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Massing Effects in the Information Domain—A Case Study in Aggressive Information Operations


III Corps' former commander in Iraq is "absolutely convinced that we must approach IO in a different way and turn it from a passive warfighting discipline to a very active one."

The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team

Commander’s Perspective on Information Operations

Colonel Ralph O. Baker, U.S. Army

Based on his experiences in Baghdad, COL Baker tells us how the 1st Armored Division’s 2BCT improvised an effective tactical IO program.

Assessing Iraq’s Sunni Arab Insurgency

Michael Eisenstadt and Jeffrey White

Eisenstadt and White offer a detailed look at the composition, mindset, proclivities, activities, and possible future path of the Sunni Arab insurgency in Iraq.

Officership in the Iraqi Armed Forces

MG Mohammed Najmuddin Zenulden Nqshbande, Iraqi Army

Nqshbande lays out professional foundations for the Iraqi officer corps.

Victory Starts Here! Changing TRADOC to Meet the Needs of the Army

General William S. Wallace, U.S. Army

TRADOC’s commander describes how his organization is evolving to meet the simultaneous demands of the Global War on Terror and Army transformation.

The Changing National Training Center

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Massing Effects in the Information Domain
A Case Study in Aggressive Information Operations


Lieutenant General Thomas F. Metz is the Deputy Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command. He commanded III Corps from February 2003 to May 2006, including 13 months in Operation Iraqi Freedom. From January to May 2004, he served as the Deputy Commanding General, Coalition Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7), and from May 2004 to February 2005 commanded the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I). He has commanded at every echelon, from company to corps, in the continental United States (CONUS) and multiple theaters overseas.

. . . I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma.¹

—Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, 9 July 2005

If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a “D” or a “D-plus” as a country as to how well we’re doing in the battle of ideas that’s taking place in the world today.²

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 27 March 2006

In 1995, the Department of the Army, Forces Command, and the Training and Doctrine Command began a joint venture called Force XXI, the focus of which was to understand how information-age technology could improve the U.S. Army’s warfighting capabilities. While many experiments with information technology and theory were conducted across the Army, the Task Force XXI (TFXXI) and Division XXI Advanced Warfighting Experiments

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(AWE) were the capstone events of this venture. Over 70 initiatives were reviewed in the TFXXI AWE, which culminated at Fort Irwin, California, in March 1997 with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division’s National Training Center rotation.

At the heart of this experiment was near real-time location knowledge of friendly units down to individual vehicles and in some cases, individual Soldiers. The experiment proved that “Where I am and where my buddies are” is powerful information for combat leaders. Leaders at all echelons became convinced that information-age technology would help our Soldiers, leaders, and formations become much more capable.

Post-AWE, the Army decided to reduce its combat power in combat and combat support formations by a quarter to afford the coming technology. However, our Army has not fully exploited the available technology, especially in the domain of information and knowledge management operations.

**Information Operations (IO) in the AWE**

After graduating from the U.S. Army War College and serving as a division G3, brigade commander, and division chief of staff, I was assigned to the Training and Doctrine Command with duty at Fort Hood in the 4th Infantry Division to support the Force XXI Joint Venture. Although I had no background in information technology or acquisition experience, I was involved with the preparation, execution, and after action reviews of the TFXXI AWE and preparation for the Division XXI AWE. In the summer of 1997, I was assigned as assistant division commander for support of the 4th Infantry Division. As I took on this assignment, I was optimistic that the results of the Division XXI AWE would support what we had learned with the TFXXI AWE, and that our Army would continue to aggressively pursue applying information-age technology to improve our warfighting capabilities. Although I lacked a technical background in information technology, I was confident that we were only beginning to understand the potential improvements to warfighting. I believed that funding, developing, understanding, and maturing these capabilities were certainly going to be challenging. I was excited about their prospects. But I was not prepared for the management of information operations (IO).

Shortly before the Division XXI AWE, a decision was made to add an objective to the experiment, focusing attention on IO. Because the simulation that would drive the Division XXI AWE was not designed to train this new aspect of warfighting, a “Green Cell” was established that would inject information operations events. Major General William S. Wallace, commanding general of the 4th Infantry Division at that time, gave me the task to manage this new IO challenge.

I wasted no time gathering all I could find on the subject of IO and began to study it. At this stage of our preparations, our standard operating procedures, battle rhythm, and command post drills were well established. Adding IO at this late date seemed to be a good idea added too late. Nevertheless, in the short time available, I learned as much as I could about the five disciplines which make up our doctrinal IO: psychological operations (PSYOP), deception, operational security (OPSEC), electronic warfare (EW), and computer network operations (CNO).
IO’s Importance in Iraq

Although I don’t think we enhanced the AWE by adding IO, the opportunity to focus on this new doctrine did pay dividends 6 years later when, as the commanding general of III Corps, I found myself preparing the Corps headquarters to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although IO doctrine had not changed over those 6 years, its importance to a successful campaign in Iraq and to the Global War on Terrorism was crystal clear to many in and out of uniform.

On 1 February 2004, III Corps relieved V Corps. Lieutenant General Ric Sanchez remained the commander of Combined Joint Task Force-7, and I became his deputy. Over the next 13 months, 5 as Sanchez’s deputy and 8 as the commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I), my staff, our subordinate units, and I gained a very healthy respect for IO and knowledge and perception management, primarily because our enemy was better than we were in operating in the information domain, certainly in perception management. Although little has formally changed in our IO doctrine, many leaders, both friend and foe, understand its awesome power. So why is it that we can’t seem to be the best at IO as we are in so many other areas? Where is our initiative? Where is our offensive spirit?

In April 2006, with the help of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), III Corps conducted a constructive simulation to train the headquarters of the 1st Cavalry Division as it prepared for its potential return to Iraq. As the exercise director of this Warfighter, I was disappointed at what little progress we have made in IO. The capabilities to move information not only around the battlefield but also around the world have grown exponentially, IO’s importance grows daily, and our enemy, who recognizes that victory can be secured in this domain alone, has seized the opportunity to be the best at operating in the information domain.

The Green Cell had matured over the 8 years since the Division XXI AWE, and, although its formal objective for 1st Cav’s BCTP Warfighter was to drive IO, it spent little time in IO. The capabilities to move information not only around the battlefield but also around the world have grown exponentially, IO’s importance grows daily, and our enemy, who recognizes that victory can be secured in this domain alone, has seized the opportunity to be the best at operating in the information domain.

The Current Information Situation

In an open letter to President George W. Bush published in the January 2006 issue of the Armed Forces Journal, Joseph Collins, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations in Bush’s administration, predicted that “[i]f our strategic communications on Iraq don’t improve, the strategy for victory will fail and disastrous consequences will follow.” We are not consistently achieving synergy and mass in our strategic communications (consisting of IO, public affairs [PA], public diplomacy, and military diplomacy) from the strategic to the tactical level, but blaming the IO component for the overall situation is too convenient and too narrow. The perception that IO should shoulder the blame is based on expectations that are beyond the doctrinal charter or operational capabilities of IO as currently resourced. The collective belief is that we lack the necessary skills, resources, and guidance to synchronize IO in order to achieve tangible effects on the battlefield.

Further complicating our efforts in the information domain is the fact that we are facing an adaptive,
U.S. Marines of Weapons Platoon, Company E, 2d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, dig in while they wait to go in and patrol the city of Fallujah, Iraq, during Operation Vigilant Resolve.

Examples abound where we have failed to mass effects and leverage all of the available tools in the information domain; likewise, we have examples where we have effectively bridged the gap between IO and PA to achieve integrated full-spectrum effects. Comparing Operation Vigilant Resolve and Operation Al-Fajr clearly illustrates the power of an aggressive, holistic approach to integrating IO into the battle plan. A careful study of IO in support of Operation Al-Fajr suggests three imperatives for the future of full-spectrum operations:

- The successful massing of information effects requires the commander to clearly articulate his intent for the integration of all the available elements of operations in the information domain into the battle plan.
- The successful massing of information effects requires precise and disciplined execution from shaping operations through exploitation.
- Commanders at all echelons must, at present, serve as the bridge across the doctrinal gap between IO and PA in order to synchronize efforts in the information domain. Only in this way will the intended effect be achieved.

Information Power

In April 2004, in response to the murder and desecration of Blackwater contractors in Fallujah, Coalition forces led by the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) launched Operation Vigilant Resolve, an assault to restore control of Fallujah. In spite of the superior combat power of I MEF—in leadership, movement and maneuver, and fire support—the operation failed because operations in the information domain were not integrated into the battle plan; in effect, we failed to give the warfighter-on-the-ground the best opportunity to achieve a decisive victory. Steps to prepare the information battlefield, including engaging numerous and varied Iraqi leaders, removing enemy information centers, and rapidly disseminating information from the battlefield to worldwide media were not woven into the plan.

U.S. forces unilaterally halted combat operations after a few days due to lack of support from the
Interim Iraqi Government and international pressures amid media focus on unsubstantiated enemy reports of collateral damage and excessive force. Marines won virtually every combat engagement throughout the battle and did so within the established rules of engagement. The missing element was an overall integrated information component to gain widespread support of significant influencers and to prepare key publics for the realities of the battle plan. Without such advance support, the finest combat plan executed by competent and brave Soldiers and Marines proved limited in effectiveness. The insurgent forces established links with regional and global media outlets that had agendas of their own. Our failure to mass effects in the global information sphere proved decisive on the battleground in Fallujah.4

Raising the IO Threshold

As the summer of 2004 passed and the Fallujah brigade experiment failed, it became imperative that the city’s festering insurgent safe haven had to be removed. Planning for Operation Al-Fajr, an assault to decisively clear Fallujah of insurgent activity, was initiated. A key task for MNC-I planners was to ensure that the information defeat of Vigilant Resolve was not repeated in Operation Al-Fajr. Accordingly, we focused our planning to avoid replication of Vigilant Resolve and to prevent the worldwide media clamor and international public condemnation that would negatively impact operations.

To articulate a clear intent in the information domain, we developed what we called “the IO threshold.” Its purpose was to enable the MNC-I commander to visualize a point at which enemy information-based operations (aimed at international, regional, and local media coverage) began to undermine the Coalition forces’ ability to conduct unconstrained combat operations. As Operation Vigilant Resolve proved, the enemy understands the idea of an IO threshold. He is capable of effectively using the global media to impede our operations by creating the perception that our combat operations are indiscriminate, disproportionate, and in violation of the rules of war.

Using the commander’s intent for massed effects in the information domain as expressed in terms of the IO threshold, we illustrated to our subordinate commanders that kinetic shaping operations had to be conducted underneath the IO threshold; that is, we couldn’t remove a city block to prepare the battlefield because such an act could create negative effects in the information domain. Any resulting negative international and local media coverage could impair the conduct of the overall campaign, as had happened during Operation Vigilant Resolve.

We used the same concept to brief the operation to Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) commander General George Casey and to convince him that when I MEF executed the decisive operation, crossing the IO threshold could not distract us from our tactical and operational objectives. Once across the threshold, we planned for success to be achieved in days and hours.

Using this intent as a guideline, MNF-I, MNC-I, and Multi-National Force-West (MNF-W) developed courses of action to mass effects in the information domain, thereby raising the IO threshold and creating additional “maneuver” room for combat operations in Fallujah. We deliberately countered enemy information campaigning, planned and executed IO shaping operations, and executed carefully planned senior leader engagements, military diplomacy, and public diplomacy activities. As a result of these synchronized, integrated, and complementary actions, we were able to mass information effects and build a strong base of support for combat operations in advance of the operation; in other words, we were able to raise the IO threshold.
IN THE WEEKS leading up to the historic January 2005 elections in Iraq, we in the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Public Affairs Office had developed a comprehensive plan to publicize important aspects of pre-election preparations together with whatever events might unfold during that historically important day. Part of that plan included having obtained clearance to have Fox News reporter Geraldo Rivera cover events from the command’s Joint Operations Center in Baghdad. During the preparation phase of this plan, we arranged for Rivera to visit several units “outside the wire,” including accompanying mounted and dismounted patrols in Mosul. This preparation phase culminated with us dropping him off in Tikrit two days prior to the election for a final sensing of the Iraqi population.

However, on the evening just prior to the election, the MNC-I chief of staff called me in to inform me that higher headquarters had made a last-minute decision not to permit interviews with MNC-I forces on election day. This was a stunning development owing to the many commitments we had made to the media. Fortunately, we were able to negotiate a modification to the guidance that permitted interviews with battalion and lower level elements. However, we were unable to secure media access for interviews at HQ MNC-I. This placed us in a very difficult position to show an immensely important dimension of what we believed was going to be a great and vitally needed story.

Both concerns weighed heavily on me as we scrambled to find alternatives. I viewed the situation as a matter of honor, believing that the broken commitment could easily be perceived as a betrayal of trust. The anxiety apparently showed on my face as I went to the helipad the next day to meet Rivera coming from Tikrit. As Rivera saw me walk towards him, he asked me what was wrong. I paused, and then said: “Geraldo I’ve got some bad news.”

His chin dropped, his face became tensely serious, and his eyes narrowed with concern. He said: “What’s wrong—what happened?”

“Well,” I began, “though I know that we committed to support your coverage of the election from here, for reasons I am not at liberty to explain, we have to cancel your access to the MNC-I operations center.”

At that point, his eyes opened, his face regained its composure, and he let out a gasp of relief. He then grabbed my head and, with his hand behind my neck, placed his forehead on my forehead—skin to skin—and said: “Is that all?” Continuing, he said, “Man, you had me worried. I thought you were going to tell me another helicopter with troops was shot down or something like that—Man, am I relieved.” After briefly discussing our efforts to find alternative ways to cover the election, he then said, “Don’t sweat it—this is just bureaucratic B.S. —we’ll figure something out.”

As it turned out, the 1st Cavalry Division’s public affairs officer, LTC James Hutton, was able to set up a visually rich opportunity at a police station in Saba Al Boor, supported by the 256th Enhanced Separate Brigade of the Louisiana National Guard. Ironically, the change of venue resulted in some of the most dramatic and famous coverage of election day. Rivera reported from polling stations and featured the work of the Soldiers of the 256th, who demonstrated the great effort that had gone into making the election a resounding success.

Subsequently, Rivera continued to provide some of the most consistently comprehensive, informed, and accurate reporting that we saw during III Corps’ entire tour in Iraq.

Editor’s note: The above anecdote was solicited by the Editor, Military Review, from the Public Affairs Officer, COL Dan Baggio, who served under LTG Metz in Iraq during the period encompassing the first Iraqi election.
threshold by preparing key influencers and agencies for the impending operation.

This offensive mindset and aggressive massing of effects resulted in two additional complementary effects: first, MNC-I placed additional pressure on the enemy throughout Iraq through the elimination of widespread support for his activities; second, decisionmakers were prepared for the pending operation and given the necessary information to prepare their constituencies for the operation.

**IO in Operation Al-Fajr**

As with other operations, massing effects in the information domain requires disciplined execution by leaders, Soldiers, and staffs at all echelons. In Operation Al-Fajr, this meant precise, painstaking execution of all the core elements of traditional IO as well as other elements of combat power that had information implications. Doctrinal IO—PSYOP, deception, OPSEC, EW, and CNO—played a significant role in our shaping operations. Fallujah became a textbook case for the coordination and use of the core elements of IO capabilities in support of the tactical fight.

**Deception and OPSEC.** MNF-I, MNC-I, and MNF-W used deception and OPSEC to conceal our buildup of forces north of Fallujah. We attempted to focus the enemy’s attention on the south by constant and aggressive patrolling and feints from the south while simultaneously executing precision strikes in the southern parts of the city. Movement by the British Black Watch Battle Group and employment of a very maneuverable brigade combat team in a dynamic cordon also aided in this effort.

**PSYOP.** MNC-I conducted very effective PSYOP encouraging noncombatants to leave the city and persuading insurgents to surrender. These doctrinal psychological operations might have been the most important aspect of our operations to defeat the enemy in Fallujah, as some estimates showed that 90 percent of the noncombatants departed the city.

**Electronic warfare.** MNC-I and MNF-W also controlled the enemy’s communications capabilities by restricting his access to select communications and not only denying the enemy a means to communicate but also directing him to a means that we could monitor.

**Computer network operations.** Although we cannot discuss operations in this realm here, we must not allow the enemy to win the battle in cyberspace. The massing of information effects in Al-Fajr was also apparent in the incorporation of information considerations into the application of other elements of combat power. The seizure of the Fallujah hospital by Iraqi commandos during the early stages of the battle provides an excellent example of the integration of full-spectrum planning, rehearsing, and execution of IO in support of overall campaign objectives. During the military decision-making process, MNF-W identified a piece of key IO terrain that it believed had to be secured early in the operation to begin eliminating the enemy’s ability to disseminate misinformation and propaganda. The Fallujah hospital had long been used as a propaganda organ by insurgent forces and had been one of the most significant sources of enemy information during Operation Vigilant Resolve. By securing this key IO terrain, MNF-W could significantly disrupt the enemy’s access point to disseminate information.
The Iraqi 36th Commando Battalion captured the Fallujah hospital in the first major combat operation of Al-Fajr. Documented by CBS reporter Kirk Spitzer, this operation established Coalition control of the enemy propaganda platform while building the legitimacy of the Iraqi Security Forces as well as the Interim Iraqi Government. Although this small attack garnered only a footnote in history, it was decisive to winning the IO battle: Without this portal, the enemy had a much weaker voice.

**Bridging the IO-PA firewall.** In order to mass effects in the information domain and effectively integrate IO into the battle plan, the warfighter must find a way to bridge the doctrinal firewall separating IO and PA without violating the rules governing both. This firewall is essential to ensuring PSYOP, Deception Operations, EW, and CNO do not migrate into PA and discredit the PA effort. We need to be proud of our values and be prepared to underwrite the risk that we will expose too much in the service of transparency; this is counterbalanced with an implicit trust that our values and the truth will eventually prevail. Truth and transparency are strengths and not hindrances. Truth and transparency in PA are the military’s legal obligation, and they also reinforce the effectiveness of our IO by providing a trusted source of information to domestic and international media. Providing information is only effective in the long run if the information is truthful and squares with the realities faced by its recipients.

- To be prepared to execute actions specifically tailored to capture photographic documentation of insurgent activities (figure 1).
- To pass that information quickly up the chain to MNC-I, which would then turn that documentation into products that could be disseminated by the Iraqi Government and our PA elements.

Specific guidance was handed down to key elements to develop bite-sized vignettes with graphics and clear storylines. An example of massing effects, this small component of the battle enabled the Coalition to get its story out first and thereby dominate the information domain. Figure 2 is an example of this type of product: MNC-I used information from combat forces to construct a document that illustrated insurgent atrocities discovered in Fallujah. To borrow a football analogy, MNC-I flooded the zone with images and stories that the media could—and did—use.

The PAO and other staff sections can use information gathered from external sources. For example, the 1st Cavalry Division, operating as Task Force Baghdad, used information gained from multiple sources to create a product for public distribution. On the eve of the January 2005 election, insurgents attacked the U.S. Embassy with rockets and killed embassy personnel. Media outlets fixated on the event. Some media coverage initially focused on the Coalition’s inability to stop the insurgents even in the most secure areas. Even though the truth of
Figure 1. Operation Al-Fajr—Fallujah, insurgent activities map.

Figure 2. Fallujah vignette #3, National Islamic Resistance Operational Center (NIROC) atrocities.

Where: NIROC
When: Nov 11, 04
What: Evidence of Atrocities
Who: Iraqi Security Forces supported by the Multi-National Forces

Found at NIROC building
- Beheading videos of 4 different individuals
- Training videos (small arms, grenades, map reading, range/direction finding for mortar/rocket employment)
- Jihadist videos of ‘martyrs’ being buried, attacks against Coalition Forces (IEDs, rockets, mortars)
- Jihadist documents, letters and correspondence

Blood covering the walls
Blood-stained hand prints
Blood-soaked sand used to clean floor and walls
the matter was that the insurgents had no targeting capability and had merely struck the building through luck, the storyline still had resonance.

What the insurgents did not know was that the image of the rocket-firing was captured by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). Through the UAV, analysts saw the group assemble and fire the weapon, and then tracked their movement. Coalition forces moved to a house where the insurgents reassembled following the firing and detained most of those who had participated.

The Division simultaneously recorded the event, and the recording was quickly taken to the public affairs officer and edited for delivery to media. The product showed the rocket firing, the attempted escape from the area by the insurgents, and their capture. Using the relatively new capability for posting such items to a publicly accessible webpage via the Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS), the Division alerted the media to its availability. Media outlets downloaded the product, and the storyline in the media shifted from the Coalition’s inability to stop insurgent activity to how successful the Coalition was in detaining the insurgents.

Was this PA or IO? Developing a packaged product for dissemination might appear more like IO than PA, but it was clearly a PA action to utilize the DVIDS’ capability. No media outlet could have collected this information independently. The PAO is charged by the commander to determine how best to provide information about the conduct of operations within the construct of doctrine and law. Surely, close cooperation with IO officers fits within doctrinal and legal parameters. Of course, such work should be done in conjunction with standard embedding of reporters and the provision of senior-leader access to the media as often as possible. First-hand reporting by reporters from commercial outlets is indispensable to commanders seeking transparency; in fact, embedded reporters were critically important in the media coverage of Operation Al-Fajr: Over 80 embedded reporters worked with MNF-W during combat operations.

In reality, these two vignettes (Al-Fajr and the embassy attack) are clear examples of how we can mass effects in the information domain by leveraging all available tools. The 1st Cav PAO decided to use available technology to deliver a clearer public message about the course of events. Why shouldn’t we use our situational awareness technology and network-centric warfare to give us an asymmetric advantage over our enemies? In Fallujah, when enemy forces used a mosque, a minaret, or some other protected site as a sniper position, the rules of engagement rightfully—and legally—enabled our Soldiers and leaders to engage with lethal force. We must have the agility to use our technological advantage, too, so that as a main gun round moves downrange to destroy a sniper position, simultaneously the digital image of the sniper violating the rules of war, plus the necessary information to create the packaged product, can be transmitted for dissemination to the news media.

Implications for the Future

The big issue in our world is whether our doctrine and our policy are up to date. We owe more thinking to the combatant commanders. What are the things that should be balanced when you look at information and communications issues?7

—Lawrence Di Rita

MNF-I, MNC-I and MNF-W were successful in massing effects in the information domain in Operation Al-Fajr for three reasons: We articulated an achievable end-state; we took pains to integrate, synchronize, and execute with discipline all of the elements of combat power (leadership, movement and maneuver, intelligence) and all of the tools
available in the information domain (traditional IO, PA, engagement, and political actions); and we were able to effectively bridge the firewall between IO and PA to achieve our desired end-state without violating the rules of either discipline.

This integration has broader implications. We must consider how tactical actions will influence the operational and strategic levels. Because of its failure to influence important audiences, Operation Vigilant Resolve offers a cautionary tale for anyone who would downplay the significance of information in modern warfare.

If general expectations are that we should be able to compete and win the information battle in the global media environment—and this appears to be the general perception within our Army—then we must reshape our doctrine and develop ways to train in the new domains, ways that will evolve as the Information Age evolves. We should restructure the definitions of IO and PA and the relationship between them and develop a considerable global mass-marketing and public-relations capability. There is no other option because “winning modern wars is as much dependent on carrying domestic and international public opinion as it is on defeating the enemy on the battlefield.”

This idea is not without controversy. The recent debate in the media concerning the use of the Lincoln Group to push written opinion-editorials to Iraqi news outlets by paying for their placement illustrates that there are no clean lines in this discussion. Despite this situation, innovation and the use of new techniques will help us win future campaigns. The new reality simply will not enable Cold War methods to figuratively outgun technologically able enemies unfettered by cumbersome processes for dissemination of information.

In an article published in the New York Times on 22 March 2006, Lawrence Di Rita, co-director of a Pentagon panel studying communications questions for the Quadrennial Defense Review, said Rumsfeld and other senior officials were considering new policies for regional combatant commanders. Di Rita noted that “[t]he big issue in our world is whether our doctrine and our policy are up to date. We owe more thinking to the combatant commanders.”

Massing of effects in the information domain can be achieved, as evidenced by Operation Al-Fajr. Functional progress within the realms of the communications professions (IO and PA) requires that we accommodate to the globalization of information. After III Corps departed and XVIII Airborne Corps took over as the new MNC-I in early 2005, it remained (and remains) clear that in Iraq our U.S. and Coalition partners have inculcated the lessons of Vigilant Resolve and Al-Fajr.

We must address the challenges an interconnected global media/communications environment and its processes pose to our information-related operations, an environment in which timely and fully packaged stories are far more valuable than mere imagery. While acknowledging continued greater levels of globalization, we must be able to harness all of the elements of national power in an integrated manner. Doing so is absolutely critical if the United States is to successfully defend itself. Failure to do so could be ruinous. MR

NOTES

2. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, in response to a question after a speech at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 27 March 2006.
6. The Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) feeds a signal from a portable machine to a satellite. News stations can pull the signal from the DVIDS website either live or from stored data on the site. It was first used in Iraq in 2004.
DUTY IN IRAQ has a way of debunking myths and countering Ivory Tower theories with hard facts on the ground. I admit that while I was preparing to serve in Iraq as a brigade commander, I was among the skeptics who doubted the value of integrating information operations (IO) into my concept of operations. Most of the officers on my combat team shared my doubts about the relative importance of information operations. Of course, in current Army literature there is a great deal of discussion about IO theory. There is significantly less practical information, however, that details how theory can be effectively translated into practice by tactical units. My purpose in writing this article is to provide commanders the insights I gleaned from my experience.

Soon after taking command of my brigade, I quickly discovered that IO was going to be one of the two most vital tools (along with human intelligence) I would need to be successful in a counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign. COIN operations meant competing daily to favorably influence the perceptions of the Iraqi population in our area of operations (AO). I quickly concluded that, without IO, I could not hope to shape and set conditions for my battalions or my Soldiers to be successful.

It certainly did not take long to discover that the traditional tools in my military kit bag were insufficient to successfully compete in this new operational environment. As a brigade commander, I was somewhat surprised to find myself spending 70 percent of my time working and managing my intelligence and IO systems and a relatively small amount of my time directly involved with the traditional maneuver and fire support activities. This was a paradigm shift for me. The reality I confronted was far different from what I had professionally prepared for over a lifetime of conventional training and experience.

Background

My brigade, the 2d Brigade Combat Team (BCT), was part of the 1st Armored Division. For the first 12 months in Iraq, we were task organized in Baghdad with up to eight battalions, roughly 5,000 strong, all trained for conventional combat. The BCT consisted of two mechanized infantry
battalions, a cavalry squadron, an armor battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, a support battalion, and a military police battalion. At headquarters were staff enablers such as psychological operations (PSYOP) and civil affairs (CA) detachments. At one point, my task organization also included 12 U.S. Army National Guard or Reserve Component companies.

My brigade’s AO covered roughly 400 square kilometers and encompassed 2 of the 9 major districts in Baghdad: Karkh and Karada. In those 2 heavily populated and congested districts lived between 700,000 to a million citizens. The area contained at least 72 mosques and churches.

In the northwest part of our AO, the population was predominantly Sunni. This area also contained a small neighborhood called Kaddamiya, where Saddam Hussein had grown up. Not surprisingly, that community was a bastion of staunchly pro-Baath sentiment and was steadfastly loyal to Saddam. Such demographic factors made that part of our AO particularly volatile and problematic.

In contrast, our area also contained the Karada district, one of the most affluent parts of the city. Three universities are located there, Baghdad University being at the very southeastern tip. Many Western-trained and educated elites live in Karada, and many of Baghdad’s banks and headquarters for major businesses are there. The population in this area is characteristically more secular in its views and somewhat more receptive to outside ideas and influence. In addition, 70 percent of the embassies and diplomatic residences in Baghdad were situated in our AO (figure 1).

The southeastern region of our area was home to a principally Shiite population. The infrastructure in this area was, in comparison to other parts of the city, shabby. In many places the population lived in almost uninhabitable conditions, the neighborhoods having been largely neglected by the Baathist regime for years (figure 2).

Another significant component of this complex society was the Christian population. Baghdad has

![Figure 1. 2BCT/1AD battlespace religious demographics: Karkh.](image-url)
the largest Christian population in the country, and it was also concentrated inside our battlespace.

The demographic diversity in 2d Brigade’s AO produced a lot of different ethnic, cultural, and religious dynamics. Consequently, each area presented unique IO challenges. And, of course, this already complex situation was made more complex by insurgent and terrorist violence and the persistent lack of infrastructure and basic services.

Also of note was what proved to be an additional geographic area with a completely different IO population of interest, one that had its own set of parochial concerns and priorities: the Green Zone. This area housed the headquarters of the Coalition Provisional Authority and Combined Joint Task Force 7.

Another vital demographic, one that my commanders and I found we had inadvertently taken for granted and failed to effectively address, was our own Soldiers. Most news that Soldiers typically received came from watching CNN, the BBC, or Fox News. Soldiers were getting the same inaccurate, slanted news that the American public gets. With a significant amount of negative news being broadcast into their living quarters on a daily basis, it was difficult for Soldiers to realize they were having a positive impact on our area of operations.

Once we appreciated the dynamics of the demographics in our AO, we found that we could easily fit Iraqi citizens into three broad categories: those who would never accept the Coalition’s presence in Iraq (religious fundamentalists, insurgents, terrorists); those who readily accepted the Coalition’s presence...
in Iraq (typically secular, Western-educated pragmatists); and the vast majority of Iraqis, who were undecided. We referred to this last category as the silent majority and focused much of our information operations on influencing this group.

Adjusting the Plan to IO Realities

One of the first challenges I faced was to understand the overarching IO plan for Iraq and, more important, how my combat team was supposed to support it. Part of the challenge at this time for everyone—battalion through corps—was our lack of IO experience and our ignorance of how valuable IO is to COIN success. In fact, during the summer of 2003 there was still much debate over whether or not we were even fighting an insurgency. The IO support we did receive from higher headquarters included broad themes and messages that we were directed to communicate to the local populations. Unfortunately, these messages were often too broad to resonate with the diverse subpopulations within brigade and battalion areas.

This brings me to my first essential IO observation: To be effective, you must tailor themes and messages to specific audiences. IO planners at commands above division level appeared to look at the Iraqis as a single, homogeneous population that would be receptive to centrally developed, all-purpose, general themes and messages directed at Iraqis as a group. In many cases, the guidance and products we received were clearly developed for a high-level diplomatic audience and were inappropriate or ineffective for the diverse populations clustered within our battalion AO.

When we did request and receive theme support or IO products, they were typically approved too late to address the issue for which we had requested them. To overcome what was an ineffective and usually counterproductive attempt by the IO/PSYOP agencies at higher levels of command to centrally control themes and messaging, we were compelled to initiate a more tailored IO process. We developed products that incorporated relevant themes and messages fashioned specifically for the diverse groups and micropopulations in our area of operations.

A guiding imperative was to produce and distribute IO products with focused messages and themes more quickly than our adversaries. Only then could we stay ahead of the extremely adroit and effective information operations the enemy waged at neighborhood and district levels.

We were also initially challenged in working through the bureaucratic IO/PSYOP culture. We often faced situations where we needed handbills specifically tailored to the unique circumstances and demographics of the neighborhoods we were attempting to influence. However, the PSYOP community routinely insisted that handbills had to be approved through PSYOP channels at the highest command levels before they could be cleared for distribution. This procedure proved to be much too slow and cumbersome to support our IO needs at the tactical level.

Good reasons exist for some central control over IO themes and products under some circumstances, but information operations are Operations, and in my opinion that means commander’s business. IO is critical to successfully combating an insurgency. It fights with words, symbols, and ideas, and it operates under the same dynamics as all combat operations. An old Army saw says that the person who gets to the battle the “firstest” with the “mostest” usually wins, and this applies indisputably to information operations. In contrast, a consistent shortcoming I experienced was that the enemy, at least initially,
consistently dominated the IO environment faster and more thoroughly than we did. Our adversary therefore had considerable success in shaping and influencing the perceptions of the Iraqi public in his favor. The ponderous way in which centrally managed PSYOP products were developed, vetted, and approved through bureaucratic channels meant they were simply not being produced quickly enough to do any good. Just as important, they were not being tailored precisely enough to influence our diverse audiences’ opinions about breaking events.

Faced with bureaucratic friction and cumbersome policy, and thrust into an IO arena quite different from that for which most of us had been trained, I had to make decisions concerning IO matters based on common sense and mission requirements. To this end, I had to consciously interpret policy and regulatory guidance in creative ways to accomplish the mission as we saw it, though in a manner such that those who wrote the original regulations and guidance probably had not intended. This was necessary because Cold War regulations and policies were holding us hostage to old ideas and old ways of doing business. They were simply no longer valid or relevant to the challenges we were facing in this extremely fluid, nonlinear, media-centric COIN environment that was Baghdad circa 2003-2004.

Of course, such an approach made some people uncomfortable. As a rule, if our application of IO techniques was perceived to violate a strict interpretation of policy or regulation, I asked myself: Is it necessary to accomplish our mission, and is our tactic, technique, or procedure morally and ethically sound? If the answer was yes, I generally authorized the activity and informed my higher headquarters.

We were not a renegade operation, however. If what we thought we had to do ran counter to written policies and guidance, I kept my division commander informed in detail of what, when, and why we were doing it. Fortunately, the command environment was such that initiative, innovation, and common-sense pragmatism were supported in the face of uncertainty and lack of relevant doctrine. One example of this sort of support was our decision to adopt, as a policy, the engagement of foreign, Iraqi, and international media at the earliest opportunity following a sensational act of insurgent violence.

The guidance we were operating within was that brigades could not conduct press conferences. In my view, that policy was counterproductive. Headquarters above division were usually slow to react to major events involving terrorism on the streets, and costly hours would go by without an appropriate public response to major terrorist incidents. We experienced firsthand the detrimental effects that this ceding of the information initiative to insurgents was having in our area. The Iraqis had increasingly easy access to TV and radio, but restrictions prevented us from engaging those media to rapidly, efficiently, and directly communicate our public information messages at critical times. By contrast, press reports appeared quickly in the Arab media showing death and destruction in great detail, which undermined confidence in the ability of the Iraqi Provisional Council and the Coalition to provide security.

Our adversary also frequently twisted media accounts in a way that successfully assigned public blame to the Coalition—and the 2d Brigade specifically—for perpetrating the violent attacks. When slow IO responses and outright public information inaction in the face of such incidents dangerously stoked public discontent, we decided to engage the media on our own in order to get the truth out to the multitudes of people living in our area. If we were going to influence our silent majority successfully, we were going to have to convince them that it was in their best personal and national interest to support the Coalition’s efforts. We had to convince them that the insurgents and terrorists were responsible for harming Iraqi citizens and inhibiting local and national progress.

As an illustration, on 18 January 2004 a suicide bomber detonated a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) during morning rush hour at a well-known Baghdad checkpoint called Assassin’s Gate, a main entrance into the Green Zone. This attack killed about 50 Iraqis waiting at the checkpoint. While we were managing the consequences of the incident, which included dealing with a considerable number of international and Arab media, I was instructed not to release a statement to the press—higher headquarters would collect the facts and release them at a Coalition-sponsored press conference to be held at 1600 Baghdad time.

Unfortunately, the terrorists responsible for this bombing were not constrained from engaging the press. While precious time was being spent “gathering facts,” the enemy was busily exploiting to their advantage the ensuing chaos. The message
The aftermath of a VBIED at checkpoint 1, one of the major entry control points into the Green Zone.

they passed to the press was that Coalition Soldiers were responsible for the casualties at the checkpoint because of an overreaction to somebody shooting at them from the intersection; that is, the terrorists were spreading a rumor that the carnage on the street was not the result of a VBIED but, rather, the result of an undisciplined and excessive use of force by my Soldiers.

As precious time slipped by and with accusations multiplying in the Arab media and tempers heating up, we made a conscious decision that our field grade officers would talk to the press at the site and give them the known facts; in effect, we would hold a stand-up, impromptu press conference. We also decided that in all future terrorist attacks, the field grade officers’ principle job would be to engage the press—especially the Arab press—as quickly as possible while company grade officers managed the tactical situation at the incident site.

Subsequently, when such incidents occurred, we took the information fight to the enemy by giving the free press the facts as we understood them as quickly as we could in order to stay ahead of the disinformation and rumor campaign the enemy was sure to wage. We aggressively followed up our actions by updating the reporters as soon as more information became available. As a result, the principal role of field grade officers at incident sites was to engage the press, give them releasable facts, answer questions as quickly and honestly as possible with accurate information, and keep them updated as more information became known.

Our proactive and transparent approach proved to be an essential tool for informing and influencing the key Iraqi audiences in our AO; it mitigated adverse domestic reaction. Our quick response helped dispel the harmful rumors that nearly always flowed in the wake of major incidents.

I heard that the methods we were using with the media immediately following such incidents caused considerable hand-wringing and resentment in some circles. However, no one ever ordered us to stop, no doubt because the positive effects were clearly apparent.

Executing Our IO Plan

My second IO observation is that you have no influence with the press if you do not talk to them. Moreover, trying to ignore the media by denying them access or refusing to talk can result in the press reporting news that is inaccurate, biased, and frankly counterproductive to the mission. Not talking to the press is the equivalent of ceding the initiative to the insurgents, who are quite adept at spinning information in adverse ways to further their objectives.

The way we adapted to working with the media contrasted significantly with our initial approach. At first, we allowed reporters to come into our unit areas and, essentially, wander around. What resulted was hit or miss as to whether reporters would find a good theme to report on or whether they would stumble onto something they did not understand and publish a story that was out of context or unhelpful. When this happened, we would scratch our heads and say, “Gee, these press guys just don’t get it.” Actually, we were the ones not getting it. We lacked a good plan on how to work with the press and interest them in the really great things happening in our area.

Recognizing this, we set about preparing our spokespersons and Soldiers to engage the media in a systematic, deliberate manner. We became familiar with what the media needed to know and
adept at providing the information they required as quickly as possible. At the same time, we ensured that the messages and supporting themes we felt were important were getting out.

To impress on our leaders and Soldiers the need for a press-engagement strategy, we emphasized agenda-setting. I conveyed the manner in which I wanted my leaders to approach this issue by asking how many of them would just let me go down to their motor pools and walk around without them grabbing me and at least trying to get me to look at the positive things they wanted to show me (while also trying to steer me away from the things that were perhaps “still a work in progress”). I told them: “All of you guys understand and do that. So from now on, when working with the media, adopt this same kind of approach.”

Meeting Iraqi expectations. One of the more difficult credibility challenges we encountered among the Iraqis was a consequence of the initial mismanagement of Iraqi expectations before we ever crossed the berm into Iraq. As a result, we were met with enormously unrealistic expectations that we had to manage and were simply unable to gratify in a timely manner. Such expectations grew out of Coalition pronouncements before Soldiers arrived that extolled how much better off the average Iraqi citizen’s life was going to be when Saddam and his regime were gone.

The concept of “better” proved to be a terrible cultural misperception on our part because we, the liberators, equated better with not being ruled by a brutal dictator. In contrast, a better life for Iraqis implied consistent, reliable electricity; food; medical care; jobs; and safety from criminals and political thugs. When those same Iraqis were sitting in Baghdad in August 2003 suffering 115-degree heat with no electricity, an unreliable sewage system, contaminated water, no prospects for a job, lack of police security, periodic social and economic disruption because of insurgent attacks, and no income or pensions with which to support their families, better had become a problematic concept. It took on the psychic dimensions of having been betrayed by the Coalition. Unfortunately, this view was exacerbated by the average Iraqis’ man-on-the-moon analogy: If you Americans are capable of putting a man on the moon, why can’t you get the electricity to come on? If you are not turning the electricity on, it must be because you don’t want to and are punishing us.

We came to realize that any chance of success with information operations was specifically tied to immediate, visible actions to improve the average Iraqi’s quality of life. Until there was tangible improvement that the Iraqis could experience and benefit from firsthand, lofty pronouncements about how much better life would be under democratic pluralism, as well as the value of secular principles of tolerance and national unity, were meaningless. This leads to my third IO observation: There is a direct correlation between our credibility and our ability to demonstrably improve the quality of life, physical security, and stability in a society. Until we could do the latter, we would continue to lack credibility. This was especially true because we were agents of change from a Western world the Iraqis had been taught to hate virtually from birth.

Reaching out to the community. Iraqis in general had little visibility of the positive aspects of the Coalition and U.S. presence in the country. Positive economic, political, and social reforms and improvements in the security environment generally went unnoticed. Collectively, the Iraqis were simply getting too little information on the good things being accomplished. International and Arab media failed to report favorable news, and little information was being passed by word of mouth. Meanwhile, efforts by Coalition forces to share information were limited because we lacked credibility and because many Iraqi citizens did not understand the horrific toll the insurgency was exacting on Iraqi lives and how much it was affecting infrastructure repair. The problem was that we did not have a coordinated, deliberate plan at the brigade level to provide timely, accurate, focused information to communicate these facts. This changed as we developed an IO concept based on a limited number of themes supported by accurate, detailed messages delivered repetitively to key target audiences.

Preventing IO fratricide. Our brigade IO effort did not begin as a centrally coordinated program within my BCT but, rather, evolved as our understanding of the importance of synchronized IO activities matured. Initially, well-intentioned commanders, many of whom lacked clearly defined brigade guidance, had independently arrived at the
same conclusion: They needed an IO plan. Each had therefore begun developing and executing his own IO effort. On the surface this was fine: Great commanders were using initiative to solve problems and accomplish the mission. Unfortunately, because our activities were not coordinated and synchronized, we often disseminated contradictory information.

For example, one battalion IO message might state that a recent operation had resulted in the capture of 10 insurgents with no civilian casualties. Referring to the same operation, an adjacent battalion might inform its Iraqi citizens that 5 insurgents had been captured and 3 civilians accidentally injured. From the Iraqi perspective, because our information was inconsistent, we were not being honest.

One of our major objectives was to earn the Iraqis’ trust and confidence. If we continued to contradict ourselves or provide inaccurate information, we would never achieve this goal. We termed this phenomenon of contradictory IO statements “IO fratricide.” The remedy for this challenge leads to a fourth significant IO observation: A major IO goal at tactical and operational levels is getting the citizens in your AO to have trust and confidence in you.

We have all heard about “winning hearts and minds.” I do not like this phrase, and I liked it less and less as experience taught me its impracticality. The reality is that it will be a long, long time before we can truly win the hearts and minds of Arabs in the Middle East. Most of the people have been taught from birth to distrust and hate us. Consequently, I did not like my Soldiers using the phrase because it gave them the idea that to be successful they had to win the Iraqis’ hearts and minds, which translated into attempts at developing legitimate friendships with the Iraqis. However, in my view, even with considerable effort it is possible to cultivate friendships with only a small segment of the Iraqis with whom we have frequent contact.

