronic not just in the realm of defense policy but throughout the business of government.

Military leaders who rise to the top in Washington inevitably get exposed to these realities and resign themselves to them. But they do not like them because political chaos is antithetical to the military ethos, the engineering instinct, and the hierarchical essence of military organization. Unlike politicians, the military sees the political confusion of war not as the essence of democratic government but as an aberration that should be corrected so government can get back to orderly ways of doing business. It is temperamentally natural for professionals to see hierarchy, clarity, simplicity, precision, and sequencing—the things that make operational planning and execution work in their business—as the way things should work in the national security system as a whole.

### Between Discipline and Instinct

In many respects a rational sequence is possible. The National Security Council (NSC) was originally designed to address these problems and enforce more order on the process of creating defense policy. Even this body, however, reflects the reality that political leaders who focus on objectives and military leaders who focus on operations pull strategy in two directions.

The council as we know it today is quite different and is in some respects opposed to what it was meant to be. In James Forrestal's original conception, it was designed to discipline the President by forcing him to systematically consider the views of the principal departments instead of running around in an ad hoc manner giving whatever orders struck his fancy. The main point of NSC was to provide a forum for strategic deliberation to inform the President and bring together the disparate strands of bureaucracy and expertise in State, Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the intelligence community.

The National Security Council itself still does this but it is not actually what we have come to think of as its role. The body technically consists of four members: the President, Vice President, and Secretaries of State and Defense (with the Director of Central Intelligence and Chairman as statutory advisers). This unit is hardly what is most significant anymore. Rather, many think the acronym NSC is not the council but its staff and, above all, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. These barely existed until more than a decade after the National Security Act was passed. They make the council in the minds of most not a forum to constrain the President but rather his arm to enforce his will on the departments.

Disparities have been more obvious at some times than others. They were most evident in the administration of Richard Nixon, when the President ignored the Department of State and ran foreign policy out of the White House, using



Persian Gulf leadership.

Henry Kissinger as his point man. Such strong direction from the top is certainly conducive to the linear model of strategy, and that vision in the Nixon period saw dramatic breakthroughs in détente with Moscow and rapprochement with China that would probably never have developed as decisively or quickly if pursued through the normal process of political pulling and hauling and second guessing.

Strong direction from the top did not produce serious civil-military tensions because the President's tight control of diplomatic initiatives was not paralleled by similar direction of the military. The White House and the Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, afforded the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the services great latitude in charting their own courses within the general guidelines of foreign policy and budget ceilings. This followed the civil-military friction of the 1960s, when Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, along with their Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, controlled military operations to a degree that the Navy and Air Force considered outrageous interference.

Under both the Democrats in the 1960s and the Republicans in the 1970s, the policymaking system aimed at hierarchy and sequence, imposing strong direction from the top. The difference was that in the second case the White House did not work as hard at integrating military operations with policy direction, allowing more of a division of labor and separation of the two phases. But in the Nixon period, with few exceptions, the crucial strategic breakthroughs were in basic foreign policy. They did not involve military operations.

The White House acted differently when it came to strategic integration between foreign policy and diplomatic operations. In that realm Nixon and Kissinger showed even more disrespect for professional diplomatic expertise and prerogatives than Kennedy, Johnson, and McNamara had toward the military. The status of the Department of State was never more marginal than under William Rogers. Veteran diplomats saw the free-wheeling interference from the White House as

no less irresponsible than the military considered the picking of bombing targets by Johnson and McNamara. Gerard Smith, the U.S. representative to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, railed against Kissinger for engaging in secret back channel negotiations with Moscow that undercut the official delegation and, due to ignorance of certain technical details, nearly stumbled into an agreement that would have precluded the Minuteman III modernization program.<sup>5</sup>

The question is not just whether a classical model of sequential progression from policy to strategy to operations is practical. The point is that it is difficult to integrate policy and operations rather than separate them without having one side take over the whole show. Integration means blending two very different sets of concerns, orientations, and priorities, but officials at either end of the bridge are likely to see that as meaning the other side must accommodate. In short, defining strategy as the integration of policy and operations is a prescription for civil-military tension.

Friction can be avoided by accepting separation in the way Moltke advised—a division of labor in which policy or national strategy is set, then the military takes over, genuflects to the guidance, and focuses on the appropriate military strategy. This can work, especially when either civilian or military leadership is particularly gifted. But it raises the odds that the linear sequence of decision will yield to a circular quality of implementation because operational requirements are more likely to ramify politically in unanticipated ways.

### Balancing Act

What is a *good* example of strategymaking? The performance of the Bush administration in the Persian Gulf War comes closest if we include only the period *following* Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The full crisis combines evidence of both the best and the worst. Policy and strategy before the invasion were an abysmal failure. Bush made no serious attempt to deter Saddam Hussein from deciding to invade. If Ambassador April Glaspie's last meeting with Saddam was not a green light, it was barely a yellow one. Had the administration performed half as well in that phase, there might have been no war.

If we begin the assessment after August 1990 and assume that the objectives of Desert Storm were to expel Iraq from Kuwait and cripple Baghdad's ability to undertake aggression again, the Bush strategy worked effectively and efficiently. Iraq was routed at minimal cost to Washington,

and the United States and United Nations subjected it to unprecedented requirements for inspection and destruction of its weapons of mass destruction. American political and military leadership worked well together in integrating political aims and military requirements.

The administration did not make cavalier and inconsistent demands on the Joint Chiefs and U.S. Central Command, nor did it micro-manage operations; but neither did it give the military *carte blanche*. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney was as intrusive as McNamara, closely assessing operational plans and disciplining those in uniform who strayed from his view of proper behavior. He fired General Michael Dugan, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force, for indiscreet public comments that represented far less challenge to civilian authority than the near insubordination of Admiral George Anderson, Chief of Naval Operations, during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Brent Scowcroft, was also instrumental in rejecting the initial straight up the middle plan of General Norman Schwarzkopf for attack into Kuwait. Although some criticized General Colin Powell for being too politicized, the close relationships he had in both directions of the chain of command facilitated communication, deliberation, and planning.

Many believed the dictator could not survive the crushing military defeat, but they were wrong. Yet it is reckless to flunk the Bush strategy on those grounds. A strategy that would have guaranteed the ouster of Saddam would have been far riskier. Its costs would have risen as the odds of success fell. American forces would have had to take Baghdad, which in turn would have dramatically raised the probability of overshooting the culminating point of victory. Instead of fewer than two hundred U.S. combat fatalities, an infinitesimal number for a war of that scale, vastly more would have been likely. The tentative and fragile political coalition of the United States and Arab nations would have frayed if not collapsed. And there is no guarantee that a victory that got rid of Saddam Hussein would not have created new and equally troublesome political and diplomatic problems in the region. Most importantly, had Saddam been pushed to the wall, he might have resorted to employing chemical and biological weapons.

### Choices and Conundrums

There are two basic challenges in devising strategy. The first is how to use force to achieve the political objective—how to get from the operational side of the bridge to the policy side. The



Patrol in Kosovo.

55th Signal Company (Martin J. Cervantez)

second is how to do so at acceptable cost. The first, while daunting, is easier for a superpower than for most countries. The handy thing about having surplus power is that you can be careless and still get where you want to go. Efficiency and effectiveness are not the same.

Effectiveness, however, is not the only test of strategy. Clausewitz made that point when he wrote something seemingly obvious but often forgotten: "Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political object, the value of this object must determine the sacrifices to be made for it in magnitude and also in duration. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds

the value of the political object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow."<sup>6</sup>

The United States could in theory have pursued a strategy that would have won in Vietnam. It could have sent a million troops, invaded and occupied the North, imprisoned or killed the communist cadre in the North and the South and all who sympathized with them, and destroyed every uncooperative village to, as Tacitus put it, make a desert and call it peace. But such an *effective* strategy was never considered by any but a few fanatics because the price was unacceptable. As it was, American strategy worked as long as the United States was willing to stay at war; it just did not offer a way to peace without defeat.

In cases such as Kosovo, muddled policy obscures the line between a strategy's success or failure. NATO obviously won the war against Serbia in some important senses, but at the price of compromising its objectives and boxing itself into a postwar occupation with no ready way out. The agreement that ended the war accepted Milosevic's condition that Kosovo remain under Belgrade's sovereignty. Combat was terminated by leaving NATO with three unpalatable choices: indefinite occupation of Kosovo; giving Kosovo independence, thus violating the peace agreement; or giving Kosovo back to Yugoslavia, betraying the Albanians for whom the war was fought in the first place. Should a military campaign that leaves this political result be deemed a strategic success?

### Guidelines

Recommendations for good strategymaking are offered more easily than they are carried out. Nevertheless, it is striking how rarely policymakers and commanders put their heads together on these points explicitly, let alone carefully. But if they can get at least that far, there are steps that might shave down the likelihood of failure.

*Estimate the culminating point of victory.* In Korea in 1950 the culminating point was probably the Inchon landing and restoration of South Korea up to the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, before the march to the Yalu and Chinese intervention. In Iraq in 1991 it was not far beyond where policymakers decided it was—although breakdowns in communication in the field and between the field and Washington prevented coalition forces from closing the gate and destroying the Republican Guard before the ceasefire.

*Determine an exit strategy.* This is not to be confused with an exit date. By what criteria will we know when the mission is accomplished, and how are operations designed to meet them? The most recent example of failure in this respect is the occupation of Bosnia.

*Decide the ceiling on acceptable costs and link it to the exit strategy.* Too often, as with bidders at an auction, policymakers pay more than they intended. They make the irrational but understandable mistake of letting sunk costs rather than prospective additional costs induce them to up the ante. The limit of reasonable costs in Vietnam was probably reached no later than 1963.

Such guidelines are easy to proclaim, but strategic decisions are made by harried officials who do not always consult Clausewitz. Politicians have to juggle conflicting concerns and are more accustomed to compromise and near-term solutions than to following checklists of general principles. Commanders easily get swallowed up in the business of keeping the military machine running rather than cogitating about vague matters of state. All these guideline tasks should be carried out, but only extraordinary people do many of them at a given time, and none do all of them all the time.

Stating guidelines is ineffectual unless they can be worked into standard procedures for the military side and comfortable political modes of

operation for the policy side. But it is often not clear that either good or bad strategic behavior can be attributed to the process—that is, the way the NSC system functioned and civil-military interaction proceeded.

Perhaps procedures in the Bush system were better than under Johnson, but this is not obvious. There is no reason to believe that anything in the Bush process, had it been in place in the 1960s, would have saved the day in Vietnam. Indeed, it was largely that experience which provided the mindsets and checklists that the Bush administration carried into the crisis of 1990–91. And it was the luck of facing an enemy utterly vulnerable to modern conventional military power that accounted for most of the difference in outcome between the Bush and Johnson strategies.

Problems of strategy are not due to the structure of the current system nor even to the constitutional dispersion of power. They originate in the convictions of powerful individuals and the temper of the times—hubris and ambition in periods of great national success and pessimism in periods of failure. Regarding the power of specific people, no prescribed process can prevent a President and his closest advisors from becoming viscerally committed to a particular course unless there is strong disagreement on the part of the

larger body politic. Success and hubris, however, foster permissive consensus and overconfidence. This cuts off the most important chance to avoid failure. Pessimism poses different risks. It may let pass opportunities that should be exploited. But at least it fits well with the recognition that in strategy “the simplest thing is difficult.” **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke's Kriegslehren*, excerpted from *War*, edited by Lawrence Freedman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> Russell F. Weigley, “The Political and Strategic Dimensions of Military Effectiveness,” *Military Effectiveness*, volume 3: *The Second World War*, edited by Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 341.

<sup>5</sup> Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk: The Story of SALT I* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), pp. 413–17.

<sup>6</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 92.

**strategic decisions are made by harried officials who do not always consult Clausewitz**

# *NATO, Europe, and Beyond...*

Globalization, that trend toward increased connectivity among political, economic, cultural, and military affairs around the world, may be the most overused term of the new century. Yet the expression seems appropriate in the context of Europe. This JFQ Forum finds that security issues on the continent are not limited by boundaries. We may not have experienced the end of history, but the end of geography has arrived. Europe's concerns are deep, complex, transnational, and multiregional. The lead article by Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, argues that European security is truly a global task and that the Alliance must look north, south, east, and west with equal interest and vigilance. Other contributions examine the implications of this new reality both within NATO and on the periphery of the region.

Together, these articles surface challenges for U.S. European Command (EUCOM). As the military instrument of American power for engaging in Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, the command is responsible for dealing with the strategic and operational consequences of globalization within the context of an expanded Europe. EUCOM must be a regional command with a global perspective. JFQ

# U.S. European



NATO exercise, Denmark.

31st Communications Squadron (Dave Altschweide)

The area of responsibility (AOR) of U.S. European Command (EUCOM) covers more than 13 million square miles and includes 91 countries from the North Cape of Norway, through the waters of the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas, most of Europe, parts of the Middle East, and on to the Cape of Good Hope in Africa.

EUCOM headquarters is located in Stuttgart, Germany. Its component commands include U.S. Army Europe (USAEUR), headquartered in Heidelberg, Germany, and comprising over 62,000 personnel. Its major tactical command is Seventh Army. The forces of U.S. Naval Forces Europe (USNAVEUR), headquartered in London, are either forward deployed on twenty ships or stationed at seven bases in the area. U.S. Marine Forces Europe (MARFOREUR) is headquartered at Norfolk and includes II Marine Expeditionary Force, composed of 45,000 personnel from 2<sup>d</sup> Marine Division, 2<sup>d</sup> Force Service Support Group, and 2<sup>d</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing. These units are located at Camp Lejeune, New River, Cherry Point, and Beaufort. U.S. Air Forces Europe (USAFE) is headquartered at Ramstein air base, Germany. The command includes 14 installations, six of which are main operating bases situated across Europe, and 73,000 personnel, including 26,000 active-duty airmen. U.S. Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), also located in Stuttgart, is a subunified command with responsibility for exercising operational control over all assigned or attached in-theater Special Operations Forces. Its component commands are 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces, Naval Special Warfare Unit Two, and 352<sup>d</sup> Special Operations Group. **JFQ**



Tupaci, Kosovo.

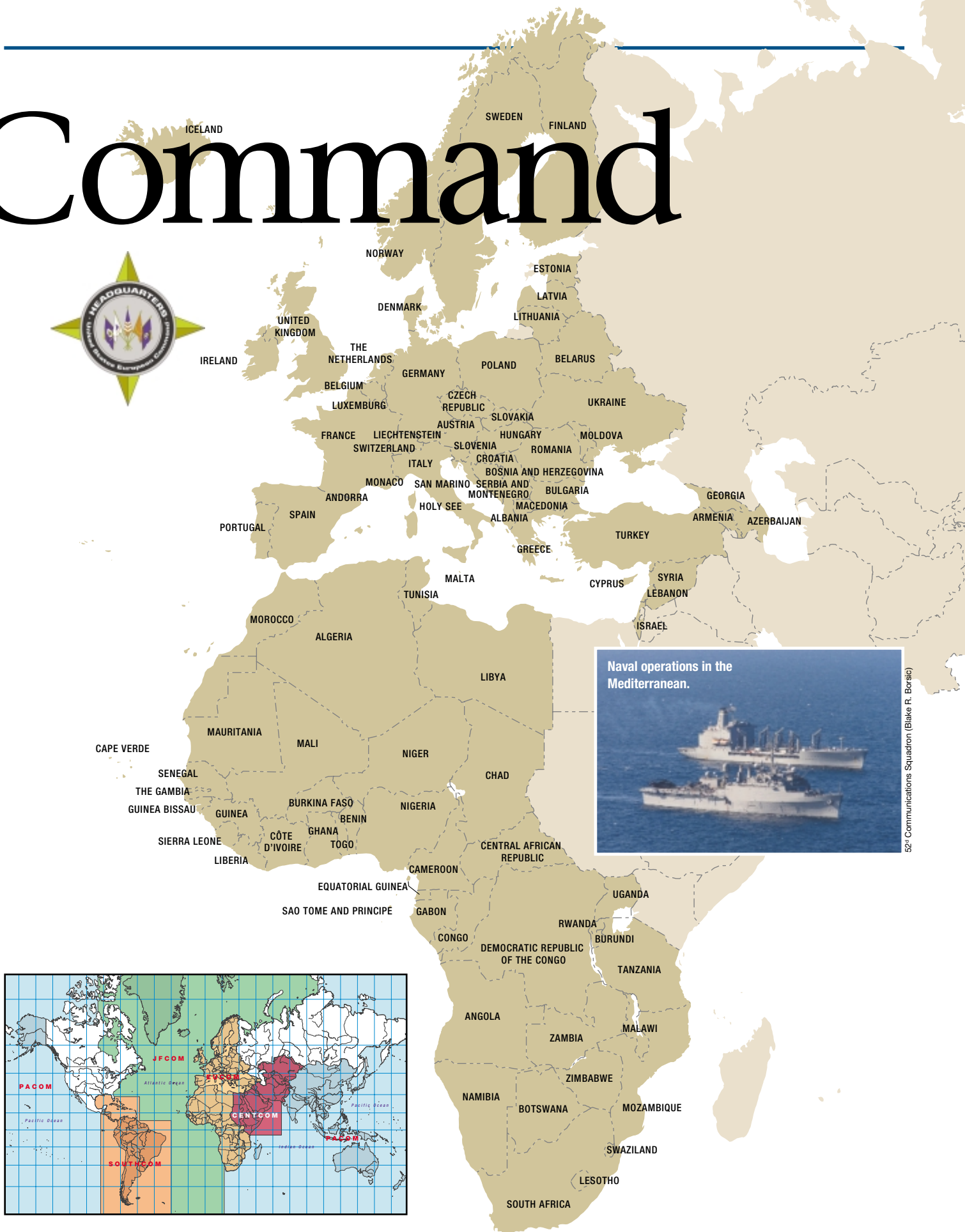
55th Signal Company (Vincent A. King)

See the EUCOM homepage (<http://www.eucom.mil>) for details on the area of responsibility, component commands, theater strategy, et al., or contact:

U.S. European Command  
ATTN: Public Affairs Office (ECPA)  
Patch Barracks  
Box 100, Unit 30400  
APO AE 09128

Telephone: (011 49) 711-680-8574/DSN 314-430-8574  
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# Command



Naval operations in the Mediterranean.

52<sup>nd</sup> Communications Squadron (Blake F. Borsic)

Lord Robertson  
meeting the press  
on September 11.



# The Transatlantic Security Agenda

By GEORGE ISLAY MACNEILL ROBERTSON

**T**he collective reaction of the North Atlantic Alliance to the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 is proof that North America and Europe remain unflinchingly united as a security community. In invoking Article 5 of the founding charter for the first time, all members have agreed that the attack on the United States was an attack on all. Nothing could demonstrate solidarity more than facing common challenges together.

While Article 5 and solidarity are the bedrock of the Alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has remained the central element of European security through five decades by adapting to changing strategic requirements. The implications of the September events will only reveal themselves in full over time. Yet they already make clear that the transatlantic security relationship is undergoing a critical transformation much like the phase that shaped it half a century ago. As in the immediate postwar era, the Alliance must develop a fresh combination of political, economic, and military tools to cope with new challenges. And—again like the immediate

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**The Right Honorable Lord Robertson of Port Ellen is the 10<sup>th</sup> Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and formerly served as the British Secretary of State for Defence.**

postwar years—success in managing this adaptation will enable NATO to influence the direction of Euro-Atlantic security for years to come.

The specific role the Alliance can play in fighting terrorism is a key question. It will be an indispensable part of the wider adaptation of the transatlantic security relationship. But the answers to other questions crucial to common security are already apparent.

### Patience Is a Virtue

First and foremost, in the Balkans, Europe and North America must continue to work together if the challenges of the region are to be addressed in a sustainable fashion. Some critics portray the Balkan engagement as an endless drain on Allied resources. By doing so, they choose to ignore real progress. Bosnia has a government which is no longer represented by ethnic nationalists and is working towards reconciliation and integration. Kosovo recently held elections, followed by the establishment of self-governing institutions. And who would have thought a year ago that Slobodan Milosevic would be indicted in The Hague and a democratic Yugoslav government would be restoring ties with other countries?

These positive developments were only possible because North America and Europe persevered. Transatlantic

### the Alliance is working with aspiring members to improve their defense capabilities and their readiness to work with NATO forces

discord did not prevent the Alliance from acting as it did during the early phases of the Bosnian conflict. Members understood the need to become and remain engaged. They realized that in the Balkans patience is a virtue.

That same patience will carry the day in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. NATO, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have worked hand in glove towards a viable political outcome from the outset of the crisis. Devising a long-term solution to the challenges of Macedonia in

purely military terms is impossible. The problems are political and must be met accordingly. That is why NATO will not let the conflicting parties relinquish their responsibility for their country's future. But the Alliance cannot be a passive observer if the peace process is to be sustained. It must remain engaged politically, along with the rest of the international community, to help the country find its way back to normalcy.

### Extending Atlanticism

The accession to NATO membership of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland marked the definitive end of the Cold War division of Europe. But nine countries are currently seeking to join. The Alliance cannot give them or any other state guarantees of rapid acceptance. But neither can it afford to frustrate their ambitions forever, for that would create a new division of

### What Is Article 5?

**O**n September 12, 2001, NATO decided that if it was determined that the terrorist attacks against the United States were directed from abroad, it would be regarded as an action covered under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which states:

*The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.*

*Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.*

The NATO strategic concept recognizes the risks to the Alliance posed by terrorism. Article 5 underpins a fundamental principle of the organization—collective defense. The United States was the object of brutal terrorist attack. It immediately consulted with other member nations. The NATO Secretary General subsequently informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the Alliance decision. This is the first time the article has been invoked. By taking this measure, members demonstrated their solidarity with the United States and condemned in the strongest possible way the terrorist attacks of September 11.

JFQ

Europe into a secure, confident West and a less secure, less confident East. Enlargement provides an insurance policy against such dangerous divisions. Thus this process must continue. And thus we need to maintain a solid transatlantic consensus going forward.

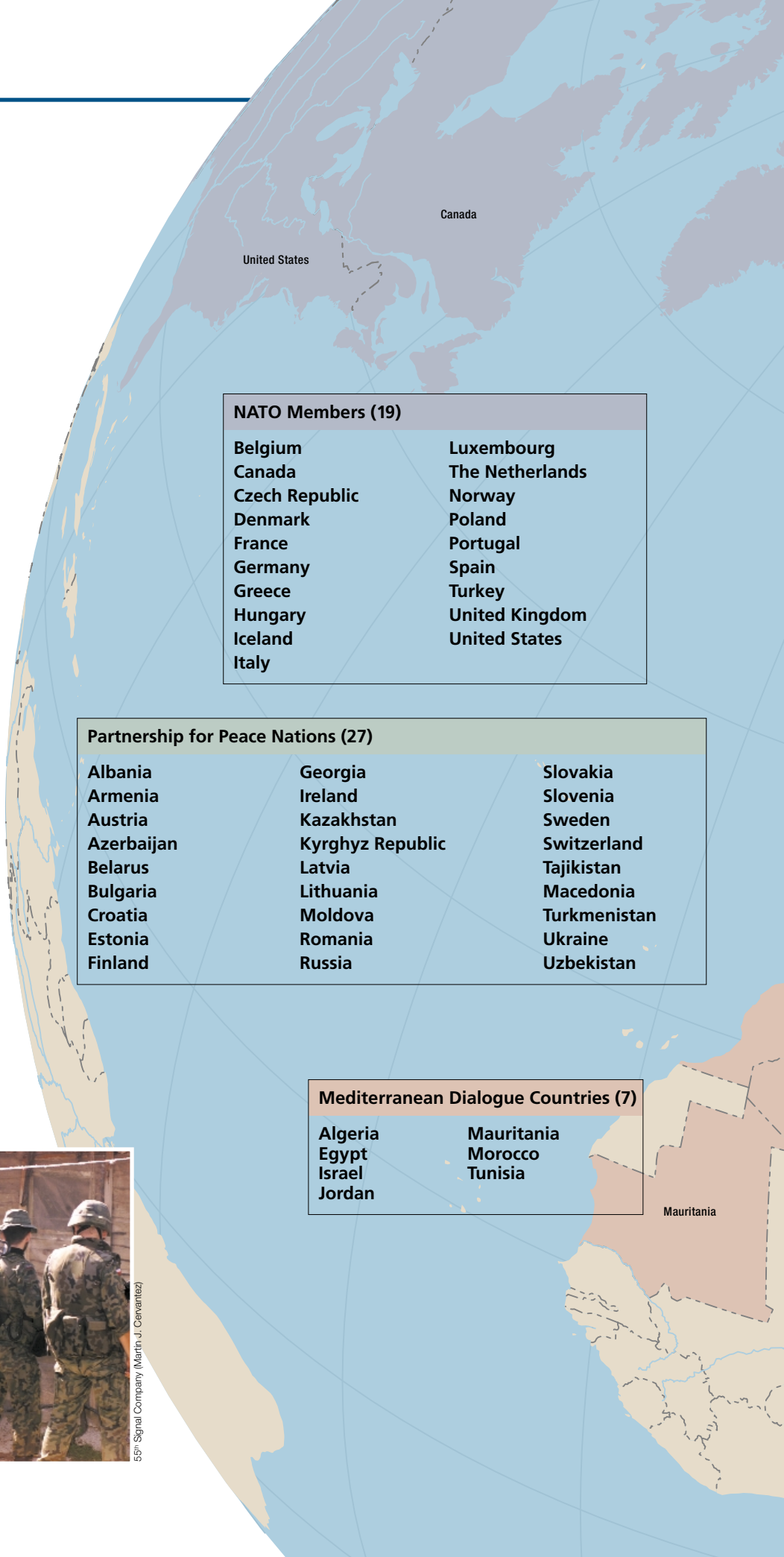
The Alliance is setting the stage for such a consensus. First, the zero option has been taken off the table, meaning there will be invitations. Moreover, NATO has now entered the third cycle of its Membership Action Plan. Through the plan, the Alliance is collaborating directly with the governments and militaries of aspiring members to improve their defense capabilities and their readiness to work with NATO forces on joint missions. That way, by the time they join, they will be net contributors to security, not simply consumers. And the Alliance will be in a better position to evaluate the potential of aspirants once the third cycle ends in spring 2002.

Enlargement will not only be another demonstration of continued growth; it will also enlarge the pool of resources the Atlantic community can draw on to manage crises in Europe. The security burden will be spread more evenly; moreover, the possibilities for the Alliance to decisively influence security developments will grow as well. NATO will reap a sound return on a sound investment.

**Partnership**

The Balkan operations reveal the extent to which nonmembers have become essential security partners. They not only provide invaluable political support, but also troops and logistics. This close interaction owes much to the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program, which has attracted more than two dozen nations, from Sweden to Kazakhstan, to enter into a cooperative military relationship with NATO, greatly increasing the pool of trained personnel and interoperable military assets for Allies and partners to draw on. This program will continue to evolve, providing a comprehensive set of tools for a wider range of joint and combined operations.

