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EDITORIAL

This, the Autumn 2010 edition of the *Australian Army Journal* coincides with Anzac Day. Anzac Day is of deep emotional significance to the Australian nation, with many going so far as to deem that it represents the birth of our authentic national identity, rather than a commemoration of our war dead.

The Australian Army is fortunate to be so strongly identified with a day of such central importance to the Australian people. On this day it is appropriate for every Australian soldier to pause and reflect on the enormous respect that they enjoy in the community. We are custodians of an important aspect of our nation's heritage. Every Australian soldier is imbued with awareness of this through the elements of the 'I'm an Australian Soldier' initiative, which explicitly acknowledges our debt to those who have gone before us.

This is especially evident in the resurgence in popular observance of Anzac Day rituals, particularly the Dawn Service. Over the past decade, as the popular observance of Anzac Day has grown, the Australian Army has also been engaged at a very high tempo in theatres as diverse as Bougainville, Timor-Leste, the Solomon Islands, Iraq and Afghanistan. Together these trends have enhanced the reputation and public standing of the Australian Army.

This obvious public appreciation of the sacrifices of our soldiers and their families has been inspiring to every Australian soldier. It is in stark contrast to the unfair public odium directed at the Army as well as soldiers and their families during the Vietnam War.

As gratifying as such popular recognition of the sacrifice of our service personnel is, for serving soldiers there is an even more important private aspect to Anzac Day. A large number of our mates are currently deployed on operations against determined and lethal enemies. Others have returned from active service or are in the process of preparing to deploy. A significant portion of the Army has experienced the grim reality of war in recent years, including the death and wounding of mates. This serves to lend Anzac Day a reflective, rather than a celebratory quality to those in uniform.

EDITORIAL

In that spirit we publish 'An Anzac Reflection' by Brigadier Nick Jans, who revives his memories of service in Vietnam. Most readers will recognise in his portrait of the soldiers with whom he served the same qualities of courage, professionalism and resourcefulness that many consider characteristic of the modern Australian Digger.

In this edition we continue our focus on current operations in Afghanistan. In particular, Lieutenant Colonel Jon Hawkins examines two other insurgencies—in Aden and Oman—for possible lessons applicable to our current operations. And Major Ian Langford makes an excellent contribution to our understanding of the Afghanistan theatre with his consideration of Australian Special Forces operations there.

Of similar interest is a provocative and thoughtful article by Major Cate Carter inspired by her operational experience in Timor-Leste. It is now firmly established conventional wisdom that in era of so-called 'war amongst the people' that every soldier must supplement his or her conventional combat skills with language and cultural proficiency. Major Carter's article is a highly original examination of the challenges in achieving this.

Nonetheless, close combat remains the inescapable characteristic of warfare and the article by Major James Davis makes a compelling case for Army to maintain its focus on this fundamental determinant of success. Colonel Chris Field expands on the challenges facing the Infantry in adapting to the dynamic operational environment, although his article is relevant to all arms.

This edition of the Journal features a number of very innovative articles about concept development, which are indicative of the vibrant climate of innovation within the Australian Army. We continue to be encouraged by the steady flow of unsolicited manuscripts that are being submitted to the Journal. The future of the *Australian Army Journal* looks to be secure.

We commend this edition of the *Australian Army Journal* to our readers.

CURRENT OPERATIONS

ASSESSING AFGHANISTAN AGAINST ADEN AND OMAN

A EUPHEMISM FOR CAPITULATION OR THE SEEDS OF SUCCESS?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JON HAWKINS

ABSTRACT

Is Australia prepared to support the possibility of a negotiated solution to the current Afghan situation? A negotiated solution must be from a position of strength, and not as a last resort or from a position of fear. With the Soviet–Afghan war as a backdrop, the insurgencies in Oman and Aden provide the basis for debate on the merits of negotiation as a means to resolve insurgencies. Many of the Afghan population support dialogue with the Taliban. This underscores President Karzai’s desire to bring moderate Taliban into the political arena in order to progress the reconciliation process.

Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

John F Kennedy¹

INTRODUCTION

Insurgencies are more than solely military actions. This has been demonstrated by numerous belligerents in past centuries, and more recently by the Taliban in Afghanistan where they are utilising many influence strategies to achieve their end-state. The Taliban believe that they are winning, or that they only need to not lose in order to win. In recent propaganda released by the Taliban, they stated that ‘the West has the clocks...but the Taliban have the time.’² Counterinsurgency is primarily about winning and keeping the ‘hearts and minds’ of the in-theatre population and, equally importantly in the modern era, the domestic population of the coalition forces supporting counterinsurgency operations in distant war zones.