Unfortunately, befriending a small portion of the population will not help us convince the remaining Iraqi citizens to begin tolerating or working with us. For us, given the amount of time we had to influence our target population, the more effective plan was to prioritize our efforts toward earning the grudging respect of our target population within the 12 months we would occupy our AO. This was a more realistic goal. If we could demonstrate to our population that we were truthful and that we followed through on everything we said we would, then we could earn the respect of a population and culture that was predisposed to distrust us.

Conversely, I felt that it would take considerable effort and time (resources we did not have) to develop legitimate friendships—assuming friendships were possible on a broad scale. So, by replacing “winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqis” with “earning the trust and confidence of the Iraqis,” I attempted to provide a mental construct to guide our Soldiers and leaders in all aspects of the IO campaign.

Subsequently, we began to formulate a general concept for IO based on the objective of garnering the trust, confidence, and respect, however grudging, of the various populations. Our overarching goal was to convince the silent majority that their personal and national interests resided with the Coalition’s efforts, not with the insurgents’. If we were to succeed, it was imperative to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the Iraqi population.

**Manning the IO cell.** Staffing an IO cell at brigade level was another challenge. Because we were not authorized many of the military occupational specialties necessary to plan, coordinate, and control information operations, we built our own IO working group (IOWG) out of hide. Our IOWG consisted of senior officers from the PSYOPs and CA detachments attached to the brigade, one intelligence officer detailed to serve as our public affairs officer (PAO), an engineer officer, and the brigade fire support officer.

The engineer officer was key because much of the visible progress we were enjoying in our AO was the result of renovation and reconstruction activities. The engineer officer maintained visibility on these projects to ensure that we did not miss opportunities to inform the Iraqis of any progress.

Adding a PAO to the IOWG was an obvious step. Because of the immense interest in our operations shown by international and Arab media, I had to assign this duty full time to one of my most competent and articulate officers. Subsequently, we realized that we needed to expand our public affairs activities and therefore hired two Iraqi citizens with media experience to manage our activities with the Arab press.

In concert, we leveraged the doctrinal knowledge of our PSYOPs and CA officers to organize activities and develop messages and distribution concepts. Finally, because our IO activities were ultimately “targeting” specific demographic elements in our
AO, it was a natural fit to place the brigade fire support officer in charge of the IOWG.

**Evolving unity of effort.** Our approach to conducting IO evolved over time, out of the operational necessity to accomplish our mission. We were probably a good 3 to 4 months into our tour before we gained the requisite experience and understanding of key IO factors. We then began to deliberately develop a structure and mechanism to systematically synchronize our information operations throughout the brigade. The following observations ultimately helped shape our operational construct:

- It is imperative to earn the trust and confidence of the indigenous population in your AO. They might never “like” you, but I am convinced you can earn their respect.
- To defeat the insurgency, you must convince the (silent) majority of the population that it is in their best personal and national interest to support Coalition efforts and, conversely, convince them not to support the insurgents.
- For information operations to be effective, you must have focused themes that you disseminate repetitively to your target audience.
- Target audiences are key. You should assume that the silent majority will discount most of the information Coalition forces disseminate simply because they are suspicious of us culturally. Therefore, you must identify and target respected community members with IO themes. If you can create conditions where Arabs are communicating your themes to Arabs, you can be quite effective.
- Being honest in the execution of information operations is highly important. This goes back to developing trust and confidence, especially with target audiences. If you lose your credibility, you cannot conduct effective IO. Therefore, you should never try to implement any sort of IO “deception” operations.

**Commander’s Vision and Guidance**

Visualizing and describing a concept of operation, one of a commander’s greatest contributions to his organization, was a contribution I had yet to provide to my combat team. It was essential to do so immediately. I also understood that after developing an IO plan, I would have to act energetically to ensure that subordinate commanders embraced information operations and executed them according to my expectations. I did, and they embraced the concept and ultimately improved on it. My fifth IO observation is that for all types of military operations, the commander’s vision and intent are essential, but when directing subordinate commanders to perform outside of their comfort zones, personal involvement is especially necessary to ensure that the commander’s concept is executed according to plan.

After establishing an initial IO cell, we obviously needed to develop an IO concept of operation that would synchronize our collective efforts. The centerpiece of this concept was the decision to dedicate brigade IO efforts toward two major themes and five target audiences (figure 3). The two major themes were to convince the silent majority of Iraqis in our AO that the economic, political, and social reforms being implemented were in their personal and national interest to support, and to discredit insurgent and terrorist activities in order to deny them support by the silent majority.

Our overall target audience was clearly the silent majority. However, to reach them and to ensure

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**Figure 3. 2BCT IO campaign plan.**
that our messages and themes would resonate with them, we determined that we needed to use mainly Iraqi proxies to convey our messages. We therefore identified five groups of Iraqis that had significant influence among the population: local imams and priests, local and district council members, staff and faculty from the universities, Arab and international media, and local sheiks and tribal leaders. Armed with a conceptual framework for conducting information operations throughout the brigade, we then wrote and published an IO annex. This leads to my sixth IO observation: An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple and few, and repeated often.

**Repeating themes and messages.** While developing my commander’s guidance, I recalled that the average person has a hard time remembering even simple concepts if he is only exposed to the concept once. A person watching commercials on TV, for example, must watch the same commercial 10 or 12 times before he retains the message and becomes inclined to buy the product. Keeping this in mind, we strove for sufficient repetition whenever we disseminated information. To influence the population, it was important to develop and repeat the messages that focused on our two themes, and to ensure that they were accurate and consistent.

**Staying focused.** Our ultimate IO objective was to convince the majority of the Iraqis in our area that they should tolerate our short-term occupation to convince the majority of the Iraqis in our area to support our goal. To support our first theme (convincing the Iraqis that it was in their personal and national interest to support reform initiatives), we defined success as progress being made economically, socially, politically, and in security. To support our second theme (discrediting the insurgents and terrorists), we took every opportunity to draw attention to the destructive, vicious disregard the enemy had for the Iraqi people and the adverse effects their actions were having on individual and national progress.

With much command emphasis, we developed metrics, which we integrated into IO messages to bolster our two major themes. Using “economic reform,” for example, we tracked the status of every brigade renovation and reconstruction project. These projects were effective in supporting our first theme because they directly resulted in quality-of-life improvements for the Iraqis. Better schools, cleaner drinking water, functional sewage disposal, more efficient distribution of electricity in our area, functioning health clinics and hospitals, and repair of university schools are some examples of the information we used to substantiate our claims.

We maintained a running total of the new projects we had started, how many we were in various stages of completion, how many had been completed, and how much money the Iraqi transitional government, the U.S. Government, or the international community had contributed to each. We also collected detailed information about insurgent and terrorist activities in our area to support our second theme. We tracked the number of Iraqi citizens killed or injured because of insurgent activities each day, the type of property damage and associated dollar value of damage caused by the insurgents, and the adverse effect that insurgent attacks were having on the quality of life (hours of daily electricity diminished, fuel shortages, number of days lost on completing vital infrastructure projects, and so forth).

One of our early IO challenges was maintaining consistent, accurate, noncontradictory IO messages. To address the challenge, we codified in our IO annex the kind of information to be collected, along with the requirement to roll up such information and submit it to the brigade IO cell each week. The cell then wrote and published an IO annex. This leads to my sixth IO observation: An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple and few, and repeated often.

**Making IO part of overall operations.** Because battalion leaders were busy fighting a war and dealing with lots of other problems, it would have been easy for them to place less and less priority on the brigade IO plan until it was subsumed by some other priority. Therefore, I knew that if I did not...
emphasize IO, it would not become a cornerstone of our daily operations. I felt strongly enough about the need for a brigade-wide IO effort that I made it one of my top priorities, so that the battalion commanders would follow suit as well.

Almost all of our IO activities were codified in our IO annex, which we developed and issued as a fragmentary order. This detailed annex described our two major themes and five target audiences, and it directed subordinate commands to conduct meetings, either weekly or bi-weekly depending on the audience, with the leaders of our targeted audiences (figure 4). The annex also directed subordinate commands to collect the information needed to support our weekly talking points, provided specific guidance on how to work with the media, and stipulated many other tasks that were necessary to support the brigade IO concept. I did not leave the “who and how often” up to the battalion commanders. They could not say, “I know I’m supposed to meet with these imams this week, but I’m just too busy.” The engagement was required.

To manage this process further, I required weekly reports. If a commander failed to conduct a mandatory target audience engagement, I demanded an immediate justification. I do not typically operate in such a directive mode, but I felt such an approach was necessary, at least initially, to ensure that our IO plan developed into something more than a good idea.

Not surprisingly, there were some growing pains, even gnashing of teeth. But once commanders saw and felt the positive effects we were having, they bought in and the program became a standard part of how we did business.

To institutionalize the IO process even further and to habituate battalion commanders to it, I required monthly backbriefs, not unlike quarterly training briefings but focused on IO activities. The commanders briefed from prepared slides in a standardized format. They addressed such topics as the frequency of engagements with targeted audiences in their areas, the number of Arab press engagements conducted, and a roll-up of directed information requirements collected that month in

![Figure 4. 2BCT IO battle rhythm.](image-url)
support of our major IO themes. They were also expected to brief what they had accomplished for the month, and what their plans were for the next month, specifically highlighting planned changes and adaptations.

This briefing technique improved my situational awareness of the brigade’s IO and provided a forum where leaders could share ideas and best practices. For example, one of the commanders might brief a new way in which insurgents were attempting to discredit Coalition forces, then address what he was doing to counter it. Other commanders could anticipate similar attempts in their AOs and take proactive measures to deny insurgent success.

When we executed more traditional operations, I gave the battalion leadership great latitude to plan and execute in their battlespace. For information operations, however, I felt I had to be directive to ensure compliance with the plan I envisioned.

**Developing talking points.** We developed two sets of talking points to support our themes. The first set came from input the battalions provided weekly. It addressed what the insurgents were doing that adversely affected the Iraqis, and detailed actions showing how Iraqi lives were getting better because of cooperative Coalition and Iraqi successes. This information was consolidated and vetted by the IO cell, then pushed back out to the battalions to provide consistent, accurate talking points and to preclude us from committing IO fratricide by contradicting ourselves.

The other set of talking points were templated standing sound bites for engagements of opportunity that might occur due to catastrophic events. We could not predict when, but we knew suicide bombings and other sensational insurgent attacks were going to occur, and we wanted officers who would be the first to arrive to have some handy formatted guidance with which to engage the media and local officials who were sure to show up. These standard talking points gave the first company commander or battalion commander on the scene sufficient material to talk to the media with confidence.

The talking points also helped commanders stay on theme and make the points that we wanted to make. While the talking points were general, they were still specific enough and timely enough to satisfy the press. The standard talking points also allowed us to shape the information environment somewhat by suggesting what the focus of an incident should be rather than leaving it up to the media to find an interpretation (which the insurgents were often clever at providing).

Along with the five target audiences that we engaged with our weekly talking points, we actually had a sixth audience: our own Soldiers. As our own quality of life began to mature, our Soldiers gained easy access to satellite TV. Typically, they would watch CNN, the BBC, FOX, or some other major international news media. It quickly became clear to us that if these organizations were the most influential sources of information Soldiers were exposed to, they would receive unbalanced information from which to develop their opinions of the effect their efforts were having in this war.

I remembered talking about Soldier morale with Major General Martin E. Dempsey, who said that a Soldier’s morale was a function of three things: believing in what he is doing, knowing when he is going home, and believing that he is winning. Watching the international news was not necessarily going to convince anyone that we were winning. Therefore, we decided to take the same information we were collecting to support our two IO themes and use it as command information for our Soldiers, so they could better understand how we were measuring success and winning, and be able to appreciate the importance of their contributions.

**Value of Societal and Cultural Leaders**

For communicating our message to the Iraqis, our challenge was twofold: We had to exhaust every means available to ensure the Iraqis heard our messages, and (frankly the greater challenge) we had to get them to believe our messages. We constantly strove to earn the trust and confidence of the Iraqis in our area by consistently being truthful with them and following through on our word. Many if not most of the Iraqis we were trying to influence with our IO themes did not have access to us, did not have an opportunity to change their opinions about our intentions, and tended not to believe anything a Westerner said to them. For our information to resonate with the population, we realized we had to reach the most trusted, most influential community members: the societal and cultural leaders. We hoped to convince them to be our interlocutors with the silent majority.
We identified the key leaders in our AO who wielded the greatest influence. These included clerics (Sunni and Shiite imams and Christian priests from Eastern Orthodox churches), sheiks and tribal leaders, staff and faculty at the universities (a group that has incredible influence over the young minds of college-age students), local government officials whom we were mentoring, and finally, select Arab media correspondents.

We began our leader engagement strategy by contacting members of local governments at neighborhood, district, and city council meetings. We sat side by side with elected local council leaders and helped them develop their democratic council systems. Eventually, we took a backseat and became mere observers. My commanders and I used these occasions to cultivate relationships with the leaders and to deliver our talking points (never missing an opportunity to communicate our two brigade themes). We typically met weekly or bi-weekly with prominent religious leaders, tribal sheiks, and university staff and faculty to listen to concerns and advice and to communicate the messages that supported our IO themes.

The meetings were excellent venues for our target audiences to express whatever views they were willing to share. Usually, we initiated a session with them by asking “What are we doing that you think is going well in your neighborhoods? What are we doing that is not going so well?” Not unexpectedly, 95 percent of their comments focused on what we were not doing so well (from their point of view). But this dialog, however negative the feedback might have been, gave them a forum to communicate to us the rumors they had heard through the Iraqi grapevine. In turn, this gave us a platform to counter rumors or accusations and, using the detailed information we had collected, to invalidate untrue or unsubstantiated rumors or allegations. After fostering relationships with the leaders from our target audiences over a period of time, we were able to refute anti-Coalition rumors and allegations with some degree of success.

These venues also gave brigade leaders insights to follow up on any allegations of unacceptable actions by any of our units or Soldiers. In fact, when any group raised a credible point that involved something I could affect, I tried to act on it immediately. In our next meeting with the Iraqi leaders, I would explain to them what I had discovered based on their allegations and what I was doing about it. For example, a sheik alleged that we were intentionally insulting Arab men when we conducted raids. He specifically referred to our technique of placing a sandbag over the head of a suspect once we apprehended him. I told him that doing so was a procedure we had been trained to perform, probably to prevent prisoners from knowing where they were being held captive. His response was that everybody already knew where we took prisoners and that it was humiliating for an Iraqi man to be taken captive in his house and have “that bag” put on his head, especially in front of his family. The sheik’s point was that by following our standard operating procedure to secure prisoners, we were creating conditions that could potentially contribute to the insurgency.

Back at headquarters we talked this over. Why do we put bags on their heads? Nobody had a good answer. What do we lose if we don’t use the bags? What do we gain if we don’t? We decided to discontinue the practice. Whether doing so had a measurable effect or not is unknown, but the change played well with the target audience because it was a clear example that we valued the people’s opinions and would correct a problem if we knew about it. This simple act encouraged the people to share ideas with us on how we should operate and allowed them to say, “See, I have influence with the Americans.” This was useful because it stimulated more extensive and better future dialog.

Another benefit of these engagement sessions was an increase in our understanding of the culture. We had not undergone cultural training before deploying to Iraq, but we received a significant amount of it through on-the-job training during these sessions. In fact, many of the tactics, techniques, and procedures we adopted that allowed us to strike a balance between conducting operations and being culturally sensitive came from ideas presented to us during meetings with leaders of our key target audiences.

**Embedded Media**

Everybody thinks embedded media is a great concept. I do. I had James Kitfield from the *National Journal* embedded in my unit for 3 months during my tour in Iraq. That is an embed—somebody
who stays with the unit long enough to understand the context of what is going on around them and to develop an informed opinion before printing a story. Unfortunately, as Phase IV of the operation in Iraq began, the definition of what an embed was for some reason changed to mean hosting a reporter for 3 or 4 days or even just 1 day. That is risky business because a reporter cannot learn about or understand the context of the issues Soldiers face and, consequently, has a greater propensity to misinterpret events and draw inaccurate conclusions. Realizing this, I made it a brigade policy that we would not allow reporters to live with us in the brigade unless they were going to come down for an extended period of time.

Reporters who wanted to visit us for a day or two were welcome, but they had to go home every night because I was not going to expose them to, or give them, the same kind of access a true embed received if they did not want to invest the time needed to develop a sophisticated understanding of the environment the Soldiers faced, the decisions we were making, and the context in which we were fighting. Therefore, my seventh IO observation is that reporters must earn their access.

Unfortunately, it is also my experience that some reporters come with a predetermined agenda and only want to gather information to support some particular political or personal slant for a story they are already developing. However, I learned by experience who those reporters were and what to expect from them. No matter what we do, we are not going to change some reporters’ or publications’ mindsets. The best way to work around a biased and unprofessional journalist is by being more professional than they are and by developing a plan to deal with them.

**Arab versus international media.** Although the international press is an integral component of our IO effort, they were not our top media priority. While higher headquarters viewed U.S. and international media as their main media targets, our priority was more parochial: We regarded the Iraqi and Arab media as our main targets. As a result, most of the time I spent on the media was focused on the Arab press because it informed the population in my area. What most people were viewing on their new satellite TV dishes was Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera, not CNN, the BBC, NBC, or FOX. From my perspective, I was competing with the insurgents for the opinion of the silent majority, the wavering mass of Iraqi citizens who were undecided in who they...
supported and who constituted the most important audience we needed to influence.

Weekly roundtables. The most effective technique we developed to routinely engage the key members of the Arab press was the bi-weekly, brigade-level news huddle. Since policy at that time did not permit us to conduct press conferences, we held small roundtables, something like the exclusive U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) press roundtables conducted in Washington, D.C. We allowed only the Arab press to come to these sessions; CNN, the BBC, and other international media were excluded. The Arab media was our target audience because it was our conduit of information back to the Arab community.

Every 2 weeks I invited Arab media representatives to my headquarters. In preparation, one of my PAOs drafted talking points and a script. I began each meeting with scripted comments emphasizing messages related to our two primary IO themes, then opened the floor to questions.

To focus our efforts and to determine which venues the Iraqis received their news from, we conducted surveys and ascertained which newspapers were read and which TV programs were watched in our battlespace. We then hired two Iraqis to be brigade press agents. Their main jobs were to facilitate attendance at our press roundtables and to promote the publication of our messages. They would go out, visit with various newspapers, and invite reporters to our press conferences. Typically, the press agents described how we conducted our press conference, provided reporters with the location and frequency of our meetings, and coordinated the reporters’ clearance for entry into our forward operating base. Finally, the press agents would stress to the reporters that they were not only allowed but encouraged to ask anything they wanted.

It was not unusual to have anywhere from 8 to 10 newspaper reporters attend these meetings, among them representatives from Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and one of the Lebanese satellite TV stations. After the press huddle I usually did offline interviews with the Arab satellite stations.

Engaging Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, for the most part, enjoy a justifiably bad reputation in the West because of their biased reporting style. But the fact is they report to the audience we need to influence, so why not develop a rapport with them so that maybe we can get some of our messages across to the Iraqi public?

When Al Jazeera reporters first came to one of our press huddles, they were distant. However, after three or four meetings they began warming up to us and later, they became just as friendly as any of the other reporters attending. We can, if we put enough effort into it, develop a good working relationship with almost any reporter as long as we are truthful and honest. They cannot help but respect us for that and, much of the time, respect is rewarded with fairer and more balanced news accounts because reporters know they can trust what we are saying. It is a mistake not to allow Al Jazeera and other Arab media access simply because we do not like much of what they report. We need to work with them specifically if we want more accuracy and balance. We cannot just censor them, deny them access, or fail to respect them because, ultimately, they talk to Arab peoples in their own language and are the most likely to be believed. Not to engage them or work with them is to miss tactical and strategic opportunities.

Handbills. Another important tool in our efforts to communicate IO themes to the Iraqi public was handbills. Generally, we Westerners dismiss handbills as a trivial medium because we associate them with pizza advertising, close-out sales, and other such activities. In Iraq, hand-distributed material in the form of flyers and leaflets is an effective way to distribute IO messages.

To take the initiative away from the insurgents, we developed two different types of handbills: one to address situations we faced routinely (figure 5), another for mission-specific operations or incidents (figure 6). Standard handbills spread news about such events as improvised explosive device (IED) incidents, house raids, and road closings (usually to clear an IED). Because we wanted to ensure that we had a way to take our IO message straight to the local population as soon as an opportunity presented itself, every mounted patrol carried standard flyers in their vehicles at all times. Thus, when Soldiers encountered a situation, they could react quickly.

We also relied on handbills tailored to specific incidents that had occurred or operations we were conducting. For example, we might draft a handbill addressing an insurgent incident that had killed or injured Iraqis citizens in a local neighborhood. Being able to rapidly produce and disseminate a
We apologize for this inconvenience. We have been forced to conduct these types of search operations because people in your community have been attacking Iraqi and Coalition security forces.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Iraqi and Coalition security forces are conducting operations to defeat terrorists who use your community to plan and execute attacks against Iraqi citizens and Coalition forces.

Figure 5. House raid handbill.

handbill that exposed the callous and indiscriminate nature of insurgent or terrorist activities while a local community was reeling from the attack was powerful and effective.

When developing handbills, we followed two important guidelines: Ensure that messages were accurately translated, and ensure that the handbills were distributed in a timely manner. Much careful, deliberate thought went into the scripting of our messages. We made sure our best interpreters translated the material, and we vetted each translation through multiple interpreters to ensure accuracy.

It is an unfortunate characteristic of war that tragedy invites the greatest interest in political or social messages. As a result, the best time to distribute a leaflet, as exploitative as it seems, was after an IED or some other sensational insurgent attack had resulted in injury or death. A population grieving over lost family members was emotionally susceptible to messages vilifying and condemning the insurgents. Consequently, we would move rapidly to an incident site and start distributing preprinted leaflets to discredit the insurgents for causing indiscriminate collateral damage. We also requested help in finding the perpetrators of the attack. Such leaflets brought home immediately the message that the insurgents and terrorists were responsible for these events and that the best way to get justice was to tell us or the Iraqi security forces who the insurgents were and where they could be found. This technique, which helped drive a wedge between the insurgents and the locals, often resulted in actionable intelligence. Quick distribution of leaflets helped influence our population before the insurgents could spin the incident against us.

We also drafted handbills that informed the Iraqis about local or national infrastructure progress (figure 7). We highlighted successes, such as the increased production of electricity in the country and improvements in the amount of oil produced and exported.
Anti-Iraqi forces are operating in your neighborhood.

25 casualties on 18 January:

13 Iraqis killed—including an 8 year old boy!!
12 severely wounded—11 Iraqis and 1 Coalition Soldier

Only you can help stop this violence. Report all IEDs and suspicious activity to Iraqi or Coalition Security Forces.

Figure 6. Handbill addressing specific incident.

This project is proudly presented to you by your local Iraqi government.
Built by Iraqis for Iraqis—Another example of progress in Iraq.

This project is being built for Iraqis by Iraqis. This project was selected and is supported by your Iraqi government who is helping to move Iraq towards progress and prosperity.

Figure 7. Iraqi success handbill.
We specifically designed these leaflets to convince the population that progress was occurring.

**Measures of IO Effectiveness**

As with all operations, gauging IO effectiveness is important; however, the process of measuring IO success is not a precise science. That noted, we did discover certain simple techniques to identify indicators that we found useful for measuring effectiveness. **Iraqi PAOs.** Iraqi PAOs were indispensable to our success with the Iraqi and Arab press. They were instrumental in soliciting Arab media correspondents to attend our bi-weekly brigade news huddles and in gauging what was being published or broadcast that directly affected our area of operations.

We hired two Iraqi interpreters and dedicated them to 24-hour monitoring of Arab satellite news. That's all they did: They watched satellite news television in our headquarters and noted every story that was aired about operations in Iraq.

Through their efforts we were able to determine that our information operations were having the intended effect because of an increase in the number of accurate, positive stories published or aired in local papers and on satellite TV.

Updates and analysis from this monitoring process became a key part of the daily battle update brief. The PAO briefed us on newspaper articles or Arab TV stories related to our operations. For example, a story might have appeared on Al Jazeera about some particular issue or event in the brigade AO that might have been incorrectly reported. We would respond by developing an IO action to counter the story. This type of monitoring told us about the type of information being directed at the local population, which in turn allowed us to take action to counter or exploit the information.

**Lack of adverse publicity.** A similar key indicator that our IO efforts were succeeding was a lack of adverse publicity. While we were in Baghdad we raided eight mosques, but received no adverse publicity other than from a few disgruntled imams. To our knowledge, these raids were not reported by either the Arab or the international press. Nor did these raids prove to be problematic in feedback from the various target audiences we were trying to influence. We attributed this success to the meticulous IO planning we did for every sensitive site we raided. Ultimately, we developed a brigade SOP that detailed the IO activities we were required to do before, during, and after such raids.

**Increase in intelligence tips.** Another indicator of success was the increased number of intelligence tips we received. We determined that there was a correlation between the number of tips we received from unpaid walk-in informants and the local population’s growing belief that they should distance themselves from the insurgents and align themselves with Coalition reform efforts. By comparing week after week how often local citizens approached our Soldiers and told them where IEDs were implanted or where they were being made, we had a pretty good idea that our efforts to separate the insurgents from the population were working.

**The wave factor and graffiti.** An informal but important indicator was what we called the wave factor. If you drive through a neighborhood and everyone is waving, that is good news. If you drive through a neighborhood and only the children are waving, that is a good but not great indicator. If you drive through a neighborhood and no one is waving, then you have some serious image problems. A similar informal indicator was the increase or decrease of anti-Coalition graffiti.

**Monitoring mosque sermons.** A more sophisticated indicator came from reports of what had been said at mosque sermons. Monitoring imam rhetoric proved to be an important technique because messages delivered during sermons indicated whether or not imams were toning down their anti-Coalition rhetoric. If they were, we could claim success...
for our program of religious leader engagements. Feedback on what was said inside the mosque steered us to those imams we specifically needed to engage. For example, I would be briefed that a certain imam was still advocating violence against Coalition forces or that he was simply communicating false information. We would then tailor our IO efforts to engage that particular imam or other local neighborhood leaders so that he might modify his behavior and rhetoric.

The Way Ahead

In Iraq’s COIN environment, information operations are important tools for achieving success. I believe the program we developed, with its focus on engendering tolerance for our presence and willingness to cooperate (rather than winning hearts and minds), and its basis in consistent, reliable actions supported by targeted communications to specific audiences, paid dividends.

Repetition of message, accuracy of information, and speed of delivery were key to executing our plan. Ultimately, those of us tasked with counter-insurgency must always keep in mind that we are really competing with the insurgents for influence with the indigenous population. In Iraq, that means convincing the population that they should tolerate our short-term presence so that economic, political, social, and security reforms can take root and ultimately give them a better country and a better life. To achieve this goal, we must dominate the IO environment. To dominate the IO environment, we need to ensure that information operations receive the same level of emphasis and involvement that our commanders have traditionally allocated to conventional maneuver operations. Until our Army matures in its development of doctrine and approach to training for insurgencies, commanders at all levels will need to play a prominent role in developing, implementing, and directing IO within their areas of operation.

One of the many strengths our Army enjoys is that it is an adaptive, learning organization. Significant changes are already taking place as we begin to learn from the lessons of fighting an insurgency. Our Combat Training Centers are implementing changes to their training models to better integrate IO into rotation scenarios. Their challenge will be to give rotating forces an irregular warfare experience that acknowledges and rewards good IO planning and execution by our Soldiers. The addition of IO, PA, and CA officers, PSYOP NCOs, and PAOs to maneuver brigades is encouraging, and the offering of COIN electives at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) indicates real progress. However, there is still more to be done before our Soldiers and our Army can comfortably employ IO as a key instrument for waging war against an irregular enemy. Some of the following suggestions are already being considered and will soon be implemented; others I hope will spark some debate as to their merits:

● Do more than add a COIN elective to the CGSC curriculum. Immediately require COIN instruction at all levels in our institutional training base.
● Integrate cultural awareness training as a standard component in our institutional training base curriculum.

Essential IO Observations

1. To be effective, tailor themes and messages to specific audiences.
2. You have no influence over the press if you do not talk to them.
3. There is a direct correlation between your credibility and your ability to demonstrably improve the quality of life, physical security, and stability in a society.
4. A major IO goal at tactical and operational levels is getting the citizens in your AO to have trust and confidence in you.
5. The commander’s vision and intent are essential, but when you direct subordinates to perform outside their comfort zones, your personal involvement is especially important to ensure that your concept is executed according to plan.
6. An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple, few, and repeated often.
7. Reporters must earn their access.
• Increase the quality and quantity of media training provided to Soldiers and leaders.
  • Consider compensating culture experts commensurate with their expertise. Why is it that we see fit to give pilots flight pay but do not offer foreign area officers cultural pay? If we want to build a bench of specialists in key languages such as Arabic, Farsi, and Mandarin Chinese, we should consider a financial incentive program to attract and retain people who possess these critical skills.
  • Reassess policies and regulations that inhibit our tactical units’ ability to compete in an IO environment. The global communications network facilitates the near-instantaneous transmission of information to local and international audiences, and it is inexpensive and easy to access. Our Soldiers must be permitted to beat the insurgents to the IO punch.

In closing, the model of information operations I have advocated here is simply one way to conduct IO at brigade level and below. This model is not intended to be the only way. The unique aspects of each operational environment, our national goals in wartime, the culture of the indigenous population, and many other factors will ultimately dictate each commander’s concept of information operations. The important thing is to develop a plan and to execute it aggressively. Failing to do so will give the insurgent a perhaps insurmountable advantage. MR
THREE YEARS after the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the fall of Saddam Hussein, confusion and controversy still surround the insurgency in Iraq’s Sunni Triangle. Part of this is due to the nontraditional character of the Sunni Arab insurgency, which is being waged by amorphous, locally and regionally based groups and networks lacking a unifying ideology, central leadership, or clear hierarchical organization.¹

The ambiguities inherent in insurgent warfare also make insurgencies difficult to assess. In conventional military conflicts, we can compare opposing orders of battle, evaluate capabilities, and assess the fortunes of belligerents using traditional measures: destruction of enemy forces, capture of key terrain, or seizure of the enemy’s capital city.

Insurgents are often not organized into regular formations, making it difficult (even for their own leaders) to assess their numerical strength accurately. Usually, there are no front lines whose location could offer insight into the war’s progress, and, at any rate, military factors are usually less important than political and psychological considerations in deciding the outcome of such conflicts. As a result, we need different analytic measures to assess the insurgency’s nature, scope, intensity, and effectiveness.²

The Insurgency’s Origins and Nature

Assumptions about the roots and origins of the Sunni Arab insurgency color assessments of its nature and character. Analysts and officials who believe that Saddam Hussein anticipated his defeat and planned the insurgency before the invasion of Iraq tend to downplay the complex array of factors that influenced its origin and development. No evidence exists that Saddam planned to lead a postwar resistance movement or that he played a significant role in the insurgency’s emergence. However, prewar preparations for waging a popular war against invading Coalition forces in southern Iraq, or for dealing with a coup or uprising, almost certainly abetted the insurgency’s emergence following the regime’s fall. The first insurgents were also able to draw on relationships, networks, and structures inherited from the old regime, which helps account for the rather rapid onset of the insurgency in the summer of 2003.³

U.S. officials have also differed over the nature of the violence in post-Saddam Iraq, with some seeing it largely as the work of former regime “dead enders,” and others seeing it as a multifaceted insurgency against the emerging Iraqi political order.⁴ Part of the confusion stems from the fact that Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) face a composite insurgency whose
elements act on diverse motives. These elements include former regime members and Iraqi Islamists, angry or aggrieved Iraqis, foreign jihadists, tribal groups, and criminal elements, each of which draws considerable strength from political and religious ideologies, tribal notions of honor and revenge, and shared solidarities deeply ingrained in the population of the Sunni Triangle.

Among the factors driving the insurgency are—

● The humiliation engendered by the Coalition military victory and occupation.
● The sense of entitlement felt by many Sunni Arabs who consider themselves the rightful rulers of Iraq.
● Anxiety over the growing power of Shiite and Kurdish parties and militias.
● The fear that Sunni Arabs (some 20 percent of Iraq’s population) will be politically and economically marginalized in a democratic Iraq.
● A potent brand of Iraqi-Arab nationalism that is deeply ingrained in many Sunni Arabs.
● The popularity of political Islam among sectors of the Sunni population.
● A desire to gain power—as individuals, as members of a dispossessed elite, or as a community.

Some senior civilian and military officials, at least early on, failed to grasp the protracted nature of insurgency and counterinsurgency warfare. On several occasions (after the December 2003 capture of Saddam, the June 2004 transfer of authority, and the January 2005 elections), a number of officials expressed confidence that these events presaged an early end to the insurgency. In each case, their hopes were dashed by subsequent events. Such expectations were unrealistic and ran counter to the weight of historical experience.

Insurgencies are often bloody, drawn-out affairs that last for years, frequently for a decade or more. This occurs for several reasons:

● Insurgents must act with great caution to avoid being killed or captured by government forces. Even basic tasks take longer to accomplish than they would in a permissive environment.
● It takes time to win over civilians (who tend to remain neutral until one side clearly has the upper hand) and to create new institutions of governance in areas under insurgent control.
● The insurgent and counterinsurgent are locked in a struggle to disrupt and undermine the other’s activities; progress, for both sides, frequently suffers setbacks and reverses.

● Insurgents often see time as an ally in their efforts to clandestinely mobilize and organize the population and to build up their military strength; they consider patience a virtue.
● Insurgents often start off militarily weak and generally avoid engaging government forces decisively until they feel confident of success.

The Sunni Arab insurgency in post-Saddam Iraq, however, has departed from the typical pattern in at least four important ways:

● The insurgents were able to “fall in” on existing structures in Iraqi society—the tribe, religious institutions, and the underground Baath Party—to quickly organize and begin operations.
● Because of insufficient Coalition intelligence and forces, the insurgents were relatively unfettered from the outset, allowing the insurgency to gather momentum quickly.
● The insurgents were well armed because the former regime armed its supporters before the war, many soldiers took their weapons with them when the army went home, and postwar looters cleaned out the regime’s weapons stores.
● The insurgents were well financed from the start, using former regime funds and looted monies.

These factors put Coalition forces and the new Iraqi Government at an initial disadvantage, making it more than likely that the struggle in Iraq would be prolonged and difficult.

The Scope of the Insurgency

Because insurgencies are complex, dynamic, adaptive systems, an assessment of the Sunni Arab insurgency should employ both quantitative and qualitative measures and must examine multiple dimensions over time, including the insurgency’s operational environment; its structures, processes, and functions; and the degree to which it has penetrated public and private institutions in the Sunni Triangle and won over Sunni hearts and minds.

The insurgency is occurring in a complex and evolving human and geographic “landscape” which it influences and to which it responds. Demographic, social, geographic, religious, and economic factors are key elements of this operational environment.

Demography and insurgent strength. Although numbers might not indicate the insurgents’ prospects
for success, they might suggest the amount of popular support the insurgents enjoy, the effectiveness of their recruitment and mobilization efforts, their capacity for action, and the efficacy of Coalition and Iraqi Government countermeasures. Estimates of insurgent strength should include combatants (guerrillas and terrorists who are currently active or available for future operations) and members of the insurgent underground involved in recruiting, training, financing, propagandizing, and conducting political activities in support of the insurgency.6

We can assess the insurgency’s mobilization potential by looking at Iraq’s male Sunni Arab population.

In a total population of about 27 million, 5.4 million are Sunni Arab, with 1.35 million Sunni men of military age (for our purposes, 15 to 49). This is the theoretical mobilization potential of the Sunni Arab community.7

Central Command General John Abizaid has stated that the number of Iraqis participating in the insurgency amounts to less than 0.1 percent of the country’s population, and most likely does not exceed 20,000 (fighters plus members of the underground).8 Historically, insurgent movements have generally mobilized some 0.5 percent to 2 percent of the population.9 If insurgents make up less than 0.1 percent of the total population (and given the scope and intensity of the insurgency, this figure might be low), the Sunni Arab insurgency would be among the smallest, percentage wise, in modern times.

Even doubling or tripling this estimate would yield a relatively small insurgency by historical standards, which probably explains why Sunni Arab insurgent groups seem never to lack for manpower or to have problems recouping their losses.10 Employing only a small fraction of their potential mobilization base means the insurgents have no difficulty recruiting or impressing new members to replace combat losses. Because these groups are organized into compartmentalized cells and networks that recruit locally by drawing on various social solidarities, they are well adapted to replacing losses, though not to the generation of large field forces. Large forces might not be necessary, however, if the insurgents hope to prevail by winning over or intimidating the civilian population, disrupting ISF recruitment, and undermining the U.S. will to fight, rather than by defeating U.S. forces in combat—as seems to be the case in Iraq.

There are probably hundreds of thousands of Sunni Arab males with intelligence and security, military, or paramilitary training who are prime candidates for recruitment by the insurgency. Furthermore, the number of Sunni Arab males with a strong sense of grievance (the result of losing a family member or being humiliated, mistreated, or wrongly detained by Coalition or Iraqi Government forces) is probably in the high tens of thousands, at the least. This group of “angry Iraqis” provides another source of potential recruits.

Sunni Arab insurgents swim in a largely sympathetic sea, with opinion polls suggesting that broad sectors of the Sunni Arab population support insurgent attacks on Coalition forces. Still, many Sunnis are skeptical of the insurgency’s prospects and oppose the use of force for political ends.11 Terrorist-type attacks on Sunni targets are also creating disenchantment with the insurgency’s extremist elements, such as Al-Qaeda in Iraq, and Sunni Arab participation in the October 2005 constitutional referendum and the December 2005 elections indicates that many Sunnis see some positive potential in the political process.

Overall, Sunnis have not stopped supporting the insurgency, especially that part engaged in what is widely considered in Iraq as resistance to occupation. Thus, it is likely that armed Sunni insurgents number in the thousands, that unarmed members of the insurgent underground number in the tens of thousands, and that the insurgents can draw on a large pool of sympathizers, as well as associates, friends, family members, and fellow clan members and tribesmen. The minimum number of Sunni Arabs “involved” with the insurgency in one way or another likely approaches 100,000 (and might be much higher), although the number might fluctuate in response to changing political, military, economic, and social conditions.12

The insurgency has probably mobilized only a fraction of the Sunni population that supports attacks on Coalition forces or has some kind of military or paramilitary training. Should insurgent groups exploit this untapped demographic potential more effectively, insurgent violence could further intensify.

**Social solidarities.** The Sunni insurgency draws on personal and kinship ties, shared military experiences, membership in former regime organizations,
attendance at insurgent-associated mosques, business relationships, and other connections. These relationships bind insurgents and their supporters in complex ways. They overlap and reinforce one another, producing cells and networks founded on multiple associations, and they contribute to the flexibility and resilience of insurgent organizations. They also provide the basis for recruiting, establishing bonds of trust, and fostering cooperation among widely dispersed and ideologically disparate groups.

**Geography.** Insurgent activity is closely tied to Iraq’s human and physical geography and follows the dominant pattern of urban settlement along those segments of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that run through the Sunni triangle. There are also multiple corridors or zones of resistance: Baghdad-Fallujah-Ramadi; Tikrit-Baquba; northern Babil province (the so-called Triangle of Death); and the Euphrates River Valley from Husbaya on the Syrian border to Ramadi. 13

Insurgent cells and networks tend to be concentrated in neighborhoods, villages, and towns that are home to large numbers of ex-Baathists and former regime military and security personnel; in areas where unemployment is rampant; in neighborhoods, villages, and towns associated with certain tribes; and in the vicinity of certain mosques used by insurgents as weapons depots, recruiting centers, and meeting places.

Insurgent armed action in Iraq has been persistent and pervasive. Areas that experienced insurgent activity in 2003 generally continue to do so today, albeit at reduced levels in some important places (such as Fallujah, Mosul, Tal Afar). Some 75 percent of insurgent violence occurs in the four governorates comprising the Sunni triangle (al-Anbar, Salahuddin, Ninawa, and Baghdad), although significant insurgent activity also occurs in Diyala, Babil, and Ta’amim governorates. 14 By these measures, the insurgency remains widespread in Sunni areas and in areas where Sunnis are a significant presence (figure 1). 15

Although a plurality of reported incidents—between 20 and 35 percent—occur in Baghdad, most U.S. troops killed in action (KIA) have fallen in Anbar province (figure 2). This likely reflects the intensity of engagements there, especially Fallujah I and II during April and November 2004, the prolonged struggle in Ramadi, and U.S.-ISF operations in the Western Euphrates River Valley during the second half of 2005. In Anbar, both U.S. forces and the insurgents have evinced a willingness to incur significant casualties to achieve their objectives.

**Religion.** In Sunni areas, religion offered solace to those who suffered under Saddam’s regime, comfort to those harmed by the post-Saddam order (which brought the humiliation of occupation, de-Baathification, and the dismantling of the Iraqi army), and inspiration for those now fighting Coalition forces. Not surprisingly, Iraqi insurgents, even those who are probably not true believers or Islamists, make extensive use of religious language, symbols, and imagery. About half of all Sunni insurgent organizations mentioned in the media bear Islamic names. Examples include some of the most prominent insurgent organizations, such as the
Army of Muhammad, the Islamic Army in Iraq, the Iraqi National Islamic Resistance, the Mujahidin Army, and Ansar al-Sunnah.\textsuperscript{16}

**Economy and reconstruction.** Many Iraqis consider security and the economy to be the two most urgent issues facing the country.\textsuperscript{17} War, sanctions, years of neglecting the country’s infrastructure, Coalition policies, and insurgent violence have created an economic environment favorable to the insurgents. Economic conditions have fueled anger against the Coalition and the Iraqi Government and created a large pool of unemployed (25 to 50 percent of the general labor force, and up to 70 percent of the labor force in Sunni areas hit hardest by insurgent violence, some of whom are apparently willing to attack Coalition forces or emplace improvised explosive devices [IEDs] for money).\textsuperscript{18} Nearly 3 years after Saddam’s fall, electricity and oil production are below prewar levels (although oil revenues have soared thanks to high oil prices).\textsuperscript{19} Both industries are frequently the targets of sabotage, resulting in the disruption of basic services, a decline in the standard of living, and lost government revenues.\textsuperscript{19}

**Structures, Processes, and Functions**

Although attention tends to center on the most visible insurgent activities (daily violent incidents and mass-casualty attacks) these are but a fraction of the insurgency’s range of activities, and they leave in the shadows the structures, processes, and functions that sustain the war.

**Organization.** The Sunni insurgency is not organized in a strict hierarchy (like the communist insurrections in Malaya and Vietnam) and, in this sense, is not a classic insurgency. It is a hybrid with some elements of hierarchy combining with a looser cell structure. It has an informal leadership with elements, entities, and organizations grouped into cells linked by personal, tribal, or organizational ties (figure 3).