The second major partnership mechanism, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), complements the PFP program by providing a forum for enhanced political dialogue. However, the council is more than a political umbrella for the NATO military partnership. Its agenda includes crisis management, regional issues, arms control, international terrorism, defense planning, and budgets. Civil-emergency and disaster preparedness,



NATO Members (19)	
Belgium	Luxembourg
Canada	The Netherlands
Czech Republic	Norway
Denmark	Poland
France	Portugal
Germany	Spain
Greece	Turkey
Hungary	United Kingdom
Iceland	United States
Italy	

Partnership for Peace Nations (27)		
Albania	Georgia	Slovakia
Armenia	Ireland	Slovenia
Austria	Kazakhstan	Sweden
Azerbaijan	Kyrgyz Republic	Switzerland
Belarus	Latvia	Tajikistan
Bulgaria	Lithuania	Macedonia
Croatia	Moldova	Turkmenistan
Estonia	Romania	Ukraine
Finland	Russia	Uzbekistan

Mediterranean Dialogue Countries (7)	
Algeria	Mauritania
Egypt	Morocco
Israel	Tunisia
Jordan	



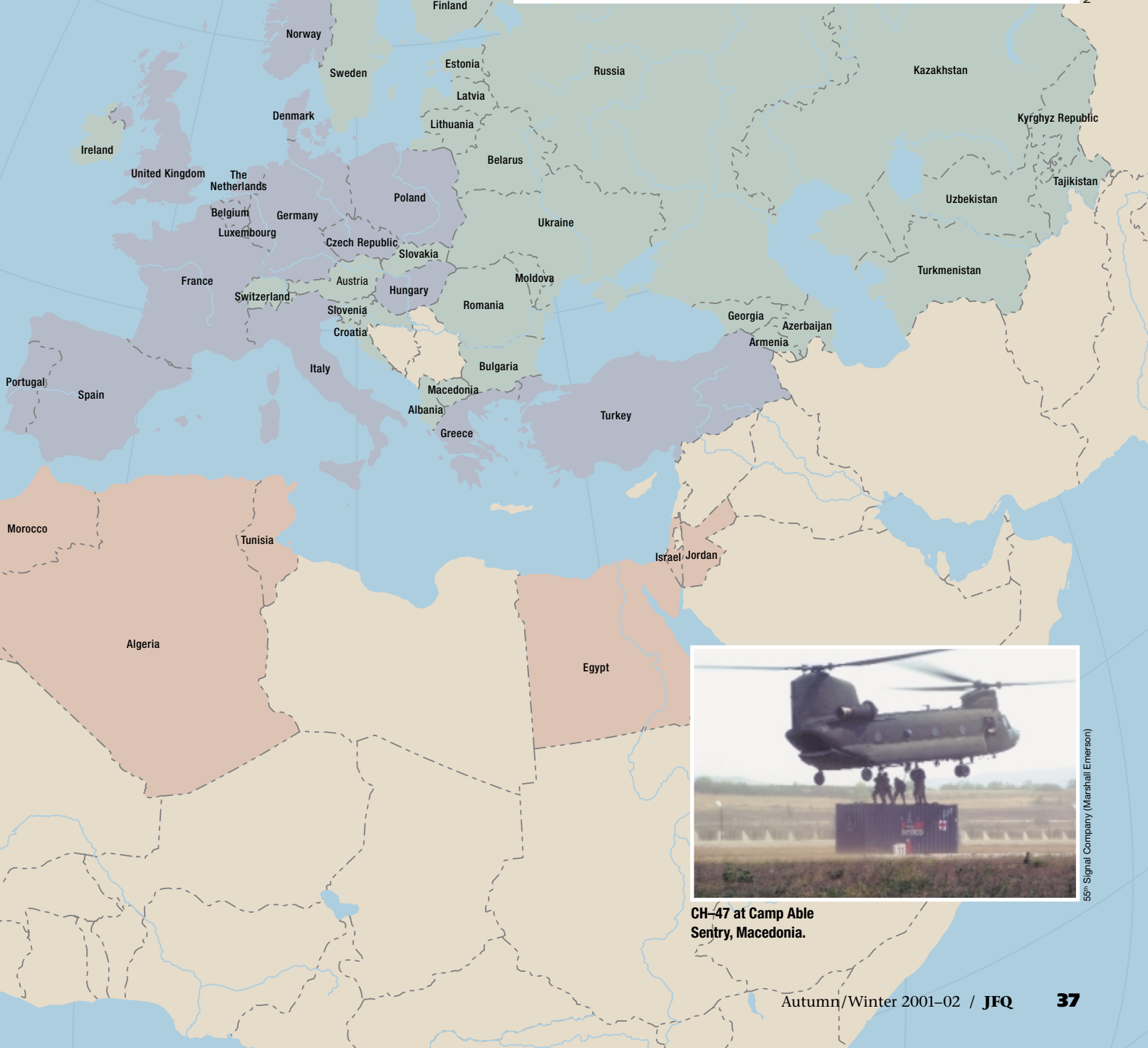
Polish and Ukrainian forces operating in Kosovo.

59th Signal Company (Martin J. Cervantes)



Bilateral NATO talks with Russia.

NATO



CH-47 at Camp Able Sentry, Macedonia.

55th Signal Company (Marshall Emerson)



DOD (R.D. Ward)

armaments cooperation, and defense related environmental operations complete this impressive list. In addition to traditional consultations, EAPC flexibility has also allowed innovative approaches to regional security issues, including consultations on the Caucasus and Southeastern Europe.

### In from the Cold

How Russia settles into the emerging Euro-Atlantic system will have great impact on the future quality of European security. If Moscow remains on the path towards democratic reform and a market economy and chooses to engage constructively in transatlantic affairs, most European security problems could be solved cooperatively, whether the issue is regional conflict, nuclear safety, or nonproliferation. By contrast, should Russia abandon its European orientation, a true Euro-Atlantic security order would become a more distant prospect. NATO thus has a vested interest in seeing the first option materialize—a cooperative, self-confident Russia.

The Alliance may not be able to play the leading role in bringing Russia into the European mainstream, yet it

must be more than a bystander. It must engage constructively. Above all, it must signal that it takes Moscow seriously as a major security actor. The NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997 served that purpose. The creation of a permanent joint council reinforced it, setting an agenda ranging from nonproliferation to crisis management.

NATO-Russian cooperation is picking up momentum again as disagreement over the Kosovo crisis fades. But

### proliferation is one of the greatest security issues of the new century

going back to the status quo is not enough. Both parties must seek a relationship where disagreement in one area does not lead to a breakdown in others. The council should be seen as a forum where differences can be aired, not just a consultative body for fair weather use. Such a crisis-resilient partnership would not only benefit the relationship between Russia and NATO but be a strategic advantage for the entire Atlantic community.

### WMD and Missile Defense

The rapid dissemination of technology and information offers benefits but raises the threat of more states developing weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear tests by India and Pakistan have highlighted this challenge, as have clandestine activities by Iraq and North Korea. Moreover, while nuclear weapons remain difficult to acquire, biological and chemical weapons are more readily obtainable.

Although the military value of such weapons is often questioned, ruthless regimes have demonstrated their willingness to use them. Their availability

will increase the striking power of nonstate actors such as terrorist groups. Thus proliferation is one of the greatest security issues of the new century. Only the combined efforts of North America and Europe can manage it. They must continue consultations on missile defense and develop a common approach. By putting the issue firmly on the NATO agenda, the United States and its Allies have demonstrated that they intend to tackle it in a transatlantic framework. Furthermore, Allied cooperation with

partners, particularly Russia, as well as links with other parties, are valuable assets in searching for an answer to the proliferation problem.

### Preserving Competence

The frequent use of buzzwords such as *crisis management* and *peace support* should not obscure the fact that these operations still require advanced military capabilities and possibly, as Kosovo demonstrated, the use of overwhelming force. One of the recognized lessons from the Balkans is that capability gaps between national militaries make coalition operations difficult to mount—the more so when the number of participants increases. Alliance strategy, with its emphasis on interoperability, demands considerable technological equivalence among the units involved in any given effort. State-of-the-art communications systems find it difficult to function with systems designed decades ago.

Interoperability was one reason the Defence Capabilities Initiative was launched at the 1999 Washington Summit. The initiative is helping to identify essential capabilities all members must have to conduct modern operations. Correcting interoperability shortfalls centers on force planning, an Alliance-wide effort. There has already been progress; but changing security structures can take years, especially in countries with forces optimized for Cold War-style territorial defense. That makes it all the more important to live up to new commitments and take the necessary steps now.

### Transatlantic Bargain

Last but not least, there is the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which to some American observers may seem to be driven by the European Union and aimed at securing autonomy from NATO and the United States. But in fact it is a transatlantic project. A European Union that develops capabilities to manage crises where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged is a bonus for transatlantic relations. It will be major progress indeed when there are more options than can be provided by NATO in times of peril.

European Allies who can pull their weight in future coalition operations



U.S. troops guarding Serbian church in Mogila, Kosovo.

55th Signal Company (Vincent A. King)

are also a bonus for transatlantic relations. More than ten years after the end of the Cold War, it is becoming increasingly difficult to explain why Europe, as an economic powerhouse equal to the United States, is not pulling its weight in managing conflicts on its own doorstep. The asymmetry revealed during the Kosovo campaign, where the United States carried a disproportionate share of the military burden, cannot remain a politically sustainable option.

These factors explain why ESDP, rather than being optional, is increasingly a precondition for a balanced transatlantic relationship—and thus for a healthy Alliance. ESDP is not about institutional competition but rather about broadening the range of crisis response options. The emerging NATO-European Union relationship reflects these realities. There will be no unnecessary duplication between the two bodies. The non-European Union Allies will have an opportunity to participate in European operations. And unlike its many previous incarnations, which were long on rhetoric but short

on results, the European Security and Defence Identity is focused on concrete capabilities. The headline goal of establishing a 60,000-strong rapid reaction corps by 2003 indicates an understanding of the need to go beyond mere institution-building. Some nations have already begun to halt the fall in their defense budgets, and many have set new priorities on procuring the forces required by the new security environment. Such a renewed emphasis on capabilities is most welcome from the NATO point of view because improved European capabilities will also be available to the Alliance itself.

The challenges mentioned are not the only ones on our common transatlantic security agenda. Advancing the NATO relationship with Ukraine, a country of pivotal importance for European security and stability, is another task North America and Europe must pursue together. Building a web of dialogue and cooperation with the nations along the southern shores of the Mediterranean is still another. And the Allies and partners will be relentless in their common efforts to oppose terrorism in all its forms, wherever it occurs.

This agenda is busy but far from unmanageable. After all, North America and Europe comprise the world's most dynamic societies and have proven themselves capable of embracing change and innovation. Working together, there is hardly a security challenge they cannot overcome. The Alliance will face the latest trial, the scourge of terrorism, and defeat it using the enduring strengths that have succeeded for over fifty years—transatlantic solidarity and common action in the face of common threats.

JFQ

USS Theodore Roosevelt,  
Allied Force.

# NATO

## Command and Control for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

By THOMAS-DURELL YOUNG

**M**any advocates of a revolution in military affairs argue that technological breakthroughs will bring greater operational speed. Global communications systems spurred by the explosion in microprocessing and digital technologies will provide commanders with unprecedented advantages. Given such advances, there has been speculation that the Armed

Forces of the future will be able to overwhelm any enemy *in extremis*.

But despite extensive study of the impact of new technologies, there has been insufficient analysis on how such innovations will affect political oversight. This dearth in the literature has been particularly glaring with regards to alliance and coalition warfare. The political leadership of any assemblage of democracies will want to exploit greater speed in order to bring a war or peace enforcement operation to a quick and just conclusion. Given that Western democracies only rarely

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conduct operations unilaterally, the immediacy of this issue takes on added importance.

Political oversight in alliances and coalitions is effected by a formal standing body like the North Atlantic Council or through ad hoc political consultative forums. It becomes the province of multinational parties in either case. In the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), decisionmaking by 19 nations often occurs at a languid pace that may not be conducive to high-speed maneuvers. This should come as no surprise, given that governments are loath to surrender their forces to foreign command without provision for close political monitoring. The success of NATO as a long-standing military alliance and the growing worldwide application of its basic procedures make it worthwhile to revisit the current definitions and practices of its command authorities, their compatibility with the expectation of a revolution in military affairs, and the capacity of NATO to translate future political decisions into rapid military action.

### The Challenge of Change

Delegation of command authority to multinational commanders remains one of the least developed areas of Alliance force employment policy. Land operations present singular problems because ground commanders require greater authority than naval and air commanders. The missions and operational limitations of ships and aircraft are a function of their design. Naval vessels and planes can best be thought of as integral weapons and systems platforms that can be allocated to nonnational commanders for specific tasks. Hence for naval and air forces, only a few command authorities need be transferred to a multinational force. Land forces, on the other hand, are combined arms teams that must be organized for a specific mission. The cross-assignment of units, the frequent need to change missions rapidly to respond to a developing situation, and the legitimate need for a commander to establish supply and training priorities are among the more sensitive powers nations are reluctant to turn over to an Alliance commander.

**Table 1. NATO Authorities**

#### **Operational Command (OPCOM)**

The authority granted to a commander to assign missions or tasks to subordinate commanders, to deploy units, to reassign forces, and to retain or delegate operational and/or tactical control as may be deemed necessary. It does not of itself include responsibility for administration or logistics. May also be used to denote the forces assigned to a commander.

#### **Operational Control (OPCON)**

The authority delegated to a commander to direct forces assigned so that the commander may accomplish specific missions or tasks which are usually limited by function, time, or location; to deploy units concerned; and to retain or assign tactical control to those units. It does not include authority to assign separate employment of components of the units concerned. Neither does it, of itself, include administrative or logistic control.

#### **Tactical Command (TACOM)**

The authority delegated to a commander to assign tasks to forces under his command for the accomplishment of the mission assigned by higher authority.

#### **Tactical Control (TACON)**

The detailed and usually local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned.

#### **Coordinating Authority**

The authority granted to a commander or individual assigned responsibility for coordinating specific functions or activities involving forces of two or more countries or commands, or two or more services, or two or more forces of the same service. He has the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved or their representatives but does not have the authority to compel agreement. In case of disagreement between the agencies involved, he should attempt to obtain essential agreement by discussion. In the event he is unable to obtain essential agreement he shall refer the matter to the appropriate authority.

#### **Integrated Directing and Control Authority**

(employed only by commanding general, I German-Netherlands Corps)

This authority provides the commander with powers that are identical or similar to those vested in a commander of a national corps or with powers that are altogether new. Sovereign national rights (in the narrowest sense) are excepted. The commanding general has the right to give instructions to all subordinate military and civilian personnel and may issue directives to the binational and national elements of the corps and set priorities.

Source: NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions.

The four official levels of NATO command authority—operational command (OPCOM), operational control (OPCON), tactical command (TACOM), and tactical control (TACON)—have not been revised since the early 1980s (see table 1). Their definitions are legalistic and not readily understandable. Authorities do not cover important peacetime responsibilities appropriate for multinational formations such as

training, readiness, and logistics. Because of broad NATO interpretations of command authorities, members often indulge in the practice of employing caveats, creating even more ambiguous terms such as OPCOM+ and OPCOM-. During peacetime, with the exception of I German-Netherlands Corps, multinational commanders of formations earmarked for NATO do not have command authority per se. Rather, they wield coordination authority, which does not allow any directive control.

### Three Faces of the New NATO

Commanders have discovered three trends that are reshaping how Alliance capabilities are employed.

*Multinational forces.* Integration of multinational land forces was almost exclusively effected on the corps level during the Cold War, the exception being Multinational Corps Northeast (located in Stettin, Poland). To protect force structure and maintain expertise on higher levels of command, there exist multinational land formations declared to the Alliance down to corps and even division levels. Sadly, there is no NATO policy, let alone a common approach, to establishing command authority requirements on specific levels of command. Moreover, there has been no concerted effort among the 19 members to ascertain if current definitions match the mission requirements of multinational force commanders. To be sure, issues related to administration (such as promotions and transfers), referred to in NATO as *full command*, will always remain within the purview of a sovereign state. Yet no one would seriously challenge the responsibility of a national corps or division commander to meet the training and readiness standards set out by higher authorities. Command arrangements and practices in NATO hinder the achievement of these goals at present.

*New missions.* The range of possible tasks for forces declared to NATO has increased dramatically. Serving as reaction forces for non-Article 5 peace support operations is the dominant mission of most elements, as opposed to meeting less immediate collective self defense missions. These new operations have two important characteristics. First, they almost exclusively tend to be executed within a multinational formation. Second, while the missions and mission essential tasks are not as demanding as combat missions, they are nevertheless rigorous in the context of political military issues. Nations have found the ambiguity afforded by nuanced command authority definitions to be an advantage because they



U.S. Air Force (Joe Cupido)

Closely related to the issue of command authorities is the question of when forces should be transferred from

### Alliance forces in Bosnia and Kosovo revealed severe weaknesses in NATO definitions and their use in practice

national command structures to a multinational land force commander. This decision has a major effect on when important matters such as training and logistic requirements can be directed rather than merely coordinated.

After the Cold War, with its luxury of facing a single coherent and predictable threat, vague NATO definitions and obscure practices did not keep pace with geostrategic realities. The central region chiefs of army staff (CR-CAST) in the early 1990s became acutely aware of the problem during multinational exercises. At the Central Region Chiefs of Army Staff Talks in May 1994, General M.J. Wilmlink, Commander, Land Forces Central Europe, recounted an incident when he directed a subordinate contingent to reallocate assets to another national

force. The time required for the commander to gain approval from his national authorities nearly cost the battle. Allied Rapid Reaction Corps experienced similar crippling limitations in its authority to direct and task organize forces during fast-moving exercises. These troubles presaged difficulties during the force deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995–96.

The use of Alliance forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo revealed the severe weaknesses in NATO definitions and their use in practice. General Klaus Naumann, Chairman of the Military Committee, stated in the aftermath of Operation Allied Force,

*I think one has to make sure that a NATO commander is given the maximum unity of command and the right to really see it through. Nations . . . should prepare to think through to which degree they are really willing to transfer authority to NATO.*

Loading a laser guided bomb on AV-8B Harrier.



U.S. Navy (Susan Milton)

Table 2. Recommended Mission Command Authorities

**Article 5**

collective defense	operational command
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**Non-Article 5 peace support operations**

peace enforcement	operational command
conflict prevention	operational control
peacemaking	operational control
peacekeeping	operational control
humanitarian aid	operational control
peace building	operational control

allow the appearance of multinationality without actually giving up authority for commanders to carry out assigned tasks. While such arrangements might be politically appealing, they reduce operational efficiency.

*Reorganized commands.* One of the least recognized problems has been caused by reorganization of the integrated command structure without accompanying review and reform of command authorities. The revision of the integrated command structure and the introduction, but not as yet full acceptance, of the combined joint task force concept have not resulted in a reconsideration of the number of command authorities and their definition to ascertain if they support new structures.

**Conflict in Command**

Under the U.S. system there are three distinct levels of command supported by three different levels of command authority: combatant commanders in chief for combatant command, component commanders for operational control, and service commanders for tactical control. During the Cold War, NATO developed command authorities that fit neatly into a similar logical construct: supreme commanders for OPCOM, major subordinate commanders for OPCON (+/-), subordinate commanders for TACON (+/-), and national corps commanders for full command.

These existing relationships have proven inadequate for dealing with missions, organizations, and new formations. The integrated military command structure of NATO has been reorganized but is largely guided by political, not military considerations. Thus levels of command and span of control over subordinated units do not clearly or logically match command authorities.

A CR-CAST working group determined that command for a multinational force ought to be decided in a bottom-up fashion, where the mission should be the starting point for identifying appropriate authorities. For example, the group offered recommendations to guide the selection of command authorities for a multinational corps commander.



Command center, Allied Force.



UH-60 near Prejidor, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

NATO

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Lemuel Casillas)

It recommended, for example, a higher command authority (OPCOM) in collective defense and peace enforcement. The group recognized the possible requirement to carry out combat operations, the most demanding tasking, and to allow the commander to protect the force. But while these recommendations appear logical, thus far NATO has made little progress in implementing them. Al-

**Alliance initiatives have fallen short of matching the operating realities of the emerging strategic environment**

liance initiatives have fallen short of matching the operating realities of the emerging strategic environment.

Political decisionmaking is unlikely to change significantly. Although technology can provide sophisticated decision support technologies, making such decisions will remain an inherently human responsibility driven by

both foreign and domestic policy concerns. Assuming that digital communications continue to evolve, it appears that communications between the operational/tactical commander and national political leadership will become more refined and instantaneous, making for more consultation, not less.

Assuming continued improvement in the ability of commanders to affect the operational speed, it should be clear that future tensions loom large in the critical and delicate area of civil-military relations.

**New Wine in New Bottles**

The basis for ascertaining command authorities should follow the key recommendation of the CR-CAST

working group study, basing command authority requirements on the given mission. If command authorities in a particular operation fall short of what is needed, replacing them should be a clear political decision as opposed to the application of ambiguous command definitions or idiosyncratic interpretations of their meaning. Moreover, given recent evidence of the difficulty of carrying out multinational land operations, any reform of the current system of definitions and procedures should err on the side of addressing singular requirements of land forces. In this respect, the need for multinational commanders to assign and change missions and task-organize



Some work is already ongoing. The ABCA Armies Standardization Program—whose membership includes America, Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—has existed over fifty years and has provided a forum for the five armies to discuss areas of mutual interest that affect interoperability. One of its aims is improving combined operations. For example, the program recently published a useful coalition operations and logistic planning guide.

A recent meeting in Washington addressed the issue of command definitions for coalition operations. ABCA armies accepted a challenge to take the lead in formulating a methodology similar to the one suggested by the CR-CAST working group.

The jury is still out on reform and likely to remain so for some time. It is clear that, if for no other reason, global and instantaneous communications are likely to continue improving, thereby compressing levels of command. If greater operational speed is also realized through new technologies, one can foresee serious civil-military challenges which will most acutely affect alliances and coalitions. As yet, there remains no firm formal understanding among Alliance members on exactly which authorities a multinational force commander requires. This is a critical issue that must be addressed with deliberate action for the difficult times ahead. **JFQ**

subordinate formations must be addressed. These are admittedly politically sensitive issues, given that they affect the very constitution and employment of armies. However, without acknowledging the peculiar nature of multinational land forces, any reform is likely to be incomplete.

Apropos the actual reform of command authorities, consideration should be given to the terms themselves, which have proven less than useful in quickly and clearly conveying intent. For example, the term *commandement operationelle* (OPCOM) as used by the French is essentially defined as *full* or *national* command, unlike NATO where it is considered to be subordinate to full command. Indeed the simple use of terms such as *command* could be counterproductive. After all,

operational command implies authorities that all but constitute sovereign responsibilities and even sounds all too similar to full command.

One solution is regarding command authorities in the same manner as nations approach the employment of force. The advantage of considering the delegation of command authorities in the same way as formulating rules of engagement, for instance, is that those rules are mission specific and structured to avoid doubt whether an action is allowable.

But mission-oriented command procedures cannot be created out of whole cloth. They must be formally developed, evaluated, and validated. Extensive politico-military seminars, command post exercises, computer assisted simulations, and perhaps even a small part of planned field exercises should be conducted before implementing such radical reform.

# European Missile Defense— Issues and Options

by RICHARD D. SOKOLSKY



Secretary of Defense  
at Nordic talks in  
Torku, Finland.

DOD (R.D. Ward)

**T**he NATO reaction to the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States underscores the heightened European recognition of threats to Western security originating from beyond the borders of member nations. Nonetheless, the European Allies remain wary of plans to extend missile defenses to their continent. In trying to change attitudes toward missile defense within NATO, the administration will need to consider European interests and

political and economic realities. The United States should not try to force missile defense on Europe. Nor should this issue be viewed as an exclusively NATO project or a test of Allied fealty. At the same time, the Allies need to face the potentially damaging consequences of remaining vulnerable to ballistic missile attack while the United States builds defenses against such a threat.

Hammering out a responsible NATO missile defense policy will be far more difficult if the transatlantic debate becomes polarized between those who believe Europe will never agree to missile defenses and those who argue that the continent must be protected regardless of its own wishes.

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The real choice is not between a comprehensive defense or none. Rather it is between a region that remains totally vulnerable to ballistic missile attack and one that follows a strategy of differentiation, wherein some Allies pursue varying levels of protection against missile threats of different ranges on different timetables. The United States and its Alliance partners should agree on a division of labor for constructing a European missile defense system. America should take primary responsibility for intercepting longer-range missiles in the boost and midcourse phases, relying on sea-based systems and limited ground and air-based capabilities. Europeans should accept primary responsibility for terminal defense, particularly against shorter-range missiles.

### Making the Case

The administration of President George Bush has pledged that its missile defense program will protect Allies and friends. As a result, senior officials no longer talk about national missile defense but about systems for Allied and global protection. The logic of including European Allies is compelling. Allied participation in dealing with regional crises is critical to sustaining domestic and international support for the use of force by the United States. A Europe vulnerable to attack could be deterred from dealing with regional crises that threaten vital Western security interests. A deterred Europe could inhibit the United States from responding to aggression, or NATO countries exposed to missile attack might sit on the sidelines while the United States bears the brunt of defending European interests.

Yet if the strategic logic is compelling, the political and economic realities across the Atlantic work the other way. Most Europeans continue to harbor serious reservations about U.S. missile defense policy and would prefer to replace the Antiballistic Missile Treaty with a new regime regulating the deployment of missile defenses. They do not want the United States to withdraw from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty, as the President recently announced it



Fleet Combat Camera Group, Pacific (Gloria J. Barry)

will, and unilaterally build its own missile defense system. In addition, they are hardly likely to make missile defense a high priority for themselves primarily because they do not feel particularly threatened by ballistic missiles in the hands of rogue states. Nor do they see missile defense as an effective response to terrorist organizations that might someday threaten European soil with nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. For the foreseeable future, few

### **few governments will be prepared to devote scarce resources to a European missile defense system**

governments will be prepared to devote scarce resources to a European missile defense system in order to help preserve freedom of action to conduct military interventions outside Europe.

### The Options

In the long run, America's strategic logic may trump European misgivings. Indeed, while European wariness about missile defenses has not disappeared as a result of the events of September 11,

there is growing awareness within the Alliance that threats emanating from beyond Europe, such as terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, can endanger Western security, and that new defense capabilities are required. Thus it is worth evaluating the three available options.

*Theater missile defense system.* One alternative is relying on current NATO plans for missile defense systems to defend limited areas against ballistic missiles with less than intercontinental range. This approach offers several advantages. While still contentious, it is less controversial than a more comprehensive global system that would shield the continental United States and potentially Europe as well. A more modest system could cause fewer diplomatic problems with Russia and China. Moreover, some systems currently under development could shield ports and cities in border areas against shorter-range missile attacks and under certain circumstances could guard against strategic ballistic missiles.



*USS Cape Saint George underway.*

Fleet Combat Camera Group, Atlantic (James F. Slaughtenhaupt)



**Launching target track vehicle, Hawaii.**

U.S. Navy (Nick Galante)

Few Allies have shown much interest in comprehensive theater missile defense. The United States has sought to persuade a skeptical NATO to acquire such a capability since the mid-1990s. Despite endorsing cooperation and reaching an agreement to share theater missile defense early warning information in 1996, scant progress was made in developing and deploying an Alliance-wide capability for the protection of forward deployed forces, let alone European home territory.

Recently, however, the program has received a shot in the arm. In June 2001, two teams of defense industrial companies were selected to design a system for protecting deployed forces

from missile attack. This put the Alliance on a track to make a decision on program development in 2004. American cooperation with Germany and The Netherlands continues to grow. The U.S.-German-Italian medium extended air defense system program, which has faltered over the years, appears to be back on track. Germany, Italy, and The Netherlands are considering collaborative research, development, and procurement of ship-based tactical ballistic missile defense systems. Italy and Turkey are pursuing lower-tier programs. These and other



initiatives could provide terminal defense against shorter-range systems and form one tier of a multilayered system.

Nonetheless, the prospect for cooperation on more capable defenses remains uncertain at best. Most member countries have long avoided difficult policy, program, and funding decisions and face a host of competing military and nonmilitary demands. As a result, current activities are focused on programs to provide lower-tier protection of troops operating outside NATO territory. No ally has a missile shielding capability beyond basic point defense, and all rely on the United States to provide upper-tier protection of forward deployed multinational forces. Furthermore, the systems under consideration are limited to a missile threat range of 3,500 km, rendering

### ground-based sites on European territory could raise Moscow's hackles

them significantly less capable against intercontinental ballistic missiles, and are not optimally designed for a continent-wide shield. Portions of Northern Europe can be reached by Iranian or Iraqi missiles of greater than 3,500 km range and would therefore require strategic interceptors.

*Ground-based midcourse system.* An architecture including ground-based interceptors and radars located in Europe for midcourse interception of long-range missiles aimed at the United States could also provide some defense for U.S. Allies. To provide maximum protection of both American and European territory against Middle East threats, one site would need to be located in Central Europe, perhaps in the Czech Republic, Germany, or Poland. This integrated transatlantic architecture would offer equal protection to all NATO members. The United States would own and operate the system but depend on a host country for basing facilities.

This option has serious drawbacks. Ground-based interceptors would employ existing midcourse technologies and thus share the same vulnerabilities to countermeasures as U.S.-based interceptors.

The political acceptability of ground-based deployments in Europe would be highly uncertain and far more problematic than sea-based alternatives. Additionally, ground-based sites on European territory could raise Moscow's hackles since they could threaten Russian strategic forces. Some of these political and diplomatic risks could be mitigated by placing x-band radars, which are required for warhead tracking and discrimination, aboard

ships deployed in the Mediterranean or Atlantic or in a less controversial location such as Turkey.

*Sea-based midcourse system.* The United States and NATO could also deploy a sea-based system for midcourse interception. For instance, as a first line of defense in a multilayered system, the United States, with the participation of selected Allies, could deploy Navy theater-wide defense on Aegis platforms in the far eastern Mediterranean. The second tier could be a littoral defense of Allied territory deployed in the Baltic Sea, English Channel, or North Atlantic. This midcourse intercept would fill the gap between forward deployed systems and U.S.-based midcourse systems for homeland security.

This approach offers several advantages. It avoids the more politically charged step of deploying missile interceptors on European soil. A sea-based system might be easier to justify domestically insofar as it could be portrayed as a logical extension of the current NATO program, designed to defend forward deployed forces. Deployment at sea offers relatively inexpensive opportunities for European participation. NATO countries could pool their naval assets to form a standing sea-based force in the Mediterranean or the North Atlantic. Finally, this option would provide operational flexibility because sea-based assets in the Mediterranean and elsewhere around Europe could, with adequate strategic warning, swing relatively easily into position to counter missile threats.

Benefits would have to be weighed against the fact that sea-based systems will pose a greater threat to Russia the further north they are deployed because they will have a significantly increased capacity to intercept Russian missiles. In addition, unless the location of potential threats allowed the United States to deploy sea-based platforms that could intercept missiles launched at both it and its Allies, European countries would need to build dedicated sea-based assets to defend their own territory.

*Boost-phase intercept system.* Boost-phase systems intercept ballistic missiles shortly after they are launched.

An architecture using ground-, sea-, and air-based boost-phase interceptors offers several significant advantages in overcoming political, technical, and operational challenges. Their overwhelming benefit is their ability to defend both the United States and Europe against missile threats of any range. They could also be deployed in locations that would not threaten Chinese and Russian strategic capabilities. Based outside national territories, they offer greater potential for multinational cooperation. Because missiles would be intercepted in the early part of their trajectories, an effective system could prevent the deployment of decoys, countermeasures, and other penetration aids. Finally, mobile boost-phase systems can be moved forward to deal with specific threats, providing greater operational flexibility.

One approach combining ground-, sea-, and air-based boost-phase interceptors could be described as the southern or Turkish option. Under this scheme, which could also serve as the first line of defense for the ground- and sea-based midcourse options, ground-based boost-phase interceptors and x-band radars could be deployed in southeastern Turkey to deal with an Iraqi ballistic missile threat to NATO and U.S. territory. It could be supplemented with sea-based interceptors in the Black Sea to defend against ballistic missiles flying trajectories out of northern Iran. The Air Force airborne laser system operating from Turkish air bases could also be a component of this plan.

A major benefit of the Turkish option is the opportunity for cooperation. For example, those members who plan to field theater systems now or later, including Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, and Turkey, could deploy these capabilities to defend Turkish missile defense sites and other facilities. NATO countries could also deploy combat aircraft or naval assets to protect sea- and air-based systems operating from the Black Sea and Turkish airfields. These deployments could be made on a rotational basis as part of a multinational unit, and some of the development and operation costs could be met out of the NATO infrastructure account. In addition, the option would avoid the politically sensitive question of land-based



U.S. and Russian officials discussing ballistic missile defenses.

DOD (R.D. Ward)

missile defense sites elsewhere in Central Europe. Given Turkey's threat perceptions and extensive participation in European missile defense, this approach should be broadly acceptable to the public, particularly since it would boost the country's influence and stature within the Alliance. Finally, for both technical and operational reasons, Turkish-based systems founded on boost-phase intercept technologies should be less threatening to Russia.

There are operational challenges. Most significantly, because of the short time available for launch detection and tracking, command and control of these systems would almost certainly need to be automated, rendering operational command and control problematic. Also, systems would need to be deployed within hundreds of kilometers of the launch site; thus ships operating in the eastern Mediterranean could not intercept Iraqi or Iranian launches.

### The Way Ahead

It remains to be seen whether Europe will ever embrace the American strategic rationale for European missile defense. Certainly the events of September 11, and particularly the NATO decision to invoke its collective defense obligations under Article 5 of

the Washington Treaty, raised the Alliance's collective consciousness about threats to Western security in the emerging strategic environment arising from outside Europe. Moreover, a terrorist attack on European soil comparable to those on the United States could create a sea change in attitudes toward homeland security against asymmetric threats. But whether this change, if it does occur, will be translated into specific funding and programmatic commitments on missile defense remains an open question. In fact, most experts believe that it would take a ballistic missile attack on European territory with weapons of mass destruction—a scenario most governments on the continent still regard as highly unlikely—to bring about a cataclysmic shift in attitude. Consequently, the challenge remains for the United States and its Allies to design a transatlantic system that is politically logical, operationally effective, technically feasible, diplomatically sensible, and fiscally affordable. Finding a responsible policy for the Alliance will be far more difficult if the debate becomes polarized between those who assert that Europe would never accept missile defenses and those who blithely assume that the Allies will march in lock-step with an American vision.

It should be possible to steer a middle course. Ground-, sea-, or air-based boost-phase intercept systems deployed in Turkey and the Black Sea could be the first line of transatlantic defense. The second layer would be sea-based midcourse systems operating in the easternmost corner of the Mediterranean and in waters around the periphery of NATO countries. The last tier in this layered system could be land-based and/or ship-borne platforms for close-in terminal defense of ports and cities.

In addition to maximizing operational effectiveness, a mix of mobile systems for interception of missiles in all three phases of flight offers flexibility in dealing with the full range of Middle Eastern missile threats. Such a broad architecture can be easily adapted as technologies and threats change. Additionally, it offers ample opportunities for different forms of burdensharing and for NATO participation to evolve naturally. The most effective architecture will meet operational requirements while allowing individual Allies to choose among a mix of moderately low-cost defense systems.

The Allies need to decide for themselves whether they require a missile defense system and are willing to pay for it. Absent a catastrophic

### the Allies need to decide for themselves whether they require a missile defense system

event that shocks European governments into action, such a consensus is likely to evolve slowly in most countries if at all, and will be driven as much by internal political and economic conditions as by geopolitical developments. At the same time, NATO probably needn't make a deployment decision for several years. First, the Alliance contribution is most likely to evolve out of theater missile defense developments, and the systems under consideration will not be deployable until later in the decade. Second, and equally important, it will take several years of development and testing before Washington can commit to a specific architecture. In view of these factors, the natural instinct of



most members will be to temporize until the technological feasibility of missile defense systems, especially the more politically palatable sea-based options, has been demonstrated and other more immediate priorities have been met.

If a multilayered system is ever to be constructed, compromises will be required on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States will have to be prepared to develop a flexible design that allows Allies to plug into it in varying ways, depending on the evolution of threat perceptions, advances in ballistic missile defense technologies, and changes in domestic political and economic circumstances. For their part, European Allies will need to choose among a broad range of options, with each country deciding what it wants based on its requirements and resources.

Moreover, if the Allies decide they need an extra missile defense insurance policy, a transatlantic division of labor and burdensharing will be needed for the architecture that meets the threat, minimizes political and financial costs, and assuages Russian concerns. Taking these considerations into account, the United States and its NATO Allies should consider a high-low division of labor. Specifically, the United States

would take primary responsibility for intercepting missiles in the boost and midcourse phases as the first line of defense in a multilayered architecture while the Allies accept primary responsibility for terminal defense, particularly against shorter-range missiles.

Even if Europeans were to accept a minimalist but realistic role in developing a missile defense system for their territory, consensus on building it is likely to prove elusive unless the United States is ready to accept some degree of free riding. Moderating U.S. ambitions for Allied contributions, while a bitter pill to swallow, might be a price worth paying to realize the strategic benefits of extending the missile defense deterrent to Europe while avoiding another divisive issue in the transatlantic relationship.

Most Europeans still feel safer today than at any time in fifty years. Prior to September 11, European missile defense was virtually unimaginable. But in the future, America's Allies may be more sensitive to threats to their territory arising from an arc of instability stretching through the greater Middle East and Persian Gulf and along the entire Asian littoral. Whether or not these dangers loom larger in the European strategic calculus, the impediments to missile defense should not be understated. Nevertheless, the road map laid out here could lead to the future deployment of effective Allied protection and help coax reluctant NATO governments down the path the United States has chosen at a price they and their publics are willing to pay. **JFQ**

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AH-64 arriving at  
Rinas, Kosovo.



1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Cesar Rodriguez)

# The Operational Challenges of Task Force Hawk

By JOHN GORDON IV, BRUCE NARDULLI, and  
WALTER L. PERRY

Operation Allied Force was a major NATO success. The Alliance withstood competing national agendas and divisive political pressures while conducting a 78-day campaign that ended violence against Albanian Kosovars. Serb forces withdrew from Kosovo and refugees returned home. Yet the conflict also raised questions. While many of the controversies were debated on the levels of policy and strategy, differences on the operational role of U.S. joint forces also arose. Task Force Hawk was the most visible case. Intended to supplement airpower by using the AH-64 helicopter and multiple launch rocket system (MLRS), its



ANTP-Q-37 radar,  
Task Force Hawk.

55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company (Russell J. Koale)

Lieutenant Colonel John Gordon IV, USA (Ret.), Bruce Nardulli, and Lieutenant Colonel Walter L. Perry, USA (Ret.), are defense analysts with RAND.

Perimeter at Rinas Airport.



U.S. Air Force (Angela Stafforci)

mission proved to be controversial among senior U.S. military officers. In addition, operations revealed major failures in the integration of ground and air forces.

This article reviews the background leading to the decision to launch Task

### while NATO had months to prepare for air operations, the timeline for Task Force Hawk was constrained

Force Hawk, its deployment, misconceptions regarding its speed of arrival, and the operational difficulties that confronted the joint force.

#### A Rumor of War

Preparations for a campaign against Yugoslavia started in summer 1998. With conditions in the province of Kosovo steadily deteriorating, military planning was conducted within both NATO and U.S.-only channels. Planning was significantly constrained because few Alliance members perceived that they had vital interests at stake in Kosovo. In particular, neither American nor NATO leadership favored using ground forces as part of an integrated joint operation. While fairly elaborate air attack options were developed through the early winter of 1999,

there was no planning for a land component. This shortfall strongly influenced subsequent operations.

Although the initial mission was to take out the Serbian air defense system, air operations included provisions for attacks on ground forces as well as fixed infrastructure targets. Planners realized at the outset that it would be hard to locate and hit Yugoslav ground troops operating inside Kosovo where regular army and police forces were conducting operations against the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Serbian conventional units were employed in company- and battalion-sized battle groups so forces could spread throughout the province and rapidly move to support the police. These tactics and the forested, hilly terrain produced a dispersed and nearly invisible enemy with long experience in small unit, combined arms operations.

While NATO had months to prepare for air operations, the timeline for Task Force Hawk was constrained. Army planners in Europe first learned that General Wesley Clark, USA, Commander in Chief, European Command, was considering using attack helicopters in Kosovo at a planning exercise at

Grafenwohr, Germany, on March 20, 1999, just four days prior to the start of NATO air attacks. Initial guidance to the Germany-based Army V Corps was to plan to deploy a force of 1,700 to Macedonia, where it would prepare for deep attack helicopter operations. The force would eventually grow to 48 AH-64s, although the initial deployment envisioned 24 aircraft plus support ships. A small number of MLRS were included to provide air defense suppression fires. Since the force was originally envisioned to deploy to Macedonia and be positioned near elements of the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, planners minimized unit size because force protection and logistic support would be available.

Clark's request for Task Force Hawk proved controversial. He was searching for ways to hit Serb fielded forces in Kosovo, believing that their destruction would convince the enemy to end the conflict. He considered the ground forces a center of gravity for Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic. Moreover, he felt the political pressure for results. Initial air attacks had done little to either damage Serb forces or halt ethnic cleansing.

Where Clark saw benefits, JCS found risks. They immediately raised objections. Critics cited such issues as possible Serb attacks against the AH-64s' operating base, low altitude air defenses in Kosovo, and the dispersed nature of ground targets. The whole issue appeared moot when Macedonia refused permission to mount offensive NATO operations from its territory. Army planners in Germany learned the mission would probably be cancelled on the Friday before Easter.

The situation changed over the weekend. Albania agreed to accept ground forces. The President was persuaded at the same time to authorize the mission despite strong JCS objections. On April 3, he decided to deploy Task Force Hawk.

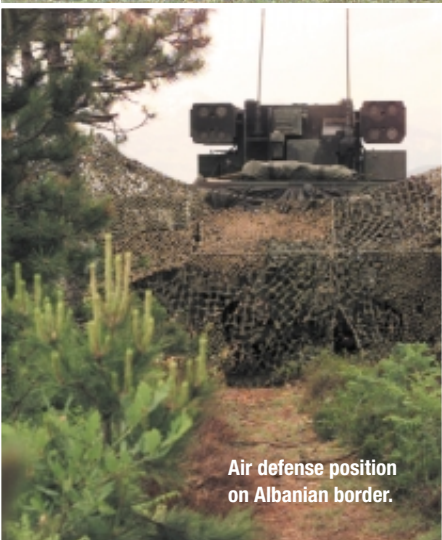
#### On the Fly

The new base profoundly impacted planning and operations. Given the absence of U.S. or NATO units in Albania to provide force protection or other support, the size of the force

AH-64s near Tirana.



55th Signal Company (Christina Ann Home)



Air defense position on Albanian border.

55th Signal Company (Russell J. Koste)

the total number personnel to 5,100. A major portion of the V Corps staff was deployed to Albania to control operations. Lieutenant General John Hendrix, USA, was named to head Task Force Hawk.

Expanding the size of the force was not the only factor affecting deployment. The small airstrip at Rinas, inbound humanitarian flights, and limited means of offloading restricted arrivals to twenty C-17s per day.

Transports carrying personnel and equipment departed from Ramstein air base on April 8. Helicopters began departing six days later. All arrived in Pisa, Italy, by April 18. They were held there several days. The situation at Rinas was chaotic. There was limited ramp room for cargo aircraft and torrential rains had turned the surrounding area into a lake of mud. Humanitarian relief helicopters landing in open fields had sunk up to their bellies. The attack ships would have to wait while concrete landing pads were constructed.

The first 11 AH-64s and 20 support helicopters arrived April 21. The remaining 24 ships came five days later. Hendrix declared an initial operational capability on April 26. On May 7, Task Force Hawk was declared to be fully ready for deep operations

and placed under the operational control of Joint Task Force Noble Anvil, commanded by Admiral James Ellis.

These dates did not compare unfavorably with the expectations of U.S. and NATO commanders. Task Force Hawk met its goals despite the public perception that it was slow to deploy. The National Security Council set mission capability for April 23-24. On April 23, 11 mission-ready AH-64s were at Rinas and several mission readiness exercises had been conducted. In fact, the deployment had gone well from the viewpoint of the Army and Air Force despite one training accident and another mishap attributed to equipment failure.

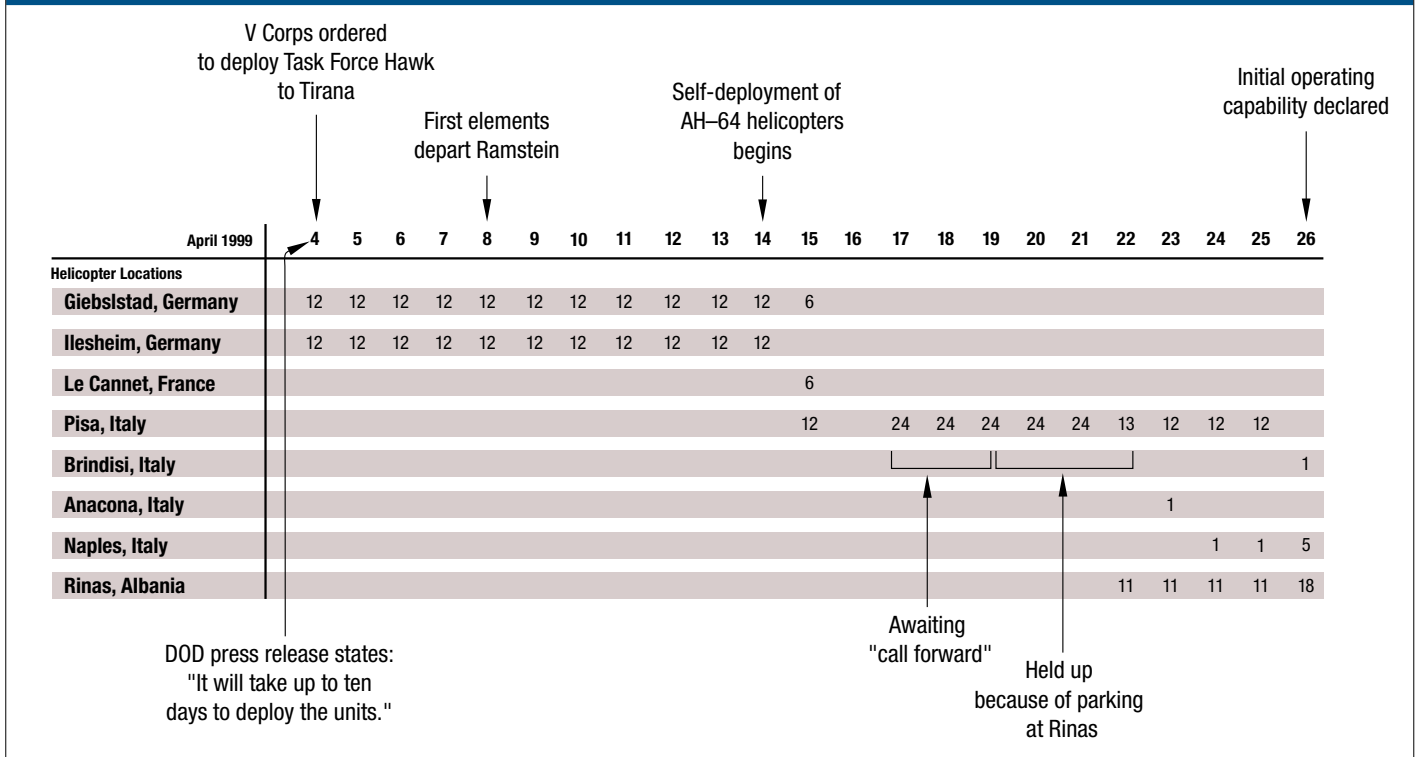
An April 4 DOD press statement contributed to the feeling that the deployment was slow. Kenneth Bacon, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, told a reporter, "You're probably talking, when you consider the transportation challenges, about a week or so, maybe seven to ten days. . . ." A formal press release the same day stated that it would "take up to ten days to deploy the units,"<sup>1</sup> implying closure on April 14, well before the Clark or National Security Council targets. This established a false expectation in the media and among the public.

### Preparing for War

Once in theater, the plan was for attack helicopters to strike conventional and police units operating in central and western Kosovo. The targets were to be developed by various means, including joint reconnaissance systems, Army counterfire radars that were observing artillery and mortar firing against KLA in western Kosovo, and Army unmanned aerial vehicles from Macedonia.

All the missions were planned as night attacks by groups of four to six AH-64s, supported by fixed-wing aircraft strikes and helicopters on standby for rescue in case a ship was shot down. Extensive deception missions and suppressive fires against air defense sites were prepared. Lethal suppressive fires were to come from MLRS and artillery units flown to Albania.

## Task Force Hawk: Helicopter Self-Deployment



For planning and control, V Corps Deep Operations Coordination Center deployed to Albania, developed targets for attack helicopter strikes, and passed those to the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) at Vicenza, Italy. Task

### The Chains that Bind

As with the deployment, Task Force Hawk faced a variety of obstacles once in Kosovo. Overshadowing operational challenges was enduring senior level disagreement over the risks versus

### overshadowing operational challenges was disagreement over the risks versus benefits of employing the force

Force Hawk maintained close contact in Vicenza with the Battlefield Coordination Element (BCE), a small Army detachment whose role was to negotiate the details of proposed helicopter missions. As plans developed, the detachment communicated them to CAOC to deconflict airspace, negotiate fixed-wing support, and work out timing. Task Force Hawk submitted mission proposals daily. While the force prepared for strike operations, it also developed targets that were passed to CAOC for possible fixed-wing strikes.

benefits of employing the force. Combined with Belgrade's capitulation in early June, these factors resulted in Task Force Hawk never being employed in direct combat.

Authorization to employ the force directly never came for several reasons. The target set in western Kosovo consisted of platoon-size forces, dispersed and usually hidden under trees and in villages. Attack helicopters penetrating at low altitude would have been exposed to small arms fire, anti-aircraft guns, and shoulder-fired missiles. Given the extreme U.S. and NATO unwillingness to suffer casualties, the risks were determined to be too great relative to the payoff.

Allied fighters were achieving at least some effect on enemy forces from safer medium altitude attacks, although post-conflict analysis shows that ground forces suffered less damage than was thought at the time.

Exacerbating the challenge of low altitude operations by the helicopters was the fact that the aircraft would have been limited to several mountain passes leading from Albania into Kosovo; they could not fly over the mountains carrying weapons loads. Therefore, the enemy could concentrate its defenses on those ingress and egress routes.

The rules of engagement were so restrictive that extensive lethal suppressive fires were not viable. There was great concern for the huge number of refugees. NATO pilots were required to actually see their targets before releasing ordnance to confirm that there were no civilians in the target area. The rules of engagement tightened every time civilian casualties occurred. In the

case of night attack by helicopters, extensive lethal suppressive fires would have been required since low altitude air defense weapons did not need emitting radars to conduct engagements and were therefore hard to locate.

Washington's support for operations also seems to have eroded as a result of two crashes involving AH-64s in Albania during training. Both crew members were killed in the second accident.

Meanwhile, Task Force Hawk continued to target enemy positions. Since it did not have permission to engage the enemy, these locations were nominated for attack by other air assets. However, due to the lack of preexisting joint procedures to share data on emerging targets and quickly respond, most targets were struck hours later or not at all. Restrictive rules of engagement also limited the effectiveness of sensor-to-shooter linkages. The requirement for eyes on target to minimize collateral damage frequently negated the utility of rapid targeting data such as that provided by the task force's counterfire radars.

Despite the fact that the AH-64s were not employed in Kosovo, Task Force Hawk contributed to the success of Allied Force. The leadership in Belgrade probably viewed it and the NATO ground forces in Macedonia as the nucleus of an eventual ground attack into Kosovo.<sup>2</sup> The presence of the force also likely reassured Albania that the Alliance was committed to its defense during a time of extreme crisis when tens of thousands of refugees were flooding in from Kosovo. In addition, the task force's target location and reconnaissance systems, though not used to best effect, also assisted in locating enemy forces.

**For the Future**

Operation Allied Force provides many lessons for joint operations. It was an operation with strictly limited objectives and significant political constraints. Tomorrow's joint operations will present similar challenges. It is thus possible that, due to political realities, future operations will be *air-only*—despite the fact that air-land



UH-60s supporting civil engineering project.

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Chris Steffen)



MLRS mission rehearsal at Kcirre, Albania.

55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company (Christina Ann Home)

synergies are preferable to single dimension operations. A better joint approach is needed to respond to similar contingencies.

While NATO won the conflict using airpower alone and with no combat fatalities, joint planning and execution were lacking and better joint procedures would have helped. No land component commander was ever designated. That precluded ground force planning in the event that a land offensive was ever required. It also added to the difficulties of establishing clean lines of command for the joint task force commander. Additionally, land component intelligence with its expertise in enemy land force tactics could have facilitated strike operations.

Similarly, joint procedures for target coordination were slow to evolve. There was a general lack of familiarity among the components as to how to integrate and deconflict target requests. The BCE located at CAOC did not normally work with corps-level headquarters, and Air Force and Navy personnel there were unfamiliar with Army procedures. The joint targeting coordination

process needs to be worked out in advance and well understood.

Better methods to integrate Army attack helicopters with an air operation are also needed. Allied Force revealed a general lack of understanding about how to employ attack helicopters in conjunction with what was primarily an air offensive, resulting in a lost opportunity to expand the means of attack. Planners should consider how Army attack helicopters and missiles can be employed in the initial phase of a joint campaign before ground forces arrive.

Campaign plans should also be as multidimensional as possible. Execution will be compromised when there are no air-land synergies on the operational level. Neither the United States



Redeploying M-1 tank.

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Chris Steffen)

nor NATO was willing to consider a ground attack into Kosovo. The practical effect was that the enemy could tailor countermeasures and tactics to minimize the effects of air attack alone. KLA

### the Army should expand ground force options to improve joint synergies

was such an inadequate ground force that police and conventional forces could operate in a very dispersed manner and still defeat it despite Allied command of the air. With no credible threat of a ground offensive, there was no need to be concerned with creating defenses and massing units. Post-conflict analysis indicates that the minimal damage inflicted on the forces inside Kosovo was largely due to their ability to disperse in the face of a single-dimensional threat.

The Army should expand ground force options to help improve joint synergies. Essentially two types of ground units were available for operations in Kosovo, light forces and heavy mechanized units. However, given the

limited firepower, ground mobility, and protection of light units, casualty-averse decisionmakers would probably have been loath to employ them even had there been a willingness to conduct a ground operation. On the other hand, the heavy Army forces with their M-1 tanks and M-2 infantry fighting vehicles would have been severely constrained by the terrain. Indeed, Army engineers in Albania who surveyed routes heavy units could have taken from Albanian ports to the Kosovo border concluded that weeks of extensive engineering would have been needed to shore up bridges, repair roads, and make other infrastructure improvements. The Army's current plans to introduce medium units into its force structure, as represented by the interim brigade combat teams and the later Objective Force, are appropriate given the Allied Force experience.

Allied Force demonstrated the strategic deficiencies of not taking a joint air-land approach to military operations. The political impediments were real enough, but so were the

consequences of adopting a lesser strategy. Key combat synergies derived from joint air-ground operations and the compelling force they can exert on enemies were not realized. Allied Force was a combined air campaign that never had the benefit of a truly joint command. Establishing such a command would have helped the overall effort. Ground intelligence analysts would have brought their special expertise to the identification of targets in Kosovo, possibly improving the effectiveness of the air campaign against Serb forces. Above all, a fully joint headquarters would have been better able to integrate Task Force Hawk, not to mention more ambitious ground operations. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Defense Link, DOD news briefing, April 4, 1999, and "U.S. Attack Helicopters and Multiple Launch Rocket Systems to Deploy in Support of Operation Allied Force," DOD press release no. 145-99, April 4, 1999; DOD news briefing, April 4, 1999, Kenneth H. Bacon, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Clark states that Task Force Hawk "conveyed a powerful image of a ground threat and would have been its lead component." See Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), p. 425. Some argue that the threat of a ground invasion was one of several contributors to Milosovic's willingness to settle with NATO, citing Yugoslav precautionary measures such as strengthening defensive positions along possible invasion routes and positioning 80,000 mines along the Kosovo border with Albania. See Steve Hosmer, *Why Milosovic Decided to Settle When He Did*, MR1351-AF (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), pp. 109-14.



Cooperative Osprey '98.

# Shaping on NATO's Doorstep

2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division (Charles E. Rolles)

## U.S.-Ukraine Relations

By TIMOTHY C. SHEA

**U**kraine's independent status and location are key to the permanent demise of the Soviet empire. A strategic hinge between Central Europe and the partner states of Eastern Europe and Eurasia, it is also the second largest country in Europe and, except for Russia, has the largest military outside NATO. Its force

structure still clings to the Soviet military legacy, with more than 300,000 personnel remaining in uniform. It is a pivotal state with substantial potential to stabilize the region.

This article examines how DOD executes the national military strategy in shaping the international security environment relative to Ukraine. U.S. engagement strategy has been moderately successful and is worth continuing, but resources have not been leveraged efficiently. The government in Kiev has shrewdly exploited American efforts to its own advantage while

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**Lieutenant Colonel Timothy C. Shea, USA, serves in the Resources and Assessment Directorate (J-8), Joint Staff, and recently completed an assignment as the Army attaché in Kiev.**



largely spurning attempts to influence its external behavior or internal politics.

### **Sovereignty, Stability, and Independence**

Creating a peaceful, stable region where an enlarged U.S.-led NATO remains the preeminent security organization is an enduring American objective. Additionally, the United States seeks cooperative Russian and Ukrainian relations with the Alliance. Tools include forces stationed abroad and troops deployed for operations and exercises; military-to-military contacts; programs such as security assistance and defense and international arms cooperation; and a regional academic facility, the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies.

America's hopes for engagement are ambitious. The U.S.-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Bilateral Defense and Military Cooperation produced a vision statement that calls for actions to ensure that Ukraine is "a stable, independent democratic, and economically prosperous state, meeting its legitimate

security needs and playing a constructive role in promoting both regional and international political, military, and economic stability." To that end, the country has created a civilian-controlled defense establishment increasingly interoperable with Euro-Atlantic security organizations.

But achievements have not matched expectations. Responsibility for the overall engagement strategy toward Ukraine remains fragmented. All actions are supposed to complement the Mission Performance Plan (MPP), approved by the ambassador for all Federal agencies operating under the umbrella of the country team in Kiev,

### **overall engagement strategy toward Ukraine remains fragmented**

but MPP, NATO activity, and the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) Military Contacts Program all exist without one master.

In this vacuum, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) works to formulate sound engagement policy

and sponsors interagency working group sessions. OSD manages the bilateral annual Ministerial Plan of Defense Cooperation, which includes a variety of initiatives such as the International Military and Education Program (IMET), the EUCOM-administered U.S.-Ukraine Military Contacts Program, Foreign Military Finance (FMF) cases, Partnership for Peace (PFP), and other bilateral initiatives such as support for Ukraine's participation in Kosovo Force (KFOR).

OSD receives little help in managing engagement. No national body oversees the effort to integrate the political, economic, and informational instruments of national power with the military. Likewise, EUCOM lacks the authority and capacity to synchronize military efforts with the work of other Federal agencies. The defense attaché office in Kiev, while not formally tasked or sufficiently manned, assists DOD in synchronizing in-country activities but with mixed results. Most peacetime military engagement

## Ukraine

**Defense Budget:** \$582 million for 2000; the gross domestic product in 2000 was \$3.2 billion (\$4,762 per capita).

**Manpower:** With a population of 50,387,000, Ukraine has a total of 5,472,000 men between 18 and 32 years of age. Active military strength is 303,800. Reserve forces number approximately 1,000,000.

**Armed Forces:** Ukraine has an army of 151,200 with 3,937 main battle tanks, a navy with 13,000 sailors and one submarine, one cruiser, and two frigates; and an air force with 96,000 personnel and 534 combat aircraft.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2001–2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001).

involving Ukraine, a military culture dominated by landpower, is PFP exercises, KFOR deployments, and other peacekeeping efforts—land operations. Inexplicably, the U.S. defense attaché is an Air Force officer who is generally not a regional specialist and by skill set is ill-equipped to handle the myriad demands of a robust engagement program. He should logically be an Army foreign area officer. The present condition is symptomatic of the failure to think through and fully integrate engagement initiatives.