According to some reports, the insurgency’s senior leadership consists of 8 to 12 individuals who meet occasionally inside or outside of Iraq to discuss organization and tactics. The group includes members of the former regime’s intelligence and security services, former Baathists, Iraqi and foreign jihadists, and tribal figures. These leaders reportedly provide resources and direction to many insurgent groups. Personal, family, tribal, and religious ties are believed to facilitate cooperation and coordination.\textsuperscript{20} Insurgent groups have also created mujahidin shura councils or other collaborative mechanisms to coordinate operations in localities like Fallujah or to synchronize the activities of like-minded groups operating in the Sunni Triangle, such as the Mujahidin Shura Council currently associated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.\textsuperscript{21}

Action elements include insurgent groups and criminal organizations (for example, the Islamic Army in Iraq, the Army of Muhammad, the Mujahidin Army, Al-Qaeda in Iraq, and so on), each with its own leaders and decisionmaking process. These make up a web of networks linked by personal, tribal, or organizational ties that communicate by various means, such as cell phones, the Internet, and couriers. Each group is believed to be involved in a range of activities, including recruitment, training, financing, propaganda, political activities, guerrilla,
Coordination/Cooperation

**Leadership elements**
- Tribals, Iraqi Islamists, Baathists, foreign jihadists

**Action elements**
- Islamic Army in Iraq, Army of Muhammad, Mujahedin Army, al-Qaeda in Iraq, criminal organizations

**Recruitment base**
- Ex-Baath, ex-security services, ex-military, tribal members, aggrieved, unemployed, Iraqi Wahhabists/Salafists, foreign jihadists, criminals

**Sunni Arab society**
- Tribes, clans, families, religious elements, political factions, businesses

Support/resources/participation

Direction/resourcing/influencing

**Action**
- Attacks, intimidation, organization, facilitation


**Figure 3. The insurgent system in Iraq.**

and (sometimes) terrorist attacks. Terrorist attacks appear to be largely the province of jihadist organizations like Al-Qaeda in Iraq and Ansar al-Sunna, although former regime elements might also be involved, at least in a supporting role.22

While the jihadists have garnered the most attention because of their emphasis on mass-casualty attacks and because they take credit for almost every major attack that occurs, the “national resistance” is probably responsible for most attacks on Coalition forces and Iraqis associated with the government. The organizational boundaries between these groups, however, are probably not well defined. While Al-Zarqawi did not “hijack the insurgency,” his organization appears to have cooperated at least with Baathist elements of the insurgency to carry out actions and achieve shared tactical and operational objectives.23

The influence of the jihadists, however, goes beyond the immediate impact of their operations. By striking fear into the hearts of their enemies and drawing the ire of Coalition military officials, they are undoubtedly influencing some Iraqis and inspiring others to join their ranks (as demonstrated by the involvement of four Iraqis in the 9 November 2005 bombing of three hotels in Amman, Jordan, by Al-Qaeda in Iraq). To ensure their long-term viability in Iraq, foreign jihadist groups like Al-Qaeda in Iraq are engaged in a process of “Iraqification,” the recruiting of local members in order to sink roots into Iraqi society.24

Nevertheless, jihadist operations are apparently producing strains within the insurgency, and between jihadist insurgent groups and the Sunni population, particularly the more tribal elements. This strain has been most pronounced in Anbar province, but it has also been noted in Samarra, in Salahuddin province. While disputes and clashes between nationalist and jihadist insurgent groups, and between tribal elements and jihadists, have been reported for some time, these have clearly worsened since summer 2005. However, the extent of any split within the ranks of the insurgents remains unclear, and major insurgent groups, including the Islamic Army in Iraq, the 1920 Revolution Brigades, and the Army of the Mujahideen in Iraq have issued statements denying any such split.25

For both the national resistance and jihadists, cells seem to be the dominant form of organization, although some kind of limited hierarchy exists, with cells controlling the activities of sub-cells. Some cells appear to be multifunctional, carrying out attacks using small arms, light weapons (such as rocket-propelled grenades), and IEDs. Other cells are specialized and might be involved in preparing forged documents or propaganda materials, or in planning and executing attacks with mortars, rockets, IEDs, or vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs).26

**Financing.** The insurgency’s varied activities require a steady income stream with extensive and sophisticated financing operations. Although open-source information on this topic is scaree,
the insurgents do not appear to lack for financial resources, despite Coalition and Iraqi Government efforts to disrupt their funding.  

The insurgency receives financial support from inside and outside Iraq. Internal sources include donations from sympathizers, charities, and mosques, and income generated by legitimate businesses and criminal activities (robbery, extortion, smuggling, counterfeiting, narcotics trafficking, and kidnapping for ransom). At least some funds have been siphoned off from Iraq’s oil industry. External sources include donations from wealthy private donors in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iran, Europe, and the Gulf States (especially Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates); expatriate former regime elements; and members of transnational charities. The government of Iran might also be providing some funding for Sunni insurgent activity.  

Insurgents are believed to use at least three types of networks to collect, move, and disburse money: former regime financial networks, traditional informal hawala networks, and clerical networks/charitable religious endowments. Couriers are the preferred means of transport. These networks extend across Iraq’s borders and are probably interconnected. Until recently, the Syria-Iraqi border was the most important route for such activity, although improvements in security on both sides of the border might be affecting this path (figure 4). As with other insurgent activities, their financial operations have evolved and adjusted to changing conditions and Coalition and Iraqi Government countermeasures, which has allowed the insurgency to weather the seizure of large amounts of cash, the detention or death of financiers, and the 2003 exchange of Saddam-era currency for redesigned notes.  

**Political activity.** The destruction of Saddam’s regime left the Sunnis temporarily leaderless and in disarray. Moreover, because the insurgents violently opposed the January 2005 elections and largely succeeded in preventing meaningful Sunni involvement, Sunni Arabs were left without an effective voice in the Iraqi Transitional Government, although the insurgency provided them with a degree of influence over the political process that they would not have had otherwise. Nevertheless, virtually from its onset, the insurgency had a political face. The clearest manifestation of this was the rise of the Muslim Clerics Association as a political advocate of the Sunnis and as an overt voice articulating political positions similar to those of the insurgents: opposition to the occupation, the illegitimacy of the occupation-imposed political process, and the right of legitimate resistance.  

In addition to overt political groups voicing positions supportive of the insurgents, the insurgents themselves developed political organs. These political bureaus or political wings have been used to articulate the political positions of the insurgent groups and to establish that these groups are more than just violently nihilistic with nothing to offer for the future of Iraq. They have also served to keep the insurgency and its Sunni audience informed of changes in the political situation and the significance of these changes. Thus, both the October referendum and the December election generated insurgent political commentary.  

A critical issue is the relationship between the insurgency and the overt and legitimate Sunni political parties that have emerged as a result of the political process. While some Sunni parties emerged rapidly after the fall of the regime (especially those such as the Iraqi Islamic Party, which maintained an underground presence in Iraq under the Baath), this
process accelerated after the January 2005 elections and is still continuing. Sunnis now have significant political parties and a significant presence in the parliament (with more than 50 of 275 seats). 

The election of large numbers of Sunnis to the parliament and their aggressive advocacy of Sunni interests have created a political arena with both potential risks and rewards for the insurgents. The insurgents must play in this arena or risk isolation from the Sunni community. While resistance rhetoric (especially that emanating from jihadist elements such as the Mujahidin Shura Council) regarding the legitimacy of the political process remains largely negative, insurgent supporters and insurgents alike are likely involved with and active in the new parties and will almost certainly attempt to use their positions in government to influence governmental activities and policy in ways favorable to the insurgency.

“Military” operations. The insurgents conduct purposeful activity; they do not attack randomly, as is sometimes suggested. They act along several broad lines of operation:

- **Counter-Coalition**—attacks against Coalition personnel and infrastructure (excluding convoys and air transport).
- **Counter-collaboration**—attacks against the ISF, Iraqi Government personnel and facilities, Iraqi translators working for Coalition forces, tipsters, and virtually anyone working for or with the Iraqi Government or Coalition forces.
- **Counter-mobility**—attacks against convoys; road, rail, and air transport; and bridges.
- **Counter-reconstruction**—attacks on contractors, oil and power infrastructure, foreign companies and international aid organizations, banks, and medical infrastructure.
- **Counter-stability**—attacks against civilians; religious sites; tribal, community, and political leaders; foreign (non-Coalition) diplomats; and international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

A sixth, temporary line of operation—counter-election—was implemented before the January 2005 elections and consisted of attacks against voters, polling centers, election officials, and candidates. No similar line of operation preceded the 15 October 2005 constitutional referendum or the 15 December 2005 general elections, although in both cases local boycotts, acts of intimidation, and a small number of attacks occurred in a few places.

Taken together, the insurgent lines of operation represent the operational expression of the insurgent strategy to achieve consensus objectives: ending the occupation and undermining or taking control of the Iraqi Government. Here, individual incidents and short-term variations are less important than cumulative effects and long-term trends.

To date, the most important insurgent lines of operation have been counter-Coalition, counter-collaboration, and counter-stability (figure 5). Counter-Coalition attacks have taken a significant physical and psychological toll and reduced the Coalition’s operational freedom of action by creating a non-permissive environment. Routine movements by U.S. troops are treated as combat patrols, and in areas where the insurgency is well established, road movements are constrained. Just keeping open the road from Baghdad International Airport to the International Zone in Baghdad requires a substantial commitment of U.S. and Iraqi forces. The insurgent campaign against collaborators, including ISF recruits and members, has succeeded in killing large numbers of Iraqis working for the government or connected to the reconstruction effort, and it has intimidated many more; but it has not stopped Iraqis from lining up in large numbers to join the ISF or seek government jobs.

Counter-stability attacks have achieved important successes, leading to a significant reduction in UN and NGO operations, and rising sectarian tensions. In particular, the destruction of the Shiite Askariyya Shrine in Samara in February was a highly successful “shock and awe” operation that greatly increased sectarian violence in Iraq.

Thus far, insurgent operations do not appear to be a form of strategic bargaining, in which the scope or nature of insurgent actions is tied to concessions from the Coalition and Iraqi Government. Rather, insurgent operations have aimed to weaken or frustrate the Coalition, the Iraqi Government, and the political transformation process. Strategic bargaining might come into play, however, as the political face of the insurgency develops.

Shifts in emphasis between lines of operation suggest changes in insurgent effort or strategy. Thus, since the January 2005 elections, counter-collaboration and especially counter-stability
attacks appear to have become more important. This likely reflects an insurgent assessment that the Iraqi Government and the ISF are greater long-term threats and easier targets than Coalition forces and, in the case of the jihadists, that civilians are legitimate, vulnerable, and useful targets.

Rhythms and cycles. Highs and lows in insurgent activity might be associated with the religious calendar (for example, Ramadan, Ashura), seasonal weather patterns, political events (such as elections), or anniversaries (figure 6). In Iraq, Ramadan 2003 saw an increase in activity, but any such increase in 2004 was obscured by the large spike in incidents associated with the second battle of Fallujah. Ramadan 2005 coincided with the constitutional referendum in October, so it was again difficult to discern its effect. Jihadist groups apparently seeking to foment civil war have also launched major attacks during the Shiite commemoration of Ashura.

Weather might likewise be a factor in the insurgency in Iraq, although the evidence is ambiguous. Thus, February and early March 2004 saw relatively low levels of insurgent activity, as did February and March of 2005. In both cases, insurgent activity increased after these winter lulls, which might have been caused by inhospitable (cold and/or rainy) weather conditions. This pattern appears to be repeating itself in 2006.

Insurgent activity also declined sharply after the two battles of Fallujah. The insurgents might have needed time to rest and recover, assess their options, and replace their losses following surges in activity during Fallujah I and II (April and November 2004, respectively), and before the January 2005 elections.

The period of intensified insurgent activity preceding the January 2005 elections suggests that the insurgents can temporarily more than double the number of attacks undertaken in support of their strategy. By contrast, insurgent strategy for the October 2005 constitutional referendum and the December 2005 general elections was largely political, with Iraqi insurgent elements by and large supporting “get out the vote” campaigns during October and December.

Resiliency. Arrayed against the U.S. military, the insurgents have fought a ruthless, relentless war. Although thousands of insurgents have been killed and tens of thousands of Iraqis detained, incident
and casualty data reinforce the judgment that the insurgency remains robust and lethal. The insurgents have made good on their losses by drawing on their large manpower reserves, augmented by recruits from outside Iraq, although the flow of foreign volunteers has apparently been reduced in recent months, thanks to efforts to seal the border with Syria and to interdict insurgent “ratlines.” Insurgent cells have likewise demonstrated that when they incur losses they can recruit new members or merge with other insurgent cells, while leaders detained or killed by Coalition forces have been replaced without fundamental disruptions to insurgent operations.

Individuals might also be recruited on a “cash” basis to attack Coalition forces (for example, by emplacing IEDs). As long as cash reserves are plentiful and unemployment rates in Sunni areas remain high, the insurgency will be able to hire freelancers to mitigate attrition and enhance its lethal punch.

The insurgency’s loosely organized cells and networks contribute to its resilience and effectiveness. Successes against one group are not fatal for others or to the larger cause. Smaller groups are more likely to innovate, and their propensity for sharing expertise and experience (either through face-to-face meetings or via the Internet) ensures that innovations are passed on, allowing groups to achieve broader tactical and operational effects than they could on their own.

Penetration of Sunni Arab Society

Insurgencies center on the struggle to control or win over the hearts and minds of a society’s civilian population. In Iraq, the status of the insurgency can be measured by the degree to which it has penetrated public and private institutions of the Sunni Arab community and its “thought world” (figure 7).

The insurgency has established a significant presence in broad sectors of Sunni Arab society, including the social, economic, religious, political, and criminal spheres. While the depth of penetration is uncertain, a strategy of combined persuasion and intimidation has enabled the insurgents to largely succeed in undermining efforts to extend government institutions, such as village and town councils, into Sunni Arab areas.

The failure of Sunnis to participate in significant numbers in the January 2005 elections reflected the powerful influence of the insurgents in the Sunni Arab community. The rallying of the Sunnis against the draft constitution during the October 2005 referendum also showed how Sunni Arab attitudes can mesh with insurgent objectives.

The insurgents have also managed to penetrate the Sunni Arabs’ thought world, which consists of at least the following nine elements:

1. Beliefs about the occupation and resistance.
2. Images of Coalition forces.
3. Images, myths, and stories of the resistance.
4. Beliefs about political transformation.
5. Beliefs about the Iraqi Government.
7. A sense of entitlement and grievance.
8. Religious notions and sensibilities.
9. Beliefs about the future.
These interconnected components represent a belief structure shaping Sunni Arab attitudes and actions that determine, to a significant extent, where Sunni Arabs will likely fall on the resistance—‘collaboration’ spectrum.

Polling data, media commentary, and anecdotal reporting indicate that, among Sunni Arabs in Iraq, ideas and beliefs sympathetic to the insurgency have become widespread, including views of the occupation, Coalition forces, and the Iraqi Government. These findings permit a number of cautious assertions to be made about the beliefs that embody the thought world of many Sunni Arabs:

- The country is headed in the wrong direction.44
- The occupation is the proximate cause for the Sunnis’ loss of power and privilege, and for this reason it should come to an end as soon as is practically possible.45
- The Coalition came to despoil Iraq’s oil wealth—a view also shared by many Shiite Iraqis.46
- The Shiite-dominated Iraqi Government is controlled by Iran (with the connivance of the United States) and is making war on the Sunni Arabs.47
- Violent “resistance” against the Coalition is legitimate; attacks on Iraqi civilians, especially Sunnis and security forces, are not.48
- The Sunni community is deeply divided over whether its future lies with the insurgency, the political process, or both.49
- The insurgent “narrative” runs counter to that of the Coalition and Iraqi Government; it is a blend of fact and (mostly) fiction, and contains vivid images and mythic stories of a heroic, pure resistance.50

Sunni Arab political behavior reflects the complexity of this thought world, which varies from place to place in Iraq, and has evolved over time. Attempts to influence the Sunni Arab community that are not based on a sophisticated understanding of this thought world are apt to fail and liable to produce unintended consequences.

**Insurgent Effectiveness**

An assessment of insurgent effectiveness on the tactical or operational levels must track and assess trends in insurgent strength, number of attacks, and Coalition and ISF casualties. Assessing insurgent effectiveness on the strategic level requires a different set of analytical measures and might, therefore, yield different answers. And because political and psychological factors play critical roles in determining the outcome of insurgencies, analysts must develop measures of success that tap into these dimensions of the conflict. What matters most in insurgencies, however, is the political outcome of the struggle, which is the ultimate measure of insurgent effectiveness.

**Measures of tactical and operational effectiveness.** At the tactical and operational levels, there is a tendency to rely on quantitative measures—metrics—to assess insurgent effectiveness. But a number of factors might limit the utility of metrics often used to analyze the tactical and operational dimensions of insurgencies: data might be flawed or subject to multiple, conflicting interpretations, and proper interpretation might require a degree of insight into insurgents’ thought and practice that cannot be readily attained.51
A more fundamental limitation of quantitative measures is that a lack of measurable success on the battlefield might not necessarily prevent the guerrilla or insurgent from attaining key political objectives. Thus, guerrillas or insurgents might lose nearly every battle and still win the war, as did the Algerian National Liberation Front against the French (1954-1962), the Viet Cong against the United States (1961-1972), and Hezbollah against Israel in Lebanon (1982-2000). Nevertheless, tactical or operational metrics might be useful as indicators of strategic success and might provide insight into factors that can influence the strategic direction of the war. (For example, the volume of tips regarding insurgent activity might indicate the degree of popular support for insurgents in Sunni Arab areas.) Other measures (for example, changes in the number or tempo of insurgent attacks) might signal shifts in insurgent strength, capabilities, or strategy, or popular support for their cause. Thus, tactical and operational metrics, if properly understood, can shed light on key trends and developments in the insurgency.

One measure of insurgent activity is incident rates, usually measured as incidents per day, week, or month. Because incidents might differ dramatically in terms of effort invested and effects produced, incident rates represent a relatively crude measure. (For example, a brief sniping incident and a complex attack involving scores of insurgents might both be counted as a single incident.) Incident rates are nonetheless an important indicator of the status of the insurgency (figure 8).

The gradual but generally steady increase in the rate of attacks during the first 30 months of the occupation (ranging from 10 to 35 attacks/day in 2003, to 25 to 80 attacks/day in 2004, to 65 to 90 attacks/day through most of 2005, according to U.S. Department of Defense [DOD] figures), strongly suggests that the insurgency has grown in strength and/or capability, despite losses, Coalition countermeasures, the rapid growth of the ISF, and the unfolding political process. As for the dip in attacks since November 2005 (attacks averaged 75/day during this period, according to DOD figures), it is too soon to tell whether the dip is caused by operational rhythms or seasonal cycles, the impact of recent Coalition operations in the Western Euphrates River Valley, or a decision by insurgents to reduce their tempo of operations in order to facilitate the December 2005 elections and subsequent negotiations to form a government.

Iraqi and Coalition casualty rates (and, when available, insurgent casualty rates) provide a measure of the intensity of violence and combat in Iraq. Combining incident and casualty rates can help gauge trends in the lethality of the insurgency. American KIA rates have been fairly steady during the insurgency, averaging 49/month in 2003 and 71/month in both 2004 and 2005, for an average of 65 KIA/month since the fall of Baghdad. ISF KIA rates ranged between 100 to 300/month in 2005. The rate at which Iraqi civilians are being killed in violent incidents increased from 750/month in early 2004 to 1,800/month in late 2005.

Attrition imposed by the insurgents has been steady rather than dramatic, with a few exceptions (for example, April and November 2004). But the costs have added up, and now the insurgency is a...
major factor affecting domestic support for U.S. Iraq policy (figure 9). According to U.S. Government reporting, from the end of major combat operations (1 May 2003) to 1 February 2006, 1,665 U.S. troops had been killed in action, and 16,111 wounded in action in Iraq, for a total of 17,776 combat casualties, which represents nearly 50 killed and 500 wounded per month.\textsuperscript{54} For the insurgents, a small but steady stream of U.S. casualties might be more advantageous politically than large numbers of casualties produced in infrequent, intense clashes.

A key measure of insurgency capability is the complexity and tactical sophistication of its attacks. Elements of complexity include the number of insurgents or insurgent elements involved, scheme of maneuver, numbers and types of weapons used, numbers and types of targets engaged or objectives assaulted, and use of denial and deception measures.

A review of reported incidents between February and August 2005 indicates that most attacks are relatively simple.\textsuperscript{55} Moderately complex actions are less frequent and generally target the ISF. Highly complex attacks are initiated to achieve important operational or strategic objectives, but they are infrequent (figure 10). A key reason for this is that, generally speaking, the insurgents carefully manage risk, to minimize losses by avoiding large clashes, especially with U.S. forces. However, an emerging trend is an increase in moderately complex attacks against ISF elements, especially the police.
While attacks by fire (ABF) represent the largest category of insurgent attacks, the use of IEDs has increased dramatically over time. They now represent nearly 50 percent of all attacks on Coalition forces and account for more than 60 percent of U.S. KIA. Suicide bombings, involving either an individual with an explosive vest (SIED) or a suicide car bomb (SVBIEED), and VBIEDs, became major categories of attack in 2004 and 2005 (figure 11). The number of IED attacks during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) has been staggering and, according to DOD figures, includes more than 75 suicide vest bombings, 550 suicide car bombings, 1,300 car bombings, and more than 16,500 roadside bombings in nearly 3 years of combat. The one-day high for major types of IED attacks included 8 VBIEDs, 9 SIEDs, and 15 SVBIEEDs (figure 12).

Suicide attacks generally focus on high value targets: Coalition and ISF convoys, ISF recruiting centers and installations, and concentrations of Iraqi civilians (such as at Shiite religious celebrations).
Such attacks often result in heavy casualties and are intended to produce instability and a climate of fear and sectarian tension, and to discredit the Iraqi Government and the ISF. The dramatic increase in suicide attacks in fall 2004 and spring 2005 likely reflected changes in insurgent targeting priorities, organizational dynamics, and capabilities. Suicide bombings have been a major tactical and operational success for the insurgents and have driven international and aid organizations from Iraq, dramatically increased sectarian and ethnic tensions, demonstrated the inability of the Coalition and the Iraqi Government to protect the population, and forced the Coalition to devote significant resources to countering the threat.

Insurgent operations and corresponding incident data reveal some important aspects of insurgent effectiveness at the tactical and operational levels. The insurgents—

● Have employed violence effectively to achieve important military and political goals.
● Have, over the course of the insurgency, sustained operations at progressively higher levels and shown that they can more than double the number of attacks during surge periods.
● Continue to exact a growing toll on Iraqi civilians, the ISF, and to a lesser extent, Coalition forces.
● Have managed to enhance their operational capability by employing more sophisticated IEDs and demonstrated an ability to mount complex operations against important targets.
● Retain the initiative and the ability, within limits, to conduct operations at a time and place of their choosing, particularly against Iraqi civilians and the ISF.

On the other hand, what did not happen during the past year is also noteworthy. During 2005, not a single Iraqi police station was overrunalthough the insurgents have had substantial success in engagements with ISF, especially police elements. Not one U.S. military adviser was captured by insurgents (although it is not clear that this has been an objective of the insurgents), and not one U.S. base was penetrated by insurgents, despite attempts to do so. Not a single city or town fell to the insurgents, although the insurgents exercised control over a number of towns and neighborhoods during the year, especially in the west, and exercised partial control in others, such as Ramadi.

In sum, the insurgents have scored important tactical and operational successes, particularly against the ISF and the Iraqi Government. They have been able to translate these “battlefield” successes into a number of important short-term political gains, but still face the challenge of using these “military” capabilities to achieve long-term political objectives.

**Measures of strategic success.** What are the insurgents’ goals in the current phase of the struggle for Iraq? For some, it might be to strengthen their hand in current negotiations to form a government and in future negotiations to amend the constitution. For others, it might be to derail the political transition and seize power. For the jihadists (such as Al-Qaeda in Iraq and Ansar al-Sunna), it might be establishing an Islamic caliphate in Iraq.59

The insurgents are pursuing a number of common objectives that each group believes will help them achieve their own particular goals. These common objectives include—

● Bringing an end to the occupation by inflicting a constant toll of casualties on U.S. forces, to turn the American public against the war effort.
● Undermining government institutions and establishing control over predominantly Sunni Arab areas of Iraq.
● Attacking and subverting the ISF, to prevent it from becoming a serious threat to the insurgents.
● Fostering a climate of fear and insecurity to intimidate the population, cripple the economy, and undermine the legitimacy of the government.
● Restoring Sunni Arab pride and honor in order to fan the fires of resistance and bolster the popular standing of the insurgency.
● Bending the political process to support Sunni and insurgent interests.
● Reestablishing the Sunnis as an important, if not dominant, presence in Iraq.

Finally, the jihadists hope to foment a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites in order to prevent the emergence of a predominantly Shiite government in Baghdad, and to inflict a major defeat on the United States.

After nearly 3 years of fighting, what progress can the insurgents claim toward achieving their objectives? They have—

● Succeeded, through assent or intimidation, in establishing themselves as a major, if not the dominant, social and political force in the Sunni Triangle.
● Won the support of large portions of the Sunni Arab population for attacks on Coalition forces and at least tacit support for attacks on the ISF and the Iraqi Government.
● Deterred many residents of the Sunni Triangle from working for or joining the new government and coerced others to quit.
● Made the security situation a major issue of concern for many Iraqis, giving the Sunnis a strong (if largely negative) voice in determining Iraq’s future.
● Complicated the political transition by engineering a successful boycott of the January 2005 elections in the Sunni Triangle, and supporting Sunni opposition to the draft constitution in October 2005.
● Slowed the pace and raised the cost of reconstruction, reduced government revenues, degraded the quality of life, maintained high unemployment, and generally undermined confidence in the Iraqi Government and its institutions.
● Contributed to popular dissatisfaction in the U.S. with the war and its handling and to Washington’s decision to start drawing down its forces in Iraq in 2006.60

The insurgents have, however, experienced a number of setbacks during this period. They have—
● Not succeeded in derailing the political process, which continues to move forward, and many Sunni Arabs now seem committed to influencing the process from within.
● Been unable to deter large numbers of Iraqi youths from joining the ISF.
● Lost (at least temporarily) important sanctuaries in several major towns in the Sunni Triangle to joint Coalition-ISF operations, including Fallujah and Tal Afar.
● Not succeeded in building substantial support among either the Iraqi or the American public for a rapid and total U.S. withdrawal from Iraq.

Moreover, they have alienated many Sunni Arabs because of attacks that have killed numerous innocent civilians and because of the extreme version of Islam some groups imposed on areas temporarily under their sway.61

While experiencing some setbacks, the insurgents have scored a number of important successes. Most important of all, they have made the Sunni Arabs a force to be reckoned with. The main Shiite and Kurdish parties and the United States have had to recognize the need for substantial, credible Sunni Arab participation in the political process and to accommodate at least some of the key demands of Sunni Arab representatives in the new government. Sunni politicians will participate in the new government at the ministerial level, and some may be able to alter the dynamics of Coalition and Iraqi Government counterinsurgency decisionmaking, perhaps in ways that will benefit the insurgents. The insurgency’s future will depend to a significant degree on its ability to craft a political-military strategy that can guarantee its survival and its relevance while advancing the interests of the broader Sunni Arab community.

Challenges

The Sunni Arab insurgency poses major analytical and operational challenges. It is pervasive in Sunni Arab areas, yet because it lacks a clear ideology, leadership, or organizational center, it defies easy categorization. It is not dependent on external resupply or internal or external sanctuaries, and while the manpower, materiel, and funds that come from external sources are not insignificant, they are not necessary to the insurgency’s survival.

The insurgency has access to all the weapons, explosives, and trained manpower it needs in amounts sufficient to sustain current activity levels indefinitely, assuming continued Sunni political support; and its networked nature makes it a resilient and adaptive foe. The insurgency also has at least the beginnings of a political face and enjoys support from overt Sunni political organizations.

The insurgents also know that Coalition forces are constrained in how they use force to deal with them. These are among the reasons that combating the insurgency has proven so difficult.

The insurgents’ tactical repertoire, however, still consists mainly of IED, hit-and-run, and terrorist-type attacks, and the insurgency has a number of weaknesses that could limit its potential, if properly exploited by the Coalition and the Iraqi Government:
● The insurgency has little appeal beyond the Sunni Arab community; thus, the Coalition must avoid pushing the insurgents into tactical alliances with aggrieved members of other communities.62
● Many Sunni Arabs are ambivalent toward the insurgency and divided over whether their future lies with the insurgents, the political process, or both; they must be convinced that legitimate grievances can be addressed through the political process.
● Some insurgent attacks are done by freelance insurgents on a commission basis; therefore, improving the economy and cutting unemployment might reduce the pool of paid freelancers.63
● The political transition is making it more difficult to preserve unity of purpose among insurgent groups and could help identify those insurgent groups with whom compromise and reconciliation are impossible.
● The extreme beliefs and brutal tactics of the jihadists have alienated erstwhile allies in the insurgency and at least some Iraqi Sunnis, making the jihadists vulnerable to attempts to isolate them from local and external bases of support.64

Given their limited military capabilities and the substantial Coalition presence, the insurgents are unlikely to stage a successful coup or to attempt a march on Baghdad. Moreover, U.S. forces are likely to remain in Iraq for as long as they are tolerated and needed, in part to prevent such an outcome. The resulting stalemate might provide an opportunity for the evolving political process to produce a settlement that all parties can live with.

Thus, the war might yet yield an acceptable outcome—a relatively stable, democratic Iraq—provided that the political process is not undermined from within, derailed by escalating civil violence, or scuttled by a premature U.S. withdrawal. The path to an acceptable outcome is likely to be protracted, costly, and punctuated by additional setbacks. For the U.S., Iraq will be a major test of its national will, its political leadership, and its military’s ability to prevail over a new type of enemy, one that it is likely to confront again elsewhere in the future. MR

NOTES
1. For convenience, we refer to the Sunni Arab insurgency in the singular, although it actually consists of a number of locally and regionally based insurgencies woven by various groups pursuing diverse objectives.
3. For reports that suggest the insurgency was preplanned, see Thom Shanker, “Hussein’s Agents Behind Attacks, Pentagon Finds,” New York Times, 29 April 2004, A1, and Edward T. Pound, “Seeds of Chaos,” U.S. New & World Report, 20 December 2004, 20-22, 24-26. For a report that suggests Saddam Hussein was the catalyst behind the postwar insurgency, see Joe Klein, “Saddam’s Revenge,” Time, 28 September 2005, on-line at <www.time.com/time/archive/preview/0,10987,1106378,00.html>, accessed 12 April 2006. For an explanation of why the insurgency was likely not preplanned, see Michael Eisenstadt, “Understanding Saddam,” National Interest (Fall 2005): 157-21, on-line at <www.washingtoninstitute.org/papers/PDFs/1323080760048.pdf>, accessed 12 April 2006. The regime likewise had longstanding contingency plans to deal with the possibility that it might be ousted by domestic rivals and would once again have to go underground, reorganize, and seize power, as it did between 1963 and 1968. Such planning probably also facilitated the emergence of the Sunni Arab insurgency following the conclusion of “major combat operations” in May 2003.
7. Even in the socially conservative Sunni Triangle region, women likely participate in the insurgency on some level—although probably in small numbers. (Thus far, only a handful of Iraqis—less than 100 women—have been killed in this conflict.) For our purposes, to simplify matters, we will count only men in the recruitment pool.
The population data cited here are drawn from the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004, vol. 1, 15-19, on-line at <www.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm>, accessed 12 April 2006. The estimate of men of military age was arrived at by multiplying the UNDP estimates of the number of Iraqi males in the 15- to 45-year-old cohort by 0.20. If therefore assumes that the age distribution among adult Sunni Arab males mirrors that of the general Iraqi population (UNDP, Iraq Living Conditions Survey, 18).
9. Molnar and others, 13-16. These data are not doctrinal norms of any sort, but reflect the simple fact that to survive, insurgent movements generally mobilize only a small fraction of their potential recruitment base in the early phases of their struggle to avoid being detected and crushed by government forces.
12. In trying to assess the strength of any insurgency, one should keep in mind the observation of T.E. Lawrence regarding the Arab guerrilla forces he led during the Arab Revolt in World War I: “No spies could count us . . . since even ourselves had not the smallest idea of our strength at any given moment” (Seven Pillars of Wisdom [New York: Doubleday, 1991], 381).
14. The Washington Institute, Iraq Incident Data Base. By comparison, according to the DOD, 85 percent of incidents occur in the four major provinces (“Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq,” Report to Congress, DOD, October 2005, 21), on-line at <www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct2005/02051013Iraq.pdf>, accessed 12 April 2006. The insurgency is the overwhelming fact of life in parts of Iraq, and it has made many Iraqis virtual prisoners of their homes when they are not working, shopping, or going to school. It has curtailed nightlife in parts of Baghdad and greatly influenced public life in large parts of the Sunni Triangle. On the other hand, many areas of the country are virtually untouched by insurgent violence. In those regions, the residents’ dominant concern includes inadequate electricity (available only a few hours a day throughout much of the country), ethnic and religious tensions, the presence of Coalition forces, lack of adequate housing, high prices, corruption, unemployment, and crime. For instance, see a recent poll by the International Republican Institute, “Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion,” 6-12 September 2005, 13, on-line at <www.iri.org/pdfs/09-27-05-Iraq%20Poll%20Presentation.ppt>, accessed 12 April 2006. See also Mendrala and Hornbach, 1-2, 6-7, and Ellen Knickmeyer, “Where Charter is Least of Worries: Local Issues Top List in Town in S. Iraq,” Washington Post, 7 October 2005, A12.
15. Incident data used for the charts in this paper are derived from The Washington Institute for Near East Policy’s Iraq incident database. This project was initiated in May 2003 under the direction of Jeffrey White, with data search and entry conducted by Washington Institute research assistants. The unclassified database now contains over 8,000 incidents, reaching back to April 2003. Each incident is tracked for a number of variables, including date, location (city/province), forces involved, types of weapons, type of attack, casualties (including Iraqi casualties), and other factors. Data are drawn from open-source reporting and represent a sample of perhaps 15 percent of the incidents reported by the Coalition. The data are used to analyze operational and tactical trends in the insurgency, the effectiveness of insurgent forces, and shifts in operational and tactical activity. Data generally track with broad trends revealed in official data.
16. David Baran and Mathieu Guideré, “Iraq: A Message from the Insurgents,” Le Monde Diplomatique (May 2005), on-line at <mondodiplom.com/2005/05/Iraq>, accessed 12 April 2006. How many insurgent groups are active in Iraq is unclear. Some organizations might use more than one name, and new names appear with some frequency. Moreover, some of the names used by insurgent groups such
as the Al-Qaeda and the Saddam Al-Din Brigades have both nationalist and religious connotations. This makes it difficult to discern the group’s motives and alliances. There may be new military leaders and sieges that might be missed. (Al-Qaeda’s bin Laden is a warrior-poet and hero of the battles of Yarmuk in 636 C.E. and Qadisiya in 637 C.E. The al-Din was a great military leader who led a Muslim army to victory over the Byzantines at the battle of Hitlin and in the subsequent reconquest of Jerusalem, both in 1187 C.E.)


22. See, for instance, Aparisim Ghosh, “Professor of Death,” TIME, 17 October 2005, on-line at <http://time.com/time/archive/preview/0,1087,1183370,00.html>, accessed 13 April 2006, which describes the role of Qa’dah Al-Dirab as an entrepreneurial former Republican Guard officer and “born-again Muslim” who facilitates and coordinates suicide bombing attacks for various jihadist and nationalist insurgent groups.


25. See for example Anthony Loyd, “Murder of Sheikh Proves Sunnis to Turn on each other,” London, 15 September 2005, 10, on-line at <www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,7374,1933020,2552E2703,00.html> (this article is no longer available).


29. Glaser, 2-4; Temple, 3.


36. During the Vietnam War, the tempo of communist military activity followed seasonal weather patterns. For instance, the onset of the rainy season (September through January) generally saw a significant slowdown in combat operations (Thayer, 11-13).

37. See Baran and Giudere 20.
38. Prior to the effort to seal the border, 100 to 150 foreign fighters reportedly crossed from Syria into Iraq each month or two at a time. See Bradley Graham, “Zarqawi ‘Hijacked’ Insurgency: U.S. General Says Foreign Fighters Now Seen as Main Threat,” Washington Post, 28 September 2005, A17; Ghosh, “Professor of Death.”

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42. Ibid., 9.
44. Ibid., 9.
46. Ibid., 9.

48. The distinction between legitimate and illegitimate resistance is evident in the reaction of Sunnis to terrorist-type actions by the Zarqawi group. Both Sunni Arab political leaders and resistance organizations have condemned specific actions by Zarqawi and his declaration of war against the Shiites. See for example the 1 October 2005 statement by the Iraqi Islamic Party condemning the terrorist attacks in Balad on 29 September 2005 in Spinther, “U.S. Troops Target Rebels in Far Western Iraq,” Washington Post, 2 October 2005, A11; Narow to broad majorities of Sunni Arabs surveyed in a June 2005 poll characterized those who attacked Coalition forces as enemies of Sunni Arabs and as members of the Al-Qa’qa’ Brigades and the Salah Al-Din Brigades, have both nationalistic and religious connotations. This makes it difficult to discern the group’s motives and alliances. There may be new military leaders and sieges that might be missed. (Al-Qaeda’s bin Laden is a warrior-poet and hero of the battles of Yarmuk in 636 C.E. and Qadisiya in 637 C.E. The al-Din was a great military leader who led a Muslim army to victory over the Byzantines at the battle of Hitlin and in the subsequent reconquest of Jerusalem, both in 1187 C.E.)

53. The exact number of Iraqis killed by the insurgents is unknown but is clearly in the thousands. According to DOD data, the trend in daily Iraqi casualties has been rising since January 2004, with an average of 25/day from January-March, 30/day from April-June, 40/day from June-November, 50 per day during the election period from late November 2004 to early February 2005, slightly below 50/day from February-August, and 60/day from September-October 2005. See “More than 26,000 Iraqis Killed, Injured Since 2004: Estimate,” AFP, 30 October 2005, on-line at <http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20051030/pl_afp/iraqusunrest toll>, (this item no longer available). Since January 2005, ISF losses have fluctuated between 100 to 300 killed in action monthly, according to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, on-line at <www.icasualties.org/oi/2005/iraq/deaths.aspx>, accessed 14 April 2006.


55. The chart in figure 8 reflects the period since the January 2005 elections, which was a reasonably representative period of insurgent activity. By contrast, the insurgency did not spread beyond these minority communities was a key element of British counterinsurgency strategy in Malaya and Kenya.


During the second Palestinian intifada (uprising) which lasted from 2000-2004, Palestinian groups launched nearly 150 suicide bomb attacks on Israel.

58. Washington Institute Iraq Incident Database.


62. The fact that the insurgency in Malaya (1948-1960) was rooted mainly in the country’s ethnic Chinese minority and that the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya (1952-1956) involved only the Kikuyu tribe are key factors explaining the failure of those insurgencies. See David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice (Science 101) (Praeger Security International Paperback, 1964), 20. Ensuring that the insurgency did not spread beyond these minority communities was a key element of British counterinsurgency strategy in Malaya and Kenya.

63. For an assessment showing that improved social services and employment opportunities for the mainly Shiite slum-dwellers of Sadr City in Baghdad led to a sharp decrease in recruitment to and attacks by Muqtada Sadr’s Mahdi Army, see MG Peter W. Chiarelli and MAJ Patrick R. Michaelis, “Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations,” Military Review (July-August 2005): 4-17. Whether such an achievement can be replicated in the largely Sunni Arab areas of Iraq remains to be seen.

Writers of the basic concept paper upon which the above statement of ethics is based were Colonel Michael Haith, U.S. Army, Retired, then director of the William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic; Colonel Tom Kolditz, Head of the Department of Behavioral Science and Leadership; Colonel Joe LeBoeuf, U.S. Army, Retired, then Academy Professor of Behavioral Sciences; Colonel Don Snider, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D., Professor of Social Sciences; Colonel Tom Weafer, former director of the Office of Programs and Analysis, USMA; Colonel Michael Meese, Head of the Department of Social Sciences; and Lieutenant Colonel Jim McDonough, U.S. Army, Retired, former Professor of Outreach, Simon Center. Rick Swain, Ph.D., Olin Professor of Officership, Simon Center, acted as committee secretary.

PHOTO: An Iraqi army officer explains to his troops how he wants to execute a building-clearing exercise in Hateen, Iraq, 29 April 2006. (DOD)

Major General Mohammed Najmuddin Zenulden Nqshbande, Iraqi Army

MG Mohammed Najmuddin Zenulden Nqshbande is the commanding general designee of the Iraqi Training and Doctrine Command. A graduate of the Iraqi Military Academy, he has commanded units from platoon through brigade and has been a division and corps chief of staff. He also served as the commandant of the Iraqi War College and as governor of Sulimania Province. Since the fall of the former Iraqi regime, he has served as the deputy national security advisor. Recognized as a leading Iraqi Soldier-Scholar, he holds a Ph.D. in Strategic Military Studies and is fluent in English, Arabic, and Kurdish.

The following article is an English translation of a proposed statement of the Iraqi Professional Military Ethic as it applies to service as an officer in the Iraqi Joint Forces. It outlines the standards of military professionalism envisioned by the Iraqi senior leadership for Iraqi officers and, as such, will serve as a foundation document for the teaching and integration of professional ethics training into education from the Iraqi Military Academy through the senior defense college.

This statement is an adapted version of a 2004 U.S. Officership Concept Paper written by members of the staff and faculty at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA). It was intended for integration into U.S. Army leadership doctrine.

In an effort to implement measures to instill into the Iraqi military a sense of professionalism and mission, MG Nqshbande selected the USMA concept paper as the basis for an Iraqi statement of ethics, primarily because of its well-articulated focus on the universal professional military ethical standards and roles that the Iraqi leadership wants to instill in the new Iraqi Officer Corps. These include a sense of obligation to become a highly competent and skilled warrior; recognition that a soldier’s highest obligation is to be a servant of the nation and people as a whole; a sense of self-identity and shared pride as members of an honorable profession and national institution; and a sense of obligation to serve the nation with integrity, honesty, and courage as leaders of character. Subsequently, MG Nqshbande adapted, modified, and retranslated portions of the paper to ensure the concepts were properly conveyed in Arabic military terminology and were appropriately compatible with the conventions, traditions, and expressions of Arabic military culture.

OFFICERSHIP is the practice of being a commissioned leader, accountable to the Prime Minister of Iraq for the Army and its mission. Officers swear an oath of loyalty and service to the Constitution. Officers apply discretionary judgment and bear ultimate moral responsibility for their decisions. Their commission imposes total accountability and unlimited liability. Essential to officership is a unique, shared self-concept that is shaped by what officers KNOW and DO, but most important, by a deeply
held personal understanding and acceptance of what a commissioned officer must be. This shared self-concept consists of four interrelated identities: warrior, servant of the Nation, member of an honorable profession, and leader of character. Grounded in values, this shared self-concept inspires and shapes the Iraqi officer and the Iraqi Officer Corps.