### Between Eagle and Bear

U.S. strategy toward Ukraine is designed to prevent conflict, but it inherently risks confrontation with Moscow by compelling Russia to accept a weakened position regarding its regional ambitions. Russia's view of being encircled by this *cordon sanitaire* along its "near abroad" encourages behavior toward the United States vis-à-vis Ukraine more as a regional rival than a partner for stability. Additionally, Ukraine has sought to assert its independence. While not anti-Russian, it wants to balance East and West, as evidenced in its establishing bilateral military interaction with the United States by signing a



memorandum of understanding and cooperation in 1993. Ukraine was the first spinoff from the former Soviet Union to join PFP in February 1994. Further symbolizing how critical Ukraine is to U.S. interests, Vice President Al Gore and President Leonid Kuchma formally established a symbolic strategic partnership in 1996.

Moscow will no doubt retain significant influence over Ukraine no matter how close the Washington-Kiev relationship becomes. Nevertheless, an enduring relationship between NATO and Ukraine promises to

be an important aspect of the emerging European security architecture and a goal of the NATO-Ukraine Charter, which provides a framework for an open-ended association through consultation and cooperation on common issues.

Progress in improving Ukraine's relations with the West is not assured. The NATO bombing campaign in the Balkans had a negative impact on Ukraine's perception of the Alliance and disastrous consequences on years of progress in building support for engagement within its skeptical officer corps. The NATO information center in Kiev sat unmanned while allied bombs



Peace Shield '00,  
Ukraine.

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Chris Steffen)

fell. Support for active cooperation with NATO among the corps fell from a

### **the way engagement is currently financed inhibits fiscal control and leads to waste**

pre-Kosovo level of 24 to 12 percent in one poll. Half of the population now views the Alliance as an aggressive bloc. The events of September 11 have softened attitudes, but many officers remain wary of America and the Alliance.

The NATO liaison office has reopened and is grappling with interoperability issues. The Verkhovna Rada (parliament), following years of gridlock, finally ratified the partnership's Status of Forces Agreement. This will facilitate and simplify Allied activity in the country. The robust Ukrainian Individual Partnership Program in one

year included 295 activities involving exercises, training, education, civil emergency planning, defense support, and communications. However, Ukraine only executed half of the events, revealing that it was grossly overcommitted.

Considering that all this engagement activity is fully subsidized, the dismal execution rate suggests that Kiev cannot absorb so much attention. EUCOM alone conducted more than 3,000 activities throughout its area of responsibility. Both sides have recently agreed to concentrate their efforts and shift the focus from quantity to quality.

#### **Gatekeeper**

The lead for peacetime military engagement is EUCOM. Its role in shaping U.S. engagement efforts cannot be overemphasized. Some have

raised the argument that CINCs have largely displaced the Department of State as regional powerbrokers. CINCs view their engagement programs as their highest priority. Each annually develops a theater engagement plan which links planned engagement to prioritized objectives. The CINC does not fund the bulk of these activities from his own budget but from a number of programs, so money is not a serious constraint. The way engagement is currently financed inhibits fiscal control and leads to waste.

The primary engagement activities handled by the EUCOM security assistance and logistics directorate are IMET and FMF. Flawed management of these resources illustrates the problem. The greatest fault with international military education and training is the belief that many officer-graduates will rise to positions of prominence in their armed forces. IMET does not require retention

in exchange for a free education, and Ukraine has done poorly at using these highly trained officers. Transparency in the nomination process, clear and detailed guidelines outlining minimum qualifications, and accountability for retaining and assigning officers should be instituted as prerequisites for IMET. The Office of Defense Cooperation in Kiev should have veto authority over unqualified candidates.

Foreign military financing can be incredibly slow, and Ukrainian inputs outlining national priorities are suspect. The leadership will all too frequently attempt to shift priorities or overturn so-called deliberate decisions *after* committing resources to an FMF case, but *before* delivery. To permit these military oligarchs to unilaterally spend U.S. taxpayer-funded FMF money on their own priorities is a mistake. The United States is in a better position to objectively decide how to spend the funds to support U.S. strategy, filter out poor choices, and challenge questionable priorities. U.S. management of IMET and FMF would be in Ukraine's best interest.

Exercises are one of the best vehicles for training combined staffs and exposing Ukrainian officers to U.S./NATO tactics, techniques, and procedures. Ukraine traditionally hosts annual ground forces and maritime exercises. But the cadre responsible for planning with U.S. counterparts is small and shrinking. While the bilateral exercise regime has grown in scope and complexity each year, senior leadership in Kiev has become increasingly apathetic toward planning and execution. Many of these same leaders focus exclusively on the operational details of the opening ceremony and exercise payments earmarked for the training area.

Additionally, the Department of International Cooperation (DICMOD) inserted itself into bilateral exercise development in 1999 and limited general staff participation to NATO and multinational exercises. The absence of general staff officers in bilateral exercise planning not only hurt the exercise but was also a lost opportunity for improving NATO interoperability. This



Ukrainian marksman.

Marine Corps Combat Camera (Sean C. Newman)

development has diminished exercise quality and was viewed as a cynical attempt to qualify for funding entitlements in an unsuccessful bid to obtain computers and office equipment.

Another major initiative gone astray was the introduction of a EUCOM military liaison team (MLT). A component of the Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP), it serves as the focal

point for the command's peacetime engagement program. JCTP by law cannot replicate any activity funded by another program and the team is prohibited from participation in exercises, providing services or equipment, or conducting training. The defense attaché in Kiev and the Office of Defense Cooperation manage these activities. Sadly, the situation does not fit the standard JCTP mold. Designed to be colocated with counterparts on the general staff, MLT in Ukraine's case was forced to accept

Yavoriv training area.

1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (Cesar Rodriguez)

residency on the opposite side of Kiev from the Ministry of Defense. Instead of directly coordinating with planners, the team relies on DICMOD *apparatchiks* to administer the program. MLT members serve in a temporary duty status without mastering the intricacies of dealing with their counterparts. They lack Russian or Ukrainian language skills and regional expertise. The team's organization and activities need to be reorganized and its efforts placed under the operational control of the Office of Defense Cooperation.

The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, located in Garmisch, Germany, teaches defense planning, organization, and management in democratic societies to East European military officers and government officials. The center provides a useful product to Ukrainian officers, but realigning the curriculum would offer substantial benefits. A reinvented relic of the Cold War, the center inadvertently reinforces the dominant role of Moscow and fosters the illusion of a functional Commonwealth of Independent States. In partial recognition of this problem, the center moved to hire a foreign service national to work with the attaché in Kiev and customize the program. As a practical matter, the center maintains Russian as the *lingua*

*franca* of the former Soviet republics instead of using national languages such as Ukrainian (English and German are also offered). While the costs are prohibitive to use all regional languages, the strategic importance of Ukraine warrants the wider use of its

### general officers serving today are more concerned with perks than showing initiative

official tongue. The U.S. policy of pandering to the Russian Federation to fill seats at the center convinces other countries that they are second class. Success should not be defined as maximizing Russian participation in events or attracting mostly unreformable senior officers to flagship courses. Instead, the school should invite officers from regional groupings with orientations arrayed against Russian domination of the region.

### On Foreign Ground

The Yavoriv training area in the western Ukraine was designated as the first NATO/PFP training center on the territory of the former Soviet Union during the April 1999 NATO summit.

The United States strongly supported the Ukrainian desire to market the facility. However, Kiev has not agreed to host a NATO exercise there since Cooperative Neighbor in 1997. Western Operational Command, which owns Yavoriv, originally saw an opportunity to increase revenues and enable infrastructure improvements. Exercise costs included amortization charges for coat hangers and paintings hanging on billet walls. Ukrainian senior officers do not view extortionist practices as inappropriate and shamelessly defend even the most dubious charges. Allied nations such as Canada, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, have avoided the inflated exercise costs charged by the Western Operational Command and sought training opportunities elsewhere. During Peace Shield, the United States met with hysterical resistance when it contracted for goods and services instead of transferring funds to ministry bank accounts.

The legacy of the Soviet armed forces and the Committee for State Security (or KGB) remains deeply imbedded in the psyche of most senior officers. Old party leaders poison the entire government. As James Sherr of the Conflict Research Studies Centre in the British Ministry of Defence says, "In Ukraine official and criminal structures have effectively merged. Ukraine expects the West to take more risks on its behalf than it is prepared to take itself. Neither Western assistance nor pressure produces results." After Ukraine's declaration of independence, many senior officers elected to stay for opportunistic reasons. This *nomenklatura*, which includes the majority of senior general officers serving today, are classic products of the Soviet military, more concerned with perks and privileges than showing initiative and seeking responsibility.

U.S. engagement has been effective in teaching the senior ministry leadership to use defense reform rhetoric and buzzwords to maintain the incentives and to keep the pressure off for real action. Defense reform threatens these leaders directly, and they have a huge stake in misleading the United States into believing they are



786th Communications Squadron (John Traut)

shaping activity was loosely regulated and allowed activity managers substantial discretion. Engagement activity has become more regulated over time and resources less available. Meanwhile Ukraine's perception of its strategic value to the West has grown proportionally with its expectation of even greater material incentives. This distortion has resulted in mutual disappointment and alienation, a vicious cycle that threatens to spin out of control as each side increasingly views the other as insincere and exploitative. The amount of money thrown at peacetime military engagement has convinced senior Ukrainian leadership that the United States has unlimited resources and that the decreasing incentives represent Washington's indifference.

What is needed now is less lecturing, greater U.S. humility, more thoughtful organizing, rewarding positive change, and discouraging inappropriate action. Because problems cut across the entire government, neither OSD nor EUCOM can solve them alone. For any strategy to succeed it must be implemented using all instruments of U.S. power—and Ukraine must respond across the entire spectrum of its government. The senior civilian and military leadership have not actively supported reform in the past. Ongoing bilateral efforts have shown some renewed signs that point toward progress. Kiev remains receptive to engagement, but the way ahead requires more judicious use of incentives to motivate positive forces for change and deny success to sophisticated elements interested in blocking reform or plundering resources. **JFQ**

not smart enough to grasp the concept, or they lack the necessary resources, or they are valiantly struggling to achieve reform along the edges.

On the other hand, junior and middle rank officers are progressive, energetic, and patriotic. But the oppressive command climate punishes initiative, imposes silence, and causes frustration. Political officers—*zampolit*—of the former Main Political Administration of Soviet Armed Forces are now promoting their version of patriotism and loyalty. These political socialization responsibilities included marching the troops to vote in presidential elections in autumn 1999 to support the Defense Minister's favorite relative.

In truth, archaic Soviet practices still flourish. The Byzantine structure of the Ministry of Defense functions as a loose coalition of stovepipe organizations that answer only to the defense minister. The U.S. military engagement apparatus has no clearly defined counterpart. The United States coordinates with the general staff, the services, various departments within the ministry, or as a last resort DICMOD for engagement activity. The proliferation of deputy defense ministers has further weakened the effectiveness of the Ministry of Defense by diluting authority and obscuring accountability and responsibility. These structures have evolved into competing organizations

incapable of lateral coordination. The appointment of a new defense minister, General Volodmyr Shkidchenko, who is widely viewed as a reformer, has prompted renewed optimism that things may change. Time will tell.

Still, corruption exacerbates the challenges of working with a flawed institution. Ukraine finished second to the last out of 90 countries with a score of 1.5 out of 10, according to the annual corruption perception index published by Transparency International. This problem affects all aspects of engagement from exaggerated exercise costs to the payment of officer per diem. Without careful management and scrutiny, peacetime military engagement could easily serve no purpose other than enriching a few well-placed and corrupt officers. These problems are deep-rooted and complex. They are symptoms of ills that will not yield easily to a half-hearted, poorly managed engagement program.

Early U.S. efforts were effective in convincing Ukraine to give up nuclear weapons in return for substantial material incentives provided through the cooperative threat reduction program. Subsequent initiatives have shown poorer results. In the beginning,

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Mount Ararat, Armenia.



AP/Wide World Photos (Misha Japaridze)

# Military Engagement in the South Caucasus

By JAMES E. DETEMPLE

**T**he importance of the South Caucasus to European security is growing. Recent trips by Lord Robertson to the region underscore NATO resolve to expand security under the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program. Moreover, the three South Caucasus states—Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia—are moving toward a closer relationship with the Alliance. These developments bode well for future regional stability.

## Far Countries

Strategically located on the southeastern NATO flank, the South Caucasus borders Iran, Russia, and Turkey. Some observers believe that among post-Soviet regions the South Caucasus is second only to the Baltic states in strategic importance to the Alliance because its territory is contiguous with member nation Turkey and is a natural extension of Europe. It also forms a strategic corridor linking Southern Europe with Central Asia that could be used as a conduit for Caspian energy resources, which will likely play a significant role in European energy security

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U.S. meeting with Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents.

AP/Wide World Photos (Wilfredo Lee)

### Armenia

**Defense Budget:** \$65 million for 2001; the gross domestic product in 2000 was \$1.9 billion (\$3,703 per capita).

**Manpower:** With a population of 3,464,000, Armenia has a total of 477,000 men between the ages of 18 and 32. Active military strength is 42,060.

**Armed Forces:** Armenia has an army of 38,900 troops with 110 main battle tanks and air defense and aviation forces with 3,160 personnel and eight combat aircraft and 12 armed helicopters.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2001–2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001).

### Azerbaijan

**Defense Budget:** \$119 million for 2000; the gross domestic product in 2000 was \$4.8 billion (\$2,181 per capita).

**Manpower:** With a population of 7,752,000, Azerbaijan has a total of 990,000 men between the ages of 18 and 32. Active military strength is 72,100.

**Armed Forces:** Azerbaijan has an army of 62,000 with 262 main battle tanks; a navy with 2,200 sailors and six patrol and coastal craft; and air and air defense forces with 7,900 personnel and 35 combat aircraft and 15 armed helicopters.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2001–2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001).

and the global energy market if regional instability is overcome.<sup>1</sup>

Security problems, including ethnic conflicts, humanitarian crises, and regional disintegration, beleaguer the three countries. Georgia has been troubled by internal disputes since gaining independence in 1991. Abkhazia on

### Russian military presence in Georgia is a serious challenge to regional stability

the Black Sea and South Ossetia on the Russian border tried to secede in the early 1990s. Moscow has been implicated in supporting secessionist movements in both regions. Russian support for the separatists, who achieved de facto independence, was presumably in retaliation for Georgia's refusal to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Georgia finally joined in 1993 after the West repeatedly ignored the pleas of President Eduard Shevardnadze for assistance. Russian forces (supposedly representing CIS) deployed to Abkhazia in 1994, following a Georgia-Abkhazia ceasefire agreement. In addition, Russian troops have been in South Ossetia since 1992. Tensions remain although ceasefires are in effect in both regions.

Russian military presence in Georgia is a serious challenge to regional stability. NATO has in fact been seeking the withdrawal of Russian military equipment. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, signed in 1990 and amended in 1997 and 1999, established ceilings on conventional weaponry and reduced the allowable size and forward deployment of Soviet, and later Russian, forces. As of Decem-

ber 2000, Russia is in compliance in Georgia, but NATO has also said that it must dismantle its bases there to honor an agreement reached at the November 1999 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Istanbul summit. Compliance on this point may not be forthcoming. There are four bases in Georgia which the Russians are loath to part with: Akhalkalaki on the southern border with Turkey, Batumi on the Black Sea, Gudauta (Abkhazia), and Vaziani near the capital, Tbilisi. Additionally, Russian peacekeeping forces stationed in Abkhazia continue to strain relations. Dismantling Moscow's bases and withdrawing its forces remain thorny issues.

The Kremlin's influence is also prominent elsewhere in the region. It has a formal security pact with Armenia and supplied the country with \$1

billion worth of arms from 1994 to 1997. Additionally, Russian ground forces with 74 main battle tanks, a MiG-29 squadron, and an air defense battery are deployed at a military base on Armenian territory.



### Georgia

**Defense Budget:** \$22 million for 2001; the gross domestic product in 2000 was \$4.7 billion (\$5,289 per capita).

**Manpower:** With a population of 4,891,000, Georgia has a total of 590,000 men between the ages of 18 and 32. Active military strength is 16,790. Reserves forces number 250,000.

**Armed Forces:** Georgia has an army of 8,620 with 90 main battle tanks; a navy of 1,040 sailors with 11 patrol and coastal craft; and an air force with 1,330 personnel with seven combat aircraft and three armed helicopters.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2001–2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001).

Russian campaigns in Chechnya are another source of instability. Attendant security issues include Moscow's constant allegations that Georgia and Azerbaijan are serving as bases for Chechen rebels. The possibility that Georgia is being used as a transit country for fighters and weapons is remote since Chechens assisted Abkhaz secessionists in their fight for independence against Georgia. Nevertheless, the Kremlin has tried to force Tbilisi into transferring control over the 70-kilometer Chechnya-Georgia border to Russian guards and may also try to pressure Baku into accepting Russian bases on Azerbaijan soil. NATO and the West have expressed grave concern about human rights abuses and the potential spillover of the conflict in the Caucasus. One analyst predicts that the Chechen war will "aggravate existing conflicts and ignite new hot spots throughout the region."<sup>2</sup>

There is little likelihood that the Kremlin will change its policies. Russia includes the South Caucasus in what it regards as its sphere of influence and exerts considerable leverage on the foreign and defense policies and defense of the former Soviet states. Yielding to Russian pressure, President Shevardnadze softened his position on applying for NATO membership. Tbilisi also announced that its internal troops would increase their patrols in the Pankisi Gorge near the border to block infiltration routes of Chechen guerrillas into Russia.

Moscow has also expressed alarm at alleged NATO and U.S. encroachment on former Soviet territory, particularly the oil-rich Caspian basin.

In addition to Russia's role in the region, there are other major issues. Nagorno-Karabakh remains another flashpoint. Azerbaijan and Armenia fought a three-year war over that ethnically Armenian Azeri autonomous region after it proclaimed independence

from Azerbaijan in 1991. Seven years after the ceasefire, prospects for resolving the conflict over the disputed territory have improved slightly, with the U.S. administration taking a more active mediating role. Renewed fighting

in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, however, would certainly undermine regional stability.

### The Alliance Response

A wide range of South Caucasus security issues, including the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, have been discussed regularly in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which provides the overall framework for cooperation between NATO and partner nations. The council established an open-ended ad hoc working group on the Caucasus to intensify conflict prevention and crisis management. This subregional group could form the basis for a new security architecture and help to develop a regional stability pact in coordination with the European Union (EU), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and United Nations.

According to Giorgi Burduli, Georgia's First Deputy Foreign Minister, if the concept for "the stability pact in the Caucasus bears fruit, the role of the EAPC, along with other international organizations, would be substantial in terms of consultation and practical cooperation."<sup>3</sup> He stated further that "regional cooperation in the Caucasus is

### the size and scope of PFP activities have increased significantly

still weak" and that EAPC should encourage the South Caucasus states to continue using the ad hoc working group, for example, to facilitate negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan to address the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Having an agreement such as the U.S.-Baltic Charter or the EU Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe "would go a long way towards diffusing regional conflicts and anchor these vulnerable states firmly with more powerful countries and international bodies."

A regional security system underpinned by NATO and EU would greatly enhance regional stability. According to the Secretary General:

*We continue to place a high priority on the strengthening of our partnership with all members of the Euro-Atlantic*



AP/Wide World Photos (Shahk Avazov)

*community through the EAPC and the Partnership for Peace. We believe that partnership is pivotal to the role of the Alliance in promoting security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region and contributes to the enhancement of the Alliance's capabilities in crisis management.*

*We therefore welcome discussions underway in the EAPC on its possible role in conflict prevention and crisis management, and in developments to promote regional cooperation in Southeast Europe as well as in the Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>4</sup>*

NATO focuses on the South Caucasus as it relates to European interests. Objectives include fostering regional security and stability through peacetime military engagement; ensuring access to Caspian basin energy resources; combating nontraditional threats such as international terrorism, drug trafficking, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and containing Russian resurgence at the expense of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and Azerbaijan. NATO is also alarmed by the increased militarization on the southern borders of CIS. Furthermore, the West is concerned by the rapidly developing security relationship

between Moscow and Tehran. Iran is already Russia's third largest customer for weapons and military training after China and India. The Russian-Iranian initiative is clearly intended to block NATO influence in the area and monopolize energy corridors from the Caspian region to Europe.

Interest in the South Caucasus is illustrated by the visits of the Secretary General to Georgia in September 2000 and Armenia and Azerbaijan in January 2001. Outlining the general approach guiding NATO engagement, Lord Robertson emphasized that European security is "inseparably linked to that of other countries." In Tbilisi he told a conference on Regional Cooperation and Partnership with NATO that "the more secure our neighbors are the more secure we are. . . . European security first of all depends on how well our neighbors are protected."<sup>5</sup>

### Enlarging Engagement

PFP constitutes the chief NATO tool for deepening military cooperation in the South Caucasus. Members such as Turkey and the United States also provide military assistance on a bilateral basis that complements the partnership. After joining, each partner nation in consultation with NATO developed a two-year individual partnership plan which sets specific interoperability objectives and the basis for expanded cooperation with the Alliance.

The size and scope of PFP activities in the South Caucasus have increased significantly. Azerbaijan and Georgia joined at the program's inception in 1994 and have become two of its most active constituents, using the partnership as a means to bring their armed forces closer to NATO standards. A Georgian infantry platoon currently operates with a Turkish battalion as part of the peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR). Georgia's KFOR role is a source of great national pride and demonstrates the country's ability to work smoothly with allied peacekeeping forces. Azerbaijan also has an infantry platoon operating with Turkey's peacekeeping battalion.

Azerbaijan's and Georgia's 2000-2001 Individual Partnership Plans focused on activities ranging from peacekeeping and disaster planning to



Training near Tbilisi, Georgia.

AP/Wide World Photos (Shahk Alavazov)

English-language training and military exercises. Georgia hosted several activities and joint exercises in 2001, including its first multilateral PFP exercise, Cooperative Partner, maritime and amphibious field training designed to increase stability in the Black Sea region and build confidence among the littoral states, including Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine. Troops from five NATO countries—France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, and the United States—in addition to six partner nations—Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Sweden, and Ukraine—were invited to participate. Forces included 4,000 military personnel, 40 warships, two submarines, 12 fighters, and two military transport aircraft. The Alliance also committed portions of the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean, composed of destroyers and frigates. Amphibious

forces from several countries, including 100 Georgian marines from the battalion in Poti, practiced amphibious techniques in support of peacekeeping and humanitarian relief.

Azerbaijan is already scheduled to host its first PFP exercise, a peacekeeping staff drill designed to practice operating a multinational brigade headquarters according to established NATO command and control procedures, to include coordinating airlift, medical evacuation, and search and rescue for a peace support operation. Among its themes are learning to work with relief organizations, improving coordination of aerial delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, and utilizing aviation assets such as transport helicopters. NATO members—France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, Turkey,

and the United States—and partner nations—Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, and Switzerland—will take part in a computer-aided simulation. Azerbaijan also conducts regional courses in civil-military cooperation at its military academy in Baku. Uniformed personnel from all the South Caucasus states attend NATO courses and seminars in crisis management and peacekeeping in addition to other exchange programs.

Azerbaijan and Georgia are undergoing force restructuring and reorganization with technical assistance from NATO, Turkey, and the United States. Turkey recently modernized the Marneuli air base in southern Georgia for \$1.5 million. U.S. military cooperation is designed to help the armed forces develop the capabilities necessary to preserve territorial integrity and

become more self-sufficient in matters such as border security and military reorganization. U.S. European Command recently conducted an assessment of Georgia's military and made recommendations for restructuring, including the creation of a rapid reaction force of up to three light brigades. Ukraine's 11<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Infantry Brigade has been designated as the core unit to respond to crises, including natural disasters and civil emergencies, and is among the formations spearheading the transformation of Georgian land forces.

Additionally, Special Operations Forces recently conducted training on demining in all three countries. This humanitarian effort was intended to help the three states deal with countless land mines remaining from the Armenia-Azerbaijan and Abkhazia-Georgia disputes. The U.S.-sponsored activity brought together soldiers from Armenia and Azerbaijan for the first time since they fought over the Nagorno-Karabakh territory.

Armenia has considered upgrading its biennial Individual Partnership Plan and increasing cooperation with NATO within the PFP framework. Admiral Guido Venturoni, Chairman of the Military Committee, visited Armenia in March to discuss Alliance efforts to expand military cooperation and met with President Robert Kocharian, Prime Minister Andranik Margarian, Defense Minister Serge Sarkisian, and Lieutenant General Mikael Harutiunian, Armed Forces Chief of Staff. Armenia also expressed interest in obtaining NATO assistance in forming a U.N. peacekeeping battalion. The visit produced an informal agreement on creating an Armenian peacekeeping unit with NATO assistance within the PFP framework. Moreover, the country was enthusiastic about officer training in the West, English-language training for military personnel, and other opportunities PFP can offer.

Along with peacekeeping, Armenia seeks to learn how to cope better with natural disasters, particularly earthquakes. One project combines the information systems of its institutes



Armenian troops guarding parliament.

AP/Wide World Photos (Misha Japaridze)

for seismological analysis with those of Greece, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

Indeed, disaster preparedness is an area for expanding cooperation, especially since the South Caucasus is prone to earthquakes and floods. Local states are keen to increase interaction with NATO in disaster planning. In late September 2000, NATO and Ukraine conducted a disaster relief exercise in the Trans-Carpathian region of western Ukraine. The exercise actually built on

the experience gained by Ukraine and EADRCC from flooding in the Trans-Carpathian region in 1998. The scenario featured a command post exercise followed by a field training drill. The first phase tested the procedures used by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) at NATO Headquarters and national



Ceremony marking transfer of helicopters to Georgia.

AP/Wide World Photos (Shakh Avazov)

disaster response coordination centers to meet a request for international assistance from Ukraine. The second phase focused on disaster response teams from 11 countries operating as part of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit, marking the first time the unit was exercised as a whole.

### the South Caucasus and Central Asian states are keenly interested in greater cooperation with NATO

Other activities included search and rescue and provisions for life support, medical care, water purification, and cleaning contaminated rivers.

#### Patterns for the Future

Three trends have emerged in recent years. First, NATO military engagement within the PFP framework increasingly aims to improve interoperability between partner and allied forces. This is particularly important since the Alliance will play an extended role in future multinational peace support operations such as the ongoing mission in Bosnia. Crisis management and peacekeeping have joined collective security as a staple of

the Alliance mission. Integrating partner nations into NATO-led peace support operations is a political and military necessity that remains critical to efforts to enhance security and stability on Europe's periphery.

Second, PFP is the primary means for non-NATO nations to move closer to the Alliance. Accordingly, partners now play a more active role in determining the size and scope of their participation. Active involvement in PFP remains essential to joining the Alliance, providing a way of transforming defense establishments based on Western models and developing interoperability with NATO forces.

Third, the South Caucasus and Central Asian states are keenly interested in greater cooperation with NATO. In 1999, Georgia joined the Planning and Review Process, a special program for defense planning cooperation within PFP intended to help allied and partner militaries prepare for combined operations. Azerbaijan has also joined and has expressed strong interest in developing a Membership Action Plan in preparation for the possibility (albeit remote) of applying for NATO membership. On the other hand, Azerbaijan and Georgia, which are contiguous and border Turkey, may be considered serious candidates for accession at some stage as they will play a pivotal

role in allied and U.S. efforts to enhance regional security on Europe's periphery.

NATO engagement within the PFP framework should enable the South Caucasus to make steady progress toward interoperability with allied forces and regional security and stability. Additionally, the Alliance has outlined a coherent strategy for engagement based on Individual Partnership Plans, the Planning and Review Process, and Membership Action Plans. These efforts will help improve the performance and capabilities of future coalition partners. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anna Lindh, "Resolving a Frozen Conflict: Neither Russia nor the West Should Try to Impose a Settlement on the Southern Caucasus," *Financial Times*, February 20, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Igor Rotar, "Chechen Spark-Caucasian Powder Keg," *Perspective*, vol. 10, no. 2 (November/December 1999).

<sup>3</sup> Speech by Giorgi Burduli, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia, at the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Foreign Ministers Meeting, May 25, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Communiqué, NATO Defense Ministerial Meeting in Brussels, December 5, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Speech by Lord George Robertson, "Caucasus Today: Perspectives of Regional Cooperation and Partnership with NATO," Tbilisi, September 26, 2000.

# Sub-Saharan Africa and the

# Unified Command Plan

By JOHN E. CAMPBELL



Amphibious training  
at Cap Serrat.

U.S. Navy (Seth Rossman)

**T**he United States is in a position to play a key role in improving the security environment in Africa. One suggested initiative is establishing a regional command for the continent.

According to the *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* submitted by the Secretary of Defense for Fiscal Year 2001, regional commands “shape

the environment, respond to the full spectrum of crises, and prepare for the future. The geographic CINCs are responsible for the planning and conducting of all military operations, including military engagement activities, and serving as the single point of contact for all military matters within their theaters of operations.” The Secretary’s annual report emphasizes that the primary responsibility of unified commanders remains the development of strategic and contingency

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plans for military operations. In practice, however, CINCs spend much of their effort on implementing the shape, prepare, and respond functions of national security strategy. Indeed, since passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, regional CINCs have gained more stature and may have become the single most influential figures helping shape and implement foreign policy within their regions. According to an account in *The Washington Post*, they “control headquarters budgets outside of Washington that total \$380 million a year” and have long “jockeyed with diplomats and intelligence agencies to shape U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>1</sup> During the 1990s power shifted to CINCs primarily because of their budgetary might.

### Continental Challenge

In the case of Africa, the potential of a CINC to influence regional affairs is diffused because responsibility is divided between three of the five regional unified commands—U.S. European Command (EUCOM), U.S. Central Command (whose geographical boundaries include Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan), and U.S. Pacific Command which has responsibility for Madagascar.

Of these commands, challenges facing EUCOM in operating effectively in the region are the most daunting. Its area of responsibility stretches from northern Europe to Sub-Saharan Africa. Its main focus is clearly on NATO and European security. The CINC is dual-hatted as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, with headquarters at Mons, Belgium, while EUCOM headquarters is located in Stuttgart, Germany, with day-to-day operations run by his deputy. Given the command’s many roles, coupled with the increasing importance of engaging around the world, the added responsibility of managing affairs in Africa might exceed the ability of a unified commander in Europe.

One argument for creating a unified command for Sub-Saharan Africa is that foreign policy in Africa has



100<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron (Rashleen A. Douglas)

been reactive rather than proactive, causing the military to undertake a continuing series of contingency operations.<sup>2</sup> The prospects for future interventions are high. The United States will, according to this rationale, require the capacity to intervene with military forces. The only way to make these interventions efficient and effective is assigning proponenty to a dedicated headquarters.

The underlying assumption is that the current arrangement—dividing Africa among three unified commands—does not ensure “that strategic objectives are accomplished and that diplomatic and political goals are achieved.” But does a dedicated headquarters put the operational cart before the strategic horse? The answer lies in returning to the fundamental purpose of such a command—supporting national security strategy.

### Guidelines for Engagement

*A National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (December 2000) continues to emphasize the longstanding practice of shaping the international environment, responding to threats and crises, and preparing for an uncertain future. This strategy is implemented through integrated regional approaches. It calls

for a transformation of U.S.-African relations with

*emphasis on democratic and pragmatic approaches to solving political, economic, and environmental problems, and developing human and natural resources. . . . Our immediate objective is to increase the number of capable states in Africa, that is, nations that are able to define the challenges they face, manage their resources to effectively address those challenges, and build stability and peace within their borders and their subregions.*<sup>3</sup>

Based on this assessment of Sub-Saharan Africa, the primary concern is nationbuilding. Further, it appears that Washington perceives the greatest security challenge as the lack of democratic states and the inability of states to govern. The strategy concludes, “prosperity and security . . . depends on African leadership, strong national institutions, and extensive political and economic reform.”<sup>4</sup>

While the current administration has yet to publish a new national security strategy, there is no indication that African security will receive greater prominence. While many things have changed since he was sworn in, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated during his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services

Committee in January 2001 that “We’re not geniuses at nationbuilding.”<sup>5</sup> The implication is that the military will be less involved in these tasks in places like Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the interest of some in the administration in dealing with issues such as the AIDS pandemic, military engagement will likely be limited to promoting regional stability and advancing U.S. interests with modest investments in ways and means for the foreseeable future.

EUCOM is implementing these efforts through its Africa Engagement Plan, which has several objectives: maintaining freedom of navigation, providing prompt response to humanitarian crisis, and promoting stability, democratization, and military professionalism. These goals translate into a litany of endeavors, most notably the

### **military engagement will likely be limited to modest investments in ways and means**

African Crisis Response Initiative, Africa Center for Strategic Studies, humanitarian assistance, military medical exercises, demining, and security assistance. All are concerned primarily with training militaries in basic peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, and the mechanisms of civilian control. Further, the concept for implementing the strategy is through subregional engagement. This approach is focused on leveraging resources, fostering collective security, and creating responses for peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The subregional organizations in Africa are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Eastern Africa Cooperative (EAC), and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Actual command activities focus on small unit training with limited military to military contact.

#### **Modesty Rules**

Creating a Sub-Saharan unified command fails to address the fundamental issues. The problems of engagement in Africa are not primarily, or even substantially, about command

and control of military operations. Indeed, while a unified command might provide better focus on Africa, doing so may not be consistent with national policy. The danger in creating such a command would be to place DOD out front of, and perhaps out of step with, the rest of the foreign policy apparatus. What needs emphasis is ensuring that the military plays a proper role in Africa based on national security strategy—and then organizing efforts to best achieve national objectives.

Some analysis have suggested that in the future U.S. interests will be to “promote regional stability, economic prosperity, and democracy to combat transnational threats.”<sup>6</sup> Military involvement will be almost exclusively in the form of humanitarian assistance. Importantly, the study called for the United States to shift from crisis response to peacetime engagement in order to better shape conditions. Specifically, it called for this transition to be accomplished through training programs like the African Crisis Response Initiative and small unit training exercises through the Joint Combined Education Training Program. Its assessment further suggested better coordination with European partners to leverage collective efforts. While military activities have their limited place, some have concluded that “African institutional development is the single most important objective.”<sup>7</sup>

Richard Holbrook, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, summed up African needs to Congress: “[The United States has] an interest in helping Africans resolve their conflicts and ridding their societies of horrible diseases like HIV/AIDS. And we have an interest in helping Africa’s people build societies based on democracy, liberty, and political freedom.”<sup>8</sup>

Still other proposals call for reassurance rather than deterrence; consolidation or creation of state institutions, and building a regional security community. The keys to creating viable states lie in support from the international community for state building, with more emphasis on police, justice, and correctional services. Specifically, there needs to be less of a military focus.<sup>9</sup>

A regional command is not the answer to building viable states and governable societies in Sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, such a command might actually hinder the process by placing too much emphasis on the military and diverting attention and resources from nationbuilding. Accordingly, it appears that Washington should not create a unified command.

That said, the United States should improve its ability to manage military engagement. While EUCOM activities will play an important role, it should be within a coordinated foreign policy effort. Instead of establishing a new unified command, the geographic boundaries for the EUCOM area of responsibility should be redrawn to match the Department of State concept for the region, essentially the Sub-Saharan area. And as outlined in the current national security strategy, engagement should be targeted at the *subregional* level. In particular, redrawing unified command boundaries will keep the major subregional actors, ECOWAS, SADC, and EAC, in the command area of responsibility.

The United States should also better coordinate with European Allies. EUCOM is in the best position to assist here since it has a long history of working with them through NATO. Many Alliance members also have traditional ties to Africa, particularly the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Portugal.

EUCOM should also take the lead in advocating better international military education training (IMET) opportunities. Such efforts are the basis for training foreign military leaders on the fundamentals of civilian control of the military and provides professional military education through schools in the United States. Many European allies have similar programs and thus can reinforce the civilian control concept. Accordingly, IMET for Sub-Saharan African militaries can be coordinated within Europe by EUCOM and be part of engagement strategy.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff could also create a new subregional command as part of EUCOM to manage the African

SOF training  
Senegalese soldiers.



1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron (David D. Underwood)

engagement strategy. Further, this headquarters could provide a second theater special operations command. Today, EUCOM has a single such command for its entire theater of operations. An additional capability would expand the command's ability to engage on the right level, with the right means, consistent with national objectives. Special Operations commands are uniquely qualified to participate in engagement. Their principal missions include foreign internal defense, which involves protecting societies from lawlessness. Collateral activities include coalition support, demining, security assistance, and humanitarian assistance.

Foreign policy and security strategy for Africa are focused on building credible states and democratic governance. Sub-Saharan Africa does not involve the same vital U.S. interests as other geographic areas represented by existing unified commands. Creating a

unified command exclusively for the region would overemphasize the military aspect of foreign policy. Although there are steps the United States can take to ensure that the military is best prepared to conduct engagement, it should not create a regional command until Africa becomes a greater focus of national security strategy. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Dana Priest, "A Four Star Foreign Policy?" *The Washington Post*, September 28, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Richard G. Catoire, "A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan," *Parameters*, vol. 30, no. 4 (Winter 2000–01), pp. 112–13.

<sup>3</sup> President of the United States, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (Washington: The White House, 2000), p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> Donald H. Rumsfeld, "Rumsfeld's New Order," *Air Force Magazine*, vol. 84, no. 3 (March 2001), p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> Institute for National Strategic Studies, *Strategic Assessment 1999: Priorities for a Turbulent World* (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1999), p. 162.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>8</sup> Richard C. Holbrooke, "Text: Holbrooke Briefs U.S. Senate on U.N. Peacekeeping in Africa," July 12, 2000, <http://www.eucom.mil/africa/usis/00jul12.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> See Jakkie Cilliers, "South Africa and Regional Security," Institute for Security Studies, briefing to the Sub-Saharan Africa regional studies group, Air War College, March 12, 2001.

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# Peacekeeping



U.S. Navy (Jim Hampshire)

## in West Africa

By DAVID G. LEATHERWOOD

Instability in West Africa presents U.S. decisionmakers with a conundrum. The domestic imperative to avoid entangling new commitments abroad is tempered by the CNN effect—the need to do something to alleviate the plight of those ravaged by armed conflict, disease, famine, and

natural disasters. Responding to these contradictory pressures, successive administrations have largely relied on Africans to maintain peace and security on their continent. While consistent with Chapter VIII of the United Nations charter, this approach has practical limitations.

A look at support for Nigerian military intervention in West Africa, using events in Liberia and Sierra Leone as case studies, reveals more cause for caution than optimism. Though demographics and globalization have both

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Boarding C-5 in Ghana, Focus Relief.

78th Communications Squadron (Pamela J. Farin)

contributed to a contagious anarchy, at its heart regional instability is not caused by these phenomena, nor is it spontaneous. State sponsorship of insurrection from neighboring states is at the root, and inappropriate international responses to this combination of invasion and rebellion have only compounded the problem.

Ensuring the success of Nigeria's fledgling democracy has become a rationale for significant increases in U.S.

military aid. In the rush to assist Abuja, policymakers frequently cite the Nigerian military's past accomplishments in ensuring regional stability. Its record in this regard, however, is suspect. Support for ongoing operations in West Africa is misguided. Pouring funds, equipment, and training into Nigeria profits segments of that country's military, as well as the U.S. contractors involved. But American largess does not contribute to regional conflict resolution and may indeed retard it.

### Troubled Corner of the World

The latest chapter in Liberia's sad history can be traced to an armed invasion led by Charles Taylor. In December 1989, Taylor, who had fled to the United States to escape corruption charges, returned to his native Liberia leading a rebel band of 160. There they confronted the dictatorial regime of Samuel Doe, a former noncommissioned officer who had come to power through a coup in 1980. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)

swelled to 6,000 within months. With significant material support from the government of Burkina Faso, the front gained control of all the major Liberian towns outside of Monrovia by late 1990. Fighting was fierce in the first year; an estimated 200,000 died while 600,000 sought refuge in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire.

Events in Liberia concerned Nigerian officials for several reasons. The beleaguered Doe was an ally of Nigerian military dictator Major General Ibrahim Babangida. Taylor, with reputed ties to Libya, also represented a threat to stability beyond Liberia's borders. More immediately, three thousand Nigerian citizens residing in Liberia had been rounded up by NPFL and moved to the interior as hostages. The safety of the Nigerian embassy in Monrovia became increasingly precarious as well.

At Babangida's suggestion, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) dispatched troops to



DOD (Helene C. Shikell)

Liberia in August 1990 to contain the civil war. Its multinational military entity was termed the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), although there was no ceasefire in effect at the time of its dispatch. The force initially consisted of Gambian, Ghanaian, Guinean, Nigerian, and Sierra

### Nigerian-dominated intervention was perceived as a partisan effort

Leonean troops organized in national contingents. The commander was Ghanaian General Arnold Quainoo, but the overwhelming majority of the troops and key leaders were Nigerian.

The Nigerian-dominated intervention was perceived by most Liberians as a partisan effort against Taylor. NPFL forces that had encircled Monrovia immediately engaged ECOMOG troops on the edge of town. When Doe was murdered shortly after the arrival of ECOMOG, Quainoo was removed and replaced by a Nigerian general. The command remained in Nigerian hands throughout the conflict.

ECOMOG held Monrovia from 1990 to 1992 but made little progress in expanding its area of control. Thirteen ceasefires between warring factions were negotiated in the following years, apparently motivated more by the warring

parties' tactical considerations than good faith. As these agreements invariably broke down, ECOMOG vacillated between agendas favoring various factions, and its mission alternated between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. An apparent agreement between Taylor and Babangida cleared the way for Liberian elections and a peace agreement that finally held in 1997.

Episodes of individual valor in the Nigerian contingent within ECOMOG were marred by widespread corruption. The priority for many Nigerian troops, who sometimes went months without pay, was personal profit. Looting was common. Corruption became institutionalized and ever more efficient as the group's presence in Liberia dragged on over seven years. Illicit economic endeavors in Liberia centered on rubber, timber, U.N. humanitarian aid, drugs, and diamonds. Criminal profits made sustaining deployment abroad an end unto itself.

Nigerian involvement in the group was unpopular domestically. While the public generally accepted their government's argument that Libyan-sponsored instability spreading from Burkina Faso had to be contained, many perceived the cost as excessive. The national windfall from oil revenues during the Persian Gulf War was consumed by the deployment. As Nigeria's economy faced harder times, deployments abroad became increasingly controversial. National records put the total spent on ECOMOG by past military governments at \$8 billion.

Ultimately, the Nigerian-led intervention in Liberia merely delayed a transfer of power from one corrupt despot to another. It neither saved Doe nor stopped Taylor. The arrival of the Nigerians in August 1990 very likely saved residents of Monrovia from starvation, but it also kept the factions who fought Taylor fed and armed for years. By prolonging the period in which Liberia was divided without a single sovereign, ECOMOG did little nationbuilding.

## Nigeria

**Defense Budget.** \$340 million for 2000; the gross domestic product in 2000 was \$53 billion (\$1,359 per capita).

**Manpower.** With a population of 113,007,000, Nigeria has a total of 16,749,000 men between 18 and 32 years of age. Active military strength is 78,500.

**Armed Forces.** Nigeria has an army of 62,000 with 200 main battle tanks; a navy of 7,000 sailors with one frigate and eight patrol and coastal craft; and an air force with 9,500 personnel and 86 combat aircraft and 10 armed helicopters.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2001–2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001).

## Diamonds Are Forever

The conflict in Liberia is inexorably linked with the strife in Sierra Leone. In March 1991, NPFL forces crossed into the country from Liberia. Aimed at capturing the diamond mining areas, the offensive was led by former Sierra Leonean Corporal Foday Sankoh. A close friend of Taylor, Sankoh had previously attended training with him in Libya and worked with him in support of Blaise Campaore's coup in Burkina Faso. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) Sankoh founded in Sierra Leone was largely an offshoot of NPFL.

A year after the RUF invasion, the government fell to a military coup led by 28-year-old army Captain Valentine Strasser in April 1992. In 1993, Strasser's National Provisional Ruling Council, with the assistance of \$18 million in U.S. military aid, was able to regain the diamond mines in the south and east previously lost to the rebels. These gains were short lived, however. Sierra Leonean soldiers themselves began to engage in illegal mining, exporting the diamonds through Liberia as RUF rebels had. Government revenues remained low and rebel activity picked up. Guinea, countering RUF incursions into its diamond-mining regions, conducted cross-border raids on

Nigerian soldiers conducting live fire drill.



U.S. Navy (Jim Hampshire)

the insurgents in Sierra Leone. Further confusing the situation was the emergence of the *Sobel* phenomenon, as more and more government troops became soldiers by day and rebels by night. By 1995 the insurgents had taken back the Sierra Leone diamond mines, consolidated control of the northern half of the country, and threatened Freetown.

Lacking a credible military force, the Strasser junta hired mercenaries to counter RUF. In exchange for a promise of future mining revenues, Executive Outcomes, based in South Africa, deployed men to Sierra Leone in May 1995. Using two contracted MI-17 gunships and a Sierra Leonean MI-24 helicopter, mercenaries in Sierra Leonean uniforms recaptured all the diamond-mining centers within nine months. Their military prowess did not save Strasser. He was ousted in a military coup led by defense minister Brigadier General Julius Mada Bio in January 1996. Bio arranged for elections as a precursor to a return to civilian rule and negotiated a ceasefire with RUF.

Ahmad Tejan Kabbah emerged from the March 1996 elections as the President of Sierra Leone. On taking office, he terminated the relationship with Executive Outcomes, signed a bilateral defense pact with Nigeria, and negotiated a peace agreement with

RUF. The November 1996 agreement, known as the Abidjan Peace Accord, required the rebels to disarm, demobilize, and transform into a political party. The accord was overtaken by

### Nigeria's primary interest in Sierra Leone was diamonds

events before it could be implemented. Major Johnny Paul Koroma of the Sierra Leone army and twenty confederates stormed a Freetown prison on May 25, 1997, released 600 prisoners, and overthrew the elected government. Through the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), Koroma and his followers then declared themselves the new rulers and invited RUF to join them. The rebels marched into an already anarchic Freetown and Kabbah fled to Guinea. From his exile in Conakry, he requested Nigerian intervention under the terms of their bilateral pact. Just as scheduled elections in Liberia heralded the imminent end of one prolonged Nigerian military operation abroad, another beckoned.

ECOMOG headquarters in Monrovia sluggishly planned and executed the overall Nigerian military response to the Sierra Leone coup. Force commander Lieutenant General Victor

Malu was away in Nigeria at the time of the coup. Once back, he took the lead in a dual track strategy of negotiations with AFRC and simultaneous preparing for a military solution. The Nigerians and AFRC/RUF agreed to restore democratic government to Sierra Leone, but the accord was never implemented. In February 1998, almost a year after the coup, ECOMOG troops from Nigeria took Freetown from AFRC/RUF.

Nigeria's primary interest in Sierra Leone was diamonds. Indeed, diamonds are at the heart of the current conflicts in West Africa. The bulk of RUF diamond exports, for example, valued at \$75 million annually, continue to leave Sierra Leone through Liberia. The complicity of the Liberian government has been documented by the United Nations.

The mounting cost of the operation in Sierra Leone and unfavorable military conditions on the ground caused Nigeria to threaten to pull its troops out despite the prospect of mineral wealth. Kabbah then signed the Lome Accords with Sankoh on July 7, 1999, under pressure from multiple foreign benefactors. This peace agreement called for the U.N. Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), which had evacuated Freetown in December 1998, to return to monitor implementation.

### Wave the Blue Flag

The U.N. Security Council authorized the expansion of UNOMSIL to 210 military observers in August 1999. The Nigerian military, presented with an opportunity to legitimize their efforts with a U.N. imprimatur and also receive funding, reconsidered its decision to withdraw. Thus Nigerians formed a large part of the contingent when a force of 6,000 U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) peacekeepers was authorized by Resolution 1270 in October 1999.

In early May 2000, RUF kidnapped hundreds of Zambian and Kenyan U.N. personnel who had deployed to monitor compliance. The British decided to intervene as RUF rebels massed 85 kilometers north of Freetown at Rogberi Junction. With little faith in the Nigerians or U.N. forces, Britain sent its own

Evacuees assembling in Freetown, Assured Response.



U.S. Air Force (Richard M. Heileman)

soldiers. The air force flew in 400 troops to Freetown under a Commonwealth mandate. Some 800 marines followed aboard *HMS Ocean*, a new amphibious assault carrier. Quick action, to include helicopter assaults on advancing rebels, saved the capital from falling again.

Contrasting with the British performance in Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL got off to a rough start. Hampered by internal bickering and a fluctuating situation on the ground, the United Nations was quickly caught in the ECOMOG trap of alternating between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The UNAMSIL mandate was extended and expanded in August 2000, authorizing offensive action.

Reports reached the United Nations in September on illegal diamond trading between senior Nigerian military officers and RUF. Rather than investigating the allegations made by the impolitic UNAMSIL commander, the U.N. removed him. India and Jordan, the two most capable militaries within the mission, then announced that they would withdraw their forces. Another tenuous ceasefire was signed in November 2000. Few suspected any peace would follow.

Meanwhile, an armed conflict in Guinea further illustrated the transnational nature of West African proxy insurgencies. Events there had a familiar

ring—and what is remarkable about the methods employed to contend with them is how little schemes varied from past ineffective responses to instability. Troops on U.N. peacekeeping missions in recent years, restricted to acting in self defense, have frequently confused their mandate of impartiality with neutrality. The result has often been a force prone to appease aggressors and unsuited to oversee true disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants. Equally damning, the duration of deployments has proven difficult to curtail. This inertia takes on even greater immediacy in civil wars, where prolonging the temporary division of states undermines domestic and international stability.

### On the Sidelines

American military actions at the outset of the West African crises were restricted to noncombatant evacuation managed by U.S. European Command (EUCOM). Operation Sharp Edge removed American nationals from Liberia between April 1990 and January 1991. A similar mission, put together so hastily it was not named, performed evacuations from Sierra Leone from April 29 to May 4.

As U.S. decisionmakers resolved to stay out of conflicts in the region, they

rushed to find surrogates. Senegal agreed to deploy troops to Liberia as part of ECOMOG in return for \$15 million in aid. Another \$19 million was provided to Kenya and Tanzania. Babangida's decision to annul the Nigerian elections was the chief hurdle U.S. policymakers had in helping West Africans contain Charles Taylor. The United States joined other Western nations in imposing sanctions against Nigeria. U.S. sanctions included a ban on military services and the sale and repair of equipment, as well as restrictions on visas for Nigerian government officials. The U.S. military ability to track and influence regional events declined as a result of the sanctions. Washington decided not to replace its defense attaché, who was completing his tour of duty, leaving an Air Force major as the senior defense officer in the attaché's office. Meanwhile, in the downsized embassy in Monrovia, a single Army lieutenant colonel was responsible for covering both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In late 1994 and early 1995, Peter Chaveas, a senior Foreign Service Officer with extensive experience in Nigeria, moved on from his position as Director of the West Africa Office. Dane Smith, who replaced him at the State Department Bureau of African Affairs, was stretched thin by his additional duties as special envoy for Liberia. Political appointee Susan Rice took over the African Affairs Office at the National Security Council (NSC). The net effect of these changes was to consolidate NSC leadership on West African matters in Washington.

Significant changes were also occurring at EUCOM. General James Jamerson, USAF, took over as Deputy Commander in Chief in July 1995. The Commander in Chief, General George Joulwan, USA, immediately used him to initiate a program of proactive engagement. Nigeria's pariah status and instability in Liberia, however, resulted in minimal command interaction with those states.

U.S. assistance to ECOMOG now took discrete forms. The U.S. Government worked through contractors to provide Nigerians in Liberia with trucks, radios, and helicopters in 1996 and 1997. Behind the scenes cooperation

with Nigeria's dictatorship, while clearly not in the spirit of sanctions, was nevertheless welcomed by many in Congress.

### A New Era—Perhaps

The death of military dictator General Sani Abacha in 1998 had a profound impact on the entire spectrum of U.S. relations with Nigeria. When both Abacha and his prominent civilian opponent, Chief M.K.O. Abiola, died of heart attacks in the summer of 1998, that curious coincidence set the stage for a return to democracy. General Abdulsalam Abubakar oversaw a transitional government, undertaking dramatic political reforms and scheduling an election that took place within a year of Abacha's death. Retired General Olusegun Obasanjo then took the reins of an elected government in May 1999. He initiated sweeping changes, ousting many senior officers in the course of consolidating power and reforming the military, retiring 17 generals, and then removing the chiefs of all three military services.

From 1999 to the present, U.S. foreign policy has focused on Nigeria as the region's key state. The idea be-

### the death of dictator Sani Abacha had a profound impact on U.S. relations with Nigeria

hind this strategy is that limited foreign assistance is best spent on a state that is aware of its potential to exercise regional hegemony and willing and assertive enough to do it. This anchor state strategy, which gained momentum under Bill Clinton, has been adopted by the Bush administration.

Thomas Pickering, the Under Secretary of State and an ambassador to Nigeria in the early 1980s, flew to Abuja to discuss training for Nigerian troops in July 2000. Operation Focus Relief initially involved 3<sup>d</sup> Special Forces Group providing 10 weeks of training to seven battalions—one Ghanaian, five Nigerian, and one Senegalese. Nigerians welcomed the proffered equipment but bristled at training. Citing their greater combat experience, they saw little to gain from U.S. instruction.

Evacuating civilians to  
*USS Kearsarge*, Sierra  
Leone, 1997.



USS Kearsarge (Aaron Kulik)

The military transformation training promised to the Nigerians has also proven a source of friction. It consists of a three-part process conducted by an American contractor, Military Professional Resources Incorporated, intended to reprofessionalize the Nigerian Ministry of Defense. Phase one, completed in 1999 at a cost to the U.S. Agency for International Development of \$1 million, entailed an assessment of necessary actions. Phase two, at a combined cost to the United States and Nigeria of \$7 million, was initiated in late 2000. As the process drags on, the military is showing irritation with perceived U.S. insensitivity to Nigeria's national sovereignty. The honeymoon is apparently over.

Sierra Leone remains one issue of contention. The challenge facing the international community is how to stop the violence without perpetuating that nation's partition. The United States has opted to treat conflict resolution in Sierra Leone primarily as an ancillary aspect of its détente with Nigeria. The fate of Nigeria, with Sub-Saharan Africa's largest population and its only megacity, is enormously important. Its embryonic democracy must be nurtured in every way, to include the sort of military engagement the United States has undertaken. One

should distinguish, however, between what is good for Nigeria and what is good for smaller countries in West Africa. Regional hegemony by nature retard the sovereignty of weaker states in their areas of influence. Nigeria, with its endemic corruption and other vestiges of its recent past, is not yet capable of instilling lasting stability in other countries.

Whatever the approach to conflict resolution in West Africa, it must encompass all of the affected states to succeed. It must also better coordinate the use of statecraft and military force, a complicated endeavor given the multiplicity of actors and interests. A decade of Nigerian intervention has made this much clear: peacekeeping alone will not induce stability. **JFQ**



National Archives

# International Naval Cooperation during the Spanish Civil War

By ADAM B. SIEGEL

**A**mong ideologues on the left and the right, the Spanish civil war was perhaps the most controversial conflict of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, European powers could not ignore the fact that it posed the greatest threat to peace since World War I. Spain's strategic location, the rise of fascism as a military threat, and the presence of over 100,000 foreign nationals drew international naval forces into Spanish waters. Thus the conflict entangled foreign powers which, in addition

to sparring with Republican and Nationalist forces, became involved in ad hoc multinational operations from support to combatants to interdiction patrols, antisubmarine operations, and noncombatant evacuation—portending what today is known as *coalitions of the willing*.

## It's War

The Spanish military leadership launched an attempt to overthrow the left-wing Republican government on July 17, 1936. France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States had naval forces in Spanish waters or en route within days. They were joined by Argentina, Mexico, Portugal, and Yugoslavia by the end of the year.

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In line with a long history of such actions, the navies involved in evacuation operations cooperated in communications, intelligence, and logistic support; removal of each others' nationals; diplomatic *demarches* or joint actions against Republican or Nationalist activities; and cordiality to reduce the tensions and burdens of patrolling Spanish waters.

Cooperation emerged from the start. The first messages the U.S. consul at Barcelona sent to the State Department, calling for the evacuation of American citizens, went via the Royal Navy. Most Americans had already been evacuated aboard other nations' ships by the time a U.S.

### the civil war threatened general navigation from its earliest days

merchant ship reached Barcelona several days later. In November, the Germans asked the British to assist them in evacuating their citizens from southern Spain. This pattern continued through the war. The U.S. Navy evacuated over 1,500 people, of whom only 633 were American citizens. The German navy evacuated 9,300 in July and August 1936, half nationals from third countries. The combined navies removed 50,000 foreigners and 10,000 Spaniards by the end of 1936.

Naval services often collaborated. Professional courtesies included steps to relieve the tensions of the day. Thus, for example, U.S. warships frequently had foreign officers aboard for movies—with German ships providing the beer. Such attitudes extended into the operations in Spanish waters, with honors exchanged among the numerous foreign ships anchored in Spanish harbors.

Refugees en route to France, 1936.



National Archives

Cooperation often extended to giving advice and informing other navies of local conditions. On July 30, 1936, the captain of the German warship *Albatross*, which had just entered Bilbao, was preparing to send an armed party ashore to protect evacuation efforts. The captain of a British ship in the harbor quickly dissuaded him. The Germans were surprised to learn that, far from being occupied by armed belligerents, Bilbao was quiet. Sending armed patrols ashore would have done more harm than good. Thanks to the British, the German captain avoided an embarrassing incident.

### Freedom of the Seas

The civil war threatened general navigation from its earliest days, with attacks on merchant and neutral warships beginning in early July. Crews took appropriate steps. British ships displayed floodlit white ensigns on their turrets. The U.S. Navy directed its vessels near the Spanish coast to display additional colors. Despite such efforts attacks on neutrals increased. Nations protested to both sides in the civil war and warships were ordered to fire on attacking warplanes. A plane attempted to bomb *USS Kane* on August 30, 1936. The log recorded:

*At 1610 unidentified, tri-motored, low black winged monoplane approached ship from stern and dropped 2 bombs which exploded 1,000 yards astern. Went to general quarters, and maneuvered on various courses at various speeds to avoid bombs. At 1625 plane returned and dropped 1 bomb, distance of miss 150 yards. At 1626 opened fire on plane with anti-aircraft gun, fired 2 rounds. At 1631 plane circled back toward ship, resumed fire on plane with anti-aircraft gun. At 1632 plane dropped 3 bombs which exploded 200 yards abeam to starboard. At 1634 ceased firing, total rounds expended 10 rounds 3 inch 23 cal. SPD 2235 service shrapnel ammunition, no casualties and apparently no casualties inflicted on plane. At 1645 plane retreated in northeasterly direction and disappeared. . . .<sup>1</sup>*

The question of belligerent rights, such as the authority to institute a blockade or stop ships on the high seas, remained throughout the war and frequently provoked naval responses. The Republicans suggested that they would blockade all ports in Nationalist hands in August 1936.