The basic notions about the nature and obligations of being a commissioned officer arise from the Constitution, the commissioning act, and the nature of the profession. Officership is reflected in the unique set of beliefs, skills, competencies, and practices that distinguish and link officers as the ultimately accountable leaders of units, Soldiers, and the Army profession.

Officership is the inspirational basis of authority, empowered and driven by deeply held convictions and a commitment to be the standard bearer for individual and unit performance and conduct. Officership is a compelling ideal that all officers aspire to and one that propels officers’ passion for continuous growth, the accomplishment of all assigned missions, Soldiers’ well-being, and the security of the Nation. Officership creates a bond between leader and led. It produces teamwork and efficacy to anticipate and overmatch all circumstances and adversity. Officership establishes and maintains the bond of trust between the Iraqi Military Profession and the Iraqi people. By their commission, officers are the moral agents of the Nation. This document seeks to stimulate and guide continuing discussion about officership.

Warrior

The Officer is a Soldier first. The Iraqi Army exists to fight battles, to win the Nation’s wars, and to secure the peace as part of the Nation’s joint warfighting team. To serve those purposes, commissioned officers assume unique responsibilities and duties. Officers lead the military profession in service to the Iraqi people. Commissioned officership is a professional practice that realizes the special trust and confidence the Nation places in the officer’s patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities—qualities highlighted in the officer’s commission.

Trust. Leadership is at the core of the military profession. Officership entails leadership because our military is its people. Soldiers are the centerpiece of our formations. Officership must be grounded in a solid understanding of human nature and development. Officers are entrusted not simply with the daily welfare but with the very lives of Iraqi youth. They must be compassionate leaders living balanced lives. Every day officers influence, shape, and improve the profession to which they belong by caring for the people under their command, by creating a positive climate, and by inspiring subordinates to excel. An officer’s responsibility to do the best he can for his subordinates in the most trying of circumstances is the foundation of the bond of trust that is required for units to endure the rigors of combat.

Responsibility. Commissioned officership, practiced by commissioned leaders from second lieutenant to general, involves a particular kind of leadership. Commissioned officership is fundamentally concerned with responsibility—“exceptional and unremitting responsibility.” Commissioned officership differs from other forms of leadership in the quality and kind of expert knowledge required, in
the breadth of responsibility, and in the magnitude of the consequences of inaction or ineffectiveness. Both the noncommissioned officer (NCO) and officer swear an oath to obey lawful orders, to protect the land of Iraq and its people from all aggression, and to be loyal to the principles of the Constitution. There is a distinction between the officer and the NCO, however, that establishes a different expectation for initiative. Officers depend on the counsel, technical skill, maturity, and experience of NCOs to take the officers’ instructions and intent and execute (or implement) purposeful action. Officers depend on the same counsel, technical skill, maturity, and experience for assistance in reaching a decision.

Only commissioned officers are entrusted with command. The life and death decisions conveyed by NCOs and executed by Iraqi Soldiers begin with officers. Thus there are legal distinctions between offenses against the authority of commissioned and noncommissioned officers and specific offenses that only an officer can commit. Officers are strictly accountable for their actions.

Senior officers bear a particular responsibility for the consequences of their decisions and for the quality of advice given, or not given, to their civilian superiors. Each officer’s development of a powerful self-concept guiding individual behavior in all aspects of life depends on an understanding of the unique requirements of being a commissioned leader. A strong component of humility in the face of the moral weight of responsibility is an essential component of the Iraqi officer’s character.

Commissioned officers should see themselves in terms of the four distinct identities mentioned, and they should see officership as a moral activity governed by both the emotional and rational faculties. Commissioned service is a matter of the heart as well as of the head. Mastery requires a commitment to lifelong learning and dedicated practice throughout one’s professional life.

The Iraqi Military Officer

The officer is a warrior. A warrior is not just a warfighter. History is replete with warfighters who fought with great skill and achieved success without restraint. The oath of office commits the officer to safeguard the unity of Iraq and the dignity of its citizens and their personal freedoms. This promise is the defining characteristic of the Iraqi officer, indeed of any Iraqi Soldier. It demands the full measure of the warrior’s commitment to victory and full adherence to standards of law and morality. The Iraqi officer is a warfighter whose specialty is the disciplined application of force or the untiring support of those who apply force in accordance with the law and custom of war. The warrior has an ethos that refuses to accept defeat, but discipline informs him that some roads to victory can be as destructive to the Iraqi Armed Forces and the national soul as an operational defeat.

Because the consequences of failure are so severe, officers are expected, when necessary, to be ready to sacrifice their Soldiers’ lives and their own to accomplish assigned missions. This relationship of unlimited liability must characterize every officer’s service to the Iraqi people. Whether officers serve a full career or only a few years, it is their duty to give their full personal commitment to accomplish the mission, even at the sacrifice of their lives. In times of crisis, on the battlefield or during the performance of peacetime duties, an officer understands that there are times when his life is not important if it is preserved at the cost of the mission or to the detriment of the Nation’s safety. This obligation is true for support and combat arms officers equally.

So, the warrior must have the determination, desire, and competence to win, as well as the discipline to do so within the laws of war and the moral constraints of honor. Iraq expects its armed forces to win once they are committed to battle and, as a nation governed by the rule of law, to win honorably. The warrior has a vital role in lesser conflicts too. In stability and support operations, as in war, it is most often the demonstrated will to act, as well as the recognized ability to finish the issue, that makes actual fighting unnecessary.

The officer as warrior must possess a warrior ethos; tactical and technical proficiency in the threat or application of violent force; and mental,
physical, and emotional stamina and toughness. The Warrior Ethos forms the foundation for the Iraqi Soldiers’ spirit and total commitment to victory, in peace and war, always exemplifying ethical behavior and ethical values. Soldiers put the mission first, refuse to accept defeat, never quit, and never leave behind a fellow Soldier. Their absolute faith in themselves and their comrades makes the Iraqi Armed Forces invariably persuasive in peace and invincible in war.

Warriors must possess the ability and will to destroy the enemy. The same unyielding commitment to mission accomplishment must reside within the heart of all officers, combat arms and support. Officers employ their weapons, move their units tactically, and secure themselves and their Soldiers. Lower ranking officers are often called on to lead subordinates by direct example. Senior officers direct and sustain ground combat but must never avoid the risk of death because they think themselves too important to be sacrificed.

Iraqi leaders leverage teamwork as a force multiplier. Soldiers act as members of larger fighting units. They display loyalty to their peers and unit. They are well disciplined, coordinated, and accountable for their actions under legal and lawful command. To retain Soldiers’ confidence, officers require the adaptability, mental and physical agility, moral courage, and mental toughness to make necessary and right decisions in situations of uncertainty, even when their own lives and those of their Soldiers are in the balance. A key responsibility for the warrior officer is to provide for command succession in the event of his loss and to develop his subordinate leaders so the unit can go on to accomplish the mission in his absence.

Warriors must have technical and tactical proficiency, or competence, in the threat or application of violent force to ensure victory or success. Warriors are self-aware: They are able to assess their abilities, identify strengths, recognize opportunities, and correct weaknesses in an operational setting. The specific requirements for individual competence change throughout a career as an officer’s responsibilities and scope of action change. At the lower levels, technical proficiency means expertise in direct leadership and in the employment of various weapons or systems, the tools for ensuring success in combat. Increased responsibility requires greater vision.

In addition to the knowledge of direct leadership, the officer must gain a thorough understanding of the capabilities of different types of units and systems as well as an ability to employ them creatively to achieve purposes that transcend the immediate outcome of a given fight. At higher levels of responsibility, competence signifies the mental ability to translate abstract political objectives into a desired outcome, to formulate and direct a series of discrete actions to achieve that outcome, and to explain with clarity and precision what is required and possible to civilian officials who possess little or no military experience.

Much of the officer’s authority derives from superior professional knowledge and understanding of the situation—from the ability to formulate solutions and command resources not immediately available to subordinates. Because of the consequences of failure, competence is an ethical imperative for the warrior officer. Because the requirements of competence change over an officer’s career, the officer must be uniquely committed to a lifetime of periodic self-assessment and the pursuit of relevant continuing education in institutional settings, in units, and through an active program of self-education. Officers also have the duty to ensure that the next generation of officers is mentored in ways that allow them to grow rapidly in the profession.

The warrior also must be mentally, physically, and emotionally resilient. The development and execution of often-prolonged military operations in the face of a determined and resourceful adversary is mentally, physically, and emotionally challenging. The presence of an independent and active opponent is the defining characteristic of the environment of officership. “I know of no branch of art or science,” British General Sir Archibald Wavell wrote, “in which rivals are at liberty to throw stones at the artist or scientist, to steal his tools and to destroy his materials, while he is working, always against time, on his picture or statue or experiment.”

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Chaos, fear, fatigue, friction, personal danger, and uncertainty—the fog of war—are intrinsic attributes of combat. The warrior-officer must possess extraordinary mental, emotional, and physical fitness to maintain clear thinking under extraordinary stress. The officer must be self-aware and adaptable, recognizing and responding rapidly to changing circumstances and requirements. The officer must possess the moral force to persevere when the courage of subordinates begins to falter.

**Servant of the Nation**

The officer is a servant of the Nation. The officer’s oath is to be loyal to the principles of the Constitution. Military officers in a democracy bear a particular responsibility to live a life of duty, service to the Nation, loyalty to the Constitution, and subordination to civilian superiors. Officers abstain from forms of political expression and action open to their fellow citizens. They serve whenever and wherever the Nation and its leaders send them. The notion of dependable service to country creates the moral foundation for the officer’s individual duty, a duty tied neither to economic gain nor to the limitations of the clock. The officer must internalize a moral obligation to act effectively and a sense of duty and commitment to serve with unlimited liability. Living a life of service to the Nation means accepting the contract of unlimited liability even when the Nation calls for sacrifice and devotion to duty at a personally inconvenient time. It means good stewardship over the Nation’s goods and care for the needs and welfare of the Soldiers assigned. Officers serve for two principal reasons: personal and professional satisfaction. The professional is finished only when the task is done or the mission accomplished—when the Iraqi people and their way of life are secure. Success in war demands the subordination of the individual will to the responsibilities of the group; democracy likewise requires the subordination of the profession to the control of civilian leaders.

**Member of an Honorable Profession**

The officer is a member of an honorable profession. Professions are highly specialized functional groups organized around a core body of expert knowledge to do work society is unable to do for itself. As professionals, Iraqi officers maintain their focus on the essential requirements of their calling, namely, to acquire and maintain expert knowledge of warfare and to develop other officers, Soldiers, and units able to apply their expertise to new missions assigned by the democratically elected or appointed representatives of the Iraqi people. Although Iraqi Armed Forces perform many functions, the Constitution directs that they shall be organized, trained, and equipped for prompt and sustained combat operations on land, sea, and air in the defense of Iraq, its people, and its way of life.

The Iraqi Armed Forces provide the capability to fight as a joint team. They train and equip Soldiers, Airmen, and Sailors and develop leaders. Even when an officer is assigned unfamiliar duties, maintaining focus and personal proficiency in the conduct of air-sea-ground warfare at the tactical and operational levels is a fundamental requirement of Iraqi officership. Failure to maintain focus on the requirements of the core functions leads to failure in battle and loss of the public’s confidence. Equally
dangerous is a tendency to resist changes in the Nation’s expectations when called to take on new responsibilities and master new roles.

Because of their knowledge and abilities, officers are granted authority to act and to direct others to act. Officers are commissioned agents of the Nation, serving within their government with authority to direct others in mortal combat and to be obeyed under the legal and moral authority of the Constitution and other implementing law. To be a professional, the officer must possess the necessary expert knowledge of the profession of arms, the ability to develop that expertise in others, and the talent to employ that expertise creatively, often in unexpected or unfamiliar circumstances. Having sworn to obey orders with alacrity and courage, the officer is expected to display discretionary judgment in conditions of ambiguity. Since war can seldom be predicted, necessary adaptability requires a lifetime of learning and practice.

Professional organizations are granted a degree of autonomy. As long as their behavior does not conflict with basic legal and societal values, they possess the freedom to practice as well as to police the behavior of their members. For example, the lethal and chaotic nature of warfare requires a higher standard of good order and discipline than is normal in a democratic society. The military profession maintains a strong, independent code of ethics, a unique body of military law, and a set of cherished and closely guarded customs and courtesies. These essential components of the profession help Soldiers make sense of the violence and chaos of war.

Leaders of Character

Officers are leaders of character. Officers are commissioned by the Nation on the basis of special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities of the candidate to whom the commission is presented. To be successful, the officer must possess the moral presence to command obedience when legal authority alone is inadequate. Supported by other professionals, particularly NCOs, commissioned officers direct and influence Soldiers and units to accomplish assigned missions. They set the organizational climate and standards each day for Soldiers and units throughout Iraq. Officers develop and approve plans and doctrine and write all military regulations.

Commissioned officers do not just lead the Iraqi military profession; they also live in a principled manner. They personally embody and police the professional ethos. They set, adapt, and enforce the profession’s standards. Senior leaders must create an environment in which honest dealing can flourish. When the standards of integrity and behavior are not met, leaders must be prepared to identify and remove those who betray the people’s trust. Should the profession fail to fulfill the people’s trust, officers must be held personally, and in some cases corporately, accountable for everything the profession does or fails to do.

The professional military ethic is a shared understanding of the standards of personal and professional practice that officers demonstrate every day, in every duty, in peace and in war. More than a body of rules for individual behavior, the professional military ethic is an ethos that encompasses the character of, and values peculiar to, the profession of arms. The functional requirements of warfighting, democratic traditions of military service, laws and customs of land warfare, and Iraq’s own national values influence the professional military ethic. The ethic is found in military values, Constitutional and military law, accepted principles of the Law of War, and the time-honored traditions of historic units. Understanding that a military force can claim the status of a profession only to the extent that all officers adhere to and enforce a shared ethic, Army officers do not tolerate within their ranks those who flout that ethic.

Officers are more than servants, commanders, trainers, strategists, warriors, and tacticians; ultimately, they are accountable leaders. An officer’s honor is not negotiable. Officers do not lie, cheat, steal or engage in any conduct intended for personal gain or to avoid accountability for wrongful action. The foundation for all an officer does is an impeccable character in both his personal and professional life. If the officer is unfaithful at home, fellow officers and Soldiers are justified in doubting his
fidelity to his official duties and responsibilities. The officer’s word must be a bond of trust with senior and subordinate alike that will not compromise truth and honesty. In other words, in all actions, Iraqi officers seek to discover the truth, decide what is right, and demonstrate the moral courage to act accordingly.

Officers exist to provide responsible and accountable leadership for the profession. The officer’s commission is the credential to direct others. Such authority imposes unique responsibility: Iraqi officers must lead by example and inspire others to do the same always. They must achieve a balance in their lives between the inherent roles of officer and the diverse obligations of an exemplary human existence. They must maintain high standards of moral, physical, and mental fitness to fulfill their professional responsibilities. As the guardians of the profession, officers must confront forthrightly their own mistakes and those of their superiors, contemporaries, and subordinates, and take the necessary measure to correct those mistakes in accordance with the rightful expectations of the Iraqi people. To maintain the trust of Iraqi society, the profession must elicit the best efforts of all of its members, and it must sustain an honest dialog with civilian leaders and the people.

Living the Life of an Officer

Officership inspires and shapes the officer’s behavior at all times. Often filled with conflicting priorities, loyalties, and perspectives, the life of an Iraqi officer can be exceptionally difficult. Officers are guided in their daily actions by their unremitting selfless duty to Iraq and their Soldiers. When internalized, these values manifest themselves as principles of action, touchstones to which commissioned officers automatically and repeatedly return.

An officer’s decisions and actions spring from a deeply held sense of responsibility and from identifying oneself as a warrior, member of a profession, servant of the Nation, and leader of character. Each of these identities carries with it inspiration, passion, and obligation. Professionals must always behave knowing that the trust and the relative autonomy society accords them are contingent on continued excellence in practice of war and ethical conduct. Officers nurture technical expertise early in their careers and continue to develop its breadth and depth even when assignments take them away from daily contact with tactical units. Officers must be as competent in counterinsurgency operations as in warfighting, but they must never sacrifice their core expertise.

Soldiers are not managed into harm’s way, they are led, and leadership depends to a great degree on trust. Built on mutual loyalty, the bond of trust between leader and led is both emotional and rational. It is the Soldier’s confidence in the officer’s character and military proficiency that forges trust, which itself becomes the foundation of teamwork. Trust depends on presence, demonstrated competence, and a reputation for honest and sympathetic dealing. The Iraqi people entrust Iraqi officers with the lives of their Soldiers. They expect that trust to be secured by the officer’s honorable character.

Finally, and fundamentally, officers must be warriors, be they combat arms or support. The underlying imperative of officership is to lead Soldiers in combat; it “is the ultimate to which the whole life’s labor of an officer should be directed. He may live to the age of retirement without seeing a battle but he must always be getting ready for it as if he knew the hour of the day it is to break upon him. And then, whether it comes late or early, he must be willing to fight—he must fight.”

MR

NOTES

3. Quote from Bruce Catton, This Hallowed Ground; The Story of the Union Side of the Civil War (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1956), 71-72.
IN ORDER TO ADAPT to meet new and evolving challenges, change is an essential and necessary aspect of our personal lives, our Nation, our Army, and our operating environment. On 11 September 2001, a new kind of enemy declared war on our Nation, our Army, and on each one of us as individual Americans. Today, we find ourselves having been at war with that enemy longer than the span between the attack against the United States at Pearl Harbor and Victory over Japan Day. In response, the modification to our Nation’s culture as a whole has been relatively modest: Domestically, most changes have amounted to little more than inconveniences. In contrast, however, our Army has found it necessary to undergo change of a magnitude not seen since World War II. Comparisons of the Army of today with that of even just a decade ago reflect great differences.

Many factors have necessitated this change, including the changing nature of the threat, a retooled national military strategy, and the collective experiences of our deployed formations engaged against an elusive enemy in a protracted war of global scale. Each catalyst shapes the lens through which we view the Army’s mission, but one overriding thought remains: We must increasingly and consistently adapt to how we handle the challenges of full-spectrum operations in a protracted conflict.

The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), as part of the generating force, is in the midst of transformation in today’s state of continuous operations. A symbiotic relationship is forming between generating and operating forces, and the traditional line between responsibilities is beginning to blur. TRADOC must establish better linkages to the operating forces it supports while simultaneously receiving constant feedback on adaptive solutions for current and future Army modular forces (figure 1). TRADOC’s center of gravity is our ability to continue to learn and, as the “Architect of the Army,” to adjust how we support the Army’s operating force. The strength of our formation remains our people—both Soldiers and civilians—whose intellectual energy drives change necessary for the Nation’s security. This article highlights ongoing changes in TRADOC and seeks to generate the intellectual discourse necessary to lead those changes.

The Threat
Many describe today’s threat as asymmetrical. I would submit that this has become an overused term that creates an intellectual box concerning how we wish we could fight versus how we must apply ourselves in a full-spectrum environment where offense, defense, stability, and civil support operations...
occur simultaneously. Our young leaders and Soldiers understand both the political and military implications of their tactical missions on today’s battlefields. They understand that cultural awareness is a combat multiplier for this fight. They also understand that our current enemy and future adversaries recognize our dependence on coalitions and realize the excellence of our tactical formations.

The enemy of today and tomorrow will continue to look for seams where he can achieve limited tactical success reinforced by a highly effective strategic communications effort to magnify his effect. We must train and educate our young leaders and Soldiers to fight and win in this environment, write the concepts and doctrine that guide our decisions, and thoughtfully develop the Future Combat Force for a world more dangerous and complex than that of today.

The Army

Army efforts to change from a division to a brigade combat team (BCT) based force continue. Lessons learned from redeployed and engaged forces continue to inform TRADOC on the modular force design. We know it is not perfect, and we will continue to refine the doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) requirements with the Department of the Army (DA).

Although many see the modular force as a revolutionary change, the Army force generation (ARFORGEN) model will create the truly dramatic and challenging changes. ARFORGEN has the potential to touch and change every aspect of the Army. Gone are the days of Authorized Levels of Organization units when TRADOC viewed Soldiers as an input that surged following high school and college graduations. ARFORGEN demands a continuous output of Soldiers to BCTs based on reset dates and requires a prioritization of which units receive mobile training teams (MTTs), which BCTs deploy to dirt Combat Training Centers (CTCs), which units conduct collective training at home station, and when units participate in Battle Command Training Program exercises. TRADOC no longer focuses on a DA-prescribed annual training load to define mission success. Now we must clearly understand the needs and priorities of operating force commanders and become an output-oriented organization, adapted to the needs of the operating force.

Leading Change

Before I became TRADOC commander, a transition team sought to answer a few basic questions: What does TRADOC do well? What does TRADOC need to improve? How must we change? The strength of the transition team was its organizational diversity: It included leaders from TRADOC as well as representatives from across the Army and the joint force; officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), and civilians; and members of Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) units. Their view of TRADOC was not through a lens but a prism that projected many facets to view and assess. The team interviewed hundreds of leaders, both active and retired, from across the Department of Defense (DOD) to gather many thoughts, ideas, and concerns.
This iterative process helped us better understand TRADOC and how it needed to grow. The synthesis of ideas crystallized a vision for TRADOC (figure 2), and five TRADOC areas of interests emerged—areas requiring change from an internal process viewpoint and from an enterprise perspective.

Each of these five TRADOC areas of interests was assigned to a two- or three-star commander from within TRADOC, who formed matrix teams to further analyze and develop solution strategies to create the required changes. A series of issue papers, initially staffed internally and then externally to a DOD audience, were one critical output of this effort.

The papers focused on the truly challenging issues we as an Army must address. The feedback we received was extremely informative, both from those who supported our work and from colleagues with different viewpoints. The passionate concerns of many great leaders truly shaped our thoughts. This collaborative work guided our efforts and now forms the basis of TRADOC’s Campaign Plan objectives:

- Recruit, assess, and train Soldiers and develop adaptive leaders.
- Posture TRADOC to support ARFORGEN implementation.
- Reshape the fundamental Army learning process for a dynamic operating environment.
- Redesign TRADOC for excellence.
- Adapt requirements processes.
- Support continued development of the Generating Force.
- Integrate current and future Army modular forces.

TRADOC is an Army Command, but more important, it has an enterprise role to drive change across the Army. Our Campaign Plan end-state envisions a TRADOC that has adapted its processes, relationships, and organizations to support the Army campaign objectives and a Nation at war.

Recruit, assess, and train Soldiers and develop adaptive leaders. For the first time in our Nation’s history, we are using an all-volunteer force to fight a protracted conflict. The challenge of convincing young men and women to serve during war while influencers such as parents, teachers, and coaches preach otherwise, is considerable. However, the U.S. Army Recruiting Command has quietly met the Army’s recruiting goals every month since April 2005—no easy task—and we have committed considerable resources.

Recruiting the youth of our Nation is hard work, and we are only as good as our last month’s results. Every Soldier and leader in the Army today is a recruiter, and the operating force’s interaction with local communities tremendously affects how the Nation views the Army. We should all seek opportunities to promote the values and discipline gained by becoming a Soldier and serving our Nation.

Over the past three years, TRADOC has dramatically changed Initial Military Training (IMT), and the feedback from the operating force has been positive. Our young Soldiers do more tactical training and weapons firing than ever before. The Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills that form the core curriculum of Basic and Advanced Individual Training prepare Soldiers to fight and win on the battlefield. However,
the Soldier receives less technical training, and operating force commanders must understand this constraint and build home-station training programs accordingly.

We continue to refine officer and senior NCO professional development programs to produce adaptive leaders capable of rapid decisionmaking in complex scenarios. Courses such as Basic Officer Leader Course II provide all officers, regardless of branch, the opportunity to train to a common warfighting skill level before they receive basic-branch schooling. (The pilot program at Fort Benning, Georgia, has expanded to include Fort Sill, Oklahoma.) Feedback from the field and from combat veteran instructors and students has allowed us to make evolutionary changes in the program of instruction (POI). Leader courses have also increased the quality and quantity of counterinsurgency doctrine and cultural instruction needed to develop flexible, adaptive leaders of character and competence.

**Posture TRADOC to support ARFORGEN implementation.** ARFORGEN is the structured progression of increased unit readiness over time that results in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready, and cohesive units prepared for operational deployment in support of civil authorities and combatant commanders. ARFORGEN allows commanders to prioritize resources based on well-documented gates, and it permits supporting commands, such as TRADOC, to build nested plans. TRADOC must develop this training-support strategy in close cooperation with Forces Command (FORSCOM), other Army commands, and DA. This training strategy must account for all phases of the model and provide prioritized training for each phase.

TRADOC’s support to the ARFORGEN model begins with the recruiters and young men and women who sign enlistment contracts. Currently, those contracts are for a specified number of years and are not tied to when Soldiers begin service or to their first assignments. This process creates friction in the steady output of trained Soldiers the Army requires. It also creates problems in life-cycle units when a Soldier’s termination of service date does not match the unit’s redeployment date. We can do better; we are working with the Army G1 to emplace a system better nested within the ARFORGEN process.

As we change from a division to a BCT-based Army, a number of brigades will be going through the reset process each year (figure 3). When ARFORGEN reaches its objective phase, an estimated 13 BCTs will reset throughout the course of a year. This aggressive reset process implies a

![Figure 3. Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model.](image-url)
near-continuous output from the training base as well as leaders graduating from TRADOC’s education system; it is not based on when we plan for them to graduate, but on the operational Army’s manpower needs.

We predict that to meet ARFORGEN’s output demands we will need smaller classes that occur more frequently. For example, some low-density military occupation specialty courses will need additional start dates each year to provide a steady flow of IMT graduates to units entering ARFORGEN’s reset/train pool. Also, to meet the operating force’s needs, we began a second Intermediate-Level Education (ILE) class in February 2005 at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to produce graduates twice a year (in December and June).

Our Institutional Training Support Plan (ITSP) must link course start and end dates to ARFORGEN’s phases and encompass all professional military education, additional skill identifiers, functional training, and MTTs that support individual and unit training throughout the ARFORGEN cycle. The ITSP is an annex to the ARFORGEN Implementation Plan and defines how TRADOC provides institutional training and training support to operational forces. The ITSP leverages FORSCOM’s semiannual ARFORGEN synchronization conferences to identify all training requirements. This iterative process surveys the operating force and balances its needs against TRADOC’s capacity to provide the requisite training.

We must also change the way TRADOC has traditionally conducted MTTs. In the past, it was generally a first-come, first-served process where units would contact and coordinate directly with the branch schools. Over a several-month period in 2005, TRADOC completed 258 MTTs, but neither TRADOC nor other Army commands prioritized support to those units with the shortest dwell time or deployment dates. This legacy approach is not sustainable in ARFORGEN. The delivery method, whether resident or MTT, must consider training aids, devices, simulations, and simulators (TADSS) requirements, course size, and course duration. For example, if FORSCOM requests a Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course MTT at a divisional post to reduce Soldier time away from home, that division might provide the equipment and facilities to execute the training. Finally, future MTTs should focus on training the trainer instead of training the Soldier, which would increase TRADOC’s ability to provide an enduring quality of expertise in units.

TRADOC cannot fixate on the immediate months just before and after a unit reset date; it must provide first-class training support throughout the ARFORGEN model. As we look at modular force organizations and the number of BCTs entering the ready-force and available-force pools, we must ensure that CTCs are postured and resourced to meet their needs.

The CTCs provide a competitive training environment difficult to replicate at home stations. The Army modular force and ARFORGEN have changed the physics of what TRADOC must provide the operating force to maintain the CTCs as a premiere training event. Army modular forces—

DA, TRADOC, and U.S. Army Europe are building exportable training capability packages to provide enhanced collective training at unit home stations or forward-deployed sites.

● Increased the basic rotational design from two maneuver battalions to two combined arms battalions and one reconnaissance squadron.

● Increased the number of companies in a heavy BCT.

● Pulled assets from the division structure and consolidated them under a brigade troops battalion.

● Significantly increased the size and capability of the brigade staff.

The Army is reshaping the dirt CTC’s Operations Group to meet the requirements of the new rotational troop list. Also, organic unmanned aerial vehicles, an array of complex digital systems, and the ability of headquarters to influence the full-spectrum battlefield must be stressed through battlefield events, enemy contact, and higher-control-induced stimuli to hone the entire BCT’s warfighting edge.
Our opposing forces, long considered the epitome of a thinking and adaptive enemy, must understand and apply the most recent tactics the enemy is using in Iraq and Afghanistan and replicate the human terrain on which we operate.

ARFORGEN also places additional stress on the CTC system by creating more BCTs requiring more frequent training. We can no longer afford to have battalion and brigade commanders receive one CTC rotation per command tour. To solve this challenge, DA, TRADOC, and U.S. Army Europe are building exportable training capability (ETC) packages to provide enhanced collective training at unit home stations or forward-deployed sites. The ETC provides the essential CTC support (observer/controllers, opposing force, instrumentation, TADSS) to conduct a BCT-level exercise. USAREUR’s Joint Multinational Readiness Center established the first ETC with an initial capacity of conducting four ETC rotations annually. Beginning Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, we will stand up an ETC in the continental United States. Although we have not yet determined the ETC’s permanent location, we know it will be sharply focused on advanced home-station training support.4

Reshape the fundamental Army learning process for a dynamic operating environment.

The Army’s training and leader-development model succinctly captures the notion of lifelong learning and how the learning domains (operational, institutional, and self-development) require mutual support between operating and generating forces.5 To continue our move toward this objective, we must assess what we teach Soldiers, how we teach Soldiers, and how we exchange information between operating and generating forces.

One of TRADOC’s objectives is to reduce the time Soldiers spend in school while still providing the operating force with highly trained Soldiers. The key to this is assessing and changing how we present information to the student. Many suggest that distributed learning, distance learning, and assisted learning are possible solutions to reducing the time Soldiers spend away from their units and families. As an institution, we must be cautious about how we integrate distance learning. We should not make Soldiers choose between professional development and spending time with their family.

In my judgment, we should be able to reduce course length by blending distance learning and traditional classroom instruction. Distance learning should not be an entry requirement, but a graduation requirement. For example, the Infantry Captain’s Career Course is 19 weeks long. By carefully analyzing the POI, we might be able to shorten that to 16 weeks by moving three weeks of instruction to distance learning, to be completed before graduation. To accomplish this, we need to take advantage of the best available learning technologies and seek advice from industry and academia regarding their best-known methods of delivery.

We must also develop a process to seamlessly link the operating force with the generating force in terms of doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), and best practices through a structured but adaptable knowledge-management network. The lessons learned process has become vastly important to our Army. During peacetime, the institutional Army drives change through DOTMLPF and observations of trends at the CTCs. During war, the operating force drives change based on experiences, events, and lessons learned in theaters of operation.

Historically, we have considered TTPs as part of our doctrine-development process, but with the enemy’s evolving tactics and the pace of change, this idea might no longer be valid. We believe the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), at Fort Leavenworth, will assume increased responsibility for the horizontal distribution of best practices across the Army, while TRADOC focuses on high-level doctrinal principles and immutable fundamentals.

TRADOC’s Lessons Learned Initiative (L2I) envisions branch schools having virtual cells in command posts deployed to theaters and at home stations across the Army.

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stations across the Army. These virtual cells would provide a greater understanding of the current fight, serve as a resource for deployed forces to reach back and query, and help with the horizontal passing of best practices throughout TRADOC as we develop DOTMLPF solutions for the current force and Future Combat Force. L2I is more than CALL with additional resources; it offers an opportunity to better understand and support the operating force with ARFORGEN training, experimentation, and how we monitor and police the communities of practice on the Internet. L2I must be embedded as an integral component of future TRADOC centers of excellence (COE).

**Redesign TRADOC for excellence.** The Army’s new global footprint of forces and the DOD Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) directive provide TRADOC an opportunity to change its internal structures to better support Army needs. Over the decades, our schools and centers have evolved to meet the needs of their respective branches, which has resulted in duplicated efforts and misplaced resources across TRADOC. A COE is an organization that creates the highest standards of achievement by generating synergy through effective, efficient integration of functions while reinforcing the unique requirements and capabilities of the branches. The essential requirement is integration, not just colocation. Creating COEs could break some rice bowls, but it would also build leaner, more agile, more adaptive organizations.

The COE model (for single and multi-branch installations) leverages BRAC’s momentum by improving combined arms solutions and DOTMLPF integration, effectiveness, and efficiency through synergy and reduction of redundancy, and by optimizing battle labs to accelerate the development process.

Our COEs are organized with four principles in mind. First, and most important, our efforts must support the needs of the operational Army, specifically improving how we interface and provide DOTMLPF solutions. Second, we must develop a common organizational framework to strengthen synergy and integration among proponents, which would include horizontal information-sharing, best practices, and vertical information-passing from within TRADOC to our enterprise-level partners. Third, our structure must support the TRADOC core functions of recruiting, IMT, leader development and education, lessons learned, the CTC program, doctrine, training support, concepts, experimentation, and requirements determination.

Each of these functions requires far greater integration with the operating force than ever before. Finally, multi-branch COEs will consolidate functions at the center level to the maximum extent possible while maintaining branch identity with branch commandants focusing on leader development, education, and branch functional training.

The two most well known COEs are the Maneuver Center and Fires Center. Moving the Armor Center to Fort Benning and the Air Defense Center to Fort Sill requires careful planning to ensure we take care of our Soldiers, their families, and our great DA civilians. It also requires resources and military construction to ensure we can train and educate Soldiers to meet the Army’s requirements. However, these are relatively straightforward challenges when compared to changing TRADOC and Army cultures.

We are all products of our branch schooling, but that parochialism is in tension with the mindset required for an expeditionary Army. Developing combined-arms solutions from the beginning of the DOTMLPF process better serves the needs of the Army modular force. To ensure that our new structures have capability, we are developing a dynamic, collaborative network in support of the Army Knowledge Management System embedded in the COEs. Key parameters include reaching back from deployed units, monitoring ongoing exercises and experiments, linking to power-generation and power-generation support platforms, and assisting in home-station training.

Other areas we are exploring include maintenance and supply functions, neither of which are TRADOC core functions. Yet, we must have equipment present and operational for training. We are working
closely with the Army Materiel Command (AMC) and Installation Management Agency (IMA) to develop training base equipment improvement plans to optimize resources and place the experts (AMC and IMA) in charge. We are also relooking how we think about battle labs. As TRADOC commander during the early 1990s, General Frederick Franks instituted the concept of battle labs to experiment with and test emerging concepts needed for future battlefield functions. Recently, battle labs have focused largely on branch-specific issues, and we believe a broader, more functional approach to requirements-determination might be more useful.

Adapt requirements process. The Army and joint requirements process is a complex, sequential, prescriptive method for developing and acquiring materiel solutions for the military. Its thoroughness is both a virtue and a challenge. It ensures the product is optimized for its intended purpose and nested across DOTMLPF, but it is time-consuming, overly bureaucratic, and could potentially lead to missed opportunities. TRADOC does not own the process, but as an active participant it must understand it to meet the needs of the operating force. The Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) directs the Army’s requirement process, so unilateral changes are not a feasible course of action. However, TRADOC’s enterprise-level perspective obligates us to review the process and recommend changes as necessary.

The first step is to examine and then reduce the process itself by applying Lean Six Sigma methods to the development, staffing, and approval process of requirements determination. Reducing the staffing process to only two, at the colonel and general officer levels, and developing automated databases of requirement documents and supporting analysis, could help to shift the focus from routine tasks to critical analysis. Additionally, creating a small number of broadly focused, capability-based assessment categories under which we can nest smaller requirements will accelerate the process without being disruptive. TRADOC will conduct rehearsals of concept drills to codify how we will accomplish each of the JCIDS processes. Three critical outputs of these rehearsals are to develop a common vision of the process, capture and publish the rules in a single document allowing participants to clearly understand roles and responsibilities, and provide our recommended changes to DA.

Given the reality of today’s operating environment, it is possible to use two separate and distinct requirements processes. One process is very deliberate and futures- and technology-oriented; the other is rapid, to meet the needs of the operating force. Unfortunately, this creates an inevitable tension between doing things quickly and doing things precisely. Operational needs statements have proven incredibly helpful in getting equipment into the hands of the formations in contact. However, we are experiencing the fallout of materiel solutions that do not come with training packages, sustainment plans, or the ability to interface with other equipment. TRADOC has an obligation to evaluate new requirements through a DOTMLPF lens because materiel not properly integrated from the beginning tends to cause problems later in its life cycle.

Senior leaders must constantly look for targets of opportunity to advance technological capabilities to meet the needs of the operational force. To achieve this objective, we must operationalize the requirements process and bring commanders in at appropriate decision points. To support their decisionmaking, we must develop commander’s critical information requirements to separate ordinary data from key information and to focus the staff’s analysis and recommendations in forums similar to battle update briefs. The speed of technological advances combined with the adversary’s changing tactics creates windows of opportunities that open and close quickly. Only with commanders’ informed involvement can we seize these opportunities.

Support continued development of the generating force. The evolution of the institutional Army to the generating force is ongoing. The incredibly diverse functions that various Army commands execute make transformation challenging but necessary to provide responsive Title 10 functions to
sustain a joint and expeditionary Army with campaign qualities. As an emerging concept, generating forces wrestles with fundamental questions: What is the generating force? How is it different from the institutional Army? What are its core competencies? A proposed definition for the generating force is: The generating force provides Title 10 organizing, training, and equipping functions that direct and resource, develop, generate, project, and sustain forces’ operational capability for use by the combatant commander.9

DA has announced it intends to grow the operating force to 355,000 Soldiers within an Army end strength of 482,400...One partial solution is converting military positions to civilian positions.

Developing doctrine. TRADOC has identified three areas critical to the Army’s conversion to a generating force: developing generating-force doctrine, achieving military-to-civilian conversion, and developing a foundation for civilian education and leader development. TRADOC will be working closely with other generating-force Army commands in the staffing of Field Manual 1-01, The Generating Force for the Army in Joint Operations: 2015–2024, which discusses implementation strategies and articulates the role of the generating force in support of the operating force.10 This doctrine must focus on overarching principles and not TTPs to give the maximum flexibility to commanders and to fully support the changes occurring in the operating force. Although separating the Army into a generating and an operating force might be useful for analyzing functions and organizations, the distinction blurs in practice.

As we develop doctrinal foundations, three main points emerge. First, the generating force must be hyper-responsive in generating the necessary capabilities. Second, the generating force reach must be seamless or, in some cases, colocated in the area of operations. Examples of this include the sustainment functions conducted at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, and the knowledge reach-back available through the communities of interest. Finally, generating-force functions must be capable of replication in an area of operation. Conducting concurrent combat, stability, and reconstruction operations calls on many skill sets required to build an Army. The best example of this might be the training of police and army units in Iraq and Afghanistan.11

Converting positions. DA has announced it intends to grow the operating force to 355,000 Soldiers within an Army end strength of 482,400 active component Soldiers over the next several years.12 TRADOC acknowledges this requirement and is actively working with the Army for an optimal solution. However, we must be cognizant of what this means to TRADOC’s ability to meet mission requirements. One partial solution is converting military positions to civilian positions. In FY 2005, TRADOC converted more than 3,000 Soldier positions to civilian positions. Conversion does not equate to a decrease in capability, but it does give TRADOC a different dynamic.

As we lead our organization through change, the first critical step is for commanders to identify those positions Soldiers must fill and those civilians can fill. Right now, Soldier-only positions include those required to maintain combat readiness; those required by law, such as joint positions; and those that require the enforcement of good order and discipline.13 For example, we must fill drill sergeant positions with Soldiers, but civilians can fill positions that teach a technical skill.

Educating and developing civilians. We are taking on the challenge of civilian education within TRADOC. Organizations becoming increasingly civilianized require an investment in civilian education and civilian leader development. If we are to take advantage of the talents of our civilian workforce, we must educate them for the future. Analysis reveals that the Army sees civilian education as a cost, not an investment, and consequently the Army does not have an integrated, centrally managed, or adequately resourced program.

Several measurable objectives could fix this challenge. First, we must develop a civilian education model and policies that are sequential, progressive, tied to increased responsibility, and codified in a DA Pamphlet (Pam) 600-type publication.14 Second, if we
are serious about investing resources in our civilians, we probably need to take a hard look at establishing a transient account for civilian education so that supervisors who send civilians to school are not hindered by having an empty seat in the office. Third, we must tie civilian progression to mobility and professional development. If the Army commits resources for training and incentives for promotion, civilians must be prepared to fill nominative assignments regardless of location. Changing the civilian education process is a huge undertaking, but it has incredible potential. TRADOC is prepared to test a pilot program with the objective of achieving small victories over time versus changing a huge system immediately.

Integrate current and future Army modular forces. Our future operating environment will be highly complex, distributed, and extremely lethal. Our enemies are currently training cadres of people who are studying how we operate, what strengths to avoid, and where we are vulnerable. Any future force we develop must be unambiguously tied to the campaign needs that TRADOC Pam 525-3-0, The Army in Joint Operations: The Army’s Future Force Capstone Concept 2015-2024, outlines. This is where the intellectual must drive the physical, and our concepts must drive DOTMLPF solutions.

Figure 4 lists the seven key ideas of the Army’s Joint Operational Concept for future military operations. Currently, we do not have the capability to realize these seven ideas, but through wargaming, experimentation and further concept development, we will be able to form a comprehensive DOTMLPF perspective and integrate all force-capability requirements. This is hard but important work, and we are working closely with Joint Forces Command and the other services to identify and integrate joint required capabilities to ensure we get this right.

We must also maintain a running dialog with the operating force to understand its needs, determine what works, and identify current capability gaps.
We cannot allow the Future Combat Force to become isolated from current operations and useful only to scientists and theoreticians. As we identify capability gaps and direct analytical support for DOTMLPF development, including validation of research and development priorities for key Army science and technology needs, we must seek opportunities to make those capabilities available now to the current force. These developments help those formations currently in contact, but also show tangible progress and will sustain the valuable support the Army has received to date.

The Evaluation Brigade Combat Team slated to be activated at Fort Bliss will truly accelerate the process. As we place new doctrine and technologies in the hands of young Soldiers and leaders, we have no doubt they will surprise us with their innovation and understanding of how to get more out of the organization than originally designed. TRADOC will focus on overarching principles and allow Soldiers to develop the TTPs needed to fight with this emergent formation. No matter how complex the future force becomes, there remains a fundamental truth that training superiority trumps technical wizardry every time. This might imply the need to develop new training methods as we develop and mature the Future Combat System-equipped BCT.