Since they did not recognize international belligerent status, the French protested that this “police measure” would undermine legitimate freedom of commerce. French warships would not permit merchant ships to be diverted. Britain announced a similar policy. The German navy pursued an activist approach. It seized two Republican vessels at one point and turned them over to the Nationalist forces as part of the pressure on the Republicans to release the seized German merchant ship *Palos*. The Germans appeared ready to invoke gunboat diplomacy to protect their interests in Spain.

Naval operations included intervention in support of both sides. This was particularly evident in the case of German and Italian backing of the Nationalists and Soviet support for the Republicans. The German presence was the most pronounced. In late July, a German squadron entered the Nationalist port of Ceuta for “a joyous celebration.” Such public demonstrations of implicit German recognition of Nationalist legitimacy escalated throughout the autumn, with

formal recognition coming in November. Along with advisors ashore, the Germans provided technical support to Nationalist ships. They also began supporting military action. This complicity highlights the complex and often duplicitous nature of naval cooperation. At the same time German vessels were anchored in harbors to evacuate foreign nationals or support German diplomats, they observed Republican naval activity and reported it to the Nationalists.

Italian navy involvement included resupplying Nationalist ships and collecting intelligence. From late October through November 1936, two Italian destroyers patrolled the straits of Sicily to report on shipping from the Soviet Union crossing the Mediterranean to Spain. Italian participation was generally more extensive and overt than German efforts. Thus Italian ships played a direct role in the fighting “on seven dark nights in January and February 1937. . . bombarding Spanish ports.” Republican forces recovered Italian shell fragments, confirming “a widespread assumption

### Republicans and Nationalists

**S**pain’s Second Republic, proclaimed after the fall of the monarchy in 1931, was at first dominated by middle class liberals and moderate socialists whose policies threatened the privileged class. Large estates were redistributed, church and state were separated, and the government proclaimed an antimilitarist policy. With their interests and ideals under attack, the landed aristocracy, the church, officer corps, monarchists, and a new fascist party (*Falange*), opposed the fledgling administration. The government’s idealistic reforms also failed to satisfy left-wing radicals and did little to ameliorate the lot of the lower classes. Right-wing forces gained a majority in the 1933 elections, leading to a succession of weak coalition governments.

After a left-wing electoral victory in 1936, revolutionary sentiment on the right was consolidated. In July, General Francisco Franco led an army revolt in Morocco. Rightist groups rebelled in Spain, and most of the army joined the revolutionary (Nationalist) camp. By November, the Nationalists had Madrid under siege. A new Republican government under Francisco Largo Caballero organized loyalist forces to defend the city. They were aided by international brigades—foreign volunteers, many of them communists.

Throughout the war, Germany and Italy aided Franco with equipment, supplies, military advisors, and technicians. The Spanish republic became dependent on the Soviet Union for logistical support.

Late in 1938, Franco mounted a major offensive against Catalonia, seizing Barcelona in January. After the loss of Catalonia the Republican cause became hopeless. The victorious Nationalists entered Madrid on April 1, 1939. Combat fatalities on both sides during the conflict were 285,000.

JFQ



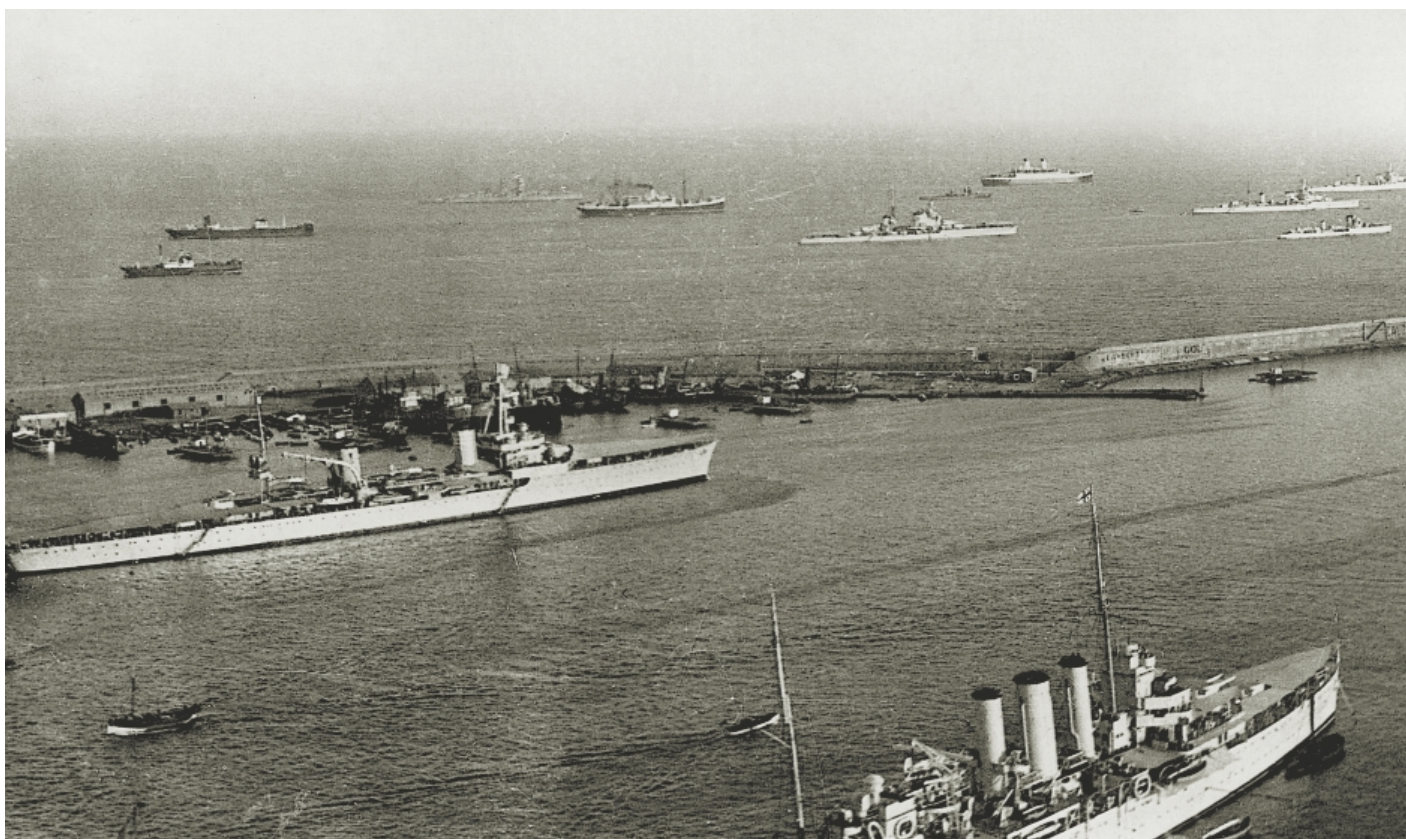
General Francisco Franco with staff.

National Archives



Nationalist sailors with Italian torpedo.

National Archives



British, French, and Italian warships, Barcelona.

National Archives

**their greatest concern was to avoid a general European war**

of Italian responsibility.” Despite this, “Italian admirals outwardly appeared puzzled when British naval officers in Spanish waters raised the issue.”<sup>2</sup>

To avoid publicly flaunting nonintervention agreements and minimize the likelihood of other nations intervening to assist the Republican government, the Germans and Italians typically avoided obvious signs of military support. Their

desire to advance the Nationalist cause, combined with their need for secrecy, rapidly led to a reliance on submarine activity. Italian submarine patrols with Spanish officers aboard began on November 8, 1936. The

Germans also dispatched two boats, but operational orders were so restrictive due to fears of international complications from mistakenly attacking British navy or other foreign ships that the submarines accomplished nothing and were ordered home on December 11.

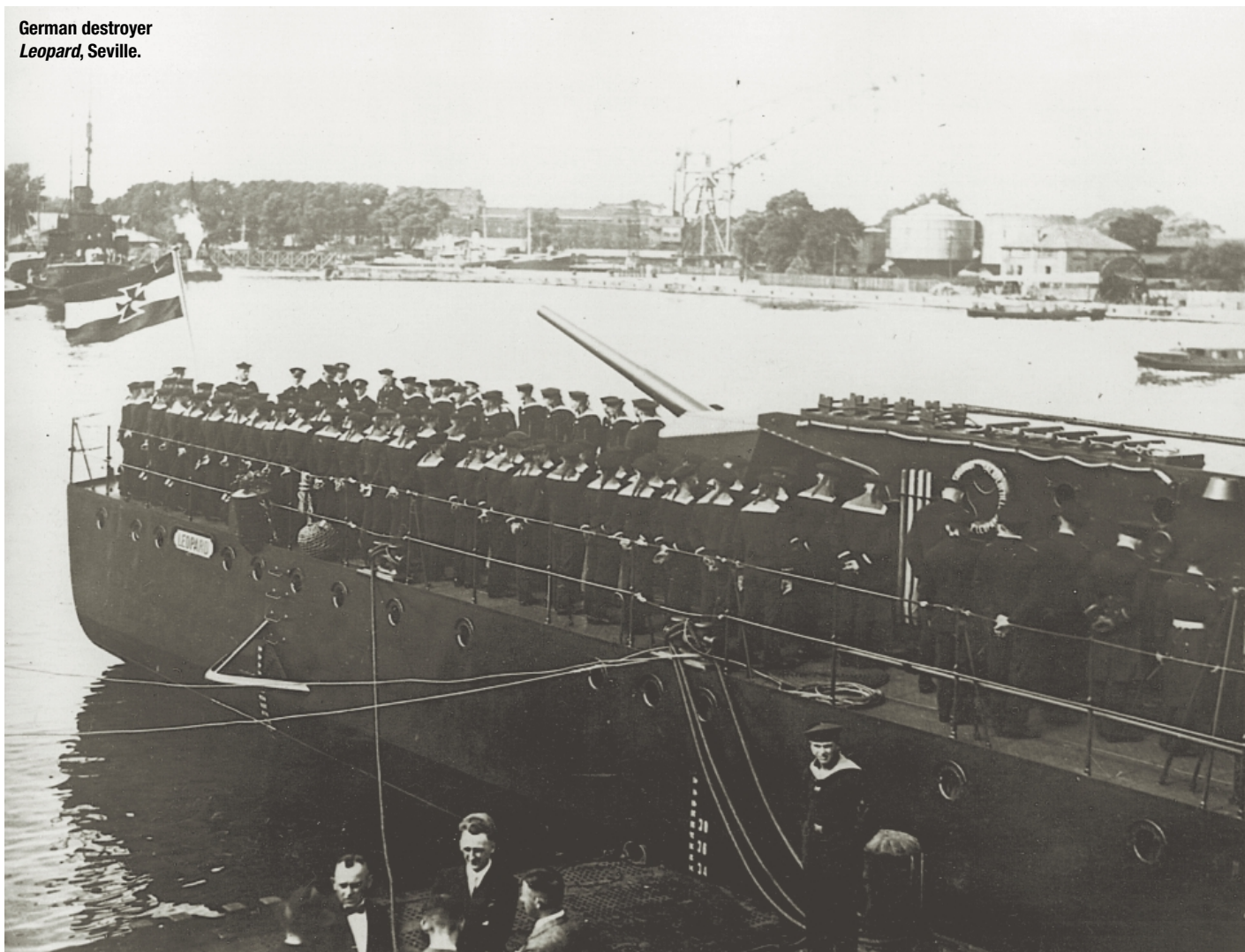
The Soviets provided a less extensive range of naval support. They lacked warships capable of operating so far from home, but that did not prevent them from contributing in a potentially decisive manner. By early September, Commodore N.G. Kuznetsov reached the Republican naval headquarters at the head of a group of advisors who essentially took over. Soviet advice,

based on the weak status of their navy and doctrine oriented toward coastal defense, radically affected the character of Republican operations, turning them from offensive sorties against Nationalist forces to limited protection of their merchant shipping.

### Limiting Conflict

Soon after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, British and French leaders demonstrated that their greatest concern was not to prevent fascist expansion in Western Europe but to limit the conflict to Spain and avoid a general European war. By the beginning of August, led by Britain and France, the European powers took the first steps toward establishing the Nonintervention Committee aimed at reducing outside assistance to both sides. The committee first met in London on September 9. It attempted to determine measures to curtail the flow of arms, supplies, and volunteers to Spain in often acrimonious meetings through the autumn of 1936. On November 12, the committee adopted a control scheme based on the use of observers. After further study, it approved a more ambitious plan in January 1937, which provided for observers to patrol Spanish land frontiers with France

German destroyer  
*Leopard*, Seville.



National Archives

and Portugal and aboard all ships of member nations sailing for Spain. Naval patrols would report all violations.

The observer mission was to take effect in March but, as with most of the committee's undertakings, the need for clarification of the agreement delayed operations. Meantime, member nations passed laws restricting merchant traffic with Spain. Great Britain, for example, adopted the British Merchant Shipping Act, which banned carrying military supplies to either side.

The control plan, with the joint nation naval patrol in place, took effect on April 20. Britain, France, Germany, and Italy contributed forces. The agreement divided the coast into patrol areas. The British and French navies would monitor the Nationalist coast and the Germans and Italians would observe Republican territories. Patrols were to report vessels of participating countries that entered their zones without notification and

without observers aboard or which refused to be searched. All the ships on patrol flew the North Seas Fisheries Commission pennant in the absence of a Nonintervention Committee emblem.

Nationalist interference with foreign shipping concerned many countries. Northern European nations, in particular, grew increasingly distressed. Between November 1936 and April 1937, 18 Dutch, 26 Danish, and 30 Norwegian ships had their cargoes confiscated. The Dutch sent a cruiser in March with orders to defend merchant ships and the Norwegians followed suit in early April. The Scandinavian countries raised the issue with the committee, suggesting that the warships of the four powers extend their protection to Scandinavian vessels with international observers aboard.



Republicans embarking, 1936.

National Archives

Despite the calls for action, the patrols quickly devolved into ineffectiveness, and by late May the French ministry of marine noted that their efficacy was “illusory,” there being too many ways to avoid them. Increased dangers also threatened the patrol effort. On May 13, the destroyer *HMS Hunter* struck a mine off Almeria. Even more serious incidents occurred later that month. Republican planes bombed Palma, endangering patrol ships. The Italian auxiliary *Barletta* was hit with six killed. The committee met to discuss the incident two days later, on May 28, with the Italians demanding that the group reassert its authority. Meanwhile, attacks continued. A Republican bomber hit the German battleship *Deutschland* at Ivisa, killing 22. In response, on May 31 the Germans sent a cruiser and four destroyers to attack the Republican port of Almeria. The next day the

German government withdrew from the committee, declaring it would not return without assurances that there would be no repeat of Republican hostilities. Italy withdrew as well. Germany also announced that their ships had orders to repulse by force any plane or warship that approached under existing conditions.

In London and Paris many feared that general war could result from further German reprisals or open intervention in Spain. Britain formulated a plan for increased neutral zones in Spanish ports and other measures to satisfy the Germans. This scheme faltered when Germany announced that Republican submarines had attacked the cruiser *Leipzig*. Berlin demanded the internment of all Republican submarines and a

*HMS Orion off Gibraltar.*

National Archives

joint naval demonstration by the four powers off Valencia. The British and French doubted the reports of the submarine attacks and argued that action should not be taken without an investigation into the incident. The Germans refused to cooperate and Rome followed the lead of Berlin.

Britain and France decided to take over the entire patrol effort. They spent the summer seeking a means to reorganize operations on a more effective basis. At the end of August, a committee report on the means for restoring and improving the naval patrols concluded that the system had been extensively evaded and did not justify its cost.

Attacks in the Mediterranean continued at a relatively light pace but escalated in late August

with strikes on British, French, Russian, and Spanish shipping. Both Britain and France viewed the situation as intolerable and the British reinforced their Mediterranean squadron and ordered it to attack any submarine in the vicinity of a strike on a merchant ship. Then a submarine attack against *HMS Havock* on the night of August 30 spurred Downing Street into supporting the call for an international meeting. London had intelligence intercepts proving that Italian submarines were responsible. Neither Britain nor France, however, wished to directly accuse Italy. They did not want a head-on confrontation and hoped to involve the Italians in a new accord. On September 6, London and Paris sent joint invitations to Rome and nine other capitals, hoping to reach European consensus on deterring attacks against neutral shipping.

The Soviets proved less diplomatic and accused Italy of attacking its merchant ships. The Italians, with the Germans following suit, used this accusation as an excuse not to attend the conference. The meeting opened on September 9 in Nyon, Switzerland, despite the Italian and German refusal to participate. An agreement was signed September 14. Immediate orders went out to British and French naval forces to attack any submarine caught under the conditions outlined in the agreement.

A major issue involved which nations would take responsibility for the patrols. While the British did not expect much cooperation, the

**the show of force by the British and French navies proved effective**

French proved willing to provide forces. That was crucial, as the other states refused to participate in operations outside their territorial waters. The British and French agreed to patrol the entire Mediterranean. The accord placed severe restrictions on submarine operations, allotting only a few zones for exercises. The signatories also agreed to give logistic support to Britain and France, permit patrol ships to enter territorial waters in pursuit of errant submarines, and not allow foreign submarines into their territorial waters.

The Nyon agreement placed heavy burdens on the British and French; the submarine patrols required the support of 50 destroyers. The British had to commit three-fifths of their destroyer force and withdraw ships from the Nonintervention Committee patrols in Spanish waters to enforce the Nyon accord.

After the signing, London and Paris formally invited Rome to take over the Tyrrhenian Sea patrol area. Benito Mussolini agreed to modifications of the Nyon clauses to accommodate Italian involvement after the British and French essentially agreed to grant his country equal status in directing the operations. This participation boosted his international reputation and inflated the role of Italy as a Mediterranean power.

Other political implications of the agreement were also intriguing. The Soviets perceived the unwillingness to directly accuse the Italians of belligerency as yet another act of appeasement and were surprised that the patrols actually went into effect. The fascist powers, as well, did not expect that the Western powers could act in the face of their opposition. Neville Chamberlain, however, believed that the attacks at sea represented such an affront to his nation's honor that he had no choice but to take action. To not respond in the face of such a direct threat meant sacrificing

one of Britain's greatest traditions—command of the sea. Still Britain's willingness to take a stand on freedom of navigation in the Mediterranean did not suggest to the other European powers that the country would take a firm position elsewhere. Indeed, the Prime Minister proved too willing to compromise over German aggression on the continent where he concluded that, unlike the situation at sea, the British lacked both the capacity and will to act.

Nevertheless, the show of force by the British and French navies proved effective. Attacks quickly abated with 27 destroyers now constantly on station. In addition to ending submarine strikes on shipping in international waters, the Nyon patrol led to increased British and French naval cooperation. The Royal Navy decided in early January 1938 to reduce patrols in light of the absence of submarine attacks. Nationalist submarines went to sea not long after and the strikes resumed. The British rapidly reinforced their patrols and the attacks ended. London again relaxed the patrols in May 1938 and the Nyon agreement was suspended in August.

The blend of informal and formal operations, confrontation and collaboration, interventionist initiatives, and acts of containment over a long period all combined to give the naval activity during the Spanish Civil War an unusually rich complexion. They were an early example of what can be accomplished by coalitions of the willing under even the most difficult circumstances. Perhaps most of all they offer an important lesson on how nations can reach beyond the limits of their own instruments of national power to provide the forces necessary to respond to crisis and deescalate conflict.

**JFQ**

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Entry for August 30, 1936, log book, *USS Kane*, LLL-16, U.S. naval vessels, record group 24, National Archives.

<sup>2</sup> John F. Coverdale, *Italian Intervention in the Spanish Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 116.

Capstone students  
at Cherry Point.



305<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron (Scott H. Spitzer)

# Senior Officers and Strategic Leader Development

By MARK A. MCGUIRE

**C**hanging demands on the Armed Forces coupled with the rapid pace and increasing frequency of deployments are not only affecting the exercise of strategic leadership but also how the military inculcates the necessary qualities in commanders. This conclusion is based on a study of senior leaders in all five services and several government agencies. By analyzing first-hand accounts of what contributed to personal growth, the research found

that while models for developing military leaders are sound, future stresses will severely test their ability to adapt to emerging conditions.

## Concepts of Command

A review of service programs indicates similarities and differences. However, all the services appreciate the importance of developing strategic leaders. The Army leader development model is depicted by three pillars: institutional (formal) education, operational assignments, and self-development initiatives. These pillars are supported by leadership fundamentals that encompass service values and ethics. The Army model prescribes a career-long, progressive, sequential,

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and interconnected process. Amplifying on the three pillars, Michael Anastasio describes it as a continuing cycle of “education, training, experience, assessment, feedback, and reinforcement in which responsibility for development lies with both the leader and the leader’s superior.”<sup>1</sup>

Navy leader development represents a career-long continuum from recruitment to retirement. The system encompasses operational assignments

### the current system of senior leader development involves placing promising leaders in key assignments

coupled with formal institutional education aimed at ensuring that leaders are technically and tactically trained and educated on the specific system, aircraft, or ship they will be assigned to next. Command leader

school reinforces service leadership fundamentals and decisionmaking processes.

The Marine Corps views leader development as a continuous and progressive process throughout an officer’s career. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, *Warfighting*, states that the responsibility for implementing professional development resides with the individual, the commander, and the educational establishment. This mirrors the pillars of the Army model. The institutional education system is intended to build on the base already provided by commanders in their unit development programs as well as through individual study. The Marine Corps University focuses on developing the skills of decisionmaking in the face of uncertainty and fosters creativity through broadening the mind.

The Air Force model is undergoing revision. In 1998 the service published its *Continuum Of Education Framework* which identifies professional military knowledge, skills, and attitudes airmen should possess at key points in their careers. The framework reflects the dynamic and continuous system of Air Force professional military education for officers and links levels of learning with a core curriculum so that each course, school, or program builds on the previous level. Its five core areas are: the professions of arms, military studies, international security, communications, and leadership. The Developing Aerospace Leaders Program, established in 2000, adds a broader developmental perspective. Its objective is to identify the leadership needs of the transforming aerospace force and design a scheme that will develop leaders with the competencies for staff, joint, and operational assignments. This process will require a balance of area expertise, career broadening assignments, training and exercises, deployments, mentoring, and professional education.

The Coast Guard defines leadership development as the system by which an organization grows its work force into leaders. Its model, as

described in Coast Guard Commandant Instruction 5251.1, *Coast Guard Leadership Development Program*, prescribes an integrated process emphasizing resident and nonresident training, unit level experience, self-development programs, and assessment instruments for units and individuals. Similar to the Army and Marine Corps models, it emphasizes three common leader development processes: the individual’s responsibility for self-awareness and development, the unit’s responsibility to provide formal and informal training, and the organization’s role in furnishing formal systems for assignments, policy, training, and education.

In the interest of cross-service generalization, this analysis uses the three common developmental tenets—operational assignments, institutional education, and self-development—to solicit feedback from all respondents. A fourth tenet, mentorship, is also included because of its influence as a development process.

### Grooming Generals, Raising Admirals

The current system of senior leader development involves placing promising leaders in key assignments to expose them to myriad challenging and educational experiences before they assume roles as strategic leaders. Each service has identified developmental commands and positions where the most promising officers are assigned. In addition to operational assignments, each service provides institutional schools that afford either a specialized or general education. Besides the intermediate and senior service schools, lasting from six to ten months and geared towards mid-grade officers, the services also offer school opportunities tailored towards the organizational level leaders, one and two star officers. Some schools are mandatory in all services, such as the Capstone Course for newly promoted general/flag officers. Others are optional, depending on the individual’s future assignment. Each service has an office to schedule and manage general officer attendance at senior schools. Some courses are competitive and attendees are selected by their superiors. Examples are the Joint Flag Air Component Commander and Joint Flag Officers Warfighting Courses. While both are training-focused rather than educational schools per se, they provide valuable instruction for air component and joint task force commanders.

Other educational opportunities include fellowships and attendance at civilian and government schools to study such subjects as national security, leadership, legal affairs, media relations,



U.S. Coast Guard (Daniel Tremper)

**Coordinating support,  
Enduring Freedom.**

systems acquisition management, equal opportunity, aviation safety, information warfare, and installation command. There is also a one-week Leadership at the Peak and Leadership Development Course, run by the Center for Creative Leadership. Classes are designed to enhance self-awareness through feedback on personal leadership style, team problem solving, and other exercises.

There are also informal methods. Mentoring, through which senior or retired officers can help develop general/flag officers in their service and for the joint chain of command, is the most common. Informal self-development also includes such initiatives as professional reading lists and subscribing to journals. Each service attaches a different emphasis to this area, though in general mentorship and self-development appear to be much less formally emphasized in the services, if they are at all, than institutional

schools and operational assignments. Since there are few formal systems for self-development, its use depends primarily on the individual.

### The Right Stuff

Knowing the requisite skills, knowledge, and capacities of senior leaders and understanding how they are used as officers progress in their careers is only part of the solution. An equally difficult question is determining how senior leaders acquire the faculty for executive leadership. How does a direct leader, a battalion/squadron/ship commander, develop into a four star strategic visionary? Stratified systems theory provides a general framework for understanding this process.<sup>2</sup> It postulates that conceptual capacity is created only as leaders are pushed beyond their current frame of reference.

There is common agreement that strategic leader development requires a stimulus that challenges the leader's capacity to rethink and reorganize frameworks in solving increasingly complex problems under conditions of ambiguity. Research suggests that operational assignments are the most vital aspect of developing senior leaders. One survey of the literature found that the "most important influence on long term growth is the interaction that occurs between commanders and subordinate officers during operational assignments."<sup>3</sup> Further, on-the-job training is more developmental than institutional education. Mentoring, coaching, self-evaluation, and reflection are only marginally helpful in enhancing operational experience.

On the other hand, some researchers contend that the arrival of interactive simulation holds great promise for allowing institutional instruction to train future senior commanders. By integrating simulation and the classroom, institutions expose students to multiple points of view, engage them in questioning existing frames of reference, challenge them with real world complexity and uncertainty, involve them with collaborative tasks that build interpersonal skill, present exercises that include synthesis as well as analysis, and provide time for reading, reflection, discussion, and writing. Richard Chilcoat's discussion of strategic crisis exercises offers one example. These drills create a representative strategic politico-military environment that raises the sights of students and confronts them with higher-level processes before they deal with them in the real world.<sup>4</sup>

Others contend that while institutional schools are getting better at replicating the realism of the strategic environment, they are still

not as good as the real thing. Using both domains as complementary developmental processes may be the best solution, a notion supported by Chilcoat's argument that no leader development domain is intended to be the sole process but that the synergistic effect of formal and on-the-job experiences most enhances leader development.

### Testing the Waters

The research behind this article suggests that current scholarship on the effectiveness of leader development tools is about right, a conclusion derived from a survey of 48 senior leaders on three grade levels.

Participants were asked to identify, rank, and explain the five developmental processes (a fifth process of *other developmental experiences* was added) in accordance with their criticality to success (the lower the score, the higher the perceived importance). Answers from the brigade command selected group (direct leaders) were ranked by their average scores: operational assignments 1.4, institutional education 2.8, mentorship 3.1, other developmental experiences 3.5, and self-development 3.7.

While the responses and accompanying narratives confirmed that operational assignments are the most critical elements for developing leader skills, institutional schools also proved im-

varied from the views of the direct leader group. The average rankings were operational assignments 1.2, mentorship 2.4, institutional education 2.6, self-development 3.6, and other developmental experiences 4.2. Narrative responses from the group included: "Key operational assignments are most effective; they are where the rubber meets the road; you learn how to do it; there is no substitute for experience."

Institutional education was not ranked second in criticality for the newly minted general officer group as projected. Having an informal mentoring relationship with a senior leader ranked higher. While this ordering is relatively close between mentorship and institutional education, the reversal in priority from the direct leaders may indicate a trend toward valuing mentorship more as leaders progress in their careers.

Finally, both groups supported the premise that self-development is the least critical process. Responses verifying this finding included statements that the pace of operations is too high to devote attention to self-development. Speaking to the interconnectedness of leader development, one respondent confessed that he could not separate self-development from the other processes.

Responses from 17 strategic leaders (senior general officers) were operational assignments 1.6, self-development 2.5, mentorship 2.9, institutional education 3.3, and other developmental experiences 4.2. Strategic leaders, like the direct and organizational groups, considered operational assignments the most critical. Notably, this group put self-development in second place, defying predictions and the scholarly literature and contrasting sharply with the low ranking other groups gave it.

### Answers and Questions

These findings raise significant issues for each component of the military leader development model.

*Operational assignments.* The most important factor for all three groups was perceived to be operational assignments. Few disagreed that on-the-job training was the foundation for growing strong leaders. Operational assignments, as presented in the literature and described by respondents, were viewed as the most challenging experiences and hence as providing the best opportunity for altering a leader's frame of reference. Therefore, the services should continue to manage the progression of operational assignments as the most critical developmental experience.

While field and fleet positions have the most powerful influence among all the development

**current scholarship on the effectiveness of leader development tools is about right**



Training at the Air Mobility Warfare Center.

305th Communications Squadron (Scott H. Spitzer)

portant in providing time to ponder the last job and consider how to improve future performance. Also, attesting to the variation in response to the same stimulus, one of the 15 in this group ranked self-development as the most critical factor.

The survey responses from 16 general officers attending Capstone (organizational leaders in transition from direct to strategic leadership)



U.S. Navy (Charles M. Abell)

Participating in NATO mission planning.

processes, operational and personnel demands may prohibit the services from optimizing the experience offered by deliberate assignment policies. In short, operational demands always place mission first and leader development second. A solution may be for the services to employ the other pillars to compensate for shortfalls in career assignment opportunities.

*Institutional education.* Findings reveal a gradual decrease in the perceived importance of institutional education as careers progress. The schoolhouse slowly gives way to mentorship or self-study. The reason may be that institutions cannot replicate the environmental demands and experiences strategic leaders encounter in actual assignments. Another explanation could be experiential bias. Strategic level respondents have generally not attended educational institutions for several years and may remember recent assignments and mentors more sharply, attaching greater relevance to them. Leaders who attended school recently perceive their institutional education as more critical. Perhaps the difference is that the two groups either don't completely understand the requirements on strategic leaders or educational institutions have improved or both. A case could be made that schoolhouses over the past decade have shifted focus to preparing students for higher-level leadership. The challenge for military institutions is to build on this success and continue enhancing experiential exercises and simulations.

*Mentorship.* Although all three groups rated mentorship as a secondary or tertiary developmental process, the study found confusion over what the term actually means. This uncertainty

biases the perceived criticality of mentorship and hence its ranking. In retrospect, a clearer definition might have reduced the diversity of opinions. For example, several respondents in all three groups referred to their commander's actions and advice as critical to their development. These responses might have been better categorized as value achieved from operational assignments. Such confusion is mirrored in service doctrines that rarely define the scope and purpose of mentorship. Clarification would be the first step in strengthening the role of mentoring.

*Self-development.* The most significant finding from the study is the importance strategic level leaders place on self-development or individual study, in contrast to the first two groups. This is an especially alarming result. Most officers in operational assignments have little time to enhance their own professional education, given the increasing tempo and frequency of military operations.

With ever quickening operational tempo, why do so many strategic leaders espouse self-development? Perhaps they have made time for self-study and seen its benefits. Several officers from this group claimed to be avid readers—and not just in military subjects. Perhaps more deliberate effort should be made to build in the time and resources for self-study.

Implementing additions to leader development programs will be tough. There appears to be no relief in sight for the current operational and personnel tempo. The demands of mission accomplishment will continue to inhibit commanders from conducting unit programs and individuals from opting for self-study programs while on operational assignments.

What can be done? Developmental exercises will certainly have to be scheduled around or in partnership with mission exercises and deployments. It will take very creative unit commanders to exploit these opportunities. For example, an *Army Times* article reported that one division commander sequestered his battalion commanders for a few days and ran them through group exercises challenging their tactical and leadership abilities. Other leader development initiatives include battlefield staff rides, tactical exercises without troops, professional reading programs, book reports and presentations, writing papers, map exercises, feedback assessments, and keeping journals of lessons learned. Currently, the services are aligning their performance evaluation reports with the requirement to develop subordinate leaders, as evidenced in the Army's revised officer evaluation report. Such initiatives should help focus commanders on this challenge.



Training exercise  
in Litothoro, Greece.

U.S. Navy (Martin Maddock)

**institutional education that complements and enhances operational assignments will be critical**

### The School Solution

Regardless of the number of development techniques used in the field and fleet, the fact remains that there are limited opportunities to employ them. There is even less occasion for self-analysis. Along with the challenge of missions and deployments, time for reflection is crucial to leadership development. This leaves institutional education as the primary vehicle in which to process the experiences encountered in operational assignments and synthesize new frameworks for the future. Thus the placement of institutional education that complements and enhances operational assignments will be critical.

Several respondents recommended conducting professional military education earlier in officers' careers to provide an enhanced awareness of national and international security strategy. One proposal is to send officers to war college before rather than after mid-level command.

Capstone and other general/flag programs help officers gain a global perspective, but they come late in a career and there are no mandatory subsequent courses for strategic leaders. Perhaps an institutional education process between assignments is unnecessary on the strategic level. Leader conferences and other interactions may already provide those benefits. The question is whether there is sufficient time or opportunity on the job for strategic leader discussion, reflection, integration, and synthesis of concepts.

One source of help is experienced senior officers. Many retired strategic leaders are involved in professional military education. Are there

additional opportunities? One possibility is an institutional setting where retirees can periodically exchange information with active duty general/flag officers in a nonoperational environment. The services should also explore how simulations technology can develop and enhance these relationships.

Other respondent suggestions included taking advantage of graduate education at civilian institutions in international affairs, exposing leaders to the dynamics of civil-military relations and congressional affairs, establishing partnerships with industry, and spending more time with senior leaders in other services. Such initiatives could be accomplished within the context of a more robust institutional development program.

Although the services have effective senior leader development programs, there is cause for concern. Given increasing mission demands coupled with the broadening complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity of the global environment, the Armed Forces must continuously strive to improve professional development, ensuring that leaders are prepared to meet future challenges. There are no easy options, but there are clearly requirements for additional initiatives to offset the effects of a relentless operational tempo. **JFQ**

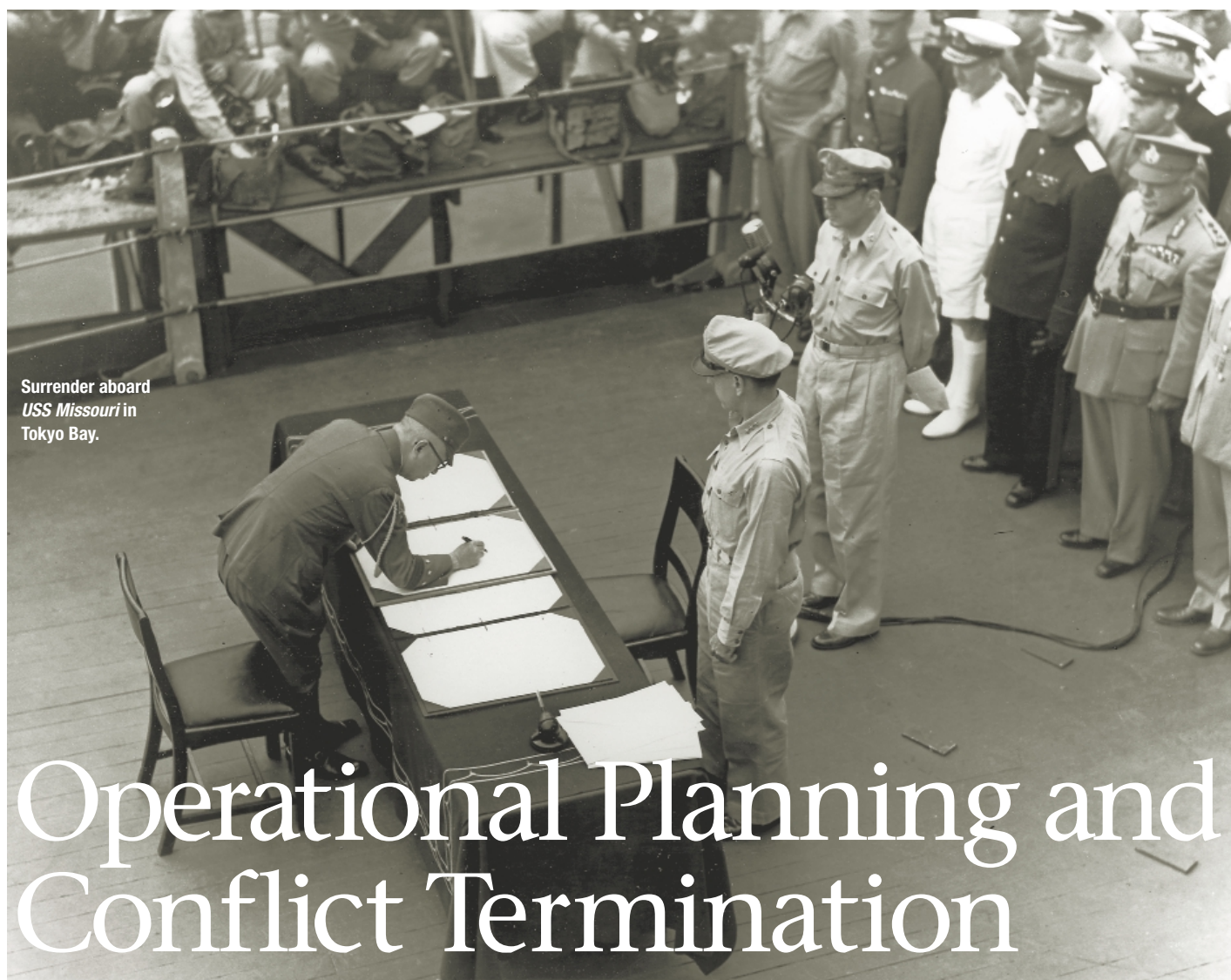
### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Michael A. Anastasio, "Leader Development: Direction for the Future," *Military Review*, vol. 71, no. 5 (May 1991), pp. 10–19.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Lewis and T. Owen Jacobs, "Individual Differences in Strategic Leadership Capacity: A Constructive/Developmental View," *Strategic Leadership: A Multiorganizational-level Perspective*, edited by Robert L. Phillips and James G. Hunt (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992), p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Mark D. Rocke and Thomas W. Hayden, "Officer Development: A Doctrinal Imperative," *Military Review*, vol. 73, no. 1 (January 1993), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Richard A. Chilcoat, "Fourth Army War College: Preparing Strategic Leaders for the Next Century," *Parameters*, vol. 25, no. 4 (Winter 1995–96), p. 19.



Surrender aboard  
USS Missouri in  
Tokyo Bay.

# Operational Planning and Conflict Termination

By JOHN R. BOULÉ II

**A**lthough the Armed Forces have proven themselves a capable policy instrument, the Nation has always struggled with conflict termination. America has often prevailed militarily while failing to achieve policy goals quickly and efficiently. A scan of joint publications suggests that military

professionals embrace the idea of a termination strategy, but doctrine offers little practical help. It is time to take the next step, creating an interagency organization and practices that can effectively conduct termination planning. Each regional commander in chief (CINC) should have a standing interagency team to act as an operations transition planning cell. This element must include members well versed in the application of the military, diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power.

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### Culture for Combat

When the President decides to use force, the military mindset is to deploy, defeat the enemy, then rapidly exit, turning affairs over to diplomats. Intense interagency coordination generally occurs only at the beginning and end. The military's hasty exit breaks continuity and detracts from shaping the environment for winning the peace and securing the desired endstate. Military culture is often oriented on its own finish line at the expense of long-term national objectives.

Strategic aims are achieved in part by the proper transition of leadership from generals and admirals to civilians. Interagency coordination throughout military operations is the linchpin. Operational planning should be guided not toward military termination but toward setting the stage for continued U.S. interaction by peaceful means.

Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, emphasizes planning for conflict termination, with the most extensive discussions in chapters I and III. Chapter I, "The Strategic Goal and Conflict Termination," describes properly conceived termination criteria as a key to lasting victory. It further states that termination is an essential link between national strategy and post-hostility aims and that military victory is measured by how it supports overall political goals.

Chapter III, "Combatant Command Strategic Planning," contains planning guidance, defines the desired endstate, and discusses how the military scenario helps set the conditions for termination. It continues with guidelines for the combatant commander that prescribe support to the nonmilitary instruments of power. Setting military transition conditions is one of the critical first steps in the estimate and planning process. It is clear from the manual that CINCs are responsible for incorporating conflict termination into campaign planning early on and in a manner consistent with national goals.

Since Joint Pub 3-0 introduces termination planning, one might expect detailed guidance in Joint Pub 5-0, *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations*. Yet termination and transition are mentioned fewer than a dozen times. The absence of techniques and practices for transition planning is glaring.

The *Joint Doctrine Encyclopedia* is the only other joint doctrinal source, containing six pages on termination. Some of its ideas repeat Joint Pub 3-0, but there is additional information as well as guidance about termination when applied to military operations other than war. Service publications provide little additional help.

### Peace and the Operational Art

Military theorists have pointed out the importance of conflict termination. Clausewitz stressed planning a campaign clear through to completion in order to achieve political objectives—including creating military conditions that would facilitate negotiations. His recommendation is incorporated into U.S. doctrine in principle. He also cautioned against "overshooting the target" in military operations.<sup>1</sup> In limited wars, combatant commanders must seek the appropriate culminating point to shape the environment for favorable peace terms. Today, Milan Vego is equally emphatic about planning military operations oriented toward the desired endstate, to include political, diplomatic, economic, and social conditions.<sup>2</sup> What theorists fail to articulate, however, is *how* to conduct termination planning. They are silent in defining the pathway from war winning to peace winning.

To achieve the operational skill required for termination, the military must reach beyond the conceptual constructs and traditional instruments of combat operations. Such expertise can only be achieved by drawing on a wide complement of talent. A number of agencies, including the Department of State, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Department of Commerce, have significant proficiency to contribute. Geographic CINCs should create operations transition planning cells within their Strategic Planning Directorates (J-5), recruiting representatives from the interagency community, to deliberately design transition strategies.

Some might argue that permanently assigning representatives of other Federal agencies to a joint military headquarters is unnecessary and would further devolve power from Washington to the CINCs. Sound doctrine along with interagency exercises and conferences will solve the problem. Such thinking is shortsighted. Transition planning is not a science. Although doctrine and theory are guides, no formulas exist that will always lead to favorable conflict resolution. The art of planning military operations requires close coordination from a staff accustomed to working together all the time. The art of transition planning requires nothing less. If anything, transition strategies are more difficult because they must incorporate all instruments of national power in a coherent, synchronized fashion.

### The A Team

The purpose of the operations transition planning cell would be to assist CINCs in achieving assigned political objectives. While most of the staff

**CINCs are responsible for incorporating conflict termination into campaign planning early on**



Celebrating German surrender.

focuses solely on military matters, this team would provide recommendations on achieving favorable conditions in all power dimensions. Using this brain trust, CINCs could develop and present options to the National Command Authorities throughout a campaign. Since the cell's options would come from diverse experts encompassing all policy instruments, it could anticipate possible contingencies, obstacles, opportunities, and objections and therefore have added legitimacy with national leaders. The cell would be assigned a number of tasks that would begin before a conflict and continue through the post-conflict period.

*Assisting with endstate definition.* After verifying initial objectives, the first task would be to recommend the desired endstate. In some cases, this might mean taking the initiative in planning. Crises develop quickly and unexpectedly, and the national security team may not have time to fully define all the goals of an operation. Restore Hope was a case in point. A tactical planning staff had to

assist the chain of command with desired endstate planning, albeit with less than optimal results.<sup>3</sup> An extant interagency planning team would have lifted this additional burden from the military and given endstate definition the attention it demands. Such a process would encourage senior leaders to conduct serious deliberations on the subject and allow the rest of the planning staff to focus on deployment and initial employment of forces.

*Defining military transition conditions.* After achieving consensus on the endstate, the team would assist in defining the military conditions that will lead to a successful transition to diplomatic leadership. These conditions would become military objectives for CINCs. In conjunction with military planners, the cell could advise on the appropriate ways and means to achieve these objectives. Its mission would be to incorporate and synchronize all key dimensions in the plan.

*Sequencing.* Favorable transition conditions will take time to evolve. Thus the cell's next task is to develop a sequenced path to the military transition state. This may be a series of phases



U.S. Army (Jose Trigo)

Discussing ceasefire terms, Desert Storm.

where the generation of specific circumstances may signal the end of one phase and the beginning of the next. Bruce Clarke developed a synchronization matrix that could be used for phased transition state planning.<sup>4</sup> It shows the

**when all transition conditions are met, CINCs are ready to hand off leadership to the diplomats**

planned status of variables such as command and control, security, economy, and diplomacy by operational phase. The oper-

ation moves to the next phase when a variable meets the tripwire definition described in the matrix. This tool could be tailored to any crisis.

When circumstances favor transition, the cell would advise on how to maintain this preferred state in order to continue progress toward the next phase. Ideally, when all transition conditions are met, CINCs are ready to hand off leadership to the diplomats.

*Monitoring, assessing, and recommending changes to strategy.* No plan survives contact with the enemy. Political aims may change, the desired endstate could be modified, and conditions that lead to success may vary. Since objectives, endstates, and strategy are a continuum, team members would have an important monitoring and assessment role.

The cell should conduct a rolling net assessment, taking full account of the economic, social, psychological, and diplomatic aspects of existing circumstances. Team members must be integrated into all available theater informational resources to accomplish this vital task. The cell would advise CINCs on ways to calibrate objectives and refine strategy. As components of strategy change,

regional commanders could provide higher quality feedback to national leaders on the implications of modifying strategy.

*Developing contingencies.* J-5 develops branches and sequels to the base plan during the planning of a major joint operation. Similarly, the termination planning cell must develop offshoots and follow-on activities that would lead to peace winning. As branches and sequels often develop through wargaming, the members should *what if* the consequences of the command's strategy.

*Leading the transition.* A hand-off to diplomatic leaders would eventually occur as the military transition state approaches. The cell's team members should take the lead in planning the event. Functional experts would coordinate with their counterparts from the country teams to ensure a smooth changeover.

During peacetime engagements, the cell should be directly involved in strategic planning as well as political-military coordination and theater engagement strategy. The CINCs could also use the team to strengthen ties with other government agencies. Transition planning exercises could be conducted in conjunction with major joint operations to provide the cell experience in transition state planning.

Team members could assist the joint task force (JTF) plans cell as crises erupt and CINCs form task forces. Functional experts from the planning cell would be available to act as liaisons with other agencies. Under certain circumstances, such as the employment of a sizable task force for a long duration, it might be wise to stand-up an additional planning cell for the JTF commander.

**Organizational Innovation**

The cell should include functional experts from several agencies as a strategic asset within J-5. In addition to being conversant in nonmilitary instruments of power, these staff members should be formally trained in military decisionmaking doctrine and methodologies. The core of the team should consist of no more than a dozen individuals, half from non-DOD agencies.

The political advisor (POLAD) would be a key player in planning cells. POLADs counsel on ways and means that ensure that military objectives are in harmony with political policy and are usually key players in engagement and contingency planning. Consistent with these assigned duties, he should be appointed as co-chairman of the transition planning cell.

The advisor should have a planner assigned to the office of POLAD with duty to J-5. This foreign service official would be primarily responsible for the diplomatic aspects of transition state



NATO meeting with  
Bosnian factions.

30<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron (Christopher Want)

planning and, working with the political advisor, would act as diplomatic liaison to country teams and State Department leaders during military-dominant operations. The advisor and diplomatic planner would play vital roles in assisting CINCs if they were tasked to conduct negotiations, as General Norman Schwarzkopf, USA, did during the Persian Gulf War.

A member of the Department of State's International Information Programs Bureau should also be assigned to each planning cell. The mission of the bureau is to promote foreign understanding and acceptance of U.S. policies. It operates internationally, managing press strategies and providing information about the United States. The bureau representative would work closely with the command's public diplomacy advisor but would focus on helping plan the information component of strategy. Using host nation and regional contacts, this representative would provide J-5 with information on foreign attitudes and trends. The data would be used to adjust features of command strategy to gain support for national objectives. This staffer would also devise methods for countering enemy propaganda, allowing Washington to maintain the initiative in the information operations arena.

Moreover, the planning cell would require membership from national intelligence agencies. As the lead U.S. intelligence organization outside the Department of Defense, CIA should provide a representative. The role of this planner would be twofold: to provide strategic-level intelligence

analysis and furnish covert action planning recommendations. He would also assist joint military intelligence planners with the estimate of the situation. The CIA representative would look at all enemy instruments and how they could be applied to defeat the U.S. military operation while military planners focus on possible enemy armed courses of action. This member would provide CINCs with military and nonmilitary options for countering enemy strategies and shaping conditions to effect conflict resolution.

The planning cell may require augmentation from other specialized intelligence agencies if the CIA representative needs intelligence planning support. A national intelligence planning team should be formed that would function like a national intelligence support team; however, the focus would be on strategic planning for transition operations.

Since economics is a crucial instrument of national power, the cell would also require dedicated specialists in that field. A representative from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) should be assigned to bolster the command's designated experts. The agency has the mission of assisting foreign governments with economic growth, political freedom, and good governance. It is a primary player in U.S. foreign disaster relief; thus its officials would be especially suited for dealing with chaotic post-conflict conditions.



Coordinating return of displaced Albanians.

An official from the Department of Commerce, which promotes national economic interests abroad, should be part of the team as well. This member could assist transition planning by recommending trade and market access components to conflict resolution strategies. Commerce and USAID representatives would give counsel in the development of economy-building strategies. Their skills would be especially useful in planning the post-transition phase of military operations.

The planning cell would also have military representatives from throughout the major staff directorates. The other co-chairman of the cell should be one of the J-5 deputies responsible for deliberate planning. This participant should receive formal instruction in interagency operations. Training can be integrated into the curriculum at institutions such as the National Defense University, Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Members of State, Commerce, CIA, and USAID could also be sent to these schools for short courses on conflict termination and transition planning.

The cell should have a standard nucleus of members; however, the CINC should modify the team to meet unique regional conditions. It must be dynamic, with complete membership dependent on the contingency. Planners from other countries may be included during multinational operations, for instance. In other circumstances it might be appropriate to seek advice from nongovernmental or volunteer organizations. Extending invitations to members outside the

Federal Government would produce additional challenges. For instance, access to some sources of intelligence would be restricted. Nonetheless, United Nations and other coalition operations have shown that the benefits of a long-term collective approach may outweigh the constraints.

To launch these organizational initiatives, a new publication must be drafted to outline how interagency transition planning should be done. Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Planning*, contains information that should be incorporated. However, an operations transition doctrine is needed before a publication can be developed. Operational planning concepts already in use—like the commander's estimate of the situation—can be modified to provide a basis for more detailed guidance. Planners from the State Department, CIA, and other agencies should be consulted as doctrine is advanced. Theorists and scholars at the senior military colleges should provide recommendations.

A beta-transition planning cell should be organized now under one of the unified command headquarters. This trial cell could be put through intensive exercises and wargames to determine the appropriate interagency organization. Team members could also develop tools for transition planning. A validated fielding version could be stood up after testing.

The future application of military power is likely to be within the context of a limited war or military operation other than war. These environments are complex and filled with uncertainty and constraints. Success requires a clear strategy for winning the peace through successful transition planning. The military must shift focus from military termination to military transition. To make this adjustment, mindsets need to change. Interagency coordination throughout military-dominant operations must be improved. The operations transition planning cell is a step in the right direction.

JFQ

**the planning cell would have military representatives from the major staff directorates**

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 579.

<sup>2</sup> Milan Vego, *On Operational Art* (Newport: Naval War College, 1999), p. 345.

<sup>3</sup> S. L. Arnold, "Somalia: An Operation Other Than War," *Military Review*, vol. 73, no. 12 (December 1993), p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce B.G. Clarke, "End-State Planning: The Somalia Case," in *Managing Contemporary Conflict: Pillars of Success*, edited by Max G. Manwaring and William J. Olson (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), p. 55.

# General John Paul McConnell

(1908–1987)

Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force

## VITA

**B**orn in Booneville, Arkansas; graduated from U.S. Military Academy (1932); primary and advanced flying school (1932–33); 20<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Group (1933–37); 50<sup>th</sup> Observation Squadron (1937–39); squadron and post duties (1939–41); Office of the Chief of Air Forces (1942); chief of staff, Army Air Forces Technical Training Command (1943–43); deputy chief of staff, Headquarters, Army Air Forces Training Command (1943); chief of staff of China-Burma-India Air Force Training Command (provisional), senior air staff officer, Third Tactical Air Force, and deputy commander of Integrated USAAF–RAF Third Tactical Air Force, India (1943–44); Southeast Asia Air Command, assumed command when it was moved from Ceylon to China (1944–46); commanded Air Division Nanking Headquarters Command (1946–47) and chief of Reserve and National Guard Division of the Air Force, (1947–48); chief of Civilian Components Group at Headquarters U.S. Air Force (1948); deputy special assistant to the Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force Reserve Forces (1948–50); deputy commander of Third Air Division (1950–51); commander, Seventh Air Division (1951–53); director of plans, Strategic Air Command (1953–57); commander, Second Air Force (1957–61); Vice Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command (1961–62); Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command (1962–64); Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force (1964–65); Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force (1965–69); died in Bethesda, Maryland.

Portrait by  
Woodi Ishmael.



Air Force Art Collection

On a number of occasions in recent years, I shared the disappointment of other military officers over unfavorable decisions on proposals which, after meticulous study and review of alternatives, appeared to be the most effective solutions to specific problems from a military point of view. But, as I indicated earlier, most of our national security problems have significant nonmilitary implications. In such cases, I found that the productive role of the JCS was to identify key factors that were vital from a military standpoint and to provide a number of suitable alternatives for the application of military power. It also was clear that alternatives which fully considered political and economic implications were more likely to be accorded attention in depth, since national authorities could choose the one which best solved the problem as *they saw it*. I believe that one of the more difficult realities for a military officer to accept is the fact that, in a modern governmental environment, a military solution to a problem may not be fully consistent with the broader objectives in the mind of the decisionmaker.

—From “Some Reflections on a Tour of Duty” in  
Air University Review (September–October 1969)

## Organization

### STANDING TO

As a result of the Quadrennial Defense Review (2001), U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) has been tasked to examine the structure and requirements for a standing joint task force (JTF) headquarters. Such headquarters are traditionally formed only when missions require the deployment of a joint task force. It is thought that a standing headquarters would offer a unique advantage. Having been activated before a crisis, it will have already completed the necessary steps any organization goes through when it first stands up. Initial experiments are utilizing a 55-person core group for the headquarters.

Standing JTF headquarters would probably be assigned to commanders in chief (CINCs) and be integrated into all aspects of their commands. In a full-blown regional conflict unified command staffs would fall in on this core element to form the joint headquarters. But the 55-person cell could be employed in other ways, with CINCs designating subordinate JTF commanders to run headquarters in response to a range of theater contingencies.

JFCOM already has a prototype organization in the form of an experimental standing joint command and control element. Experiment Millennium Challenge, set for July and August 2002, is the next major test of the concept. It will serve as the core control element and XVIII Airborne Corps will be the JTF headquarters. JFCOM will make recommendations on standing joint force headquarters following the experiment. JFQ

## Doctrine

### WIDER PERSPECTIVE

The revised Joint Pub 3-57, *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations*, provides an excellent overview of current and evolving doctrine on civil affairs and other specialized assets

which contribute to civil-military operations. The pub further defines the broad scope of activities, missions, and capabilities associated with joint, multinational, and interagency civil-military operations.

The latest version broadens the focus from purely joint civil affairs to a more encompassing doctrine linking military power with other instruments, a shift from earlier treatments where civil-military operation was considered a subset of civil affairs.

The purpose of Joint Pub 3-57 is to provide the doctrinal basis and guidance for the exercise of authority by CINCs and joint force commanders (JFCs) and prescribes guidelines for joint operations and training. To this end, it provides a clear linkage among several key defense, joint, and service doctrinal documents: DOD Directive 2000.13, *Civil Affairs*, Joint Pub 3-57.1, *Joint Doctrine for Civil Affairs* (currently in rewrite), and Field Manual 41-10-1, *Civil Affairs Operations*.

A significant improvement over past versions is the harmonization of civil-military doctrinal terms. Misunderstanding of these terms and definitions has proven a paramount stumbling block to military and civilian operational planning on all levels. The result has been suboptimal joint integrated planning and failure to achieve coordinated annexes and plans.

With this publication, the joint community now better understands the delineations between *civil affairs* (designated component forces and units organized, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct civil affairs activities and to support civil-military operations), *civil affairs activities* (actions performed or supported by civil affairs), and *civil-military operations* (the activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area in order to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve the operational objectives).

Although the publication clarifies joint terms, there is more to be done in multinational civil-military interoperability. Many NATO members, such as Canada and the United Kingdom, currently use the concept of civil-military cooperation (CIMIC). Joint Pub 3-57 allots several pages to current NATO doctrine in this area; however, the Alliance is rewriting its civil-military cooperation manual and it appears that the United Nations will soon adopt the package largely intact. Thus a priority for the next version of Joint Pub 3-57 is an update on NATO/U.N. CIMIC doctrinal changes.

The pub also stresses the interagency flavor of all civil-military operations. Of special note is chapter 7, "Interagency Coordination." Its key point is that interagency coordination is a top priority. Only by understanding the interagency process can joint force commanders better appreciate how the skills and resources of the various agencies interact with nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and regional groups—and better understand their own roles. The integration of political, economic, civil, and military objectives and the subsequent translation of these objectives into demonstrable action have always been essential to success.