Our vision for TRADOC is simple: Victory Starts Here! I believe this is absolutely true, and it starts in our classrooms, on our ranges, and all across TRADOC where we develop young Soldiers and adaptive leaders. It is where the foundation of our great Army begins. As we fight this long war, there will be a tremendous amount of focus on current operations, which is appropriate. TRADOC is charged with preparing Soldiers for current needs while thinking about the Army’s future needs and how we will achieve our objectives. Some of these objectives are simple changes to internal processes, and we will be able to achieve them quickly. Other objectives require coordination at the enterprise level, and we will not realize them for years. As the generating force draws closer to the operating force, we look forward to exchanging thoughts and concerns as we adapt and learn now and in the future. Victory Starts Here! MR

NOTES

2. Ibid.
8. In 1992 GEN Frederick Franks, CG TRADOC, established six battle labs: Early Entry, Lethality and Survivability Battle Lab, Fort Monroe, Virginia; Depth and Simultaneous Attack, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Mounted Battle Space, Fort Knox, Kentucky; Dismounted Battle Space, Fort Benning, Georgia; Battle Command, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; and Combat Service Support, Fort Lee, Virginia (unpublished point paper, “History of the TRADOC Battle Labs,” Office of the TRADOC Historian, Fort Monroe, Virginia, December 2005).
11. Ibid.
14. All DA PAM 600-XX publications deal with personnel issues.
16. Ibid.
Brigadier General Robert W. Cone, U.S. Army

Since the first Army battalions rolled through Fort Irwin in California’s high Mojave Desert in October 1981, the National Training Center (NTC) has helped lead a revolution in training that fundamentally transformed our Army’s culture toward greater emphasis on warfighting proficiency in tactical units. Many credit the competencies fostered at the NTC for having played a key role in our Army’s success in Operation Desert Shield/Storm as well as in the initial phases of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

While the NTC was a driving force in the Army’s first revolution in training, the demands of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) have required a fundamental reassessment of the character and nature of training at the NTC. Candid assessments by leaders involved in subsequent phases of OIF have suggested the combat training centers (CTCs) could gain a greater operational payoff by focusing training on the changing skill sets needed for ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Change at the NTC

During the last 30 months, the NTC has experienced a period of profound and almost continuous change. While the specifics of change vary from rotation to rotation, the larger trend is toward refining the training experience based on feedback from the operational force. Changes at the NTC have focused on a number of key features associated with the GWOT and its campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Replication of the current operational environment has created an intellectual framework that allows leaders to exercise potential solutions to current problem sets, to build teams, and to gain experience in an environment with human terrain similar to what they will experience in theater. This entire process has created an environment in which leader development is energized.

The change in NTC training is manifested in the following important ways:

- Training at the NTC now places more emphasis on full-spectrum combat operations, especially counterinsurgency (COIN) training involving both kinetic and nonkinetic means. Cultural awareness training is a central feature of all phases of the rotation.
- While the NTC is ideally suited to prepare units for combat in a desert environment, increased emphasis on operations in urban and complex terrain has been essential in preparing units for combat in the GWOT.
- The NTC is doing more than ever before to help units integrate new technologies into their operations before they deploy to combat. The NTC
is now playing a leading role in using technological innovations to train units to defeat insurgent use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

- With the growing significance of small-unit actions, the NTC has redoubled efforts to increase the rigor and fidelity of training at the small-unit level.
- Finally, the NTC is placing significantly greater emphasis on the use of joint enablers made available to tactical echelons involved in combat missions with operational and strategic consequences.

**Pillars of NTC Training**

The key elements of the NTC experience have not changed. But, the challenge for NTC leaders has been to increase focus on the key aspects of the new operational environment while transitioning and maintaining the best of the traditional NTC culture, specifically—

- **Customer-focused training.** Unit self-assessment remains a vital element of training doctrine. As senior trainers, division commanders continue to establish unit training objectives and approve scenario design. No two NTC rotations are alike because no two units have identical training needs.
- **Stressing units to their organizational limits.** Units learn best when pushed to the threshold of failure. The NTC continues to push units to their limits, continuously raising the threat, modifying conditions, and maintaining standards of performance to expose weaknesses in key systems and functions. While the systems we stress today are different from those of the past, the pressure a unit feels must be both real and challenging. The NTC should be hard—in many ways more difficult than actual combat.
- **Unblinking feedback.** The NTC prides itself on providing brutally honest and irrefutable feedback on unit performance while providing a forum that encourages candid discussion and self-analysis by the unit. While the metrics of performance might have changed, the need for commanders to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their formations has not.
- **Mastery of fundamentals.** The NTC experience has always focused on developing proficiency in a core set of mission-essential tasks. While the tasks associated with the GWOT have changed to include proficiency in both kinetic and nonkinetic realms, the philosophy of focused training to achieve mastery remains the same.
- **Collective task integration.** The NTC focuses significant energy and resources on fully integrating all collective training tasks within a brigade combat team (BCT). The desired end-state is a holistic and synergistic approach to full-spectrum combat operations.
- **Importance of home-station training.** The level of training proficiency a unit achieves by the end of an NTC rotation directly relates to its entry training level. Experience shows that units that benefit most from the NTC arrive with solid small-unit and staff proficiency derived from home-station training. Units can then put their energies into taking full advantage of the higher level complexity and scale of problem sets the NTC environment provides.
- **Unique training capabilities.** Units do not come to the NTC to do what they are capable of doing at home station. The NTC’s advantages in training high-intensity warfare over vast desert maneuver space and in challenging live-fire corridors can now be translated to Iraq-like distances with multiple towns, villages, caves, and urban live-fire venues. The NTC is one of only a few established training venues in the world that allow a BCT to operate at doctrinal distances in an instrumented live-fire and force-on-force environment.
Integrating Lessons Learned

Another major feature of change at the NTC is our current focus on integrating lessons learned and best practices from theater into training scenarios. Leaders of the typical unit preparing for deployment and about to train at the NTC are aware of emerging problem sets from the theater that will pose challenges for their units. They do not seek our interpretation of doctrinal solutions to their problems. Rather, they ask us to teach them the best practices being used in theater to address particular problem sets. In most cases, existing doctrine provides a good point of departure for unit training. However, in a war in which the adversary is noted for being fiendishly reactive, units must seek to perform specific practices more precisely to advance quickly to the latest established iteration of successful performance.

To remain relevant, the NTC has established a dynamic process to capture lessons learned and best practices from the theater. The NTC uses three major processes to stay current on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. These processes allow us to triangulate observations about emerging trends in theater and thus develop greater confidence in the solutions we advocate to the problem sets we train units on.

First, the NTC monitors a number of classified and unclassified websites to identify emerging trends. The Center for Army Lessons Learned, U.S. Central Command, Multinational Force-Iraq, Multinational Corps-Iraq, and Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq, as well as unit websites, provide valuable information about emerging tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and evolving enemy trends. We also encourage units that have trained at the NTC to provide continuous feedback via the Internet on their experiences. We ask them to offer suggestions to modify training.

Second, the NTC sends observer/controllers (O/Cs) into theater to capture emerging trends and to conduct detailed studies of best practices and new problem sets. While passive collection from Internet sites provides good background information, it is necessary to actively examine unit performance in a combat environment.

An O/C briefs members of an exercising unit prior to an NTC mission. Eighty percent of NTC O/C’s have seen combat in Iraq or Afghanistan.
environment before advocating use of a particular practice to a training unit. Active observation allows O/Cs to understand the context surrounding the successful application of new TTPs. Trained units sponsor visits by O/Cs, and that established relationship often leads to greater rapport and continuity in the training process.

Third, while some of our best teachers and coaches do not have recent combat experience, we actively seek combat veterans with OIF or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) experience to serve as O/Cs. Units appear to prefer O/Cs who can speak firsthand of their experiences in similar situations in combat. Over 80 percent of current field O/Cs have recent OIF/OEF experience, and that number will only increase with future assignment cycles.

Physical Changes to the NTC Environment

Adapting the NTC to conduct training predicated on Iraq and Afghanistan has resulted in a substantial investment in physical infrastructure. These and future changes are absolutely essential to providing the necessary context and realism for the kinetic and nonkinetic COIN fight. New features at NTC include—

● Towns and villages. The NTC has constructed 13 towns and villages spread across 1,100 square miles in both live-fire and force-on-force environments. Buildings currently consist mainly of modified shipping containers, railroad cars, and storage sheds, but we are in the process of acquiring more permanent structures.

● Caves and tunnels. Using highway construction materials, the NTC has constructed 7 cave complexes in the mountainous regions of Fort Irwin. The NTC’s largest town has an extensive underground tunnel complex that replicates a sewer system.

● Mountain strongholds. In hilly, constricted terrain, we have created a defensive complex known as Milawa Valley to provide a simulated terrorist training camp that serves as an objective for deliberate dismounted attack.

● Forward operating bases. Five semipermanent forward operating bases exist with adequate fest tents, life support, and force-protection facilities for a BCT.

● Instrumentation. The NTC has augmented its instrumentation system with fixed video facilities in its largest town. This system consists of 79 infrared and low-light cameras, a dual-editing and control suite, and a 40-seat theater facility. In addition, the NTC has experimented with instrumentation in cave complexes, using infrared video and mobile theaters. We are also currently experimenting with handheld broadband video capabilities.

● Digital command and control facilities. The NTC’s division tactical operations center is fully equipped with a suite of Army battle command systems, including Command Post of the Future. This minimizes the division headquarters’ requirement to provide a command and control (C2) node to support rotational training.

Training in a Full-Spectrum Environment

The NTC offers rotating units an extensive menu of training options from the full spectrum of war. Units are usually within 1 to 6 months of deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan and seek mission-rehearsal exercises that meet predeployment training requirements. We meet that need. We also maintain the capability to provide a menu of predeployment lane training and limited new-equipment training on IED-defeat systems. At unit request, we have also conducted several rotations that included high-intensity combat operations against an armored threat in conjunction with a transition to mission-rehearsal exercise. NTC will maintain both the capability and institutional memory needed to offer this option to training units. Overall, the variety of training options that rotating units need has driven the NTC to develop new flexibility in training format, facilities, and rotation duration.

One of the greatest challenges we have faced in the last 2 years is developing adequate realism and robustness in training environments to support the problem sets we are encountering in Iraq and Afghanistan. These problem sets range from kinetic to nonkinetic; they call for human interaction and force units to consider all the elements of national power. Of course, the specific objective of our focused, replicative training is to facilitate a unit’s rapid and successful transition into theater operations. Because many training units have done multiple combat deployments, there is an increasing
Mission-rehearsal exercises replicate insurgent operations and allow units to hone essential skills such as traffic control point procedures and gathering human intelligence.

requirement for realistic, sophisticated training to adequately challenge veteran units. Based on feedback from the operational force, what follows are examples of the kinds of tough problem sets emphasized during current mission-rehearsal exercises.

Nonkinetic operations. Training units in nonkinetic operations requires establishing an environment in which human terrain predominates. In such an environment, units can employ nonkinetic resources such as civil affairs (CA) and psychological operations (PSYOP) teams and public affairs officers; and they can conduct leader engagements, disburse money, and participate in reconstruction. To provide the human terrain necessary to train nonkinetic operations, the NTC populates its towns and villages with up to 1,600 role players, of which 250 are Iraqi-Americans who remain in their roles and live in the field for the entire 14-day training event. Each role player is influenced by respective tribal and religious leaders and maintains familial, social, and business relationships throughout the rotation. Some role players have businesses and jobs; others are unemployed and disenfranchised, ripe for insurgent recruitment. Each urban area has its own government structure, police force, businesses, criminal element, and ethnic tension. Provincial government and police forces also exert influence on towns and villages.

The human terrain element makes leaders and Soldiers engage with real Iraqis, a function that requires them to adapt to Iraqi culture and seek cooperation. Leaders conduct engagements and negotiate with provincial, town, and tribal leaders to gather information on insurgent activity and to find out who can create jobs, provide medical aid, or develop reconstruction projects. The human element also allows the training unit to employ CA and PSYOP teams throughout its area of operations to influence the role players. Iraqi role players' attitudes change based on unit actions.

The recently constructed Joint Coordination Center, modeled after facilities in theater, is the focal point of nonkinetic operations. It serves as a coordination center for those acting as Coalition forces; Iraqi Security Forces; local government, tribal and religious leaders; local security and medical personnel; and nongovernmental organization (NGO) workers.

Media operations. The NTC also replicates television and print media continuously during the rotation. Television media are portrayed by mock versions of an Al Jazeera affiliate and an English-language network (the International News Network [INN]). While INN uses a Western reporting style, NTC’s Al Jazeera is staffed by Iraqi-Americans who constantly report on a unit’s actions and how those actions are perceived in the Arab world. Both networks are seemingly ubiquitous in the training unit’s area of operations. They provide training for the unit’s public affairs team and give unit leaders experience in interacting with reporters. Units learn how to recognize and even anticipate insurgent propaganda, and they work with available media sources to counter misinformation and rumor. Print media also comes into play: An Arabic newsletter is distributed throughout the entire town, detailing actions occurring during unit mission-rehearsal exercises.

Fiscal operations. Units practice using money from the full variety of in-theater sources, including the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, to fund reconstruction operations, condolence payments, rewards, and claims. O/Cs track the
amount and purpose of money spent and ensure that the unit is properly accounting for its expenditures.

NTC towns and villages provide a venue to prepare for real-world reconstruction projects. Units use their internal engineers, CA teams, or attached forward engineer support teams to assess town infrastructure and determine where the unit needs to conduct reconstruction. After these assessments, units can contract for reconstruction using funds or internal assets to improve the town infrastructure. They can also employ Iraqi role players to work on reconstruction projects (the idea being to help reduce the insurgent recruiting base).

**Intelligence-driven operations.** Like nonkinetic operations, intelligence-driven operations at the NTC require a richly textured training environment. Quality role playing is key. NTC has developed some 1,600 complex roles detailing the lives and motivations of role players; their familial, tribal, and religious influences; and their social and business relationships. Cultural role playing has become more authentic. To fully exercise a training unit’s human intelligence and interrogation systems, Iraqi linguists now play leading roles.

Working with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the NTC has developed a software program called Reactive Information Propagation Planning for Lifelike Exercises (RIPPLE) to improve scenario realism and increase the quantity and fidelity of intelligence on the battlefield. RIPPLE is network-modeling and artificial-intelligence software that tracks all role players, roles, and relationships among the 1,600 Iraqi role players. It maps all social, familial, and business relationships in the scenario as well as each role player’s personal history and motivation. Based on this mapping, the NTC can dynamically assess and model the effects of unit interaction with Iraqi role players. For example, if the unit positively or negatively affects a local Iraqi leader, RIPPLE can quickly determine second- and third-order effects of the actions and issue instructions to role players accordingly. The software allows exercise designers to pick the right role player to take the right action to create credible cause-and-effect relationships.

The NTC has also worked closely with the University of Southern California’s Institute for Creative Technology (ICT), a team of Hollywood producers, directors, actors, and special-effects technicians, to improve the quality of role play and the realism of scenarios. ICT has advised the NTC on script and scenario development, role player acting, the physical realism of towns and villages, and special effects to simulate IEDs.

For every terrorist action that occurs on the NTC battlefield, we must construct a credible and possibly detectable causal chain of events. This “kill chain,” which replicates the events necessary for carrying out an insurgent act, derives from the latest available intelligence from theater. The NTC insurgency will generate over 120 terrorist acts in a 14-day period, each with its own kill chain and associated trail of intelligence clues.

Each rotation features over 300 threads of information with more than a thousand discrete pieces of intelligence woven throughout the training scenario. A role player holding potential clues could be the operator of an air conditioning repair shop, a member of the town council, or an actual insurgent. Good units will use the full range of assets to collect available information on the battlefield.
Detailed replication of insurgent activity and the use of intelligence threads drastically change the nature of the opposing force’s (OPFOR’s) mission requirements. OPFOR commanders responsible for realistic execution of all of these intelligence threads must maintain a balance between free play and scripted events, must establish proper atmospheres among the townspeople, and must maintain cultural realism continuously for 14 days.

Once the unit has collected intelligence, it must connect the dots. This challenging analytical process translates hundreds of pieces of raw data into knowledge that can aid the decisionmaker. Creating a high-fidelity environment to exercise intelligence analysis has been a major focus of the NTC. O/Cs are trained and site-licensed to help units use the latest software available from theater.

**Kinetic operations.** Once the primary focus of NTC training, kinetic operations are now trained in a theater-appropriate context. Some units request high-intensity conflict scenarios for their rotations, chiefly to train and maintain higher order combat skills within their units. Most kinetic operations are designed to exercise the skills that are most likely to be needed in theater: cordon and search, raids on high value targets, operations with Special Operations Forces (SOF), combat patrolling, and convoy security. The NTC uses a combination of out-of-sector operations in force-on-force and live-fire environments to stress a unit’s ability to fire and maneuver.

**Detainee operations.** The NTC training environment provides a superb opportunity to establish a high moral standard in the treatment of detainees. Training units normally detain over 100 suspected insurgent role players during their mission-rehearsal exercise. NTC trains detainee operations using the latest published standards from theater. Units are required to fill out all the proper paperwork on detainees and to operate their own detainee collection point, which is inspected many times during the rotation by International Committee of the Red Cross role players.

**Evidence collection and exploitation.** The forcing function for realistic evidence collection and exploitation training is NTC’s mock Central Criminal Court of Iraq. Just as they do in Iraq, units must bring detainees before an Iraqi judge. During court proceedings, Soldiers testify and the training unit’s staff judge advocate presents evidence for holding the detainee. Not every Soldier in the unit gets an opportunity to testify in the mock Iraqi court, but the unit can fully exercise its legal system during the rotation. Training units are provided instruction on best practices in evidence collection and exploitation from the most successful units in theater.

**IED defeat.** In partnership with the Joint IED Defeat Organization, the NTC has recently become the home of the Joint IED Defeat Center of Excellence. This resource gives NTC’s training audience access to the latest IED-defeat technologies and mission-specific training on IED-defeat tasks. Because the NTC operating environment replicates the entire IED kill chain, NTC can train a comprehensive approach to IED defeat that targets actions against every node in the IED system.

The NTC conducts individual and small-unit IED-defeat training using IED indicators and reconnaissance lanes and by incorporating IED battle drills into mounted and dismounted combat patrols. While this training is important, the NTC, as a collective-task integrator, focuses training on battalion- and brigade-level responsibilities in integrating all IED-defeat capabilities available in the brigade’s battlespace. Of particular note, we have found that when units take an offensive approach to COIN, intelligence-driven operations are especially important.

The NTC now maintains access to a fleet of the latest IED-defeat capabilities for units to draw from and train on during the rotation. The Center’s vehicle set includes capabilities currently available in theater. Units also have access to some emerging technologies.

**Personnel recovery (PR).** Given recent emphasis on the important area of personnel recovery, the NTC provides a highly realistic venue for units to exercise PR operations both with and without the assistance of SOF. We currently offer three training scenarios in this area: downed coalition pilots, captured U.S. Soldiers (including mission transition teams), and captured civilian contractors and aid workers. NTC trains in accordance with FM 3-50.1, *Army Personnel Recovery,* and provides O/Cs and scenario writers whom the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency has certified to train and help units in all phases of PR preparation and mission execution.

**Joint integration.** The GWOT compresses the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. A
low-level tactical patrol somewhere in Al Anbar province could quickly achieve operational and strategic significance if it were to uncover intelligence that key Al-Qaeda operatives were nearby. Based on time available, this same tactical unit might almost immediately be given access to joint capabilities that were once the province of operational commanders. Today’s young leaders are fully up to the challenge of applying these joint resources, and the NTC is working to create a training environment where all of the joint problem sets and enablers found in theater are routinely available for training.

The NTC has completed the U.S. Joint Forces Command accreditation process and has been recommended for conditional accreditation in the following eight tasks related to the GWOT:

- Counter-IED operations.
- Joint urban operations.
- Development and sharing of intelligence.
- Communications.
- Joint personnel recovery.
- Tactical information operations.
- Close air support.
- Joint fires.

NTC has twice served as a venue for Joint National Training Capability events, most recently in September 2005, when the Center hosted a rotation that focused on applying joint capabilities to key problem sets in COIN warfare such as—

- Precision fires in urban areas and against fleeting targets.
- Army Airspace Command and Control (A2C2).
- Integration of joint nonkinetic enablers.
- Integration of joint assets for IED defeat.
- Integration of joint assets to conduct PR operations.

Typical live joint enablers available at NTC during recent rotations included F-16s, C-17s, AC-130s, and a P-3 Orion with the Airborne Integrated Mapping System and associated Rover downlink; E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System; Compass Call; EA-6B Prowler; and a variety of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). NTC is capable of replicating all of these enablers in a virtual or constructive environment, but it tries to obtain live assets when possible.

Integrating SOF into NTC rotations is a major objective of training units. Last year, the NTC sponsored training rotations by one Army Special Forces battalion and two Navy SEAL teams. Both Army and Navy SOF have training events planned at the NTC in the coming year.

Air-ground integration. The NTC has implemented the latest air-ground integration TTPs from theater and has also developed state-of-the-art A2C2 facilities to replicate airspace-management problem sets from theater.

The NTC’s airspace C2 play is modeled after procedures used in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. The Center has developed zones for airspace below the coordinating altitude, so that units can integrate assets such as UAVs, rotary-wing aircraft, and fires. Above the coordinating altitude, NTC uses the kill-box keypad system and replicates elements of a combined air operations center with help from the
The NTC is on the cutting edge of escalation-of-force training. Realistic scenarios force Soldiers to consider non-kinetic solutions to problem sets before resorting to force.

Air Warrior Program from nearby Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. During one recent rotation, a unit successfully integrated 13 different air platforms simultaneously in support of ground operations. Training units routinely integrate air assets in a variety of key missions: IED defeat, UAV teaming, counter-mortar/rocket operations, route reconnaissance, convoy security, cordon and search, raids, and PR operations.

Based on unit feedback, the NTC constructed improved aviation facilities in a new aviation forward operating base designed to replicate facilities used in Iraq and Afghanistan. To reduce wear and tear on helicopters, the facility has a paved runway with 29 concrete landing pads. The aviation forward operating base also includes two maintenance hangars and other buildings in which to conduct aviation operations and maintenance.

**Escalation-of-force training.** Recent feedback from the theater indicates a need for increased training on the proper application of firepower, in particular the application of minimal firepower to defeat a threat and protect the force. The NTC has developed a two-phased approach, emphasizing in both the uniquely designed lane training and embedded dilemmas within the mission-rehearsal exercise. Units are trained on the latest theater-generated escalation-of-force procedures, and throughout the rotation leaders receive constant feedback on unit performance. The NTC environment also allows us to show the consequences of excessive use of force through realistic play featuring Arab media, local Iraqi reaction, and human rights organizations.

**The Way Ahead**

Our experience in training units for the GWOT confirms one thing: The only constant in this business is the constant need for change. Given this reality, the NTC team is working on the following new initiatives:

- **Improved urban operations facilities.** The NTC requires larger, more complex urban operations facilities in order to challenge units with realistic training in an urban environment. For Fiscal Year 2006, the Army has committed over $12 million to begin construction of a 300-building urban operations facility. Follow-on funding of $45 million to complete the project and provide state-of-the-art instrumentation is included in future defense plans.

- **Interagency and NGO training.** Feedback indicates we could do a better job training units to face the complexity of the NGO and interagency environment. The NTC currently employs over 20 role players who simulate these functions. Training units receive some benefits from NGO-agency interplay, but we aren’t fully maximizing a great training opportunity. The Army’s investment in the realism of the NTC environment could easily be leveraged by other governmental and nongovernmental organizations, which could receive training even as they help train Soldiers. In a war in which all the elements of national power are at play, we would welcome the opportunity to make the NTC truly the “National” Training Center.

**Training with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).** One of the NTC’s top priorities is to find ways to better prepare training units to work with and train ISF. The NTC currently uses Iraqi-Americans to play Iraqi police and members of an Iraqi army battalion.
The training is not completely realistic and does not portray many of the complexities of dealing with Iraqi units in theater. We are exploring options to bring greater realism to this training and to build relationships with real Iraqi units earlier in the training strategy.

**Exportable training capability.** Restationing overseas units in the United States and the requirements of the Army Force Generation model will create a need for more CTC-like experiences. While increased rotations at the Joint Readiness Training Center and the NTC are planned, the full number of new requirements cannot be accommodated at existing training centers. This shortfall, coupled with the divisions’ diminishing ability to support home-station training (a result of modularity), will create a greater requirement for CTCs to assist with home-station training. The NTC has already conducted prototype Exportable Training Capability packages at Fort Carson, Colorado, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina, during the last 18 months. Whether using mobile training teams for specific training requirements or doing full-up mission-rehearsal exercises, our experience indicates this is a viable option for improving the quality of home-station training (given the availability of adequate resources for O/Cs, instrumentation, OPFOR, and role players).

**Leading the Army Forward**

Today, the NTC as well as its sister CTCs are at the forefront of leading the Army through a second revolution in training—a process of continual change. Instead of training units to improve their readiness for possible deployment for worldwide contingencies, we are focused on creating a full-spectrum operational environment and learning experience that will prepare them for the harsh realities of imminent combat in Iraq or Afghanistan. In many ways, this might be the most important work the NTC has ever done. The leading advocates of this change are unit commanders faced with the realities of preparing their units for war. The leading agents of change are a new generation of O/Cs and OPFOR who, with recent combat experience and an irresistible will to ensure victory and save lives, are helping train their brothers-in-arms for the changing requirements of war. **MR**
China today faces an immediate challenge: energy dependence. For many years it has tried to diversify its sources of hydrocarbons, but the deposits of Central Asia and the Caspian Sea have turned out to be disappointing, with reserves much below preliminary estimates. As a consequence, within the last decade China has been paying close attention to Africa and Latin America. However, Beijing’s growing political and economic presence is increasingly perceived by the United States as a serious intrusion, particularly when it comes to Latin America, an area the United States has long regarded as being in its sphere of influence. Altogether, China’s moves have aroused great anxiety in the United States.

The People’s Republic of China (PRC)—eighth largest importer of oil in 2000 and fourth in 2003 after the United States, Japan, and Germany—will probably occupy second place before the end of this decade. Imports, which accounted for 27 percent of China’s oil consumption in 1999, 37 percent in 2002, and 43 percent in 2005, are on a constant upward swing. Thus, dependence on foreign energy has become a major preoccupation of China’s leaders, who see the current situation as an obstacle to achieving the broader role they intend China to play on the world stage.

Until 1990, three countries (Indonesia, the Sultanate of Oman, and Iran) were China’s principal suppliers of imported oil. However, diversification became necessary because of the PRC’s increase in consumption and Indonesia’s diminishing reserves. Consequently, resource-rich Latin America has become coveted territory, especially since the United States is now perceived to have established its hold over all the countries of the Middle East (except Iran) as a result of its intervention in Iraq. Meanwhile, the shortfall in Caspian Sea deposits (now estimated at just 2 to 4 percent of world reserves) is exacerbating China’s problem.

Latin America, with 9.7% of world oil reserves, could potentially enable the PRC to meet its projected energy requirements. Not surprisingly, therefore, China has become the second largest importer of Latin American oil, after the United States. In fact, since 2001, China’s appetite for Latin American oil has grown at least ten-fold.

China’s Omnipresence

Although it has been active in Africa since the 1960s, China had—until recently—never exercised significant political or commercial influence in Latin America. For a very long time the continent remained veritable terra incognita for Beijing. In part, China’s reluctance to enter the region resulted from U.S. influence, especially during the Cold War. Most Latin American governments awaited Richard Nixon’s visit to Beijing in February 1972 before establishing diplomatic relations with the PRC (Argentina and Mexico in 1972, Brazil 2 years later, and finally Bolivia in 1985). In recent years, though, the PRC’s diplomacy has been particularly dynamic and determined in Latin America. The 2-week tour in November 2004 by Chinese President Hu Jintao, who traveled through several countries of the region (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Cuba), illustrates this determination.

For the moment, Latin America is only a modest supplier to the PRC, but bilateral trade is growing, from $12.6 billion in 2001 to 26.8 billion in 2003 and 30 billion in 2004. In conducting its campaign of economic and political expansion, China has adopted the following modus operandi: It negotiates and ensures regular oil supplies in exchange for investment; it
then uses commercial ties to generate agreements on political and military cooperation. The financial bridgehead Beijing has established in Latin America is now being continually reinforced. In 2003, more than a third of China’s foreign investment was placed in Latin America, and the bulk of its investment outside Asia was made in the region. By way of comparison, 14 percent of Chinese investment was made there against 80 percent in Asia and 1.7 percent in North America. China is also increasing investment in the oil sector in Venezuela, Colombia, and Mexico, without neglecting smaller producers such as Ecuador and Peru.

In August 2003, in Ecuador, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) was accorded prospecting rights by Ecuador’s President, Lucio Gutierrez. A few months later, China National Chemical (Sinochem) bought 14 percent of an oilfield in Orellana Province from ConocoPhillips for $100 million. Known as “Block 16,” the oilfield has a surface area of 2,200 square kilometers. Sinochem takes 8,000 barrels per day from Block 16, which is principally exploited by the Spanish firm Repsol-YPF (55 percent) and the Taiwanese company Chinese Petroleum Corporation (31 percent). More recently, in September 2005, the consortium Andes Petroleum, led by the CNPC, bought the interests of a Canadian company, EnCana, for $1.4 billion. With this operation, China will gain production of 75,000 barrels per day (thanks notably to the Tarapoa and Shiripuno fields) and control of reserves estimated at around 143 million barrels.

In 2004, the CNPC bought a subsidiary of PlusPetrol in Peru, PlusPetrol Norte, for $200 million. Then, in March 2005, China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) signed an agreement with Cuba’s Cubapetroleo to develop the field at Pinar del Rio on the west coast of the island.

Similarly, Mexico, although a member of the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA, which consists of Canada, the United States and Mexico), has not escaped Chinese attention. The visits of Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao in December 2003 and Hu Jintao in September 2005 ended with the signing of oil contracts. For the moment, Mexico is not exporting hydrocarbons to China, but the CNPC has obtained drilling licenses.

In Bolivia, Beijing’s presence remains modest, but given the former’s significant gas reserves, it could also become one of China’s suppliers in time. In 2004, two Chinese companies began construction of a chemical complex there. Finally, in Colombia, China is offering to finance the construction of an oil pipeline on the Pacific Coast, to move oil to the Tribugal terminal in the Choco region from Venezuela’s Maracaibo region.

Beijing’s strategy of investing in raw material sources in South America is a priori comparable to that followed in Africa, but acceptance and support of its presence is facilitated by hostility and resentment in the region against the United States.

**Venezuela’s Role**

Venezuela, the sixth largest world oil producer in 2004, remains a primary supplier to Washington, at a level comparable to Saudi Arabia’s. Even so, Venezuela constitutes the cornerstone of Beijing’s diplomacy in Latin America. Venezuela has the largest oil reserves in the American continents (6.5 percent of world reserves), more than those of the three members of NAFTA combined. Its gas reserves are also abundant—2.4 percent of known world reserves, or slightly less than those of the United States. For the time being, Washington remains Venezuela’s principal customer, purchasing 60 percent of its exports (the other clients, apart from Beijing, being Japan and Cuba); however, Venezuela’s proportion of U.S. oil imports is in decline, from 17 percent in 1997 to 11.8 percent today.

The overt hostility the United States manifests publicly and diplomatically towards Hugo Chavez,
Venezuela's current president, has given further impetus to the establishment of a firm partnership between Venezuela and China. In December 2004, during an official visit to Beijing, Chavez concluded several economic and commercial cooperation accords with Hu Jintao.

Cooperation in commercial and oil matters between the two countries has already proved fruitful. Bilateral trade has increased from $150 million in 2003 to $1.2 billion in 2004, and is thought to have doubled in 2005. A visit by Chinese Vice-President Zeng Qinghong to Caracas in January 2005 further underlined Beijing's interest in Venezuela. On that occasion, several contracts were signed, among them agreements permitting China to invest $350 million in the development of 15 oilfields (which could yield a billion barrels of oil), and $60 million in Venezuela's railway network, refineries, and other oil-related infrastructure. China also offered Venezuela a credit line of $40 million for the latter to buy Chinese agricultural equipment.

In 2004, Venezuela provided 0.5 percent of China's oil imports, with 12,000 barrels per day. Last year, the volume was nearly six times greater, at 68,000 barrels per day, or 1.8 percent of total imports. Contracts for offshore gas exploration have also been signed by Sinopec and Petróleos de Venezuela. At the end of August 2005, China and Venezuela created a joint company, in order to develop the Zumano field in the state of Anzoátegui, where reserves are estimated at 400 million barrels. Thanks to these investments, Chavez plans to double his country's oil production by 2012—for China's specific benefit. China therefore expects to multiply its annual imports almost 5 times to reach 110 million barrels of oil and 1.8 million tons of Orimulsion® in less than 7 years.6

As one would expect, such close cooperation in the oil and commercial spheres would imply a need for Chinese expatriate commercial experts and businessmen. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Chinese-national community in Venezuela is now estimated to number more than 130,000.

However, irrespective of the current plans, the volume of Venezuela's exports to China remains limited for the moment because of the narrowness of the Panama Canal, which cannot accept large ships. The alternative maritime route, around Cape Horn, is twice as long (taking up to 45 days) as the Pacific crossing.

China a Threat?

From Washington, the Chinese presence is described as a threat under one or more of three headings: political, military, and economic.

**Political threat.** Chinese influence in the domestic political life of many Latin American countries is no longer debatable. In December 2004, during a visit by Hugo Chavez to Beijing, the Chinese Communist Party announced measures to strengthen links with Chavez's Movement for the Fifth Republic. This political measure was far from unique, since China maintains close relations with several “progressive” and revolutionary movements, including the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) in Bolivia. Led by Evo Morales, an indigenous highlander, the MAS took power in Bolivia after elections in 2005. Moreover, in Nicaragua, the possibility exists of a victory by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, led by Daniel Ortega, in this year's presidential election—a worrying prospect for Washington.

Some attribute the success of Chinese diplomacy to the limited interest the administration of President George W. Bush showed toward South America during his first term in office. Clearly, Beijing’s political support for revolutionary movements in Latin America can only encourage mistrust towards the United States. The links created with Beijing have therefore bolstered the efforts of Hugo Chavez as standard-bearer for the “Bolivarian alternative for the Americas,” a project intended to reinforce the integration of Andean region economies.

Additionally, in June 2005 Venezuela concluded the Petrocaribe agreement with 13 Caribbean countries. This agreement entails the delivery of Venezuelan oil at preferential tariffs in order to reduce the influence of the United States on the area’s economies. One result is that today Cuba has attained a measure of energy independence attributable in part to its own production, which covers half the needs of the island, and to supplemental deliveries by Venezuela.

**Security threat.** In military matters, China’s influence in Panama since the departure of the United States in December 1999 has fed alarmist debate in Washington. The role of the Hong Kong-based port-operating company Hutchison Whampoa Limited (HWL) has been the catalyst of such concerns. HWL is one of Hong Kong’s principal...
firms, with 150,000 employees spread over 40 countries. Through its various subsidiaries, HWL has operations in the telecommunications, hotel, and port management fields. HWL’s Hutchison Port Holdings (HPH), is one of the main port-operating firms in the world, handling 10 percent of the world’s container traffic.

HPH now manages over 30 ports throughout the world, most being nodes of international commerce such as Rotterdam, Freeport in the Bahamas, Jakarta, Kwangyang and Pusan in South Korea, the British port of Felixstowe, and several Mexican terminals, including Veracruz and Manzanillo. Since 1996, HPH has also taken over management of 2 port terminals in Panama, Cristobal and Balboa, on leases for a period of 25 years. On several occasions the U.S. Department of State has voiced fears aroused by the management of this strategic point by a Chinese firm.

According to some American observers, the Chinese presence in the Canal Zone has made the Zone a veritable crossroads for international criminality. Two-thirds of the ships transiting the Canal come from or are going to the United States. During the passage through the Canal, ships travel at a very slow speed, giving criminal groups opportunities to stow drugs or contraband of Latin American origin on board for transport to the United States. China is openly accused of allowing these illicit activities to flourish. The Panama Canal is also seen as a springboard for clandestine immigration into the United States, with Chinese complicity.

In addition, control of the Canal is perceived as a diplomatic weapon for Beijing to use against states which have diplomatic relations with, and recognize, Taiwan. Among the 25 states maintaining diplomatic relations with Taiwan, almost half are Latin American, including Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and El Salvador, together with 4 Caribbean countries (the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nevis-Saint Kitts, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). Chinese control of this commercial artery, upon which many of these nations depend in part for trade, may well convince some of their governments to review their policies toward Taiwan.

The deployment of 125 Chinese police to Haiti in 2004, under the auspices of a UN mission, was also part of China’s policy of influence.

Finally, China is also developing military cooperation with several Latin American countries. For example, Cuba allows China to use the telecommunications infrastructure built and since abandoned by the Russians, notably the Torrens base near Havana, which contains sophisticated equipment. This base was constructed in 1964 and housed more than 1,000 Russians until 2001.

**Economic threat.** China’s presence is encouraged by Latin American governments intent on reducing the commercial and financial influence of the United States over the region.

In part, this is evident in the diversity of trade being developed with regard to raw materials. PRC investment is not limited to the hydrocarbon sector, but also includes trade and investment, most notably in mining and food production industries.

With 25 percent of the world’s reserves of silver, 30 percent of tin, and 45 percent of copper, Latin America constitutes a real reservoir of raw materials. Today, Chile alone accounts for 40 percent of copper exports to China, which is the world’s leading consumer of copper.

China is also multiplying its trade investments in Brazil. In 2000, it was 15th among Brazil’s commercial partners; today it is Brazil’s second-ranking customer. In 2004, the largest Chinese steel producer, Baosteel, invested $1.5 billion in Brazil. Also, in May 2004, Brazil concluded an agreement between Sinopec and Petrobras which aims to double Brazilian oil exports to China. Beijing, for its part, agreed to invest in oil and gas exploration
and participate in infrastructure financing (oil and gas pipelines).

The United States has also been concerned about the increasingly numerous Chinese expatriate communities in Latin American countries and the risks of aggravated criminality, particularly in the strategic region between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay known as the triple frontier, or Tri-Border Area (TBA). Close to the Brazilian port of Paranagua, the TBA is formed by three towns served by the Pan-American Highway: Ciudad del Este (Paraguay), Iguazu (Argentina), and Foz do Iguaçu (Brazil). The ethnic Chinese population living in this region is now estimated at 30,000, mainly in Ciudad del Este.

Since the 1970s, the TBA has been a flourishing site for commerce (40,000 people cross the Friendship Bridge between Brazil and Paraguay each day), as well as smuggling and narco-trafficking. Several Chinese criminal organizations, such as the Fu Chin and the Tai Chen Sanin, are actively engaged in customs fraud, extortion, drug trafficking, and counterfeiting. These groups are also thought to provide selective logistic support to groups aiding radical fundamentalist Islamic movements present in the TBA. The United States assesses that this region, which houses a large Muslim community (mainly Lebanese but also Syrian), harbors dormant networks able to commit attacks of the kind perpetrated in Argentina on the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and 2 years later against a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. The link between the drug cartels, the Asian triads, and some small groups associating themselves with radical Islam is seen as a destabilizing factor to the overall security of the region.

Above all, Washington is concerned about China’s attitude in the coming years as it seeks to preserve its valuable economic interests and its expatriate presence. In Venezuela, several Chinese expatriates have recently been killed. Such actions could enable Beijing to justify a more assertive military presence.

The Future Azimuth

Their political, military, or economic goals notwithstanding, the Chinese face several obstacles in their dealings with Latin America.

First, Beijing will be unable to dominate these countries, whose economic weight remains significant—in contrast to their ability to influence certain African countries.

Next, with regard to competing for energy resources in Latin America (just as in Central Asia and Africa, particularly the Sudan), China faces rising competition from India, whose need for oil is also growing continuously. India shows every sign of becoming the fourth-ranking consumer of oil by 2010, behind only the United States, China, and Japan. Already, India depends on foreign imports for 70 percent of its oil, a proportion projected to reach 80 percent in 2010 and 87 percent in 2020. And, although the Indian government intends to speed up oil prospecting on its own territory, any possible new fields will not satisfy its steadily increasing consumption.

Not surprisingly, in March 2005 India concluded a partnership with Venezuela enabling an Indian company, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC Videsh Oil), to acquire 49 percent of the San Cristobal oilfield. In Cuba, this same firm was granted several oil concessions. Cuba’s exclusive economic zone is divided into 59 blocks, open to foreign investors since 1999. Estimates of the reserves have settled at around 5 million barrels.

Thus, China can be expected to continue its determined quest for hydrocarbons and, after Africa (especially Sudan and Angola), will be venturing into the United States’ traditional zones of influence. Therefore, from the Gulf of Guinea to the Andean Cordillera, from the Caspian Sea to the Spratley Islands, a competition for oil between the United States and China is under way and can only get worse. From now on, however, the two protagonists must also take into account rising and determined competition from India in seeking fossil fuel resources. MR

NOTES

3. China National Petroleum Corporation is China’s second largest oil company after China National Chemical. It ranks higher than China National Offshore Oil Corporation.
4. PlusPetrol is an Argentinean company, but the majority shareholder is the Spanish firm Repsol.
5. Venezuela’s oil production constitutes 45 percent of South America’s output. Its output is approximately 80 percent of Mexico’s.
6. Orimulsion® is a bituminous hydrocarbon used around the world as an alternative fuel for electricity generation.
We must rapidly transform our past combat search and rescue concept into one that uses all of our air, ground, and maritime capabilities to rapidly report, locate, support, recover, and return our Soldiers, civilians, and contractors to friendly control.

—Chief of Staff of the Army General Peter J. Schoomaker

Because of the nonlinear, noncontiguous nature of the modern battlespace, the risk of isolation extends to every Soldier and requires the effort of all concerned to assist in recovery. A significant part of the transformation General Peter J. Schoomaker refers to (left) requires that we understand the operational environment. While the tendency is to look at how personnel recovery (PR) is being accomplished in U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) as the best way to do business, the reality is that the operational environment in every other combatant command is significantly different from CENTCOM’s. Consequently, while the principles of PR still apply, the application of those principles must be modified relative to the operational environment.

Clearly, a moral imperative extends to recovering all service members who are isolated, missing, detained, or captured. While most resources and attention are understandably focused on the military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, this does not relieve other regional combatant commanders of the responsibility to develop PR programs with a recovery architecture appropriate to their theaters of responsibility. In fact, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3270.01A, Personnel Recovery within the Department of Defense, requires each regional combatant commander to do so.

Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) recognizes the need to adapt the principles of evolving PR doctrine to the specifics of the operational environment. Such adaptation is applicable to every regional combatant command (RCC). The U.S. military is conducting operations in every RCC, from theater security cooperation to stability operations to major combat operations. These operations are being conducted with different command and control (C2) structures, with coalition partners who have varying degrees of influence, and within sovereign partner nations with which our government has fluctuating diplomatic relationships. These variables are not accounted for in PR doctrine, but they must be considered when planning, preparing, and executing recovery operations.

Evolution of Doctrine

To understand SOUTHCOM’s approach and its intrinsic, unique challenges, one must first understand the doctrinal PR model. In the past, what has evolved into personnel recovery was labeled combat search and rescue and was unique to aircrews and Special Operations Forces (SOF). From that perspective, units with the highest risk of isolation were trained to deal with the possibility of becoming isolated, and those same units provided trained and dedicated forces to recover isolated personnel.
With a greater understanding of the asymmetric battlefield came the recognition that all personnel are at risk of isolation, and the more inclusive term “personnel recovery” was adopted. Since the SOF and aviation communities had the expertise for recovery, they were instrumental in developing initial PR doctrine and did so from the major theater of war (MTW) approach with which they were familiar. Consequently, the desired end-state of PR doctrine was to expand the sphere of coverage to a greater population, using similar resources and previously employed task organization. As a result, personnel recovery doctrine was developed to recover downed aircrews and SOF. The principal modification to this approach was to use assets for recovery not traditionally used for that purpose.

The methodology is to use planning tools such as the joint integrated prioritized target list and the air tasking order to locate enemy targets and, reflexively, to determine where the greatest probability of isolation is likely to occur. Based on that, planners can position dedicated recovery forces to best support those requirements, or they can identify assets on the battlefield that can expediently recover a person considered to be isolated, missing, detained, or captured.

With respect to the conduct of major combat operations in an MTW environment, the fundamental components of this approach are sound and in line with Schoomaker’s message. The components of personnel recovery are commanders and staffs, recovery forces, and the individual. Commanders and staffs task organize and exercise command and control of available forces to create an infrastructure that can execute the five PR tasks: report, locate, support, recover, and reintegrate isolated persons. Recovery forces can either be dedicated or designated. Forces that are specifically trained with a primary PR mission are dedicated recovery forces, while other forces, although not specifically trained to be recovery forces, might have skills that make them capable of conducting a recovery.

Individual PR skills are imparted through basic Soldier skills and survival, evasion, resistance, and escape (SERE) training. The approach to SERE is evolving from resistance-oriented training (how to withstand captivity) to survival-and-evasion-oriented training (how to avoid the captivity experience). Individual training also focuses on every individual’s situational understanding of the supporting PR architecture. By understanding the architecture, individuals can most proactively assist in their own recovery.

**PR in SOUTHCOM**

In SOUTHCOM, the two most significant differences (from the MTW model) are who owns the battlespace and within that battlespace, who has the authority for conducting military operations. In CENTCOM (an MTW), those answers are relatively simple. The military coalition owns the battlespace and the military C2 structure has the authority for operations. Thus, personnel recovery takes a relatively simple approach: Identify where operations are to be conducted and, in parallel, allocate resources and plan for the eventuality of individuals becoming isolated.

In SOUTHCOM, the answers to the questions of battlespace ownership and authority are at first confusing and only get more so as different variables are added. First and foremost, the partner nations own the battlespace. These countries are sovereign nations, and without the appropriate presidential authority we must not violate that sovereignty. Effective authority for U.S. military operations is limited to that granted by the partner nation. In fact, it would be difficult to define (in a doctrinal sense) anyplace in SOUTHCOM as the command’s battlespace. Even in Colombia, where the Colombian Government is decisively engaged in combat operations against violent Marxist insurgents and self-defense groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the United States is limited to an advise-and-assist role. This effort is defined (and limited) by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1964 and the 2004 National Security Presidential Directive 18 (detailing support to counter narcotics).

Even so, within the conduct of this advise-and-assist mission, a very real threat of isolation (and subsequent capture/detention) exists for U.S. personnel.

*With a greater understanding of the asymmetric battlefield came the recognition that all personnel are at risk of isolation...*
Another factor affecting personnel recovery is that because operations take place within partner nations, the preeminent U.S. authority is the U.S. ambassador (as chief of the diplomatic mission), and the authority is vested in the president’s mission letter. The effect on command and control of PR missions is that the traditional doctrinal model does not apply. In that model, launch-and-execute authorities for personnel recovery are vested wholly within the military C2 structure. According to the MTW model, the U.S. military should also control recovery assets, but that probably will not happen in SOUTHCOM. The result is that the PR architecture that current doctrine defines cannot be responsive to isolating incidents in SOUTHCOM. As Wade Chapple, Director of the Rescue Coordination Center in Colombia, says: “In Iraq and Afghanistan, the Personnel Recovery apparatus is fully dedicated and commanded by military officers possessing unilateral authority to launch or recover rescue forces. This paradigm does not exist in Colombia. We have no dedicated rescue assets (other than our rescue center) nor does any single U.S. military officer possess launch authority; not even the combatant commander. Rather, in order to participate in search and rescue operations, even when U.S. personnel are isolated, we must first acquire permission from the Colombian Government and approval from the U.S. Ambassador to Colombia. We have, however, managed to develop a quick, capable response mechanism.”

DOD an Integral Element

The principal effect of partner-nation sovereignty and delegation of authority to the chief of the diplomatic mission is that PR coordination must take place within the country in which the isolating event occurs. All of the authority and probably most of the resources reside in that country. This does not mean that the Department of Defense (DOD) is left out of the loop. To the contrary, DOD is integral to success. Although DOD might not have the requisite authority to unilaterally coordinate a recovery, it does have the expertise to do such a mission. An Institute for Defense Analysis study articulates this dichotomy in terms of two situations: the joint force commander in charge and the chief of mission in charge. The circumstances in SOUTHCOM are significantly more akin to the second example: If an isolating event occurs in SOUTHCOM, there might not be any DOD recovery assets in country, and getting them into country would take too long. So, where will recovery assets come from?

While every situation is different, the two most common sources for recovery assets are U.S. Government agencies and partner nations (most likely partner-nation military assets). In both cases, authority for coordination resides with the chiefs of diplomatic missions. In the event DOD assets are in country, the authority to deploy them for a recovery still resides with the chiefs because of the requirement to coordinate their use with the partner nation (airspace, rules of engagement, and so on) through the U.S. Department of State (DOS).

SOUTHCOM meets these challenges by using the existing infrastructure while fabricating the missing pieces. The focal point of this effort requires establishing a PR-knowledgeable entity in each country. Clearly this cannot happen overnight, but SOUTHCOM is accomplishing this one step at a time, one country at a time, based on priorities. Priority is dictated by several factors, including the number of U.S. military assigned or routinely deployed in a country, the threat to U.S. personnel, the level of support to PR (from DOS), and the level of support from the partner nation. In high-priority countries, the partner-nation entity is a personnel recovery center (PRC) consisting of an appropriate number of full-time, PR-trained persons who respond directly to the military group commander. Currently, all PRCs are manned by contractors because contractors have the specific skill sets required to coordinate PR issues.

Negative Sentiment Toward U.S.

In general, U.S. policies and initiatives regarding Latin America have been and are viewed as intrusive. Many people in the region are wary of U.S. hegemonic aspirations and violations of national sovereignty. Generally, partner nations in the area are guarded with respect to U.S. motives; they believe that a close association with the United States yields few benefits. Such negative public
SOUTHCOM meets these [PR] challenges by using the existing infrastructure while fabricating the missing pieces.

sentiment toward the United States constrains the ability of many states to cooperate on security matters, regardless of the potential benefit to their own security interests. Therefore, it is essential that SOUTHCOM emphasize the benefits a partner nation can gain from a cooperative effort to establish a PR infrastructure.

For SOUTHCOM to continue to help partner nations in their efforts at internal development, each country must provide adequate security for a stable environment. SOUTHCOM’s primary focus is to help partner nations improve their security forces’ capabilities in areas of mutual national interest. Since it is impractical for SOUTHCOM to deploy dedicated recovery capabilities, partner nations must provide a significant portion of these essential assets. Reflexively, it is our responsibility to help partner nations develop a PR capability.

Because the primary function of security-assistance offices (SAOs) is to execute the theater security cooperation program, ideally that program should manage the country teams’ PR programs. Theater security cooperation is a DOS program (executed by DoD) that provides equipment, education, and training to partner-nation militaries. With an intrinsic part of SOUTHCOM’s concept mandating the integration of partner-nation assets, the connection between PR and theater security cooperation provides bilateral support to both participants. Since the SAO helps determine partner-nation requirements and how those requirements, if filled, can support U.S. regional objectives, it is the perfect agency to coordinate support with the partner nation.

Working with the SOUTHCOM PR branch, each country team must develop a country-specific PR plan and get it approved by the partner-nation’s U.S. ambassador. In this way, coordination procedures for an isolating event are codified before the event. Such procedures address coordination for use of U.S. interagency and DoD assets as well as procedures to coordinate for partner-nation assets.

There is growing support within U.S. embassies to evolve this methodology into a PR annex and add it to the chief of the diplomatic mission’s emergency action plan. The ideal situation would be to establish a PR coordinator in every country, but because this is fiscally impractical, a majority of country teams will establish a PR point of contact (POC), probably someone already assigned to the military group. The person selected would be a part-time PR coordinator, fulfilling the same coordination functions with government agencies and partner nations as a full-time PR coordinator. The responsibility to train the PR POC rests with SOUTHCOM. Because PR POCs are assigned to the military group, they are automatically integrated into the theater security cooperation process. As with the PR coordinator, PR POCs can be augmented when required.

The SOUTHCOM PR architecture also must maintain the ability to support a more traditional PR scenario. While it is unlikely that the United States will be involved in major combat operations in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility, there is a high probability that SOUTHCOM will be required to execute stability and support operations in pursuance of U.S. goals and objectives. These scenarios will require the PR architecture to support operations more in line with doctrine.

The most likely scenario is that the combatant commander would task an assigned component commander to act as a joint force commander specific to a contingency. That commander would be responsible for a specific joint operation area. SOUTHCOM Regulation 05-11 requires the joint force commander to establish a personnel recovery coordination center (PRCC), the nucleus of which would be formed from the designated component’s PRCC and augmented (as necessary) from other components to form a joint PRCC, if required.

Regardless of the circumstances, the joint force commander’s PR element would plug into the in-country PR infrastructure already developed.
With this model, ambassadors would be able to safeguard the lives of U.S. citizens isolated in any country.

by the PR coordinator or PR POC. The same concept would apply for exercises within the area of responsibility.

Each regional combatant commander must assess PR requirements based on the dynamics of the given operational environment. In many cases, it’s probable that those requirements will extend beyond the traditional combat search and rescue doctrinal paradigm. The SOUTHCOM PR model provides a recovery capability that will meet the requirements of DOD Directive 2310.2 ("Personnel Recovery") and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3270.01A. With this model, ambassadors would be able to safeguard the lives of U.S. citizens isolated in any country.

While the responsibility for personnel recovery rests squarely on each RCC’s shoulders, often the commanders cannot do PR alone; to succeed, they must coordinate their efforts with other U.S. Government agencies. Along with the interagency community, RCCs must strengthen existing bilateral relationships with partner nations in their areas of responsibility. They must foster an understanding of the mutual utility of PR and the importance of a cooperative effort in developing a PR infrastructure. Given the advent of the non-linear battlefield, the rise of asymmetric warfare, and a corresponding increase in the likelihood that Soldiers can become isolated, go missing, or get captured, it is imperative that we develop and implement an effective multilateral, cooperative PR strategy that provides greater security for us and our partner nations.

NOTES
1. GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, message to the field, 16 May 2005.
3. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3270.01A, Personnel Recovery Within the Department of Defense (Washington, DC: GPO, 1 July 2003), A9-14.
4. For more information, see National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) George W. Bush Administration NSPD 18, Supporting Democracy in Colombia, November 2002 (not available on-line), and Foreign Assistance Act of 1964 (not available on-line).
5. Wade Chapple, Director of the Rescue Coordination Center in Colombia, presentation at the U.S. Southern Command Personnel Recovery Conference, January, 2005.
7. In this article, I refer to as military groups.
8. SOUTHCOM Reg 05-11.
RESERVE COMPONENT
MOBILIZATION:
Improving Accountability, Effectiveness, AND Efficiency

Lieutenant Colonel Dennis P. Chapman, U.S. Army National Guard

Whereas, No adequate means has been provided for obtaining the numerical volunteer force enlisted in the several counties of this State . . . , the adjutant general of this State shall . . . transmit to the county clerk of each county in this State a correct list of the persons mustered into the service of the United States, or of this State, from such county. . . .

A recent series of articles in USA Today revealed that more than 3 years after the invasion of Iraq, the military services were unable to state authoritatively how many service members have deployed. The Army was best able to answer the question, but what should have been a “good news” story on this score was tainted by inconsistency among the various databases about the precise number of Soldiers who have participated in the Iraq campaign.

The Problem

Figure 1 depicts the estimate of current mobilized strength for the U.S. Army National Guard (ARNG) as of March 2005, as reflected in various military databases. The figure reveals great disparity among the databases, with estimates ranging from a low of 82,760 to a high of 108,724, a discrepancy of nearly 24 percent. In figure 2, the picture improves somewhat. Corrections for the dates of the various samples narrow the gap to about 20 percent, which is better, but still a big difference. Figure 3 provides another perspective. It depicts the estimated aggregate number of ARNG Soldiers drawing hazardous duty pay in early April 2005 as reflected in Army payroll versus ARNG operational data. In this example, the aggregate number of Soldiers differs by only 148 Soldiers. But when viewed from a unit perspective, these data are also problematic: Of the 1,885 ARNG units reflected in Army payroll data as having Soldiers receiving hazardous duty pay, 334 units had never mobilized.

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<td>108,724</td>
<td>99,399</td>
<td>96,176</td>
<td>82,760</td>
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Legend: ARNG, Army National Guard; DA, Department of the Army; DFAS, Defense Finance and Accounting Service; NGB, National Guard Bureau; TAPDB, Total Army Personnel Database.

Figure 1. Raw data: Number of mobilized ARNG Soldiers on duty as of March 2005. Discrepancy between largest and smallest: 25,965, approximately 24 percent (source: NGB).
Such discrepancies are extremely frustrating for senior leaders struggling to understand the true status of the force. Resolving discrepancies requires virtually a forensic analysis of unit strength data, a tedious and difficult exercise. A number of factors contribute to this: Army reliance on stovepiped, unsynchronized information systems; inefficient procedures for assembling forces into discrete mission packages; and extensive unit fragmentation driven by current mobilization policies and practices.  

Although these examples use ARNG data, we must recognize that this is not just an ARNG problem. The problems at issue are just as pertinent to the other Reserve Components (RCs).

**Progress to Date**

Since 9/11, the Army has taken a number of steps to streamline and improve accountability of the force. The first was development of the U.S. Department of the Army Mobilization Processing System (DAMPS). DAMPS is a Web-based, mostly paperless system for executing unit mobilization actions from request for alert through publication of unit mobilization orders. The system has greatly improved the mobilization process. Another example is the Deployed Theater Accountability System (DTAS), another Web-based system. DTAS provides comprehensive visibility in the time and space of units and personnel deployed in-theater. Another system is the Deployment and Redeployment Tracking System (DARTS), which is a Web-based system developed by U.S. Army Forces Command that tracks the deployment status of RC Soldiers and units.

Valuable as these systems are, while they solve some problems, they aggravate others. They improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their sponsoring commands, but they can exacerbate the Army’s overall accountability problem because each propagates yet another stovepiped, standalone database, creating still more instances of conflicting data. Fortunately, the Army has begun to recognize this and is working to remedy one of our most vexing accountability challenges—to correctly match individual mobilized Soldiers at the social security number level to the units with which they are serving. This problem exists in large part because data are transferred among the various databases manually and because systems

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<tr>
<td>108,724</td>
<td>99,399</td>
<td>96,176</td>
<td>82,760</td>
<td>Figure 1 data.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td></td>
<td>Soldiers mobilized between 1 and 18 March 2005, therefore not included in TAPDB numbers.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>Full-time ARNG Soldiers mobilized but not reflected in DFAS data.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>826</td>
<td>Soldiers mobilized between 1 and 15 March 2005, therefore not included in DFAS numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108,724</td>
<td>99,399</td>
<td>97,287</td>
<td>87,086</td>
<td>Adjusted totals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 2. Adjusted data: Number of mobilized ARNG Soldiers on duty as of March 2005. Discrepancy between largest and smallest: 21,638, approximately 20 percent (source: NGB).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARNG operation data</th>
<th>Soldiers Receiving HD Pay</th>
<th>Units with Soldiers Receiving HD Pay</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52,443</td>
<td>1,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFAS pay data</td>
<td>52,295</td>
<td>1,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepancy</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>(334)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 3. Hazardous duty (HD) pay by Soldier and Derivative Unit Identification Code (DUIC) as of April 2005 (source: NGB).
operate on different internal parameters. This results in abundant opportunities for introducing errors. The solution currently under development is to automatically cross-populate the various databases when the Soldier’s individual mobilization orders are initiated.

Reconciling these dueling databases will be a great stride forward but, alone, would not be enough to substantially streamline the process of mobilizing Soldiers. The Army will never be able to “see” itself accurately until it can adequately aggregate small units and individuals into discrete, durable mission packages that are recognized across all U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) systems. Understanding this problem requires familiarity with a few basic concepts in the mobilization process. The first is how the Army identifies and tracks units. Every unit has a name, usually consisting of an alphanumeric designation and a description of the unit type, sometimes with a special capability descriptor appended. The names are used in the vernacular, but military databases track units by unit identification code (UIC), a 6-digit alphanumeric designation unique to each unit. When only a fragment of a unit mobilizes, a special derivative unit identification code (DUIC) is created for that element. The codes are analogous to an individual Soldier’s social security number and are used in every action affecting the unit.

Understanding how the Army mobilizes RC soldiers is also important. Unlike Soldiers in the Individual Ready Reserve, members of U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) or ARNG units are not directly mobilized. The Army mobilizes the units, and the respective Reserve Components mobilize the soldiers in those units. The mechanism for accomplishing this is a U.S. Department of the Army (DA) unit mobilization order that specifies the unit name, UIC/DUIC, authorized number of personnel, and the date the unit will enter active duty, among other information. The respective components and First U.S. Army then execute orders by implementing orders of their own.

This seems simple enough, but things soon get murky. Large units must frequently mobilize some Soldiers to attend military schools or to act as an advance party before the unit’s main body arrives. But this creates a dilemma: The services cannot directly mobilize Soldiers individually, while

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<th>Battalions and Separate Companies</th>
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<td>Organic structure</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Early mobilizing DUICs</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>Filler and plug DUICs</td>
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<td>73</td>
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<td>TOTAL UICs</td>
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Legend: DUIC, Derivative identification code; UIC, Unit identification code.

Figure 4. UIC/DUIC structure of one brigade-size unit mobilized for service in Iraq (source: NGB).

Reserve Components cannot mobilize units or Soldiers without the authorization of their parent services. Reserve Components break this cycle by assigning these Soldiers to specially created DUICs that the Army then mobilizes separately, ahead of the parent unit. Cross-leveling of personnel further complicates matters. To reach full strength, most RC units require both augmentation and replacements for losses incurred during the unit’s mobilization and deployment. For ARNG units, augmentees usually come from within the parent unit’s home state. Some will come from other states, however, which creates another unique problem: Under current practices, a Soldier from one state cannot be assigned directly to a unit in another state or another component. Just as they do with early mobilizing elements, the components solve this problem by assigning cross-state and cross-component augmentees to special DUICs created by the Soldier’s home state or component. The augmentees then join the recipient unit on mobilization.

Figure 4 illustrates how this practice affects unit organization. It depicts the UIC structure of a brigade-size RC unit previously mobilized for service in Iraq. The operational structure of this particular unit consisted of 11 battalions and separate companies organized into about 35 organic UICs. When actually mobilized, however, the organization deploys with 166 UICs and DUICs. These are not 166 separate tactical elements, of course. The Soldiers assigned to them are incorporated into the organization’s organic structure and task organized for combat, regardless of which DUIC they mobilize with. However, many
of the Army’s personnel and operational databases track each DUIC as a separate entity throughout the mobilization, as if it was an actual operational unit.

By now you might be tempted to ask: So what? Who cares whether a unit deploys with one UIC or 100? In fact, it matters a great deal. DUIC proliferation creates an enormous burden for unit commanders and staffs struggling to manage and account for large units. The Army must maintain every DUIC activated and account for each through every phase of unit mobilization and deployment. Because each DUIC is technically a separate unit, commanders must waste a great deal of effort duplicating administrative actions for several DUICs that would normally need to be accomplished only once per unit.

Another major challenge is identifying and filling unit vacancies. One problem is that cross-leveling and capabilities-based (vice unit-based) sourcing causes an extraordinary fragmentation of RC units. After almost 5 years of war, nearly every RC unit has a significant population of Soldiers who have previously mobilized. Under current policy these Soldiers are usually not available to mobilize again unless they volunteer to do so. Current readiness reporting procedures do not account for this significant problem. Postmobilization attrition before deployment caused by training injuries is another problem. And then there are problems that are not visible to the chain of command before mobilization. The result is a high degree of personnel turbulence that makes it difficult for the Reserve Components to track losses with any degree of fidelity, which in turn can significantly delay the arrival of replacement Soldiers at the unit. This complicates unit training and other preparations.

Force Tailoring

For these and other reasons, correctly visualizing the personnel status of RC units is a major challenge. Something better is required. A successful successor to current practices would include several elements:

- A force-tailoring system that would modify existing units or build new ones to meet specific mission requirements in-theater.
- A mission packaging system that would aggregate disparate elements into discreet, enduring mission packages that would remain visible throughout mobilization and deployment, regardless of task organization in-theater.
- A manpower-generation system capable of assessing unit manpower shortages, identifying Soldiers or units to fill those vacancies, and tracking the status of these shortages and the efforts being made to fill them throughout the process.

These elements would be interdependent, would interface effectively with existing legacy systems, and together would comprise an integrated system that—

- Would incorporate changes into policy, procedures, and database systems.
- Would be driven from the bottom up and oriented toward input from the lowest possible level, starting with company commanders and first sergeants.
- Would be Web-based, receiving information from and uploading it to existing legacy databases (including populating and editing data fields and modifying or customizing unit structure as reflected in those systems).
- Would contain cross-reference data in new and legacy systems, automatically updating and reconciling where possible and publishing error reports to unit commanders for remedial action when appropriate.
- Would be built from commercially available, off-the-shelf products rather than the specially designed, proprietary systems the Army customarily employs.

Force-Tailoring Module

The first component of this new system would be a force-tailoring module like the one figure 5 depicts. The primary aim of this module would be to—

- Reconfigure existing units or to generate new ones to meet capability requirements in-theater.
- Help unit commanders modify the modified tables of organization and equipment (MTOE) and unit-manning rosters of existing units.
- Design and build provisional units in response to requirements received from theater.

Modifications would include—

- Adding or deleting portions of the unit structure.
- Modifying the unit’s authorized rank and military occupation specialty structure.
- Changing gender-assignment codes.
- Modifying equipment authorizations.
- Making other changes as required.

The new system would automatically upload these changes and other data into all relevant legacy systems and automatically identify and resolve any second- and third-order effects of such modifications (such as bonus, promotion, assignment, and
readiness rating problems, and so on), or it would prompt unit commanders to take appropriate steps to resolve them. More important, the system would be driven from the bottom up. Commanders and staffs at unit and Joint Force Headquarters/Regional Readiness Command levels would organize the modified unit, including developing a provisional table of distribution of allowances or MTOE, publishing permanent orders establishing the unit, populating the provisional unit manning document, and taking other appropriate actions.

The respective components would then initiate a request for alert and mobilization of the reconfigured unit, if that had not already occurred. The unit would endure in this provisional configuration only for the duration of the mission, automatically reverting to its basic configuration at a pre-determined point following demobilization.

**Mission Packaging**

Another critical requirement is to develop an effective mission-packaging system. Current mobilization practices use DUICs as the primary vehicle for mobilizing Soldiers before the main body of their unit mobilizes and for bringing out-of-state or cross-component augmentees into RC units. Unfortunately, the Army has no effective means of bundling them together for accountability.

Proliferation of DUICs injects an extraordinary level of friction into mobilization and accountability efforts. A new approach would eliminate this friction by establishing the following rule as a basic operating principle: *One unit, one UIC, one unit mobilization order.* All assigned personnel at the company or detachment level would be packaged into a single unit organized under one UIC/DUIC with a single unit mobilization order, regardless of state or component of origin or the date when the individuals mobilized with respect to the unit’s main body. Only bona fide units would be mobilized via the unit mobilization process; that is, only an entity with a defined structure and chain of command, a corporate identity, and a defined collective mission. Individuals or groups not meeting these criteria would be mobilized outside the unit process through personnel channels.

When developing the provisional unit organization, RC commanders would be able to excise the organic structure that would remain behind in a rear detachment DUIC and incorporate unit plugs (even from other states, components, or services) directly into the provisional unit in their place. This would require policy changes. One such change would be to create guidelines that would allow the early mobilization of a clearly defined segment of every mobilizing unit. Authorization for such could be communicated via enabling language in the DA unit mobilization order authorizing a specified number of Soldiers to mobilize a specified number of days before the entire unit mobilized.

A knottier problem is one that is caused by unit plugs, individual fillers, and replacements mobilizing from across state lines. The operational, administrative, and legal framework of the Army mobilization system rests on the assumption that ARNG units will mobilize as complete entities and that ARNG and USAR Soldiers will be involuntarily mobilized only.
as members of their respective units and not individually. Unfortunately, these assumptions proved false when RC mobilizations became commonplace after the Cold War, especially when it became immediately clear that a need would frequently arise for only a portion of a given RC unit’s capabilities, but not for the entire unit. DUICs were developed to meet this need. The required capability is formed into a provisional unit under the DUIC. This provisional element might or might not be a unit in the common understanding of the word, but it would be treated as a unit in a technical sense and staffed through the mobilization process as if it were a complete, organic unit.12

Creating provisional units has been a useful expedient, particularly during the relatively modest level of mobilization prevalent before 9/11. When employed under the dramatically expanded RC mobilization in support of the Global War on Terror, however, this useful expedient proves problematic. Extensive reliance on the unit mobilization process to accomplish what are really individual mobilization actions—

● Undermines strength and individual accounting within the RC force.

● Significantly delays arrival of Soldiers at their units.

● Vastly increases the administrative burden required to bring these soldiers on active duty.

Some argue that the law imposes the expedient of DUICs on us, citing Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 12302(a), Ready Reserve, as authority.13 This language combined with a regulatory language that allows “units” to consist of a single soldier leads some to conclude that only by employing the mechanism of DUICs as fictional units can we legally mobilize fillers from across state or component lines. This reasoning cannot bear scrutiny, however. Neither the statute nor DOD Directive 1235.10, “Activation, Mobilization, and Demobilization of the Ready Reserve,” mention DUICs or prescribe any specific procedures for implementation, leaving these details instead to the respective services.14

A basic rule of statutory interpretation is to construe the language of a statute according to its plain meaning. Clearly, according to the usual understanding of the term, “unit” implies a collective or group, not an individual Soldier.15 Thus, it is arguably sounder operationally and legally to interpret a Soldier’s postmobilization status, not the mechanism used to mobilize him, as dispositive for purposes of the “unit” prong of the statute. This approach would abandon the fiction of creating provisional units to get Soldiers on active duty and would rely instead on the concepts of “assignment” or “attachment.”

Rather than asking DA to mobilize a DUIC as a vehicle to get one or more fillers to a unit in another state or component, the state adjutant general would publish orders assigning or attaching Soldiers to receiving units. The state would then mobilize Soldiers as members of their units of attachment rather than as individual members of a unit comprising a separate DUIC. Clearly this approach would require further development, and it does not fit the statutory language perfectly. However, it would satisfy the intent of the statute at least as well as, and probably better than, current practices.

The critical point is that a truly efficient mobilization process requires a better method of mobilizing individual ARNG and USAR unit members when necessary (subject to the approval of the governor, as currently required).16 The Army should employ the unit mobilization process (the DUIC vehicle, for example) only where the mobilized element really is a unit in the meaningful sense of a discrete group of Soldiers with a permanent, organized chain of command, a corporate identity, an explicit collective mission, and other unit indicia, such as separate installation accounts, property accountability actions, and so on.17

This is not to say that the ARNG and USAR should be routinely levied for individual Soldiers. On the contrary, the Army should look to them to provide trained and ready units. However, a better method is needed for those cases when the ARNG and USAR must contribute individual Soldiers.

**Personnel Shortages**

One of the most significant challenges facing large mobilizing units is pinning down unit personnel shortages and tracking the progress toward filling them. A major lesson from recent mobilizations is that the populations of large units are extremely volatile. Many problems rendering Soldiers nondeployable emerge only after mobilization or occur as a result of postmobilization training. Thus, the unit must be backfilled by others from the unit’s home state. Further complicating the process is that many Soldiers initially deemed nondeployable will ultimately resolve their issues and return to deploy with their units.
Such turbulence is aggravated by the Army’s lack of a uniform standard for reporting personnel statistics for mobilizing units and the lack of a common lexicon to support it. Further hampering the effort is the apparent difficulty in transmitting timely and accurate information on current and projected vacancies from the company level through channels to brigade and higher levels for action. The result is a disjointed, unsynchronized manning effort: Vacancies emerge and are passed on to headquarters for fill too late for the fillers to attend collective training with the unit while other fillers report to units only to find that the previously vacant positions against which they were mobilized have already been filled. Meanwhile, unit commanders find the process frustratingly opaque, unresponsive, and slow.

The Army needs something better. It needs a fast, flexible, accurate system for identifying unit vacancies and sourcing them for fill. A successful system would:

- Be bottom-driven, starting with input from unit first sergeants directly into the system.
- Replace the current vertical, sequential process for staffing unit vacancies with a horizontal, collaborative system under which all stakeholders have real-time visibility of both unit vacancies and of the status of efforts to fill them.
- Include a standard lexicon and reporting procedures common across all components.
- Be fully integrated with all existing legacy databases, with the ability to view, upload, and download data.

Time for a Change

Specialists in areas ranging from information technology to personnel policy might object to the observations and proposals outlined here. Some will argue that the proposed capabilities already exist; others will argue that solutions to the problems described are already under development. These assertions are true. Capabilities do exist and reforms are underway, but all of them are inadequate to the challenge. The capabilities are inaccessible and unknown to many commanders in the field, or they cover over specific problems and do not address the Army’s business processes in a global fashion. The Army needs a sea-change in institutional procedures—a transformational shift to a flatter, more flexible, more collaborative force. MR

NOTES

3. The U.S. Army National Guard (ARNG) figure has typically been the most reliable. The other statistics are based entirely on data derived from U.S. Department of the Army (DA) or individual Total Army Personnel Database (TAPDB) and Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) mobilization orders. ARNG data begin with information derived from unit mobilization orders but, subsequently, correct this information to reflect the actual number of Soldiers present with their units, as reported by their mobilization stations. This information is input daily and corrected weekly, while TAPDB and DFAS data are updated monthly (although some fields are updated more often).
4. Here, “unit” does not mean a unit in the ordinary sense; rather, it refers to each Unit Identification Code that has been mobilized under a separate unit mobilization order.
5. On one occasion, an officer charged with studying the true status of the force stated that he had stopped counting the many factors that contribute to the situation after he had identified 40 or more examples. Some principle examples include the DFAS database, TAPDB, the DA Mobilization Processing System (DAMPS) and its companion, the Mobilization and Deployment Information System (MDIS); the Deployment and Redeployment Tracking System (DARTS); the Deployed Theater Accountability System (OTAS); and many others.
6. The legal basis for distinguishing between the mobilization of units and the mobilization of individual Soldiers in those units is Title 10, U.S. Code (USC), Section 12302(a), Ready Reserve, which reads: “In time of national emergency declared by the President after January 1, 1953, or when otherwise authorized by law, an authority designated by the Secretary concerned may, without the consent of the persons concerned, order any unit, and any member not assigned to a unit organized to serve as a unit, in the Ready Reserve under the jurisdiction of that Secretary to active duty (other than for training) for not more than 24 consecutive months.” (The Ronald Reagan Defense Authorization Act of 2005 removed the bar on ordering members to active duty for training.) See National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Public Law 108-375, Section 514.
7. Mobilizing an ARNG unit or derivative unit identification code (DUIC) requires five orders: a DA alert order; a National Guard Bureau alert order; a DA mobilization order; a unit mobilization order published by the First U.S. Army; and a unit mobilization order published by the state Joint Forces Headquarters. These would be followed by individual mobilization orders for each unit member.
8. One basis for this practice is U.S. Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 1235.10, “Activation, Mobilization, and Demobilization of the Ready Reserve,” para. E2.1.17, which defines a unit as “any identified and managed group or detachment of one or more individuals organized to perform a particular function whether or not such a group is part of a larger group.
9. Unlike individual fillers who are members of ARNG or U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) units, fillers from the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) do not require DUICs. They simply receive individual mobilization orders. Likewise, Active Component Soldiers tapped as fillers for ARNG or USAR units do not require a mobilized DUIC; they receive temporary or permanent change of station orders directing them to the unit’s mobilization station.
10. DAMPS, MDIS, DARTS, and DTAS have some capability to either link disparate DUICs or aggregate Soldiers from multiple DUICs under a single unit, but each system accomplishes the linkage only after the action has passed through multiple headquarters at a point in the process remote in time and space from the units and Soldiers affected. Also, the work accomplished is not updated to any other system and is not easily accessible to other stakeholders.
11. Buying off-the-shelf products might require a bit of a paradigm shift for the Army, which seems to rely heavily on custom-built, proprietary, in-house systems. This tendency is understandable: The Armed Forces first begin using automated data processing systems during World War II when any system it used almost had to be custom-built. For a long time thereafter military demand was a principal stimulus of advancements in computer and software technology. The world has changed, however. The military is no longer preeminent in this area. The Army can expect better results from technologies developed in and for the private sector.
12. See DODD 1235.10, para. E2.1.17, which provides a regulatory basis for this practice.
13. See Title 10, USC.
14. DODD 1235.10.
15. DODD 1235.10 defines a unit as one or more Soldiers. However, the definition specifies that a unit is one or more Soldiers organized for a specific purpose, which implies much more than a single-Soldier entity mobilized solely as filler or replacement. (Phrasing added.)
16. Administrative procedures do exist for bringing Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers on duty without DUICs, but they are limited. The Human Resources Command in Alexandria, Virginia, publishes orders for ARNG and RC unit members activated as individuals under Title 10, USC, Section 12301, and for Soldiers from the IRR, with neither group requiring DUICs. However, unit members activated under Title 10, USC, Section 12301, must be volunteers. Unlike for IRR Soldiers, no mechanism exists to bring unit members on active duty under Partial Mobilization (Title 10, USC, Section 12302(a)) or Presidential Reserve Call Up (Title 10, USC, Section 12304).
17. I assume that even if the Army develops a mechanism for calling up individual unit members under Title 10, USC Sections 12302(a) or 12304, such mobilizations of individual Soldiers from the ARNG would still require the approval of the governor of each Soldier’s state, acting through the authority of the State Adjutant General.
Since the abuses at Abu Ghraib in Iraq came to public attention, a group of critics, pundits, and other purported experts have offered a surfeit of theories on the “real” lessons of that incident. Unfortunately, many of these theories rely on the questionable inference that a causal connection existed between detainee abuse and Coalition interrogation efforts. Contrary to the critics’ assertions, the lesson of Abu Ghraib was not the long-understood truism that detainees must be shielded from cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment during interrogation. Instead, the “real” lesson of Abu Ghraib is much subtler than this and is reflected not in the fact that the incident occurred, but in the fact that the events at Abu Ghraib represent an exception to the overall outstanding record of compliance with the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) by U.S. Armed Forces.

In the 4 plus years since the initiation of military operations associated with the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), U.S. Soldiers have confronted threats from both conventional and unconventional enemies, including regular armed forces, militia groups, militant groups, and members of transnational terrorist organizations equipped to conduct military-type operations. U.S. forces have engaged in belligerent occupation, counterinsurgency operations, and stability and support operations. A common thread running through this multitude of operations is the complexity and great necessity of understanding and complying with the LOAC. If there is one unanimously agreed-upon lesson from the debacle at Abu Ghraib, it is that effective resolution of LOAC issues is of profound significance when planning and executing credible U.S. military operations. The challenges associated with identifying the scope and applicability of the LOAC in relation to the military component of the GWOT are aspects of every military operation at every level of command. Indeed, the now notorious “torture memos” generated at the highest levels of our government, along with President George W. Bush’s written determinations regarding applicability of the LOAC to members of Al-Qaeda, demonstrate that this challenge has reached the highest level of national security policy development.

In response to the detainee abuse revelations, scrutiny is being cast on the doctrine, training, execution, and leadership aspects of detention and interrogation procedures. This scrutiny has led to reassessment of the quality and effectiveness of existing policies, doctrine, and training in ensuring compliance with the LOAC. Ironically, however, little assessment has been done regarding a key component in this compliance process: developing genuine LOAC expertise among members of the military legal profession. While there is no question that the tireless efforts of dedicated judge advocates have made a
tremendous contribution to the planning and execution of GWOT operations, there is no justification for failing to include a critique of the effectiveness of the current techniques used to prepare judge advocates general (JAGs) for the future within this broader reassessment effort.

Such a critique would reveal an unacceptable reality: The Department of Defense (DOD) lacks a joint center of excellence devoted to LOAC Professional Military Legal Education (PMLE). The expertise to build such a center exists, but it is scattered throughout DOD. Providing a venue where such expertise could be consolidated and leveraged would offer JAGs, commanders, and other constituents a great opportunity to develop the expertise in the LOAC that the contemporary operational environment demands. This article proposes the creation of such a venue: a Joint Service Law of War Academy (JSLOWA).

There is certainly truth to the perception that JAG officers throughout the services have fought a valiant battle to ensure LOAC compliance in an environment marked by sometimes confusing guidance from policymakers. Unfortunately, this perception has served as a subtle shield against a genuine critique of the effectiveness of the existing PMLE used to prepare uniformed attorneys for the intense demands of serving as legal advisers during armed conflict and other military operations. Such a critique is long overdue; in fact, it is essential to ensuring that military attorneys who advise future combat leaders are as effectively prepared for the challenges of the contemporary operational environment as the forces they support.

A critique of the PMLE reveals a compelling need for the development of a truly joint approach to LOAC PMLE: creation of a JSLOWA. Such an academy could serve as a true center of excellence for developing expertise among military legal advisers, for providing a genuine opportunity to integrate advisers into joint warfare training and simulations, and for serving as a venue for exploring and advancing ideas about the legal regulation of military operations.

The proposal to develop a JSLOWA is the result of two propositions. First, the only discipline of law currently taught at service-specific JAG schools that will never be practiced in a service-specific context is the LOAC. Contemporary military operations are not now, nor will they ever again be, “service-specific”; they are joint. And second, in spite of their best efforts, service-specific JAG schools do not have the resources to develop widespread genuine LOAC expertise—a result of the prohibitive confluence of the complexity of contemporary military operations and the limited time available for PMLE. DOD needs another solution, one that would produce military lawyers steeped in the LOAC. These LOAC experts would reduce the risk inherent in lesser trained lawyers, would provide better support to the combat commands, and, ultimately, would better safeguard the strategic interests of the United States.

Signs Pointing to a JSLOWA

While anyone paying attention to the news would have quickly associated Abu Ghraib with a failure by U.S. forces to comply with the LOAC, there is a less sensational, more valuable lesson to be learned: The misconduct that took place at that detention facility became notorious precisely because it was an aberration in a much more widespread record of legal compliance. Former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger emphasized this point when he explained the results of his investigation into the abuse incident: “[W]e must continuously bear in mind that the overall performance of those armed forces has been commendable. [O]ur troops have performed well. Bear in mind that we have had some 50 thousand detainees—and that over 300 thousand of our troops have served in Iraq. To be sure, any abuses are too many. But, to date, we have identified some 300 cases of possible abuse of which fewer than 100 have been confirmed. One-third of those abuses have been at the point of capture.”3

If, in fact, Abu Ghraib represents the exception to general compliance with the LOAC, it is worth asking why the U.S. record of compliance has been so positive. The answer is no doubt multifaceted, ranging from the quality of training and discipline...
among the armed forces to the nation’s core commitment to fundamental humanitarian values. Less abstractly, however, the answer would have to acknowledge that highly qualified military legal advisers contributed extensively to this overall record of compliance.

How then does this support a thesis suggesting that the current method of PMLE is insufficient? The answer rests with an examination of the background of the senior military legal advisers who served in critical positions during the planning for and execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Army legal advisers in key positions with the major units involved in ground combat operations in Iraq shared extensive—and among their peers relatively unusual—backgrounds in international and operational law.4 In fact, almost all of these officers had previously served as professors of international and operational law at the Army JAG School or had worked in the international and operational law division of the Office of the Judge Advocate General. All but one had served as a legal adviser during combat or in another contingency operation.

What was unusual about this all-star team was that it represented a tremendously fortuitous aligning of the stars into a constellation of expertise unusually competent to deal with the myriad complex, critical LOAC issues associated with the war. However, this expertise was not developed primarily through on-the-job training. Instead, it was developed through applying in the operational context the extensive knowledge derived from opportunities to engage in extensive study of the LOAC—in short, effective PMLE. While it is difficult to prove the negative, it seems reasonable to presume that this collective expertise proved instrumental in ensuring that the debacle at Abu Ghraib did, in fact, reflect the exception to the rule.

This all-star lineup was unusual precisely because the opportunities afforded these JAG officers during their careers were exceptional. Indeed, had the random alignment of key legal advisers occurred at some other point in the history of these units, the level of LOAC expertise might have been dramatically different. Unlike these officers, the vast majority of judge advocates have been required to learn on the fly, the result of the limited opportunities available for them to develop a foundation of knowledge through comprehensive LOAC-oriented PMLE.

Current PMLE and the LOAC

All judge advocates should have the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of the LOAC, a discipline that, as recent events have once again demonstrated, is at the core of the practice of military law. This opportunity should be equal in scope and depth to the opportunity given the all-star lineup. Unfortunately, such opportunities are rare and generally insufficient. In fact, the career development of a hypothetical judge advocate is almost devoid of in-depth study of the LOAC.5

Typical judge advocates begin their military careers following graduation from law school. The years of legal study leading to their Juris Doctor degree include extensive immersion in criminal law, administrative law, contract law, and other areas of civilian specialization. However, it would be unusual if a student’s law school experience included extensive study of the LOAC. Thus, when the typical new military lawyer begins the Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course (JAOBC), he or she has virtually no foundation in the LOAC. Unfortunately, the amount of time devoted to this discipline in JAOBC is minimal.6

...the career development of a hypothetical judge advocate is almost devoid of in-depth study of the LOAC.

After completing JAOBC, new JAG officers report to their first assignments. While it is not uncommon for them to have some limited exposure to LOAC issues as a secondary or tertiary aspect of their duties, it is the norm that their primary garrison duties focus on legal assistance, claims, administrative law, and criminal law.

During their initial tours, they might have the opportunity to attend a course devoted to the LOAC or operational law at one of the service JAG schools. The odds of them attending such a course are low, however, unless they are deploying, and if they do attend the course, they will attend it normally only once. Even if they attend, the time allocated to such courses (normally 5 to 10 days), when compared to the time these officers have spent studying the other core disciplines of law, is not sufficient to meet their needs.
Nor is the usual method of instruction particularly well suited to build the type of expertise normally associated with a member of the legal profession. Officers in such courses are not asked to read or digest any cases, law review articles, or other significant sources of this law. Instead, they receive an outline of the law, PowerPoint® slides, lectures, and several small-group problems. The course, which is not graded, is normally offered only during an ongoing assignment. Thus, it is a pragmatic reality that officers will not devote much out-of-class time to studying.