Finally, Joint Pub 3-57 provides excellent information on organization and command relationships, basic and specialized planning guidance, and functional areas of civil-military operations. For the first time in years, the joint community now has a well-coordinated doctrinal publication that reflects the true consensus of current thought on contemporary civil-military operations. JFQ

## Education

### JPME ACCREDITATION

The American Council on Education has recommended granting graduate credit for attendance at the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC). The Joint and Combined Staff Officer School can award 15 graduate credit hours to all students who have completed the program since January 1999. The credit breakout is three hours in international

relations, three in organizational planning, three in operations analysis and management, two in crisis mitigation, three in computer assisted simulation, logistics planning, and management, and one in regional planning. The reference for accreditation is <http://www.militaryguides.acenet.edu/ShowACECourses.cfm?aceid=DD-0326-0002>

The Joint and Combined Warfighting School can award 16 graduate credit hours to students who have attended since November 2000: three hours in organizational planning, three in operations analysis and management, three in computer assisted simulation logistics planning and management, three in national security studies, two in emergency management response, and two in directed research. See <http://www.militaryguides.acenet.edu/ShowACECourses.cfm?aceid=DD-0326-0003>.

JFSC graduates wishing to apply credits to a graduate program at any institution offering these or similar courses should consult their admissions representatives or academic advisers.

In addition, JFSC has completed an agreement with Old Dominion University, as part of an endeavor with the Virginia Tidewater Consortium, which will grant graduate level credit in two master's degree programs. Students can earn three graduate credits in history or international studies based strictly on attendance at JFSC. They can also earn an additional three credits based on their selection of particular elective courses while taking phase II of the program of joint professional military education. **JFQ**

### History

## COLD WAR REVISITED

The U.S. Army Center of Military History is soliciting papers for the biennial Conference of Army Historians to be held on August 6–7, 2002 in Washington. This conference has traditionally featured presentations on joint and combined military history as well

as papers presented by civilian historians from government and academe. The center invites papers on the theme of "The Cold War Army, 1947–1989." They may deal with any aspect of the subject, to include the different perspectives of NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, the Vietnam War, perspectives of Pacific nations, and issues of domestic concern.

Should the center decide to publish the conference papers, presenters will have an opportunity to submit formal versions of their papers for consideration.

Prospective participants should contact the U.S. Army Center of Military History, ATTN: DAMH–FPF, 103 Third Avenue, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C. 20319–5058, or call (202) 685–2727/DSN 325–2727. E-mail submissions can be sent to [robert.rush@hqda.army.mil](mailto:robert.rush@hqda.army.mil). Further details on the conference can be found at <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg>. **JFQ**

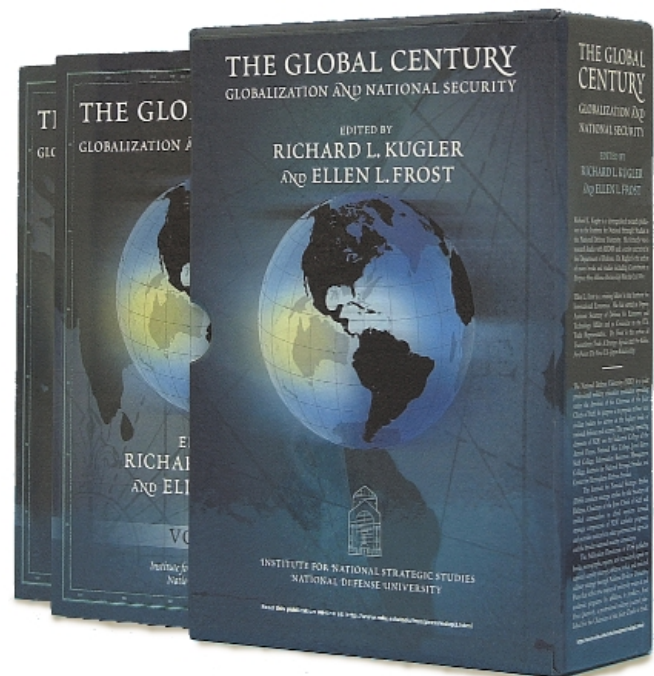
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## WAR'S OTHER NAME

A Review Essay by

AUDREY KURTH CRONIN

### The Evolution of Special Forces in Counter-Terrorism

by J. Paul de B. Taillon  
Westport, Connecticut:  
Praeger, 2001.  
208 pp. \$62.50  
[ISBN: 0-275-96922-3]

### Terrorism Today

by Christopher C. Harmon  
London: Frank Cass, 2000.  
316 pp. \$24.50  
[ISBN: 0-7146-4998-8]

### Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy

by Paul R. Pillar  
Washington: The Brookings  
Institution, 2001.  
272 pp. \$26.95  
[ISBN: 0-8157-0004-0]

Even before September 11, one of the surest ways for an author to find a publisher was to use the word *terrorism* in the title of a book proposal. The widespread American interest in terrorism and counterterrorism attests to a deepening sense of vulnerability that began with the attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993, the Alfred P. Murrah Building in 1995, and the use of a weapon of mass destruction, sarin gas, in a Tokyo subway, also in 1995. The euphoria following the Western triumph in the Cold War has been replaced by a foreboding that it is only a matter of time before further catastrophic terrorist acts occur on American soil, perhaps using chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons.

Highly visible threats from publicity-seeking villains such as Osama bin Laden, promising to kill Americans anywhere on the globe, have increased the anxiety. Images of *USS Cole*, a \$1 billion warship crippled by inexpensive explosives, underlined the danger. The rubble that was once the World Trade Center added an exclamation point. Merely the threat of attack has proven to be a potent form of terrorism. Before this year Congress had already increased funding for counterterrorism, even though the annual number of international incidents

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*USS Cole* following terrorist attack.

U.S. Navy

during most of the 1990s was half that of the mid-1980s.

The three books under review here address terrorism and counterterrorism from different directions and on different planes of intellectual discourse. Beginning with the narrowest focus, J. Paul de B. Taillon of the Canadian Royal Military College describes a specific tool of response to terrorism, military missions by British and American forces. Some of *The Evolution of Special Forces in Counter-Terrorism* is devoted to an abbreviated review of the maturation of American and British irregular forces. The chapter on U.S. capabilities is more fluently written than that on their British counterparts; however, the comparison of the historical development of their respective operational doctrine is insightful. The culture of each nation's forces is described in the context of low-intensity conflicts: Malaya, Oman, and Northern Ireland for Great Britain, and Korea and Vietnam for the United States. The Americans do not fare well by comparison. The British learned to immerse themselves in the intricacies of local culture, follow orders rigorously, win over local populations, and remain mindful of the political context of localized military operations. The Americans, despite a long early history of unconventional warfighting on the frontier, focused on applying massive firepower and inflexible, formalized combat plans. From Central America to Vietnam, U.S. cultural insensitivity on

the ground was exacerbated by an attitude of benign superiority, impatience, and an overreliance on technology. The differences of approach between the Army and the Marine Corps are discussed, with the Marines winning more approval. Misperceptions of the role of Special Operations Forces, particularly in the anti-elitist peacetime Army, get considerable ink.

This unflattering portrait of the American experience is followed by two comparative case studies of hostage-rescue missions: the successful 1980 Special Air Service rescue of hostages in the Iranian Embassy siege in London, and the unsuccessful American Delta Force attempt to retrieve captives from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. Given the choice of cases, it is no surprise that the United States is again revealed as needing to reevaluate its planning methods, intelligence, and proficiency in understanding circumstances on the ground. The book's conclusions are sound but general, including enhanced international cooperation and sharing of intelligence (especially among Western Allies), more emphasis on human intelligence, forward-basing of Special Operations Forces, and better secure communications.

It would be interesting to speculate on how the author might revise his assessments based on the recent performance of Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan.



Khobar Towers.

DOD

Clearly, their capabilities have evolved since the aborted Iranian hostage rescue. After the war against the Taliban there will be less reluctance to employ these forces.

A more broad-ranging study entitled *Terrorism Today* by Christopher Harmon analyzes the threat as it has evolved since 1990. Couched in terms of moral indignation, this book is essentially a call to arms for Westerners against domestic and international terrorists. It is an ambitious work: for example, the author describes six types of political objectives that prompt actions by terrorists (anarchism, communism, neofascism, national separatism, religion, and pro-state terrorism), three types of strategies most commonly used (political, economic, and military), and numerous types of weaponry and training employed. Harmon, who is on the faculty of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, is a proponent of snatch operations against terrorists, asserting that U.S. decisionmakers are unduly hindered by fear of retaliation even though “a gentle policy of forbearance has not protected Americans.”

This is a remarkably comprehensive survey and a helpful reference, including valuable resources such as basic information about the major international organizations and a glossary of terrorist groups at the end, but it suffers from two flaws. First, only a few months after publication, it is significantly out of date. The sources seem to be mostly three or four years old, which in a field with numerous innovations (particularly in funding, homeland security, and international cooperation) is unfortunate. For example, on homeland

security he references Marine Corps planning guidance from 1997; a great deal has happened since. On international counterterrorism he writes of infighting between FBI and CIA agents overseas that has been significantly reduced in recent years. And on the problem of controlling terrorist access to funding he says nothing at all about important international developments such as the International Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which was opened for signature in January 2000. One can sympathize with the difficulties of getting academic books published in a timely way; yet it remains true that this volume is not the best source for relevant information despite its title.

The second major flaw is the book’s politically superficial view of the world. There is no effort to substantiate broad statements such as: “Global instability has increased since 1990, and that may increase terrorism. But on balance, it has not.” What does instability mean? Surely at a time of American predominance, when we no longer need to worry about imminent nuclear war with a peer competitor, it is at least arguable that this is a much *more* stable world. Another example: “North Korea has been and remains today Asia’s most flagrant supporter of clandestine international violence. This is the view in the region—not a mere obsession of Washington.” Although Kim Jong-il may terrorize his countrymen, he has appeared to make progress in negotiating with the United States about removing

North Korea from the list of states sponsoring terrorism. Moreover, while helping the Japanese account for abducted citizens remains a serious sticking point in normalizing Pyongyang-Tokyo relations, the debate centers on coming to terms with past rather than recent terrorist acts. Washington does not sound very obsessive here, attitudes within the region have evolved, and as for North Korea being the most flagrant state supporter, is Afghanistan not part of Asia?

Most frustrating is chapter 5 (Misconceptions), which takes superficial statements such as asserting that terrorism is “mindless” and that terrorists are “mostly male” and sets them up as straw men to attack. Any scholar familiar with terrorist studies knows there is considerable evidence that terrorist behavior is the product of logical if twisted thinking. As for whether most terrorists are male, the author writes, “The general perception that nearly all terrorists are males is untrue. It cannot be supported by surveying the numbers of men versus women in the active contemporary insurgent and terrorist groups.” But where is the promised survey? What follows are vague estimates and anecdotal examples of specific female perpetrators, not hard data. A rigorous study of the numerical prevalence of women in terrorist organizations would be interesting indeed; but it is not provided. The book leaves the reader with essentially the same passionate words with which it began: “[Terrorism] is a moral challenge to legitimate political and social life.” But little additional insight is given into the complexities of meeting that challenge.

By far the best volume for a broad understanding of American responses to terrorism is *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* by Paul Pillar. It presents a nuanced, sophisticated, and timely discussion of the range of options available to the United States, placed firmly in the context of competing and overarching foreign policy goals. Pillar was deputy chief of the Counterterrorist Center at CIA, and his experience and depth of knowledge are obvious. More impressive is his ability to place that practical expertise within a broad intellectual framework. In a field crowded with work of variable quality, his book calls on the best and the brightest to take up the quest of counterterrorism.

The author admits at the outset that “Terrorism is a challenge to be managed, not solved.” The platitudinous calls for *victory* against this evil are swept aside: fighting terrorism itself may not always be the top national priority, and even when it is, the seemingly strongest coun-

terrorist policies may not be the most effective. This is not an apologia for terrorism, only a plea for more intelligent responses: "an argument that counterterrorism requires more finesse and, if not less fight, then fighting in a carefully calculated and selective way." He offers a clear presentation of counterterrorism not only from a tactical and operational perspective, but as a strategic long-term interest of the United States.

Of particular value is Pillar's evaluation of the current popular focus on chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological weapons. Without minimizing the dangers, he stresses the recent sensationalizing of the issue, especially the tendency to confuse the conceivable with the likely. He points out that the technical obstacles to such attacks are not small and that casualties might therefore be relatively few. Recent anthrax attacks in the United States seem to bear this out. He worries about the alarmist nature of much recent discussion, which also applies to concerns about cyberterrorism. He is not denying the possibility and dangers of attack; but he urges against distorting counterterrorism funding to deal with the threat *du jour*, even as more traditional dangers employing conventional means continue to be more probable and potentially devastating. Moreover, Pillar argues eloquently about the indirect costs of stirring up public anxiety, not least of which is the surge in hoaxes. Again, the anthrax offensive bolsters his case. This sort of balanced, informed discussion is a much needed antidote to the recent spate of alarmist publications in the field, which unwittingly support the main goal of most terrorists.

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Copies of back numbers of *JFQ* are available in limited quantities to members of the Armed Forces and public institutions. Please send your request to the Editor at the address or FAX number listed on the masthead.

## JUNGLE FIGHTERS

A Book Review by

JOHN W. GORDON

### Burma 1942: The Japanese Invasion

by Ian L. Grant and Kazuo Tamayama  
Chichester, West Sussex: The Zampi Press, 1999.

416 pp. £ 25.00

[ISBN 0-9521083-1-3]

### Fire in the Night: Wingate of Burma, Ethiopia, and Zion

by John Bierman and Colin Smith  
New York: Random House, 1999.

434 pp. \$29.95

[ISBN 0-375-50061-8]

Surely the China-Burma-India theater must stand as one of the most challenging and exotic locales of World War II. For the British and U.S. ground forces who contended with the Japanese in the unforgiving jungles and the pilots who flew the dangerous Hump route over the Himalayas, theirs seemed a forgotten war at the far end of a long supply line and of less interest to the home front than closer and more familiar theaters. Somewhat the same thing could be said of the Japanese by mid-1944. They too were fighting a campaign increasingly isolated and irrelevant to the battles that would decide the fate of the empire.

From the Allied point of view, the theater offered problems of command, joint and combined warfare, logistics, tententious personalities, and difficulties of high-level cooperation not elsewhere equaled. It was also unique in that it was the scene of the largest single experiment with special forces during the war. Two recent books reexamine this difficult and controversial theater. In *Burma 1942: The Japanese Invasion*, Ian Grant and Kazuo Tamayama consider the Japanese offensive that, coming hard on the heels of British defeat in Malaya, again confounded the British by suddenly taking Burma, regarded as the key to India and the back door to embattled Nationalist China. In *Fire in the Night: Wingate of Burma, Ethiopia, and Zion*, John Bierman and Colin Smith assess the role of Major General Orde Wingate, daring leader of the Chindit special force operations, and his battle behind Japanese lines.

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Kyaukpyo Camp.

U.S. Army

The great contribution of Grant and Tamayama is their description of the offensive through the actions of the soldiers involved, using a wealth of largely untapped official sources, operation orders, estimates of the situation, and other individual and unit records. The Japanese assault, which began with air attacks in December 1941 and a ground thrust a month later, caught the British unprepared. Never believing Burma to be a likely arena of war, they lavished most of their forces in the Far East on the ill-fated defense of Hong Kong and Singapore. Commanders also overestimated the capacity of British and Indian units. The Japanese quickly seized Rangoon—the port through which all supplies and war matériel, to include lend-lease equipment, was sent to China—as well as a chain of crucial airfields. Lieutenant General Shojiro Iida, Fifteenth Army commander, consistently outperformed his opponents. These included by now not just the British and Indians, but also the Chinese who were at least in theory operating under the command of Lieutenant General Joseph Stilwell, chief of staff to Chiang Kai-Shek. The British fired one general and replaced him with Sir Harold Alexander, to be named commander in the Middle East by Winston Churchill half a year later. New generals or no, in three months Japanese troops had pushed the British and Stilwell back into India. Iida and his subordinate commanders found the British to be road bound and

slow to shift units to threatened points. They exploited these qualities with aggressive outflanking tactics that let their lightly equipped infantry slip through the jungle to get behind British positions. Iida thus secured a strategic buffer, a wealth of oil and other resources, and the isolation of the Chinese. He also added to the Japanese reputation as fierce and unstoppable jungle fighters.

Hard pressed, the Allies decided to experiment with special forces, intended to raid, gather intelligence, and work with indigenous guerrillas on the flank or behind enemy lines. Small units of this type found approval not only with Churchill but also with President Franklin Roosevelt. British General Sir Archibald Wavell, who particularly backed the special operations approach, arranged for Wingate to organize a special unit. As Bierman and Smith show, Wingate was regarded by some as a natural successor to T.E. Lawrence in the business of mounting operations behind enemy lines. Wavell had known Wingate since before the war when he worked



Gurkas parachuting near Rangoon.

U.S. Air Force History Office

with Jewish guerrillas in Palestine. He later dispatched Wingate to win back Ethiopia for Haile Selassie. Early in 1943, Wingate led the brigade-sized unit he had formed and trained in a series of raids behind the Japanese lines in the jungles of Burma. This force, known as the Chindits, sustained high losses (particularly from disease) but was judged to have performed so well that Churchill took Wingate to the Anglo-American conference at Quebec. There, the United States pledged its own special force, unofficially known as Merrill's Marauders, and an "air commando" comprising fighters, bombers, and other aircraft to provide aerial support to ground forces.

Wingate himself received resources for an expanded effort to go back into Burma in early 1944. This time the Chindits and Marauders would be transported by gliders or advanced in separate columns to seize key road, rail, and air-

field targets. These columns would be supported by air-dropped supplies and by fighters and medium bombers that could be called down to attack the Japanese. Intending to place a stranglehold on the lines of communication in the enemy rear, the Allies found the task to be easier said than done. British and American forces sustained high losses, chiefly due to disease and exhaustion, and Wingate was killed in a plane crash. Later in 1944, General Sir William Slim, then the British commander in Burma, lured the Japanese into a battle of annihilation at Imphal. He then shifted over to the offensive and retook Burma.

To begin assessing the eccentric and unusual character of Wingate and the special force experiment that he commanded presents a serious difficulty. Early writings treated him as unorthodox but brilliant, the genius of a new form of warfare that tradition-bound generals failed to understand. Others were less kind. The official British history, *The War Against Japan* by Major General S. Woodburn Kirby, who had served as a senior staff officer in that theater, condemned Wingate as a prima donna and his operations as overrated and of little value. Even more scathing were the remarks in the best-selling memoir, *Defeat into Victory* by Field Marshal Lord Slim, in which he said that the experiment with special forces was wasteful and actually harmful since it advanced the idea that only elite "super-soldier" groups could take on the toughest missions.

The contribution of Bierman and Smith draws upon all previous studies of Wingate as well as official papers. They acknowledge his strengths. Wingate's raids raised British spirits and undermined Japanese morale. Even more important, his last deep-penetration effort forced the enemy into the fatal decision to attack Slim at Imphal, which led them to destruction by conventional rather than special forces.

To reach a verdict on Wingate, readers will have to await the appearance of the sort of rigorous book that Grant and Tamayama produced, this one concentrating on the 1943 and 1944 campaigns and similarly based on official documents. Only such a work can unmask what assessment Japanese commanders were actually making at the time about Wingate and his operations. Until then, the last word on this "man of genius who might have become a man of destiny," as Churchill put it, must be regarded as yet to be written.

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## PAINFUL JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

A Book Review by  
LEWIS SORLEY

### Honor Bound: American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1961–1973

by Stuart I. Rochester and Frederick Kiley  
Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999.  
706 pp. \$39.95  
[ISBN 1-55750-694-9]

### The Long Road Home: U.S. Prisoner of War Policy and Planning in Southeast Asia

by Vernon E. Davis  
Washington: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Historical Office, 2000.  
613 pp. \$58.00  
[ISBN 0-16-050381-7]

Decades in the making and products of the Historical Office within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, two recent books are hallmarks of scholarship and objectivity on a controversial and painful subject. *Honor Bound: American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1961–1973* by Stuart Rochester and Frederick Kiley concentrates on the experiences of American captives taken during the Vietnam War, while *The Long Road Home: U.S. Prisoner of War Policy and Planning in Southeast Asia* by Vernon Davis addresses the concerns at command levels and in Washington. Given the necessity for covering much of the same ground, the two works are remarkably complementary. Read in conjunction, each provides insights and detail that illuminate the account found in the other.

The dominant public image of prisoners in the Vietnam War is undoubtedly that of downed American airmen being held at the Hanoi Hilton, the Hoa Lo prison in the North Vietnamese capital; but *Honor Bound* also covers the satellite facilities in the country as well as the circumstances of captives held in Laos and Cambodia and the especially unfortunate prisoners confined on the move in remote parts of South Vietnam.

During the Johnson administration, Averell Harriman at the Department of State had primary responsibility for the

Lewis Sorley is the author of *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and the Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam*.



Repatriating POWs  
from Hanoi, 1973.

DOD

prisoner of war issue. His approach was to keep quiet about harsh treatment, apparently believing that not offending the North Vietnamese would facilitate negotiations. This stance was anathema to the wives and parents of prisoners, who were becoming increasingly organized as the League of Families under the leadership of Sybil Stockdale.

During the Nixon administration, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird personally took the lead on prisoner of war concerns. His approach, diametrically opposed to Harriman's, embodied a campaign in which a full accounting was made to the public of what was known about the torture, maltreatment, intimidation, and exploitation of prisoners by the North Vietnamese. There was a lot to tell. Rochester and Kiley detail "a systematic program of torture" which "became a standard procedure." The authors lay their case out in grim detail, to include the infamous ropes treatment, in which prisoners were so tightly bound that blood circulation was cut off, forcing their bodies to arch painfully. Crippled men were then left to hang from hooks or forced to kneel for hours on stone floors. Long periods of solitary confinement, denial of food and water, and systematic beatings were common. These were not isolated instances; rather they "became a rite of passage experienced eventually by almost every American [prisoner of war] in the North." Those captured early in the war bore the worst treatment, as well as being incarcerated longer than any other American prisoners in history. The

story of their valiant conduct under such vile conditions, retold in understated but eloquent terms, is inspiring.

The prisoners themselves acknowledge that eventually "all capitulated to some extent." But they had a code of behavior which demanded "the realistic objective . . . of holding out as long as possible, then giving as little as possible, and using the breathing spell that normally followed a period of torture to recover strength for the next bout." There were a few men, but only a few, who failed this test and collaborated willingly with the enemy. That, too, forms part of this comprehensive story.

In the end, these accounts establish conclusively that when Jane Fonda called former prisoners who described being tortured as "liars and hypocrites," it was she who spoke falsely.

The dominant prison camp impulse, second only to survival, was communication. The extraordinary means devised by the prisoners and the risks they took to contact one another—and sometimes

paid dearly for—are well described. In particular, prisoners raised their tap code, in its many manifestations, to an art. Communication was essential to another key factor that enabled the captives to tolerate their ordeal, a prisoner chain of command. Given that their tormentors often kept the most senior prisoners in solitary confinement for months or years, intensive efforts were required to keep the channels open. These efforts succeeded remarkably.

One of the great stories is the meticulously organized and splendidly executed plan for welcoming returning prisoners—Operation Homecoming. Altogether, 600 prisoners were received, aided by literally thousands of medical specialists, air crewmen, communicators, personnel and finance officers, food service teams, public information officers, chaplains, and others serving prisoner needs from reception at Gia Lam Airport in Hanoi through initial processing at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and on to the United States. There were welcoming crowds at every stop followed by ecstatic family reunions, a dramatic contrast to the bleak homecoming for most veterans who served in Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, the North Vietnamese celebrated in their own way, with a National Hate America Day, perhaps not surprising from what Davis describes as the act of "a rigid, aggrieved, abusive, and deceitful yet maddeningly self-righteous foe."

Neither of these books are intended for the casual reader. Densely written and extensively documented (in the aggregate amounting to nearly 1,150 pages of text and over 100 pages of endnotes), they are rich compilations of detailed and factual information. But they are gracefully composed, superbly edited, and fascinating. Their value extends beyond prisoner of war and missing personnel issues, for they provide much on the larger context of the Vietnam War, enemy strategy and psychology, and U.S. decisionmaking mechanisms and personalities.

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## OPERATIONAL ART

A Book Review by  
FREDERICK W. KAGAN

### In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory

by Shimon Naveh  
London: Frank Cass, 1997.  
396 pp. \$59.50  
[ISBN 0-71-46472-76]

A most thought provoking study of the operation level of conflict, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory* by Shimon Naveh, deserves urgent consideration in these times of strategic and operational uncertainty. Using a sophisticated understanding of general systems theory, Naveh describes flaws in the 19<sup>th</sup> century understanding of war and the development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century of a military theory based on an appreciation for the complexity and sophistication of modern armies and states. He examines German *Blitzkrieg* in detail to show its very real and important limitations to the operational level of war. Naveh then turns to the development of Soviet operational art in the 1920s and 1930s and the elaboration of that conception in the postwar years. Finally, he examines the development of American AirLand Battle doctrine, epitomized in the 1982 and 1986 editions of Army Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*.

Throughout these careful historical expositions, Naveh shows that operational art is more than simply the conduct of operations, and that the operational level of war is more than the tier between tactics and strategy. He argues convincingly that operational art is a theory with a content and an objective. In the past, he contends, the conduct of operations focused on massing the largest possible force against the main enemy army and destroying it, although here he puts too much blame on Carl von Clausewitz for a trend that owed more to the development of railways, mobilization plans, and myopic general staffs. Naveh is correct in pointing out that operational art has turned away from its original simple prescription for victory. As developed by the Soviets and partially adopted by the Americans, operational art proceeded from an understanding that the enemy

force was a complex system in which many independent parts work together to produce a combat power far in excess of the sums of their individual strengths. That observation led to the further conviction that destruction of the enemy force could best be achieved not by attacking it head on, strength-to-strength, but by striking at the critical points of linkage between the parts, subjecting the entire body to a shock that would disrupt its synergistic operation, break it into parts, and render each part vulnerable to rapid and decisive demolition.

The concept of operational shock delivered simultaneously throughout the enemy force was the basis of Soviet operational thinking in the interwar years. The Soviets imagined that long-range attack aviation would strike deep into the enemy rear, destroying rail lines and hubs, blowing up bridges, and attacking concentrations of reserves not so much to demolish them as to pin them down and keep reinforcements from aggregating to reestablish coherent defensive positions once the initial forward defensive belt was breached. At the same time, powerful armored forces supported by tactical attack aviation and high-density artillery concentrations would blow holes through forward defenses, facilitating multiple breakthroughs. Finally, exploitation forces, tactically and operationally echeloned to enable continuous pursuit of the defenders, would drive into the enemy rear, engage the reserves pinned down by long-range aviation, and overrun the entire defending force before it could recover its equilibrium and respond coherently. This is almost precisely the sequence of events that occurred in June and July 1944, when in a single operation the Red army completely destroyed German Army Group Center, advancing more than 200 kilometers in three weeks. A similar sequence describes the near destruction of the Iraqi army in 1991.

Since the Persian Gulf War, American military thinkers and practitioners have become ever more convinced that the enemy is a system that can be disassembled and destroyed piecemeal, and considerable reliance on that belief underlies current defense posture and planning. Yet there is a fundamental divergence between current conceptions of how to attack an enemy system and those that worked so well in 1944 and 1991, and it is not clear that recent notions are more sound.

The main advocates for attacking an enemy system are airpower enthusiasts, and the tools they imagine are airpower

tools, whether delivered by Air Force fighter-bombers or Navy Tomahawk land attack missiles. The most articulate spokesmen of this viewpoint follow Naveh in rejecting Clausewitz utterly. They argue that the days when it was necessary to attack the enemy army to win are over and that it is now possible to disaggregate the enemy system by precision strikes on a limited set of critical targets (erroneously identified as centers of gravity). Thus a war can be won quickly, cheaply, nearly bloodlessly, and virtually without ground forces.

This view, however, misses the point of operational art and misreads the history of the campaigns that best exemplify it. The precision strikes of the Gulf War, to say nothing of the imprecise attacks of the Red air force in 1944, did not destroy the enemy forces or even render them helpless by killing critical nodes. Instead, they inflicted severe operational shock that temporarily destabilized and disaggregated enemy capabilities. The ground attack against that disoriented force was then able to kill it quickly and relatively painlessly.

The shock induced by an air only offensive is largely dissipated without the synergy of simultaneous attacks. Unless the political leadership succumbs to the first assault or loses its nerve during a more prolonged bombardment, as Slobodan Milosevic did, the only way a purely air strike can follow up is by seeking to annihilate enemy forces entirely through attrition. The key point of operational art, however, is that the outcome has little to do with the war of numbers, which puts such thinking at odds with current theories relying on airpower and long-range standoff weapons. Many believe that American technological superiority will limit attrition in future conflicts to the enemy, but history offers little support for that judgment. Countermeasures will be developed. Then even the most advanced weapons can be degraded and defeated.

Attrition is a dangerous ally. Yet if the United States continues as it began in the 1980s with the serious study of operational art and focuses on developing concepts that combine operational shock with exploitation of ensuing vulnerabilities, then an enemy's ability to frustrate U.S. forces through operational defects or enemy countermeasures will be greatly reduced. Technological excellence is not incompatible with theoretical excellence. Indeed, one without the other is unlikely to succeed.

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