A student’s next opportunity to study the LOAC might come during a Masters of Law program, which will occur either at the Army JAG School or a civilian law school. This normally occurs around the 5th to 7th year of service. Students who attend such programs will have the opportunity to study the LOAC in greater depth. However, for most officers, instruction is limited to core offerings virtually identical to the previous limited instruction received earlier in their careers. Only officers with an interest in the subject will choose the several electives offering a more comprehensive treatment of this subject. Even the few who attend civilian institutions will have limited opportunity to immerse themselves in this discipline.

After graduating from the Masters of Law program as a relatively new field-grade officer, the military lawyer has essentially run out of PMLe opportunities to study the LOAC. Thus, just when their responsibility to be expert in this discipline has evolved to the point where they will be responsible for providing LOAC advice to senior commanders in the joint environment, they have exhausted virtually all opportunities to study this discipline.

Unlike the officers in the OIF all-star lineup, typical future legal advisers will not be properly prepared for the challenges they will confront. Each will no doubt be armed with a superior work ethic, intellect, and legal judgment, all of which will be crucial as they deal with the issues they confront as principal legal advisers during combat operations. But they will have been provided an unnecessarily limited opportunity to develop the foundation of expertise necessary to satisfy their ethical obligation of competence as attorneys. Consider this one simple fact: By the time our hypothetical officers assume SJA responsibilities for a division, the likelihood that they will have even read a reported case related to the LOAC (such as In re Yamashita, Ex parte Quirin, or The High Command Case) is close to nil. This is simply unacceptable.

Equally troubling is that the limited professional-development opportunities offered to these JAG officers will have all been service-specific. Although JAG schools include a faculty member from sister services, the PMLE is simply not joint, and officers will not have had the opportunity to integrate with the joint operators they will be called upon to support in the future. Thus, two undeniable aspects of the practice of the LOAC discipline (aspects that distinguish this discipline of law from every other discipline taught at JAG schools) are generally absent in the PMLE process: operational integration and joint context. For an armed force moving decisively in the joint and expeditionary direction, this won’t work. If our armed forces are to rely on certainty rather than the random alignment of stars reflected in the OIF experience, this development process must be radically reformed.

**The Solution: JSLOWA**

The judge advocate PMLE process is no longer sufficient to meet the requirements of a force called on to operate in the legally intense environment in which our forces are now—and will continue to be—involved. What is the solution? One obvious option would be to increase emphasis on LOAC education at existing service schools. While this option would be a step in the right direction, it is ultimately deficient. The integration of LOAC PMLE into the broader curricula has led to a competition for time and resources and has inhibited any genuine commitment to treating the LOAC differently from other legal disciplines—a commitment absolutely justified by the nature of the demands imposed upon JAG officers in the operational environment.

By retaining service-specific venues for the PMLE process, the services are perpetuating a disconnect between the way JAGs are trained and
the way they will fight. Of greatest significance, however, is that the service-specific PMLE deprives DOD of the opportunity to consolidate the considerable expertise scattered throughout the services into one center of excellence. If such a place existed, JAGs and the line officers they support could periodically come together to devote themselves to intensive study of this critical practice area.

The strategic context of current military operations supports the need to develop a synergistic center of excellence. Perhaps at no time in the history of warfare have issues related to understanding, applying, and complying with the LOAC been more prominent. Entities outside the military (nongovernmental organizations [NGO], think tanks), journalists, commentators, pundits, academics, politicians, and average citizens have appointed themselves experts in this area. Indeed, the cottage industry of experts that emerged in the wake of Abu Ghraib provides a compelling reason to ensure that JAG officers who advise U.S. commanders, particularly senior commanders, have had the opportunity to study the LOAC in depth.

The onset of investigations and inquiries triggered by suspected LOAC violations offers the DOD military legal community a unique opportunity to adopt a forward-looking approach to providing LOAC PMLE: consolidation of LOAC expertise into a Joint Services Law of War Academy. In the opinion of this author, the ideal venue for such a center of excellence would be collocation with the Joint Forces Staff College or the National War College. However, what is more important than location are three structural factors that must be taken into account to maximize the benefits of a JSLOWA: faculty composition, curriculum development, and benefits for existing organizations.

The military could model the basic structure of the faculty on any number of current law departments embedded within such schools as the military academies, command and staff colleges, and war colleges. These departments share certain structural characteristics: They have a senior expert officer serving as department chair, they rotate subordinate faculty members, and they are integrated into a broader Professional Military Education (PME) curriculum. Another possible aspect several of these departments share that could contribute to the effectiveness of a JSLOWA is the inclusion on the faculty of civilian professors possessing national and, in many cases, international, expertise in this discipline of law.

Also particularly well suited to a JSLOWA would be the inclusion of one or several international faculty members. Many of our JAGs have noticed the impressive LOAC expertise of many of our international legal counterparts; a conclusion reflected in the fact that the Naval War College has invited several distinguished international experts to hold its Stockton Chair of International Law—perhaps the most distinguished LOAC faculty position within DOD. Inclusion of such officers on the proposed JSLOWA faculty would substantially benefit faculty and students by offering a more international perspective.

Such a center of excellence might also include other experts on the faculty. For example, interagency experts might serve as temporary faculty members or guest lecturers. Because many LOAC issues arising at the tactical level have the potential to rapidly escalate to strategic importance, other PMLE participants could include judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers from international tribunals adjudicating alleged war crimes; NGO law-of-war experts; and representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Curriculum development for such a center of excellence will present a number of challenges. The first, and perhaps most significant, would be identifying the appropriate relationship with preexisting PMLE courses. Developing a complementary curriculum could be embraced. Doing so would let the service JAG schools rely on the JSLOWA to satisfy the LOAC component of their broader programs.

Perhaps the most advantageous aspect of a JSLOWA is that it would open LOAC PMLE opportunities to career JAGs of other services unable to attend the Army’s (or a civilian) Master of Law program. To illustrate, the JSLOWA could host a periodic 4-week intensive LOAC PMLE course. Students in the Master’s program at the Army JAG
School specializing in international law could enroll in the course to satisfy curriculum requirements. They would be joined by career JAGs who, for whatever reason, will not participate in a Master’s program. Thus, a shared foundation of expertise will be provided to a wider constituency.

The JSLOWA’s resources could also be used to benefit the regular (non-legal) PME program at the joint level. Both faculty members and students from the JSLOWA could be integrated into instruction and simulations to ensure line officers are exposed to the type of complex LOAC problems they will inevitably encounter. Student integration would result in the added benefit of exposing future leaders to the benefit of integrating legal advice into the planning and execution process.

Another benefit to creating such a joint center of excellence would be the role it could play as a think tank for LOAC issues. Faculty members would not only be encouraged but required to produce practical and scholarly work related to the LOAC. Currently, there is no joint LOAC journal; if such a journal were developed in connection with the JSLOWA, it would reflect a more joint and integrated perspective on these critical issues.

The JSLOWA could also benefit from existing organizations. For example, a formal relationship could be established between the JSLOWA and DOD’s Law of War Working Group with the former performing comprehensive research on behalf of the latter. The Working Group’s function has varied over the years, but since the beginning of the GWOT it has been responsible for addressing a multitude of issues related to the war. It has also been tasked to look over the horizon to identify potential future issues and possible legal strategies for dealing with such issues. Because the Working Group has no dedicated research and analysis component, most issues are addressed on an ad hoc basis with the Group relying on volunteers to conduct the necessary research and analysis. A formal relationship with the JSLOWA would allow the Group to submit issues to faculty members for research, analysis, and proposed courses of action. Such integration is essential to developing a comprehensive, consistent understanding of the relationship of the LOAC to ongoing and future operations.

The time is ripe for a bold new approach to developing genuine LOAC experts throughout the services—experts who will ensure that future all-star lineups are not the product of random luck but of a coherent PMLE process. Ironically, at a time when virtually every other aspect of LOAC training and compliance has come under intense scrutiny, the discipline’s PMLE has not been addressed. To create a coherent PMLE process, DOD must acknowledge that the LOAC is distinct from other disciplines of law, ensure that military attorneys develop the same level of expertise in this discipline as they do in other disciplines, and establish a joint center of excellence—a JSLOWA—for the teaching, studying, and researching of LOAC issues.

Building for the Future

When it is not just possible, but highly probable, that a senior JAG serving as a principal legal adviser to a commander of thousands of troops in combat has never been exposed to more than a cursory education in the LOAC, something is wrong. Even if this risk is overstated, there is no question that the knowledge and sophistication of critics, pundits, and nonmilitary experts in this area will continue to grow. Our JAGs deserve the opportunity to keep pace. MR

NOTES

2. Despite the extensive access granted to attorneys defending soldiers accused of abuse, no military defendant prosecuted for misconduct at Abu Ghraib has offered any credible evidence to support the “just following orders” theory as a defense or as mitigation and extenuation for sentencing purposes.
4. These included staff judge advocates assigned to the Central Command staff, V Corps, the 1st Armored Division, and the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division.
5. I use the example of an Army judge advocate because among service judge advocate general (JAG) schools, it is generally accepted that the Army offers the most comprehensive opportunity to study international law. The Army JAG School is the only service JAG school accredited by the American Bar Association to award a Masters of Law degree (following a 9-month midcareer course of instruction). Furthermore, JAG officers from other services and other nations routinely attend both the Masters of Law program and law-of-war-oriented courses conducted by the Army JAG School.
6. The instruction will encompass approximately 4 days in the classroom.
7. If, however, officers are in the Army Reserve or National Guard, they will most likely never receive this opportunity. Instead, they will be offered a 2-week course during which approximately 1 day will be devoted to law-of-war instruction.
8. For example, students attending their basic courses would spend several weeks at the Joint Services Law of War Academy (JSLOWA) studying this subject. As for the Army Masters of Law program (currently the only service advanced course for JAGs), faculty members from the JSLOWA could provide instruction at the Army JAG School to satisfy the core component of that course. Graduate students electing to earn a specialty in this subject could subsequently attend an intensive course offered at the JSLOWA to satisfy that aspect of their curriculum. Moreover, a course could be developed specifically to provide intensive preparation for JAGs selected to serve as staff judge advocates (a concept not unlike the pre-command programs currently in use).
9. Established pursuant to a Department of Defense (DOD) directive, the Law of War Working Group is the primary clearinghouse/think tank within the DOD legal community for addressing LOAC issues.
Your company has just been warned about possible deployment for counterinsurgency operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. You have read David Gafula, T.E. Lawrence, and Robert Thompson. You have studied FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency Operations, and now understand the history, philosophy, and theory of counterinsurgency.  

You have watched Black Hawk Down and The Battle of Algiers, and you know this will be the most difficult challenge of your life.  

But what does all that theory mean, at the company level? How do the principles translate into action at night, with the GPS (global positioning system) down, the media criticizing you, the locals complaining in a language you don’t understand, and an unseen enemy killing your people by ones and twos? How does counterinsurgency actually happen?  

There are no universal answers, and insurgents are among the most adaptive opponents you will ever face. Countering them will demand every ounce of your intellect. But be comforted: You are not the first to feel this way. There are tactical fundamentals you can apply to link the theory with the techniques and procedures you already know.  

What is Counterinsurgency?  

If you have not studied counterinsurgency theory, here it is in a nutshell: Counterinsurgency is a competition with the insurgent for the right to win the hearts, minds, and acquiescence of the population. You are being sent in because the insurgents, at their strongest, can defeat anything with less strength than you. But you have more combat power than you can or should use in most situations. Injudicious use of firepower creates blood feuds, homeless people, and societal disruption that fuel and perpetuate the insurgency. The most beneficial actions are often local politics, civic action, and beat-cop behaviors. For your side to win, the people don’t have to like you but they must respect you, accept that your actions benefit them, and trust your integrity and ability to deliver on promises, particularly regarding their security. In this battlefield, popular perceptions and rumor are more influential than the facts and more powerful than a hundred tanks.  

Within this context, what follows are observations from collective experience, the distilled essence of what those who went before you learned. They are expressed as commandments, for clarity, but are really more like folklore. Apply them judiciously and skeptically.  

Preparation  

Time is short during predeployment, but you will never have more time to think than you have now. Now is your chance to prepare yourself and your command.  

1. Know your turf. Know the people, the topography, economy, history, religion, and culture. Know every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader, and ancient grievance. Your task is to become the world expert on your district. If you don’t know precisely where you will be operating, study the general area. Read the map like a book: Study it every night before sleep and redraw it from memory every morning until you understand its patterns intuitively. Develop a mental model of your area, a framework in which to fit every new piece of knowledge you acquire. Study handover notes from predecessors; better still, get in touch with the unit in theater and pick their leaders’ brains. In an ideal world, intelligence officers and area experts would brief you; however, this rarely happens, and even if it does, there is no substitute for personal mastery. Understand the broader area of influence, which can be a wide area, particularly when insurgents draw on global grievances. Share out aspects of the operational area among platoon leaders and noncommissioned officers; have each individual develop a personal specialization and brief the others. Neglect this knowledge, and it will kill you.  

2. Diagnose the problem. Once you know your area and its people, you can begin to diagnose the problem. Who are the insurgents? What drives them? What makes local leaders tick? Counterinsurgency is fundamentally a competition between each side to mobilize the population in support of its agenda. So you must understand what motivates the people and how to mobilize them. You need to know why and how the insurgents are getting followers. This means you need to know your real enemy, not a cardboard cut-out. The enemy is adaptive, resourceful, and probably grew up in the region where you will be operating. The locals have known him since he was a boy; how long have they known you? Your worst opponent is not the psychopathic terrorist of Hollywood; it is the charismatic follow-me warrior who would make your best platoon leader. His followers are not misled or naïve; much of his success may be due to bad government policies or security forces that alienate the population. Work
This problem collectively with your platoon and squad leaders. Discuss ideas, explore the problem, understand what you are facing, and seek a consensus. If this sounds unilitary, get over it. Once you are in theater, situations will arise too quickly for orders or even commander’s intent. Corporals and privates will have to make snap judgments with strategic impact. The only way to help them is to give them a shared understanding, then trust them to think for themselves on the day.

3. Organize for intelligence. In counterinsurgency, killing the enemy is easy. Finding him is often nearly impossible. Intelligence and operations are complementary. Your operations will be intelligence-driven, but intelligence will come mostly from your own operations, not as a product prepared and served up by higher headquarters. So you must organize for intelligence. You will need a company S2 and an intelligence section (including analysts). You might need platoon S2s and S3s, and you will need a reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) element. You will not have enough linguists—you never do—but carefully consider where best to use them. Linguists are a battle-winning asset, but like any other scarce resource, you must have a prioritized “bump plan” in case you lose them. Often during redeployment the best use of linguists is to train your command in basic language. You will probably not get augmentation for all this, but you must still do it. Put the smartest soldiers in the S2 section and the R&S squad. You will have one less rifle squad, but the intelligence section will pay for itself in lives and effort saved.

4. Organize for interagency operations. Almost everything in counterinsurgency is interagency. And everything important, from policing to intelligence to civil-military operations to trash collection, will involve your company working with civilian actors and local indigenous partners you cannot control, but whose success is essential for yours. Train the company in interagency operations: Get a briefing on your people—perhaps an officer, perhaps a non-commissioned officer can succeed in counterinsurgency, where hundreds of well-armed soldiers under a mediocre senior officer will fail.

5. Travel light and harden your combat service support (CSS). You will be weighed down with body armor, rations, extra ammunition, communications gear, and a thousand other things. The enemy will carry a rifle or rocket-propelled grenade launcher, a shemagh (head scarf), and a water bottle if he is lucky. Unless you ruthlessly lighten your load and enforce a culture of speed and mobility, the insurgents will consistently out-run and out-maneuver you. But in lightening your load, make sure you can always reach back to call for firepower or heavy support if needed. Also, remember to harden your CSS. The enemy will attack your weakest points. Most attacks on Coalition forces in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, outside preplanned combat actions like the two battles of Falluja or Operation Iron Horse, were against CSS installations and convoys. You do the math. Ensure your CSS assets are hardened, have communications, and are trained in combat operations. They may do more fighting than your rifle squads.

6. Find a political/cultural adviser. In a force optimized for counterinsurgency, you might receive a political-cultural adviser at company level, a diplomat or military foreign area officer able to speak the language and navigate the intricacies of local politics. Back on planet Earth, the corps and division commander will get a political advisor; you will not, so you must improvise. Find a POLAD (political-cultural adviser) from among your people—perhaps an officer, perhaps not (see article 8). Someone with people skills and a feel for the environment will do better than a political-science graduate. Don’t try to be your own cultural adviser: You must be fully aware of the political and cultural dimension, but this is a different task. Also, don’t give one of your intelligence people this role. They can help, but their task is to understand the environment. The POLAD’s job is to help shape it.

7. Train the squad leaders—then trust them. Counterinsurgency is a squad and platoon leader’s war, and often a private soldier’s war. Battles are won or lost in moments: Whoever can bring combat power to bear in seconds, on a street corner, will win. The commander on the spot controls the fight. You must train the squad leaders to act intelligently and independently without orders. If your squad leaders are competent, you can get away with average company or platoon staffs. The reverse is not the case. Training should focus on basic skills: marksmanship, patrolling, security on the move and at the halt, and basic drills. When in doubt, spend less time on company and platoon training, and more time on squads. Ruthlessly replace leaders who do not make the grade. But once people are trained and you have a shared operational diagnosis, you must trust them. We talk about this, but few company or platoon leaders really trust their people. In counterinsurgency, you have no choice.

8. Rank is nothing; talent is everything. Not everyone is good at counterinsurgency. Many people don’t understand the concept, and some can’t execute it. It is difficult, and in a conventional force only a few people will master it. Anyone can learn the basics, but a few naturals do exist. Learn how to spot these people, and put them into positions where they can make a difference. Rank matters far less than talent—a few good men led by a smart junior non-commissioned officer can succeed in counterinsurgency, where hundreds of well-armed soldiers under a mediocre senior officer will fail.

9. Have a game plan. The final preparation task is to develop a game plan, a mental picture of how you see the operation developing. You will be tempted to try and do this too early. But wait, as your knowledge improves, you will get a better idea of what needs to be done and a fuller understanding of your own limitations. Like any plan, this plan will change once you hit the ground, and it may need to be scrapped if there is
a major shift in the environment. But you still need a plan, and the process of planning will give you a simple, robust idea of what to achieve, even if the methods change. This is sometimes called “operational design.” One approach is to identify basic stages in your operation, for example “establish dominance, build local networks, marginalize the enemy.” Make sure you can easily transition between phases, forward and backward, in case of setbacks. Just as the insurgent can adapt his activity to yours, so you must have a simple enough plan to survive setbacks without collapsing. This plan is the solution that matches the shared diagnosis you developed earlier. It must be simple, and known to everyone.

The Golden Hour
You have deployed, completed reception and staging, and (if you are lucky) attended the in-country counterinsurgency school. Now it is time to enter your sector and start your tour. This is the golden hour. Mistakes made now will haunt you for the rest of your tour, while early successes will set the tone for victory. You will look back on your early actions and cringe at your clumsiness. So be it. But you must act.

10. Be there. The most fundamental rule of counterinsurgency is to be there. You can almost never outrun the enemy. If you are not present when an incident happens, there is usually little you can do about it. So your first order of business is to establish presence. If you can’t do this throughout your sector, then do it wherever you can. This demands a residential approach: living in your sector, in close proximity to the population rather than raiding into the area from remote, secure bases. Movement on foot, sleeping in local villages, night patrolling—all these seem more dangerous than they are. They establish links with the locals, who see you as real people they can trust and do business with, not as aliens who descend from an armored box. Driving around in an armored convoy, day-tripping like a tourist in hell, degrades situational awareness, makes you a target, and is ultimately more dangerous.

11. Avoid knee-jerk responses to first impressions. Don’t act rashly; get the facts first. The violence you see may be part of the insurgent strategy; it may be various interest groups fighting it out with each other or settling personal vendettas. Normality in Kandahar is not the same as in Seattle—you need time to learn what normality looks like. The insurgent commander wants to goad you into lashing out at the population or making a mistake. Unless you happen to be on the spot when an incident occurs, you will have only second-hand reports and may misunderstand the local context or interpretation. This fragmentation and “disaggregation” of the battlefield, particularly in urban areas, means that first impressions are often highly misleading. Of course, you can’t avoid making judgments. But if possible, check them with an older hand or a trusted local. If you can, keep one or two officers from your predecessor unit for the first part of the tour. Try to avoid a rush to judgment.

12. Prepare for handover from day one. Believe it or not, you will not resolve the insurgency on your watch. Your tour will end, and your successors will need your corporate knowledge. Start handover folders, in every platoon and specialist squad, from day one. Ideally, you would have inherited these from your predecessors, but if not you must start them. The folders should include lessons learned, details about the population, village and patrol reports, updated maps, and photographs—anything that will help newcomers master the environment. Computerized databases are fine, but keep good back-ups and ensure you have hard copy of key artifacts and documents. This is boring and tedious, but essential. Over time, you will create a corporate memory that keeps your people alive.

13. Build trusted networks. Once you have settled into your sector, your key task is to build trusted networks. This is the true meaning of the phrase hearts and minds, which comprises two separate components. Hearts means persuading people their best interests are served by your success; minds means convincing them that you can protect them, and that respecting you is pointless. Note that neither concept has anything to do with whether people like you. Calculated self-interest, not emotion, is what counts. Over time, if you successfully build networks of trust, these will grow like roots into the population, displacing the enemy’s networks, bringing him out into the open to fight you, and letting you seize the initiative. These networks include local allies, community leaders, local security forces, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other friendly or neutral nonstate actors in your area, and the media. Conduct village and neighborhood surveys to identify needs in the community, then follow through to meet them. Build common interests and mobilize popular support. This is your true main effort; everything else is secondary. Actions that help build trusted networks serve your cause. Actions—even killing high-profile targets that undermine trust or disrupt your networks—help the enemy.

14. Start easy. If you were trained in maneuver warfare you know about surfaces and gaps. This applies to counterinsurgency as much as any other form of maneuver. Don’t try to crack the hardest nut first—don’t go straight for the main insurgent stronghold, try to provoke a decisive showdown, or focus efforts on villages that support the insurgents. Instead, start from secure areas and work gradually outwards. Do this by extending your influence through the locals’ own networks. Go with, not against, the grain of local society. First win the confidence of a few villages and see who they trade, intermarry, or do business with. Now win these people over. Soon enough the showdown with the insurgents will come. But now you have local allies, a mobilized population, and a trusted network at your back. Do it the other way around and no one will mourn your failure.

15. Seek early victories. In this early phase, your aim is to stamp your dominance in your sector. Do this by seeking an early victory. This will probably not translate into a combat victory over the enemy. Looking for such a victory can be overly aggressive and create collateral damage—especially since you really do not yet understand your sector. Also, such a combat victory depends on the enemy being stupid enough to present you with a clear-cut target, which is a rare windfall in counterinsurgency. Instead, you may achieve a victory by resolving long-standing issues your predecessors have failed to address, or by co-opting a key local leader who has resisted cooperation with our forces. Like any other form of armed
propaganda, achieving even a small victory early in the tour sets the tone for what comes later and helps seize the initiative, which you have probably lost due to the inevitable hiatus entailed by the handover-takeover with your predecessor.

16. Practice deterrent patrolling. Establish patrolling methods that deter the enemy from attacking you. Often our patrolling approach seems designed to provoke, then defeat, enemy attacks. This is counterproductive; it leads to a raiding, day-tripping mindset or, worse, a bunker mentality. Instead, practice deterrent patrolling. There are many methods for this, including multiple patrolling in which you flood an area with numerous small patrols working together. Each is too small to be a worthwhile target, and the insurgents never know where all the patrols are—making an attack on any one patrol extremely risky. Other methods include so-called blue-green patrolling, where you mount daylight, overt humanitarian patrols, which go covert at night and hunt specific targets. Again, the aim is to keep the enemy off balance, and the population reassured through constant and unpredictable activity which, over time, deters attacks and creates a more permissive environment. A reasonable rule of thumb is that one- to two-thirds of your force should be on patrol at any time, day or night.

17. Be prepared for setbacks. Setbacks are normal in counterinsurgency, as in every other form of war. You will make mistakes, lose people, or occasionally kill or detain the wrong person. You may fail in building or expanding networks. If this happens, don’t lose heart, simply drop back to the previous phase of your game plan and recover your balance. It is normal in company counterinsurgency operations for some platoons to be doing well while others do badly. This is not necessarily evidence of failure. Give local commanders the freedom to adjust their posture to local conditions. This creates elasticity that helps you survive setbacks.

18. Remember the global audience. One of the biggest differences between the counterinsurgencies our fathers fought and those we face today is the omnipresence of globalized media. Most houses in Iraq have one or more satellite dishes. Web bloggers; print, radio, and television reporters; and others are monitoring and reporting your every move. When the insurgents ambush your patrols or set off a car bomb, they do so not to destroy one more track, but because they want graphic images of a burning vehicle and dead bodies for the evening news. Beware of the scripted enemy who plays to a global audience and seeks to defeat you in the court of global public opinion. You counter this by training people to always bear in mind the global audience, to assume that everything they say or do will be publicized, and to befriend the media. Get the press on-side—help them get their story, and trade information with them. Good relationships with nonembattled media, especially indigenous media, dramatically increase your situational awareness and help get your message across to the global and local audience.

19. Engage the women, beware of the children. Most insurgent fighters are men. But in traditional societies, women are hugely influential in forming the social networks that insurgents use for support. Co-opting neutral or friendly women, through targeted social and economic programs, builds networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine the insurgents. You need your own female counterinsurgents, including interagency people, to do this effectively. Win the women, and you own the family unit. Own the family, and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population. Conversely, though, stop your people from fraternizing with the local children. Your troops are homesick; they want to drop their guard with the kids, but children are sharp-eyed, lacking in empathy, and willing to commit atrocities their elders would shrink from. The insurgents are watching: They will notice a growing friendship between one of your people and a local child, and either harm the child as punishment, or use them against you. Similarly, stop people throwing candies or presents to children. It attracts them to our vehicles, creates crowds the enemy can exploit, and leads to children being run over. Harden your heart and keep the children at arm’s length.

20. Take stock regularly. You probably already know that a body count tells you little, because you usually can’t know how many insurgents there were to start with, how many moved into the area, how many transferred from supporter to combatant status, or how many new fighters the conflict has created. But you still need to develop metrics early in the tour and refine them as the operation progresses. They should cover a range of social, informational, military, and economic issues. Use metrics intelligently to form an overall impression of progress—not in a mechanistic traffic-light fashion. Typical metrics include percentage of engagements initiated by our forces versus those initiated by insurgents; longevity of friendly local leaders in positions of authority; number and quality of tip-offs on insurgent activity that originate spontaneously from the population; and economic activity at markets and shops. These mean virtually nothing as a snapshot; it is trends over time that help you track progress in your sector.

Groundhog Day
Now you are in “steady state.” You are established in your sector, and people are settling into that “groundhog day” mentality that hits every unit at some stage during every tour. It will probably take you at least the first third of your tour to become effective in your new environment, if not longer. Then in the last period you will struggle against the short-timer mentality. So this middle part of the tour is the most productive—but keeping the flame alive, and bringing the local population along with you, takes immense leadership.

21. Exploit a “single narrative.” Since counterinsurgency is a competition to mobilize popular support, it pays to know how people are mobilized. In most societies there are opinion makers—local leaders, pillars of the community, religious figures, media personalities, and others who set trends and influence public perceptions. This influence, including the pernicious influence of the insurgents, often takes the form of a “single narrative”: a simple, unifying, easily expressed story or explanation that organizes people’s experience and provides a framework for understanding events. Nationalist and ethnic historical myths, or sectarian creeds, provide such a narrative. The Iraqi insurgents have one, as do Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. To undercut
their influence you must exploit an alternative narrative, or better yet, tap into an existing narrative that excludes the insurgents. This narrative is often worked out for you by higher headquarters—but only you have the detailed knowledge to tailor the narrative to local conditions and generate leverage from it. For example, you might use a nationalist narrative to marginalize foreign fighters in your area or a narrative of national redemption to undermine former regime elements that have been terrorizing the population. At the company level, you do this in baby steps by getting to know local opinion-makers, winning their trust, learning what motivates them, and building on this to find a single narrative that emphasizes the inevitability and rightness of your ultimate success. This is art, not science.

22. Local forces should mirror the enemy, not the Americans. By this stage, you will be working closely with local forces, training or supporting them and building indigenous capability. The natural tendency is to build forces in the U.S. image, with the aim of eventually handing our role over to them. This is a mistake. Instead, local indigenous forces need to mirror the enemy’s capabilities and seek to supplant the insurgent’s role. This does not mean they should be irregular in the sense of being brutal or outside proper control. Rather, they should move, equip, and organize like the insurgents, but have access to your support and be under the firm control of their parent societies. Combined with a mobilized population and trusted networks, this allows local forces to hard-wire the enemy out of the environment, under top-cover from you. At the company level, this means that raising, training, and employing local indigenous auxiliary forces (police and military) are valid tasks. This requires high-level clearance, of course, but if support is given, you should establish a company training cell. Platoons should aim to train one local squad, then use that squad as a nucleus for a partner platoon. Company headquarters should train an indigenous leadership team. This mirrors the growth process of other trusted networks and tends to emerge naturally as you win local allies who want to take up arms in their own defense.

23. Practice armed civil affairs. Counterinsurgency is armed social work, an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at. This makes civil affairs a central counterinsurgency activity, not an afterthought. It is how you restructure the environment to displace the enemy from it. In your company sector, civil affairs must focus on meeting basic needs first, then progress up Maslow’s hierarchy as each successive need is met. You need intimate cooperation with interagency partners here—national, international, and local. You will not be able to control these partners—many NGOs, for example, do not want to be too closely associated with you because they need to preserve their perceived neutrality. Instead, you need to work on a shared diagnosis of the problem, building a consensus that helps you self-synchronize. Your role is to provide protection, identify needs, facilitate civil affairs, and use improvements in social conditions as leverage to build networks and mobilize the population. Thus, there is no such thing as impartial humanitarian assistance or civil affairs in counterinsurgency. Every time you help someone, you hurt someone else—not least the insurgents—so civil and humanitarian assistance personnel will be targeted. Protecting them is a matter not only of close-in defense, but also of creating a permissive operating environment by co-opting the beneficiaries of aid (local communities and leaders) to help you help them.

24. Small is beautiful. Another natural tendency is to go for large-scale, mass programs. In particular, we have a tendency to template ideas that succeed in one area and transplant them into another, and we tend to take small programs that work and try to replicate them on a larger scale. Again, this is usually a mistake: Often programs succeed because of specific local conditions of which we are unaware, or because their very smallness kept them below the enemy’s radar and helped them flourish unmolested. At the company level, programs that succeed in one district often also succeed in another (because the overall company sector is small), but small-scale projects rarely proceed smoothly into large programs. Keep programs small; this makes them cheap, sustainable, low-key, and (importantly) recoverable if they fail. You can add new programs—also small, cheap and tailored to local conditions—as the situation allows.

25. Fight the enemy’s strategy, not his forces. At this stage, if things are proceeding well, the insurgents will go over to the offensive. Yes, the offensive, because you have created a situation so dangerous to the insurgents (by threatening to displace them from the environment) that they have to attack you and the population to get back into the game. Thus it is normal, even in the most successful operations, to have spikes of offensive insurgent activity late in the campaign. This does not necessarily mean you have done something wrong (though it may, it depends on whether you have successfully mobilized the population). At this point the tendency is to go for the jugular and seek to destroy the enemy’s forces in open battle. This is rarely the best choice at company level, because provoking major combat usually plays into the enemy’s hands by undermining the population’s confidence. Instead, attack the enemy’s strategy. If he is seeking to recapture the allegiance of a segment of the local population, then co-opt them against him. If he is trying to provoke a sectarian conflict, go over to peace-enforcement mode. The permutations are endless, but the principle is the same: Fight the enemy’s strategy, not his forces.

26. Build your own solution—only attack the enemy when he gets in the way. Try not to be distracted or forced into a series of reactive moves by a desire to kill or capture the insurgents. Your aim should be to implement your own solution, the game plan you developed early in the campaign and then refined through interaction with local partners. Your approach must be environment-centric (based on dominating the whole district and implementing a solution to its systemic problems) rather than enemy-centric. This means that particularly late in the campaign you may need to learn to negotiate with the enemy. Members of the population that supports you also know the enemy’s leaders. They may have grown up together in the small district that is now your company sector, and valid negotiating partners
sometimes emerge as the campaign progresses. Again, you need close interagency relationships to exploit opportunities to co-opt segments of the enemy. This helps you wind down the insurgency without alienating potential local allies who have relatives or friends in the insurgent movement. At this stage, a deflection is better than a surrender, a surrender is better than a capture, and a capture is better than a kill.

**Getting Short**

Time is short, and the tour is drawing to a close. The key problem now is keeping your people focused, maintaining the rage on all the multifarious programs, projects, and operations that you have started, and preventing your people from dropping their guard. In this final phase, the previous articles still stand, but there is an important new one.

27. **Keep your extraction plan secret.** The temptation to talk about home becomes almost unbearable toward the end of a tour. The locals know you are leaving, and probably have a better idea than you of the generic extraction plan. Remember, they have seen units come and go. But you must protect the specific details of the extraction plan, or the enemy will use this as an opportunity to score a high-profile hit, recapture the population’s allegiance by scaring tactics that convince them they will not be protected once you leave, or persuade them that your successor unit will be oppressive or incompetent. Keep the details secret within a tightly controlled compartment in your headquarters.

**Four “What Ifs”**

The articles above describe what should happen, but we all know that things go wrong. Here are some what ifs to consider:

- **What if you get moved to a different area?** You prepared for ar-Ramadi and studied Dulaim tribal structures and Sunni beliefs. Now you are going to Najaf and will be surrounded by al-Hassani tribes and Shi’a communities. But that work was not wasted. In mastering your first area, you learned techniques you can apply: how to “case” an operational area and how to decide what matters in the local societal structure. Do the same again, and this time the process is easier and faster, since you have an existing mental structure and can focus on what is different. The same applies if you get moved frequently within a battalion or brigade area.

- **What if higher headquarters doesn’t “get” counterinsurgency?** Higher headquarters is telling you the mission is to “kill terrorists,” or pushing for high-speed armored patrols and a base-camp mentality. They just don’t seem to understand counterinsurgency. This is not uncommon, since company-grade officers today often have more combat experience than senior officers. In this case, just do what you can. Try not to create expectations that higher headquarters will not let you meet. Apply the adage “first do no harm.” Over time, you will find ways to do what you have to do. But never lie to higher headquarters about your locations or activities—they own the indirect fires.

- **What if you have no resources?** You have no linguists, the aid agencies have no money for projects in your area, and you have a low priority for civil affairs. You can still get things done, but you need to focus on self-reliance: Keep things small and sustainable and ruthlessly prioritize effort. The local population are your allies in this: They know what matters to them more than you do. Be honest with them; discuss possible projects and options with community leaders; get them to choose what their priorities are. Often they will find the translators, building supplies, or expertise that you need, and will only expect your support and protection in making their projects work. And the process of negotiation and consultation will help mobilize their support and strengthen their social cohesion. If you set your sights on what is achievable, the situation can still work.

- **What if the theater situation shifts under your feet?** It is your worst nightmare: Everything has gone well in your sector, but the whole theater situation has changed and invalidates your efforts. Think of the first battle of Falluja, the Askariya shrine bombing, or the Sadr uprising. What do you do? Here is where having a flexible, adaptive game plan comes in. Just as the insurgents drop down to a lower posture when things go wrong, now is the time for you to drop back a stage, consolidate, regain your balance, and prepare to expand again when the situation allows. But see article 28: If you cede the initiative, you must regain it as soon as the situation allows, or you will eventually lose.

This, then, is the tribal wisdom, the folklore that those who went before you have learned. Like any folklore it needs interpretation and contains seemingly contradictory advice. Over time, as you apply unremitting intellectual effort to study your sector, you will learn to apply these ideas in your own way and will add to this store of wisdom from your own observations and experience. So only one article remains, and if you remember nothing else, remember this:

28. **Whatever else you do, keep the initiative.** In counterinsurgency, the initiative is everything. If the enemy is reacting to you, you control the environment. Provided you mobilize the population, you will win. If you are reacting to the enemy, even if you are killing or capturing him in large numbers, then he is controlling the environment and you will eventually lose. In counterinsurgency, the enemy initiates most attacks, targets you unexpectedly, and withdraws too fast for you to react. Do not be drawn into purely reactive operations: Focus on the population, build your own solution, further your game plan, and fight the enemy only when he gets in the way. This gains and keeps the initiative. **MR**

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**NOTES**


David Kilcullen, Ph.D., served 21 years in the Australian Army. He commanded an infantry company during counterinsurgency operations in East Timor, taught counterinsurgency tactics as an exchange instructor at the British School of Infantry, and served as a military adviser to Indonesian Special Forces. He has worked in several Middle Eastern countries with regular and irregular police and military forces since 1984, and was a special adviser for irregular warfare during the 2005 U.S. Quadrennial Defense Review. He is currently seconded to the U.S. State Department as Chief Strategist in the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism and remains a Reserve Lieutenant Colonel in the Australian Army. His doctoral dissertation is a study of Indonesian insurgent and terrorist groups and counterinsurgency methods.
Sharp Pens Sharpen Swords: Writing for Professional Publications

Colonel John M. Collins
U.S. Army, Retired

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.
—Chinese Proverb

Most modern writers prefer computers to pens, 21st-century swords are mainly ceremonial, and Thomas Edison’s incandescent bulbs long ago replaced candles, but the title of this article and the quotation remain figuratively correct because intellectual pathfinders who shed light on politico-military problems and then suggest solutions perform invaluable services. The message to readers and writers is: It is never too early or too late to make your mark.

I have selected the following 15 publications from nearly 100 outlets because they offer aspiring authors a rich menu of publication options.

Trailblazers

The Infantry Journal, activated in 1904, was a typical trailblazer.1 Charter members who gave that brainchild an auspicious start included two famous flag officers and two precocious second lieutenants. Major General Arthur MacArthur, Doug’s daddy, wore a Medal of Honor; Major General Tasker Bliss culminated his career as the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) (1917-1918). Second Lieutenant George Catlett Marshall, who became CSA shortly before World War II, retired with five stars and later served as Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State; four-star General Walter Krueger, commissioned from the ranks, commanded the Sixth U.S. Army during all of its campaigns in the Southwest Pacific.

A 679-page anthology called The Infantry Journal Reader, published in 1943, reprinted 178 handpicked articles.2 The list of authors includes many names that were little known in the early 1930s but now are illustrious: German Panzer leader General Heinz Guderian; U.S. Army General “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell, who headed the China-Burma-India theater during World War II; Flying Tigers leader “Colonel” Claire Chennault; Ole “Blood and Guts” General George Patton; General William Lee (the father of U.S. airborne forces); and British Captain B.H. Liddell Hart, an oft-quoted strategist. Harold Lamb, who later wrote 14 highly respected military histories, and Robert Strausz-Hupé, who founded the Foreign Policy Research Institute, are representative of standout civilians.

Forty other contributors to The Infantry Journal Reader might have become famous, but nobody ever will know because they hid behind ludicrous pseudonyms like Whitenred, Blackanblue, Stonecold, Tentage, Tenderhide, Trenchcoat, Chevron, Hungry, and Heelclicker, despite assurances that “the politics of an author makes no difference. Democrats, Republicans; New Deal, Old Deal; Right, Left, middle; so long as he has something to say about fighting war that makes sense, his article is printed.”

Current Torchbearers

The 15 contemporary U.S. torchbearers selected for comparison vary considerably with regard to frequency of publication, clientele, and content. Monthly magazines, for example, are better suited for hot topics than quarterlies; outlets that reach mainly parochial audiences contrast sharply with cosmopolitan competitors; while those that cast the widest nets potentially influence the most readers. Not all, for example, reach officials in the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Department of State, national security agencies, academia, think tanks, research institutes, businesses, the news media, U.S. service schools, selected libraries, allied embassies, and military establishments abroad. The number of hard-copy subscribers is less important than in the fairly recent past because most on-line editions are free.

Air & Space Power Journal. Air & Space Power Journal is an official publication of the U.S. Air Force, but opinions expressed therein need not reflect prevailing policies. On the contrary, its editor seeks innovative ideas about aerospace doctrine, strategy, tactics, force structure, readiness, and other matters of national defense. Assorted selections during 2005 reviewed Red Flag training exercises, aerial search and rescue operations, air base defense, and esoteric counterspace initiatives.

Armed Forces Journal. Armed Forces Journal (AFJ), a joint service monthly magazine that targets audiences throughout the U.S. military community, has reviewed and analyzed key defense issues for over 140 years. AFJ offers in-depth coverage of military technology, procurement, logistics, doctrine, strategy, and tactics. It also provides special coverage of special operations, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and U.S. Army National Guard developments. Representative articles recently proceeded up the scale from smart artillery to big-ticket budget programs, occupation problems in Iraq, and space wargames.

Army. Army magazine, a monthly product of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), covers a spectrum of tactical, operational, strategic, and logistical landpower issues, with particular attention to U.S. Army activities and interests worldwide. Prominent displays in recent months included the new modular Army, future combat systems, disaster relief, Active and Reserve Component culture gaps, and Army recruiting crises. Presentations commonly include a block of articles that attack particular topics from different angles.

Foreign Affairs. The Council on Foreign Relations, which concentrates on U.S. foreign policy and international affairs, includes nearly all past and present presidents; secretaries of state, defense, treasury, and other senior U.S. Government officials; renowned scholars; and major leaders of business, media, human rights, and other nongovernmental groups. The Council publishes Foreign Affairs, a quarterly forum for new ideas, analyses, and debate. Foreign policy polls, and articles on pandemics, regime...
changes, and how to win the war in Iraq have graced its pages during the last year.

Foreign Policy. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace publishes Foreign Policy, a quarterly that offers informative, insightful, and lively discourse on the full range of topics related to U.S. foreign policy and national security as well as in-depth analyses of important international developments. Illustrative subjects include UN control of the Internet, a profile of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, nuclear proliferation, and energy interdependence.

Joint Force Quarterly. The National Defense University Press publishes Joint Force Quarterly (JFQ) for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. JFQ features joint and combined education, training, and operations, plus national security policies and strategies, for use by top-flight DOD, interagency, and allied decisionmakers and their staffs. Other beneficiaries include politico-military planners and programmers at lower levels. JFQ’s editor recently snapped up articles about international-interagency processes, multinational interoperability, transformation, and joint logistics.

Marine Corps Gazette. The U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Association’s cornerstone publication is the monthly Marine Corps Gazette, which keeps readers well informed concerning the USMC’s history, policies, current operations, plans, and programs. Espirit is a perennial topic. Themes in a recent issue included individual and small-unit discipline, protecting infrastructure, measuring success in counterinsurgency, information management from the bottom, air/naval gunfire liaison companies, and recommended readings.

Military Review. Military Review, ensconced at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, as a subsidiary of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, is a forum for original thought on the art and science of land warfare at tactical and operational levels. Readers in more than 100 countries receive bimonthly issues in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic. Samplings during 2005 disclosed bits about brigade combat teams, Iraqi security forces, improvised explosive devises, and cultural-knowledge needs.

Naval War College Review. The Naval War College Review discusses public policy matters of interest to maritime services. Articles satisfy two essential criteria: They support academic and professional activities of the Naval War College, and they appeal to a wide readership. Topics range from strategy and operations through international law, defense economics, and regional security studies to civil-military relations, wargaming, and military ethics, with particular attention to influences on maritime security.

Orbis. In 1957, the Foreign Policy Research Institute founded Orbis, a quarterly journal of world affairs, which provides an outlet for policymakers, scholars, and private citizens who seek informative, insightful, lively discourse regarding the full range of U.S. foreign policy and national security topics as well as in-depth analysis of other important international developments. The CIA’s culture, the effect immigration has on national security, the United States’ ability to transplant democracy and its relationships with the European Union are representative subjects.

Parameters. Parameters, devoted to strategically significant national defense issues, emanates from the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. It emphasizes the art and science of land warfare; joint and combined matters; military strategy; military leadership and management; and military history, ethics, and other topics of current interest to the U.S. Army, DOD, and students of such subjects everywhere. Recent topics included commentaries on the events in Afghanistan after 4 years, the treatment of illegal combatants, intelligence reform, and controversies concerning the news media.

Proceedings. Proceedings magazine has been the U.S. Naval Institute’s flagship publication since 1874. Its editor increasingly solicits articles that highlight the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force, but it still concentrates on issues that primarily affect the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S.-flagged Merchant Marine. Each monthly issue addresses current issues and historical perspectives from strategic, operational, and tactical angles. The following four items are illustrative: USCG homeland security roles, high-speed sealift, naval special operations, and naval education.

Sea Power. The Navy League circulates Sea Power magazine each month to educate sea services, the American people, their elected representatives, and industry regarding the need for robust naval and maritime forces. Sea Power tracks naval policy and political developments and documents key developments in major ship, naval aircraft, weapons, and doctrinal programs. Short-range missile threats, the new Iraqi Navy, naval counterterrorism capabilities, and sea basing attracted recent attention.

Special Warfare. Special Warfare magazine, under the auspices of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, promotes the professional development of special operations forces (SOF) by critiquing established doctrine and advancing new ideas for consideration throughout the Army special operations community. All aspects of Special Forces, Rangers, civil affairs, psychological operations, and the Army’s special operations aviation regiment are subject to scrutiny. Articles that publicize unclassified aspects of SOF activities in hotspots overseas are particularly popular.

The Washington Quarterly. The Center for Strategic and International Studies issues The Washington Quarterly, a journal of international affairs that analyzes global strategic changes and their public policy implications for subscribers in more than 50 countries. Typical topics include the U.S. role in the world, emerging great powers, missile defenses, counterterrorism, regional flashpoints, and the implications of global political change. Contributors reflect diverse political, regional, and professional perspectives.

Websites

Principles of Outstanding Professional Writing

Every professional publication prefers its own writing style, but authors who honor the following tips generally produce the most attractive drafts for consideration anywhere.

**Title.** Pick a title that is descriptive and short. This first step is imperative, because it essentially determines what the document is all about.

**Mission.** Tack the writing mission on the wall and keep it constantly in sight. Disregard all tangential topics, no matter how interesting or important they might be.

**Outline.** Prepare an outline even for short papers, so all relevant subjects are displayed in a logical sequence. Begin with a skeleton outline, then add subtopics, and outline each of them. Revise the outline as you progress. (Outlines are a lot like contingency plans, which seldom are implemented the way their architects originally conceived them.)

**Basic subdivisions.** Professional books, magazine articles, substantial reports, and other official papers most often should comprise five parts, even if informally: **background, purpose, scope, main body, and wrap-up.**

- Background information up front briefly explains why the subject is important.
- One or more sharply defined purposes identify central objectives.
- The scope tells readers what topics to expect and what not to expect.
- The main body, which discusses all pertinent points, establishes a solid foundation.
- Conclusions, culminating comments, recapitulation or whatever you care to call it leaves readers with the ultimate message. The wrap-up should never address topics not previously discussed.

**Research Techniques.**

- Peruse a broad spectrum of opinion with an open mind. Never reach conclusions first and then prepare a paper to support them. You will often find that initial impressions were poorly founded and fallacious.
- Take nothing for granted. Challenge conventional wisdom to determine if it is sound, regardless of the source.
- Document important ideas with footnotes so readers can pursue selected topics in greater depth, if they desire.

**Writing Techniques.**

- An introductory quotation that precedes paragraph 1 on page 1 of a relatively short document or that opens chapters of a longer one can establish themes, particularly if tied directly to the text.
- The lead sentence and paragraph should capture reader interest immediately. You might not get a second chance.
- Understatement is preferable to hyperbole. Never use a sledgehammer to drive a thumbtack.
- Precious ideas get lost if presentations are boring, so use a thesaurus to avoid undesirable repetition and use quotation books to add spice.
- Acknowledge opposing views and critique them. That way you answer questions before skeptics ask them.
- Use common terms so all readers can continue without constant reference to a dictionary. Avoid unnecessary use of foreign words. Employ acronyms sparingly.
- Mix simple with complex sentences to build paragraphs that are neither staccato nor excessively long, so the document reads smoothly.
- Keep it simple so all readers can understand complex subjects. (When my son was 6 years old he had a book that basically explained Einstein’s Theory of Relativity.)
- Be clear and concise, but never sacrifice clarity for brevity. Never use 10 words when 1 or 2 say the same thing equally well or better.
- Be precise. Pick every word carefully.
- Emphasize active voice. Open each sentence with a primary thought, then follow with appropriate modifiers (although, however, but, yet) as required.
- Never open sentences with a conjunction (and, but).
- Use topic headings as “road signs” so the writer as well as readers know at all times where they have been, where they are, and where they are headed.
Review Techniques

- Few writers produce perfect first drafts, so rewrite each paragraph until it is the best you can produce.
- Be your own sharpest critic. Read out loud what you wrote to see how it sounds.
- Solicit comments from knowledgeable peer reviewers. Pay attention if they disagree or do not understand, particularly if more than one reviewer finds similar faults. Otherwise, you unnecessarily risk public embarrassment after the document is published.
- Proof carefully.

Culminating Comments

Consider the bulleted topics above to be starting points. Add, subtract, and otherwise revise as you see fit until you possess writing tips that suit your particular style, and then use them as a checklist to improve future products.

Hop to it. Geriatric John Collins, halfway through his 8th decade, will be on the sidelines cheering. MR

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3. Ibid.

Colonel John M. Collins, U.S. Army, Retired, has contributed articles to 13 of the 15 publications mentioned. He currently steers the Warlord Loop, an e-mail net whose 150 heavy hitters ventilate crucial national security issues from every quadrant of the compass.

MR Book Reviews


Francis Fukuyama, celebrated author of The End of History and the Last Man (Harper Perennial, New York, 1993), has finally confessed to what the rest of us have suspected: History goes on, with a vengeance. In his latest book Fukuyama provides personal views on the role America should play in what used to be called the “New World Order,” which is now not only the post-Cold War world, but also the post-9/11 world.

Fukuyama describes the influence of neoconservative thought on President George W. Bush’s foreign policy. In doing so, he provides a short, personal history of the neoconservative movement and its ideas. Fukuyama speaks as an insider: His account is based on years of personal friendships and close professional association with leading figures of the neoconservative movement, including Paul Wolfowitz, Albert Wohlstetter, and Allan Bloom. He delivers some surprising news: Neoconservatives are not new; the movement arose in the early 1940s and provided an alternative to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and his “realists” during the latter stages of the Cold War.

Neoconservatives remain firm believers in “liberal” democracy—indeed, the founders of the movement started their careers with decidedly leftist preferences. Neoconservatives are not truly conservative in their foreign policy designs; in stark contrast to other conservative movements that profess restraint in foreign policy in the name of strict national interest, stability, or isolationism, they are distinct activists who believe in promoting democracy and free markets.

Fukuyama wrote his book because he felt his views were no longer compatible with Bush’s neoconservative policies. Rather than reclaiming the term and returning it to what he believes is its original meaning, Fukuyama has conceded the neoconservative appellation to its current practitioners in the administration. Cynical readers might interpret Fukuyama’s change of mind as a case of sour grapes in response to the dramatic fall from grace of Bush’s foreign policy agenda and, in particular, the war in Iraq. However, Fukuyama is a serious scholar and provides a finely nuanced, articulate critique of what he perceives to be the failures of current policy and the misinterpretation of the original neoconservative foreign policy paradigm.

Fukuyama describes the neoconservative foreign policy agenda as one “involving concepts like regime change, benevolent hegemony, unipolarity, preemption, and American exceptionalism.” All of these, in his view, “came to be the hallmarks of the Bush administration’s foreign policy.” His critique of the current administration is threefold. First, he believes the administration mischaracterized the threat to the United States from radical Islamism by wrongly conflating it with the threat from failed and rogue states (for example in the alleged Al Qaeda-Iraq connection). This belief led to the policy of “preventive war” and the Iraq War. Second, he claims that the administration grossly miscalculated, and then dismissed, the negative effect unilateral action would have on world opinion; most significantly, on the reaction of some of our closest traditional allies. The third, and perhaps the most serious criticism, is directed at the administration’s failure to plan for and consider the difficulties of the occupation and the transition of Iraq from a totalitarian dictatorship to a multiparty, multiethnic, secular democratic state.

According to Fukuyama, “Bush’s ex-post facto effort to justify a preventive war in idealistic terms has led many critics to simply desire the opposite of whatever he wants.” In other words, the President has maneuvered himself into a lame duck posture early in his second term by adopting an activist and muscular open-ended foreign policy that has moved precisely in the opposite direction of his traditional conservative stance, a stance that specifically frowned on the use of the armed forces for nation-building.

Most of these criticisms will be familiar to serving military officers and others working in foreign policy.
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and related fields. But Fukuyama presents his points in the context of the neoconservative agenda within the Bush administration, one that began with the desire to use American power without conventional internationalist restraints and which, when faced with unforeseen and intractable problems, decided to justify its decisions on idealistic grounds that were far removed from its initial motives. Fukuyama is not a conspiracy theorist. He does not ascribe devious motives to the administration’s strategic failures but rather points to wrong policy choices and “prudent errors”—errors of judgment fostered by a specific world view.

Fukuyama offers his own prescription for future American foreign policy, cautiously advocating an activist foreign policy that he calls “realistic Wilsonianism.” This is an attempt to marry President Woodrow Wilson’s American exceptionalist idealism and reliance on international institutions with a more realistic view of the world that addresses the current world situation and the limits of transnational solutions. Specifically, Fukuyama advocates dropping the much vaunted Global War on Terrorism moniker and in Iraq and Afghanistan and anti-jihadist campaigns leveraging all elements of national power in other regions of the globe.

Fukuyama differs from the realist position that sees states as autonomous entities driven by self-interest. He acknowledges that promoting democracy may be a worthy foreign policy goal for the United States, but cautions that successful cases of transition to democracy share three characteristics: First the initiative must come from within the society in question; second, success only occurs in what he calls “semi-permissive regimes,” which for their own purposes allow the existence of at least token opposition and an electoral process in which democracy may express itself; and last, societies must be receptive to the ideas advocated by Western democracies and the free market system to leverage their moral and material assistance in their own transition to democracy. Fukuyama also advocates the use of “soft power”; that is, diplomacy, economic policies, persuasion, information, and even the armed forces in support of other elements of national power as the preferred method to achieve America’s goals while minimizing international antagonism.

America at the Crossroads is a tightly woven, highly personal, and articulate critique of Bush’s foreign policy agenda and its connection with neoconservative thought. As most academic theorists do, Fukuyama highlights the painful gulf that exists between worthy ideals and their practical implementation. This is especially true in the rough-and-tumble world of politics. The question that inevitably comes to mind is: Why, if Fukuyama can be so articulate in describing a more measured course for U.S. foreign policy, did he wait to write the book until the events in Iraq and the consequent international reaction have discredited the administration’s policy at home and abroad? Was his distancing from the neoconservatives a belated act of self-preservation? Or did it spring from an academic’s natural reluctance to jump to premature conclusions? Whatever the underlying motivation might have been, Fukuyama’s book is definitely worth reading for all military and security professionals—with a pinch of critical salt.

MAJ Prisco R. Hernández, USA, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

ON POINT, Gregory Fontenot, E.J. Degen, and David Tohn, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2005, 539 pages. $34.95. BASRAH, BAGHDAD, AND BEYOND: The U.S. Marine Corps in the Second Iraq War, Nicholas E. Reynolds, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2005, 276 pages, $32.95.

Our nation’s involvement in Iraq is far from over. Even how future generations will refer to the conflict is still undetermined—a second Iraq War or Persian Gulf War II? Early histories have offered several accounts of unit actions, specific events, individual experiences, or attempts at synthesis. Those interested in studying the conflict now have two service-sponsored efforts regarding the first months of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF): the Army’s On Point, by Gregory Fontenot, E.J. Degen, and David Tohn, and the Marines’ Basrah, Baghdad, and Beyond, by Nicholas Reynolds. On Point covers the actions and decisions at every level of war, effectively relating the experiences of general officers but always returning to those who do the hard work at the sharp end. Fontenot, Degen, and Tohn’s analysis embraces the many joint, combined arms, and branch operations that together comprise modern warfare. Despite the authors admitting that they could not give every tactical action its due, this is an effective rendering of the events leading up to and encompassing the combat action during March and April 2003. Individual units—combat, combat support, and combat service support—receive deserved recognition. Fontenot and his colleagues relate soldiers’ stories through a text that skillfully melds these many parts into a consistently coherent and readable account.

Individual vignettes range from descriptions of close combat to the irony of the 3d Infantry Division’s Colonel Daniel Allyn declaring, “If I had tried this attack at the NTC [National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California], I would not survive the after-action review,” and the dark humor of realizing that the first Iraqi soldier killed during OIF might have met his fate when he was struck by an aerial-delivered box of psychological operations pamphlets. (Notably, a U.S. Air Force MC-130 Combat Talon aircraft dropped that box, making it a joint operation.)

No less impressive is the chapter titled “Implications,” in which the authors offer frank, hardnosed analysis to add to On Point’s value. They note that “Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines study history not to glorify past campaigns [well, maybe a little], but rather to prepare for future campaigns,” then proceed to offer insights to assist in that preparation. Doctrinal shortfalls, equipment deficiencies (and related Soldier work-arounds), and insufficient urban training capabilities are among many areas sharply yet professionally scrutinized in a manner reflecting not only on the authors, but also on the powers that be who allowed such open review in the interest of preparing for the conflicts that are sure to come. (The authors, by the way, also deserve the readers’ thanks for holding the line against the growing and needless aggrandizement of the military via capitalization of “joint,” “soldier,” “marines,” “service,” and similar words.)
I do not mean to imply that On Point provides the ultimate recitation of the war’s events. While the book is commendable in its consideration of joint matters, there is still much to be written of other services, Coalition partners, individuals, and units. Analyses of commanders’ decisions and personal interactions, too, have by and large been left to others—a perhaps unsurprising fact despite the admirable openness allowed. Additional well-considered analysis, especially regarding events in Iraq since the spring of 2003, will further benefit the thinking professionals. Yet the most unfortunate aspect of On Point lies with the publishers: The quality of the maps and other images is disappointing.

Nicholas Reynolds’s Basrah, Baghdad, and Beyond is much shorter than On Point and is not what one might expect from the subtitle. Reynolds’s focus is the I Marine Expeditionary Force (1 MEF). (Forthcoming histories covering aviation, combat service support, Task Force Tarawa in Iraq, and Marine operations in Afghanistan are promised, works that should expand on the material offered in this initial publication.)

Basrah, Baghdad, and Beyond is an overly headquarters-centric offering, one that relies too much on commercial media sources rather than on primary sources for facts and analysis. Firsthand retellings and considered examination of actions where the Marines meet the enemy are few and lacking in depth. Historians will appreciate Reynolds’s coverage of operations in northern and southeastern Iraq, but here, too, descriptions of the commands’ relationships and headquarters’ living conditions smoother the few sorties into exploits at the cold face.

Reynolds’s assessment of key commanders’ precombat speeches to their Marines and Soldiers offers insights into personalities. He identifies incidents of interservice rivalries that threatened and impeded combat effectiveness, thereby offering insights that cannot fail to disgust any who have had to deal with their consequences. The Marine at battalion level and below is only an occasional guest in the book. There is value in a record of life in headquarters where higher echelon commanders make decisions and develop guidance. Yet offering a history of military leaders as a comprehensive account of I MEF action in the war is like assuming that a history of New York’s mayors tells that city’s tale of growth and glory. Basrah, Baghdad, and Beyond is a too-stereile recounting of Marine ground actions in the war; it leaves the rifleman, squad leader, and young officer searching in vain for a real sense of what it is like to fight in Iraq.

To compare a history written so soon after the fact with the likes of Marine historian Jack Schulimson’s work on Vietnam would be unfair. However, that does not preclude his fine work from serving as a benchmark to strive for. Hopefully, the U.S. Marine volumes on OIF that are yet to come will achieve a better balance between the tactical and higher levels of war and will be more representative of the full range of Marine action in the field. In the meantime, the book will serve as a summary of the conflict from a headquarters’ perspective.

On Point’s impressive range of interviews and other primary sources provides the depth, balance, and scope that should characterize initial service histories. In comparison, there are Marine accounts yet to come that might provide similar resources for those hungry to learn. It is encouraging that the Army and the Marines recognize the need to publish such works in a timely manner. One hopes that they and the other services will in the future also recognize that stability and support operations deserve similar attention.

**Russell W. Glenn, Ph.D., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**


_The poets are always right: history is on their side._

—Bukharin to Stalin, 1934

Brian Turner, who holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing, served as an infantry team leader during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Here, Bullet is his debut book of 46 poems representing his combat experience. The book’s cover depicts the near-monochromatic geometry of a Soldier who blends into the middle ground of a desert, evoking the Cubist scheme of devastated landscape in Paul Nash’s painting _We Are Making a New World_ (1918).

Turner probes the immense pathos of Iraq at war: “You hear the RPG [rocket propelled grenade] coming for you. / Not so the roadside bomb.” Throughout, he forces us to face the terror: “Believe it when a twelve-year old / rolls a grenade into the room.” Elsewhere a dying Soldier has “just enough blood / to cough up and drown in,” and a civil affairs officer stares at his missing hands. In “Autopsy,” a dead Soldier’s heart is weighed by a mortuary affairs specialist who wonders how fast that heart once beat on the occasion of the Soldier’s first kiss. Turner revisits some terrible paradoxes as in “The Al Harishma Weapons Market,” where “an American death puts food on the table, / more cash than most men earn in an entire year.” Still, in “Sadiq,” “no matter what adrenaline / feeds the muscle its courage, / . . . it should break your heart to kill.”

Turner draws deep affinities with history and his thematic vision is broad. In “Hwy 1,” he reminds us that the invasion of Iraq was incipient in “the Highway of Death” of the first Gulf War, and even more anciently, along “. . . the spice road of old.” In “In the Leucope Scope,” a Soldier scans the horizon for enemy positions, only to behold an Iraqi woman hanging laundry, knowing that she is one of many “women with breasts swollen with milk” who is essentially “. . . dressing the dead, clothing them / as they wait in silence.” There is a particularly telling image in “The Baghdad Zoo,” where an escaped baboon wanders the desert “confused / by the wind, the blowing sands of the barchan dunes,” a distant hominoid metonymy of modern man’s endless reversion to primal violence. Turner reminds us that there are brief moments of repose, as when a Soldier—for once, “didn’t comfort an injured man / who cupped pieces of his friend’s brain / in his hands; instead, today, / white birds rose from the Tigris.”

The inscription of Turner’s experience as poetry is valuable, and readers are fortunate for what is likely the first printed volume of poetry to come out of the war. Yet overall, there are not many artistically memorable verses and little
expression of the dynamic capabilities of language that could have undergirded a rich poetic imagery. The best poems are “A Soldier’s Arabic” and “Here, Bullet.”—both peering into the poet’s psyche; “Easel,” “Sadiq,” and “To Sand.” Still, Here, Bullet is a poignant and brutally lucid evocation of war.

MAJ Jeffrey C. Alfier, USAF, Ramstein Air Base, Germany


In his most recent work, P.W. Singer tackles an emerging aspect of the modern battlefield to which political and military leaders must respond: child soldiers. Singer, a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, observes that the use of children in combat is “global in scope and massive in number.” He maintains that the practice has become so pervasive that it requires “an entirely new doctrine of warfare” with an unwritten “new body of fundamental principles, deliberate instrumental choices, and transferred teachings about how to fight.”

Singer’s description of the methods of systematic recruitment, abduction, and deception (including forced drug addiction) used to manipulate children into participating in military operations is chilling, yet instructive. So are the implications, which include more prolonged, more brutal conflicts that defy resolution. Singer suggests that the actions of the international community may be crucial to ending the practice. Political leaders must universally condemn the practice and support organizational and institutional efforts to improve the awful economic conditions that give rise to the practice. In addition, Singer recommends using the World Court or war crimes tribunals to punish leaders who encourage and coerce children to fight.

Although the threat of punishment may deter the employment of child soldiers, it likely will not end it. Therefore, those forces that might face children on the battlefield must have sound doctrine and be trained for the eventuality. Singer notes that only the Marine Corps (in exercises at Marine Corps University) has included child soldiers in training scenarios, and he derides other service branches for their lack of attention to the problem. Singer also argues that political leaders, too, need to address the issue. For example, when crafting the terms of future peace agreements, they must be mindful to include plans for the demobilization, counseling, and education of former child soldiers.

Singer’s book is unsettling but essential reading for military and political leaders who may face children at war. Strengths of the work include a frank description of the problem, its implications, proposed responses from the international community, and a recommendation that future peace agreements include demobilization provisions. The book’s chief weaknesses derive from a superficial and sometimes formulaic treatment of the causes of the practice. For example, to place primary blame on U.S. policies or current economic conditions ignores the historical nature of unresolved conflict in many regions; fails to address ethnic, cultural, and religious factors; and does not acknowledge the influence of longstanding unresolved political or social issues.

In the end, Singer stresses the strategic nature of the problem and observes that there is no panacea. Thus, U.S. Soldiers must prepare to face children in military operations. Moreover, nations that send armies to areas in which children are in combat must be ready to counter demoralizing and damaging effects on their troops. As political and military leaders continue to probe the new dimensions of warfare, effective doctrinal development must begin with the study of these unsavory practices.

Deborah C. Kidwell, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas


Ephraim Kam’s Surprise Attack offers a meticulously researched analysis of indications and warnings (I&W) intelligence. I&W is a multidisciplined field that draws data from all branches of intelligence collection as well as political science, psychology, and even game theory. I&W’s mission is to warn policymakers of imminent invasion or pending military action by foreign powers.

Kam explains that because I&W is so complex, surprise attacks were relatively common during World War II. He cites standard analytical problems as the causes of warning failure: poor vetting of sources, cognitive biases, and over-compartmentalization of intelligence. Case studies, from the German invasion of Norway to Chinese incursions into India and Vietnam, support his conclusions. He also draws from psychology, political science, history, and intelligence analysis to make his case.

Kam concludes that surprise attacks are inevitable because successful warnings rely on many processes operating correctly; thus, surprise can occur when even one alarm fails or when analysts ignore an alarm that goes off too often. He offers suggestions to improve I&W, such as cultivating mature, insightful analysts who display competence, courage, and candor. Surprise Attack will interest students in the intelligence field and those who are in the policymaking process. The book is detailed enough to be a textbook for any serious course and should not be considered light reading.

CPT Andrew Marvin, US Army Military Intelligence, Iraq


The Battle of An Loc is a well-researched and solid history of one of the pivotal South Vietnamese and American battlefield victories during the 1972 Easter Offensive. The book is particularly topical because it examines a battle in which the combination of embedded American advisers, American air power, and indigenous Vietnamese forces were effective in defeating numerically superior North Vietnamese formations. James H. Willbanks is uniquely qualified to write such a book—he was among the American advisers at An Loc, he holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Kansas, and he is on the faculty at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Because the South Vietnamese won this battle at a time when the Vietnamization process was nearly
complete and because there were by then only two reinforced American combat brigades and 5,416 American advisers in the whole of Vietnam, this book may be germane to U.S. and Coalition efforts to train indigenous forces and to reduce the number of U.S. forces fighting insurgents in Iraq.

The Battle of An Loc begins with the strategic context, then scopes down to the enemy and friendly operational-level dispositions, and finally focuses on the battle, its lessons, and its aftermath. Willbanks explains the command and control architecture of the U.S. advisory effort and the array of indigenous South Vietnamese forces in 1972. He observes that when North Vietnam decided to launch large-scale massed conventional attacks during the 1972 campaign, “they made a major miscalculation when they failed to anticipate how much air power they would have to contend with.” At the tactical level, Willbanks attributes the outcome of the battle partly to North Vietnam’s poor decision to use tanks as infantry support and to their squandering of their great numerical advantage through the repeated use of suicidal frontal attacks that were not well coordinated with the tank forces.

The bottom line to the history of this battle, as well as to the Battle of Kontum during the same Easter Offensive, is that the South Vietnamese Government and armed forces might have ultimately prevailed against the North if the United States had continued to provide advisers and air support. Willbanks also notes that the performance of the South Vietnamese forces at An Loc was mixed. For example, while the South Vietnamese Territorial Forces, airborne brigade, and Rangers fought with skill and courage, the soldiers of the 5th ARVN Division acquitted themselves poorly. Fortunately, the embedded U.S. advisers and the firepower that they were able to coordinate in the form of attack helicopters, AC-130 Specter close air support, and some 700 B-52 arc-light sorties provided the winning advantage. The Battle of An Loc is commendable and relevant to the military audience as one account of the successful use of regular and auxiliary local forces with U.S. advisers and air power.

LTC Robert M. Cassidy, USA, Kuwait


Forging the Shield is a collection of essays prepared by various speakers at a special symposium co-sponsored by the Eisenhower Memorial Commission and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces at the National Defense University, on the career and influence of former U.S. President Dwight David Eisenhower. Eisenhower, who graduated from the Army Industrial College in 1932 and later served on the faculty, was instrumental in the formation of the National Defense University while he served as the Army Chief of Staff after World War II.

The book begins with an essay by Sergei Khrushchev that gives us a first-hand perspective of Soviet society; his father, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev; and his father’s experiences with Eisenhower. Subsequent essayists review various aspects of Eisenhower’s national security structure, processes, and products, offering insightful perspectives on Eisenhower’s foreign policy initiatives, especially with regard to the Korean War and China.

The essayists comment on Eisenhower’s overall defense strategy, showing it to have been a balanced and fiscally prudent program, and they discuss Eisenhower’s expansion of U.S. intelligence capabilities—an energized CIA whose director enjoyed unparalleled access to the president; communications intelligence (National Security Agency, 1952); and overhead reconnaissance (airborne overflights of the Soviet Union, the U-2 program, and Corona). One essay describes Eisenhower’s reluctant role in creating the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, showing how he braked what could have been unnecessary government bureaucracy and expense in the wake of post-Sputnik hysteria. The final essayist discusses Eisenhower’s support for joint professional education. An appendix contains the roundtable panel discussion that concluded the symposium.

These essays offer a balanced, insightful review of Eisenhower’s contribution to U.S. national security. Reviewing this book was a pleasure. I was privileged to have attended the symposium, which I found to be a professionally rewarding experience.

LTC Christopher E. Bailey, USA, Charlottesville, Virginia


Roland Perry has provided an immensely readable and well-researched biography of Michael Straight, the only American in Britain’s Cambridge spy ring. Born into a wealthy New England family, Straight went to Cambridge University in the 1930s, where he fell in with a notorious circle of friends who were already working for Soviet Intelligence: Guy Burgess, Don Maclean, Anthony Blunt, and Kim Philby. For 40 years, while he worked in the State Department, ran The New Republic magazine, and worked for Presidents John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon, Straight was also a KGB agent.

In 1963, Straight falsely confessed to the FBI, claiming that his involvement in KGB covert activities had ended in 1942. Perry sorts through the fact and fiction of Straight’s life, drawing on archival material from U.S. and former Soviet sources and on interviews with former CIA and KGB agents. Perry’s biography is the first complete portrait of Straight’s life.

He provides intriguing insights and anecdotes drawn from Straight’s intelligence career, among them:

● No agent could stray from the course once recruited—the KGB had a direct, permanent means of decommissioning agents.

● The 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact posed problems for KGB agents: How could a control officer explain Stalin’s move to an ideologically committed agent who was opposed to fascism?

● Straight’s allegations against FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover led to increased surveillance of Straight’s activities.

● Straight used his connection to Nixon, an arch anti-Communist, to secure a position on the National Endowment for the Arts, where he promoted liberal, anti-administration themes.

Altogether, Perry has created an accessible, well-researched portrait of a generally unknown member of...
the Cambridge spy ring. I recommend this book to persons interested in intelligence history.

LTC Christopher E. Bailey, USA, Charlottesville, Virginia


Histories of the Korean War often depict North Korea as underestimating the United States’ willingness to defend South Korea, and the United States’ refusal to believe China when it warned against invading North Korea. Although both sides undoubtedly made such errors, any account that emphasizes these misunderstandings tends to take the war out of its larger context; that is, the worldwide rivalry of the early Cold War. Regardless, at the time, both sides viewed the United States’ willingness to defend South Korea, and the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, Communist China, and both Korean governments. U.S. President Harry S. Truman, for example, regarded Korea as a deliberate Communist distraction from the defense of Europe.

Alan Levine restores that wider context in Stalin’s Last War: Korea and the Approach to World War III, in which he views the strategic direction of the war through the eyes of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, Communist China, and both Korean governments. Levine makes a plausible argument even though in 1951 the Soviet Union was still recovering from the catastrophic effects of World War II and was unprepared for such a risky effort. In fact, many of the events Levine cites to support his thesis could also be interpreted as evidence that Stalin, like the West, feared that the Korean War would unintentionally spiral into World War III. Viewed in this manner, Levine’s thesis must be considered unproven, although the specter of a wider war can help the reader comprehend why so many world leaders struggled to put limits on the Korean War.

This book is a refreshing reexamination of a perennial topic and as such is well worth the reader’s time.

COL Jonathan M. House, USAR, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas


Keith McFarland and David Roll have written a first-class biography of Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, who was in office from January 1948 to September 1950. This extremely insightful, well-written, meticulously researched, and eminently fair book is particularly needed because critics’ opinions have clouded Johnson’s picture.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson characterized Johnson as suffering a brain disorder that caused hyper-aggression. President Harry S. Truman concluded that Johnson “is the most egotistical man [man] I’ve ever come in contact with—and I’ve seen a lot.” Truman might simply have gotten a bit more than he wanted. He had appointed Johnson to the position because Johnson’s predecessor, James Forrestal, seemed too deferential to the armed services.

In describing Norman Longmate’s book, words like “counterfactual” and “what-if history” readily come to mind. However, If Britain Had Fallen transcends these simplistic descriptions when it asks: What if Britain had been defeated and occupied by Nazi German forces? The book’s approach is greater than simply posing this question and making up a story to go along with it. Longmate astoundingly uses archival evidence to create a background for the invasion and subsequent occupation of Britain.

The only real problem with the book is that Longmate does not use notes and offers only a few comments on bibliographic sources. He
refers to various Nazi war plans, but does not cite them or mention any of the works that he consulted. Overall, the book is entertaining and probably could have value to the defense community because of its analysis of invasion and occupation operations (even though the book’s examples are primarily conjectural). The book has most value for World War II buffs.

David Schepp, Fort Benning, Georgia


Andrew Rawson’s Bridge at Remagen, one of the latest in Pen and Sword Books’ Battleground Europe series provides tactical narratives of military operations designed to aid travelers. Rawson’s book is an excellent narration of the first tactical crossing of the Rhine River in March 1945, as Allied armies were preparing for their final drive on Hitler’s Third Reich. The story primarily concerns the companies and battalions of Combat Command B of the U.S. 9th Armoured Division.

Rawson’s book is concise enough not to daunt the reader and contains enough photographs and good maps (many showing specific unit movement routes) to permit the reader to visualize and comprehend the battlefield. Rawson is better than most at incorporating opposing German activities into the text, thereby not restricting the reader to a single perspective.

The fight for the Remagen bridgehead was limited geographically making it possible for a traveler to explore and fully appreciate the scene of the battle during the course of a weekend. Rawson’s commentary, maps, and guidance go a long way toward providing the reader with a sense of how the mission progressed.

LTC Michael A. Boden, USA, Hohenfels, Germany


Early in World War II, the isles of the North Pacific Rim were seen by both the Japanese and the United States as key strategic footholds between Asia and North America. Each side feared an island-hopping invasion that could be launched in either direction via the Aleutians. The Americans quickly realized the importance of intelligence outposts in the region and set up a security perimeter to monitor activity. The Japanese set up positions to defend against potential American attacks.

Although combat in the Aleutians would be limited to the early stages of the war, the United States maintained a facade of activity in the region by moving troops, changing security plans, and launching occasional aerial attacks into Japanese territory. Duty was monotonous for U.S. forces on the ground, but the illusion was convincing to the Japanese. It also kept Japanese forces occupied while U.S. forces moved toward the Japanese mainland from the south.

In Alaska’s Hidden Wars: Secret Campaigns on the North Pacific Rim, Otis Hays, Jr., tells the story of the North Pacific campaign from several perspectives. He illuminates the experiences of aviation crews who conducted deceptive attacks and braved the freezing, unforgiving seas only to be ignored as attention, opportunities, and rewards went to their colleagues in other theaters. Hays conveys the tedious banality of the war as experienced by Soldiers, officers, and civilians on the ground, entrenched in a progressively wearisome waiting game. He explains the strategic importance of the maritime supply routes between North America and the Soviet Union, and details the crucial yet often understated contribution of Japanese-American intelligence personnel, the Nisei. Drawing on declassified signals intelligence and Japanese news broadcasts, he also provides a glimpse of the campaign as the Japanese saw it.

Alaska’s Hidden Wars uses an impressive collection of primary sources to tell its story, including a roster of Japanese-American translators, samples of American propaganda leaflets dropped in Japan, a translation of the famous diary of Japanese doctor Paul Tatsuguchi, and an overview of signals intelligence operations in the region. The book offers a concise, well-rounded history that puts a human face on a war in a time when the elements were as formidable as the enemy himself.

Kevin Freese, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas


Flint Whitlock presents a wrenching account of the treatment of American prisoners of war (POWs) during World War II using the words of the veterans who survived the ordeal. He begins the story with the POW’s backgrounds—Americans from Texas to New York. These were average Americans—volunteers and draftees, fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons. Whitlock tells of the Soldiers’ training and deployment to the front lines just before the Battle of the Bulge to give a sense of the Soldiers’ lack of battlefield experience.

Whitlock’s skill in blending the Soldiers’ personal accounts with vivid descriptions of the locations pulls the reader into the POW’s experiences. Even with an event that happened so many years ago, readers can still feel the horror and shock of the sheer brutality of the experience. The POW’s confronted the specter of Death, resisting their tormentors in whatever way they could. During their 300-kilometer death march to the concentration camps, the Americans still found strength to carry on, even as their comrades were dying in growing numbers. The Soldiers survived because of the great courage they showed in overcoming insurmountable odds.

The book’s conclusion leaves the reader with a bittersweet taste as Whitlock tells the fates of both the Soldiers who survived and the brutal guards who tortured them. Leaders today should read this book for a better understanding of how U.S. Soldiers fought and persevered and also to consider the lessons of how brutal men can be to their fellow man.

MAJ David C. Snow, USA, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas


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An intriguing exploration into unconventional warfare during the U.S. Civil War, Jane Singer’s *The Confederate Dirty War* offers insights and cautions for current operations in the Iraqi theater. As described by Singer, the diligent efforts of Confederate operatives to undermine the authority of the U.S. Government seem to have presaged the complex and ambiguous nature of contemporary guerrilla warfare.

Singer focuses her study on clandestine agents and the operations they conducted against the cities of the North and a government that so many in the South despised. She does not speculate about or judge the characters in question, but skillfully and rather succinctly provides an accurate historical record of the facts and lets those facts speak for themselves.

The book details how elements within the Confederacy, acting officially or otherwise, developed and attempted numerous plans to inflict terror and death on the Union populace and bring down the government. Singer introduces the reader to such shadowy characters as Professor Richard Sears McCulloch, who resigned a faculty chair at Columbia College to assist the Confederacy in making a chemical weapon; Luke Pryor Blackburn, a physician and, later, governor of Kentucky, who allegedly spread smallpox and yellow fever throughout the North; and Felix Grundy Stidger, a government secret service agent and counterspy, who infiltrated the highest ranks of the Sons of Liberty, a clandestine Confederate organization.

Singer also offers a new perspective on John Wilkes Booth’s role in the conspiracy to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln. She shows how Civil War operatives, not unlike contemporary insurgents, often act on their own initiative with minimal guidance from higher leaders.

*The Confederate Dirty War* is rich in illustrations, photographs, and notes, and it extensively cites other valuable Civil War references. Weaving her sources together skillfully, Singer provides a coherent assessment of the Confederacy’s untiring efforts to demoralize the North and decapitate its government. Singer also illustrates the extreme measures desperate people go to in pursuit of their ideological and political ambitions. As she connects the past and present via the historical framework of asymmetrical warfare, Singer offers a somber reflection on the likelihood of U.S. success in combating the insurgency in Iraq.

**LTC Jonathan M. Williams, USA, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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Donald L. Gilmore has written a vivid, enlightening account of events along the Kansas/Missouri border from 1854 to 1865. He discusses the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Compromises of 1820 and 1850, and other problems that led to the border conflict. This was a time that challenged men’s souls as they experienced life and death in “Bloody Kansas” and in western Missouri’s “Burnt District,” and Gilmore describes it well.

Gilmore breaks new ground by offering a version of the border war from mostly the Missouri point of view. In doing so, he provides an in-depth study of why good men do bad things. The book highlights infamous Kansans such as John Brown, James Montgomery, Daniel Anthony (brother of Susan B. Anthony), James Lane, Charles Jennison, and the “Red Legs” whose solutions to problems were to terrorize, murder, pillage, and burn (a practice otherwise known as jayhawking). Many of the Red Legs’ actions (not unlike the exploits of Genghis Khan and Attila the Hun) would be considered war crimes today.

The book discusses law-of-war violations in Missouri, such as scalpings, the severing of extremities, executions of prisoners of war, illegal use of civilians on the battlefield, robberies, the burning of homes and businesses, and the round-up and confinement of insurgent families. According to Gilmore, these events help explain why William “Bill” Quantrill transitioned from a school teacher to a bushwhacker, and how he overcame his moral scruples to raid Olathe, Paola, and Lawrence—the latter resulting in the massacre of every townsman from 16 to 60.

Quantrill wasn’t the worst of the lot: Many of his men considered his actions insufficient to stop the Union plague in Missouri and took it upon themselves to fix the problem. One Quantrill apostate, “Bloody Bill” Anderson, earned his nickname in 1864 by wiping out a 115-man Union force and by massacring 24 unarmed Union soldiers during a train robbery. Anderson’s father had been killed by abolitionists, and in 1863 some of Anderson’s sisters were killed and the others maimed in a make-shift Union prison. He was already a killer, but these events made Anderson psychotic. Frank and Jesse James, who were part of Anderson’s party, learned devious lessons from him for their postwar careers as bandits.

Gilmore also provides insights into insurgency and counterinsurgency operations before and during the Civil War. The book discusses the tactics, techniques, and procedures of seasoned Civil War insurgents, the experiences they had and the lessons they learned during the first 2 years of the war, and how they developed into seasoned, hardened raiders.

In sum, *Civil War on the Missouri-Kansas Border* is a captivating account of western life during the violent years prior to and during the Civil War. A thorough, well-researched study of the realities of life during a particularly volatile time, it should appeal to scholars and laymen alike.

**MAJ Jeffrey Wingo, USA, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**
Great Captains of Chaos

Colonel James K. Greer, Chief of Staff, MNSTC-I, Baghdad—I would like to offer the following comments about Major F. John Burpo’s superb January-February 2006 article “The Great Captains of Chaos: Developing Adaptive Leaders.” Burpo makes some great observations in detailing the leadership traits required of adaptive leaders. I would only add that the base trait of an adaptive leader is excellence in the tactics and techniques of our profession. That mastery is the basis for effective adaptation.

Fortunately, the initiation of Basic Officer Learning Course (BOLC) II will begin the solid grounding in the basic skills our profession requires for successful adaptation. Second, his observation about Ranger School is right on—it is a tremendous school for developing adaptive leaders and the more people we get through there the better. There are no branches, MOS’s, or organizations in our 21st-century Army that don’t require the small-unit leadership skills developed at Ranger School.

The two educational experiences that most shaped my ability to adapt were Ranger School and the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). By their very nature, both courses require the student to adapt to succeed, over and over again on a daily basis. One course is primarily tactics in the field, the other is operational art; but both succeed at developing adaptive leaders. I disagree with Burpo about skipping the Intermediate Level Education (ILE) to go straight to SAMS. Any SAMS graduate or instructor will confirm that ILE is a vital component of the SAMS education. It provides the grounding in doctrine, the military decisionmaking process, and joint/combined operations that is necessary to build a common basis of expertise from which to launch the SAMS curriculum. Again, this is a great article and has some very valid recommendations that we must think through deliberately as we shape adaptive leader development for the future.

Laurels from AFJ

Thomas Donnelly, Editor, Armed Forces Journal (AFJ)—Laurels to the editors of Military Review—which, if AFJ weren’t so broad-minded we might regard as a competitor—puts the lie to the accusation that military professional journals are simply house organs and idea-averse. Military Review has run a number of highly controversial critiques of the Army’s performance in the Iraq counterinsurgency, including the now-infamous piece by British Brigadier Nigel R.F. Aylwin-Foster—you couldn’t make up a name like that (“Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations,” November-December 2005). The January-February 2006 edition had a wonderful article on “The Great Captains of Chaos: Developing Adaptive Leaders” by Major F. John Burpo. The September-October 2005 issue had a very insightful piece on Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez as a master asymmetrical strategist (“The New Master of Wizard’s Chess: The Real Hugo Chavez and Asymmetric Warfare” by Colonel Max G. Manwaring). [That’s] out-of-the-box thinking from deep inside the Army box.

Correction