This article aims to create debate on the possibility of a negotiated solution to the current Afghan situation. It strives to point out that any negotiated solution must be achieved from a position of strength, and not as a last resort or from a position of fear in order to save political face with Western electorates. George Schultz articulated the essence of the requirement when he stated, ‘Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation if the shadow of power is not cast across the bargaining table.’³

Often the root cause of an insurgency can be identified early and isolated from the insurgent’s narrative, or ideology, leaving the insurgency dislocated from popular support. The sooner this can be achieved the faster the insurgency can be neutralised through negotiation and, if necessary, physical destruction. NATO and Australian Army doctrine defines counterinsurgency as ‘Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat an insurgency.’⁴

It must be noted though, that despite the idea of physical and psychological isolation of an insurgency from the population, an exclusively military response has historically been unsuccessful. In several cases this has only exacerbated the problem and brought more of the population to view the insurgent’s narrative as the only road.⁵ Likewise, various examples from history, including Northern Ireland, Kenya and Malaya, demonstrate that, despite the use of military power, having a dialogue with the insurgents is similarly important. One of the most comprehensive polls recently conducted in Afghanistan showed that a considerable portion of the population supported negotiations with the Taliban, indeed, a sizeable segment of those polled also supported a Karzai and Taliban coalition government.⁶

In Australian Army counterinsurgency doctrine there is no mention of reconciliation or negotiations being required for success. To examine these concepts and

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Table 1. Negotiate with the Taliban⁷

Should the Afghan Government deal with the Taliban?		
	Negotiations	Coalition Government
Strongly support	36	25
Somewhat support	38	29
Somewhat oppose	9	14
Strongly oppose	9	19
Depends/Don't know	8	13

pose the question of where negotiations may be used to assist in the present Afghan counterinsurgency, two counterinsurgency wars of the last century will be examined. First though, an examination of the Soviet–Afghan conflict is necessary, as it provides perspective for the present campaign.

THE SOVIET–AFGHAN ERA

Afghanistan has been embroiled in war for centuries. The Great Game was played out between the British Empire and the Russian Empire in the mid to late 1800s, and since then both domestic and external participants have been the catalyst for further conflict and instability.⁸ Much has been written on the Soviet–Afghan conflict and drawing out several significant points highlights that some of the Soviet philosophies in dealing with the Mujahedin have become established in the current methodology of dealing with the Taliban.

The Mujahedin, like the present belligerents, consisted of many disparate groups and, according to O’Neil’s lexicon, could be labelled as traditionalist insurgents, with some overlap to egalitarians and preservationists.⁹ In reality, the insurgency was more an instinctive campaign against international involvement than any notion of nationalism. The insurgents, or the Mujahedin, received support from many Western and Middle Eastern countries and were provided sanctuary in Pakistan; however, there were as many Tajiks, Uzbeks, Baluch and Hazarans involved as Pashtuns, which contrasts with the present conflict. The current insurgency is almost exclusively centred on Pashtunistan and its tribes. The support provided by the United States and others afforded the Mujahedin a level of sophistication in weaponry and communications equipment beyond the Soviets, but they lacked a critical mass to overwhelm the Soviets throughout the country.¹⁰

The Soviets, in a similar position to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, could not enter Pakistan. They relied heavily on the Afghan Government security apparatus to conduct offensive action, as particularly towards the end of the conflict, Soviet public support waned. Additionally, Soviet bombing of villages alienated Afghans and ground tactical successes were accompanied by withdrawals to safe areas. These tactics dealt operational and strategic blows to the Soviet campaign to dominate the land. Disunity within the Afghan Government also played into the hands of the Mujahedin. Furthermore, the Soviets attempted to close the Pakistan border and, like today, were unsuccessful. An incomplete understanding of the insurgents and their narrative caused some of the Soviets to question their own legitimacy.¹¹

Towards the end of the war, when the outcome was looking uncertain, the Soviets implemented a strategy of reconciliation with the various belligerents, but it was too little, too late.¹² Another dominant issue was that the Afghan population saw the Karmal and Najibullah regimes as being too closely aligned with the Soviets: does the Afghan population view Kabul's relationship with the United States as analogous with the Soviet era?

Capturing Soviet mistakes and comparing them against today's campaign highlights several points: a lack of understanding of the Pashtun society, or limited social network analysis; too many Soviet troops confined to garrison duties and a heavy reliance on Afghan troops for combat duties; and the ever present sanctuary afforded by the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Several of these issues have a common theme in counterinsurgency conflicts of the past century, especially the post colonial conflicts of the Second World War.

Following the Allied victory over the Axis powers in the European and Pacific theatres, several small secessionist wars broke out. To provide a suitable backdrop for analysis, two campaigns have been selected where tribal Islamic elements pitted themselves against Western forces. The insurgency in Aden in the mid 1960s highlights several areas where Afghanistan's current situation has parallels; but first, the successful counterinsurgency in Oman, also during the late 1960s, presents opportunities for debate on the merits of negotiation as a strategy with the Taliban.

DHOFAR WAR (OMAN)

The campaign in Dhofar has had little coverage, but its example as a successful counterinsurgency requires its mention here. Primarily, the counterinsurgency was fought by Omani, Iranian and British troops from 1962 to 1975. Up to and during the initial stages of the insurgency, which was predominately conducted with the insurgents receiving tacit support from Yemen and Saudi Arabia, the Sultan of Oman had maintained a diffident approach to the nation's development.¹³ This was particularly the case in Dhofar, a protectorate of Oman, where oppression of the population for the benefit

of the Omani hierarchy was the norm. As a result the Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF) was formed. In 1970, a successful coup by the Sultan's son allowed for an immediate change in government policy. This brought about substantial changes in the type of campaign that was conducted against the insurgents, known as the Adoo. A combined civil and military chain of command was created and many of the Adoo's grievances were rectified immediately.

Reconciliation through amnesty and protection of villages was negotiated with the Adoo, who surrendered, and irregular company sized units of Firquats (former Adoo members) were formed to operate with British Special Air Service (SAS) liaison officers.¹⁴ Furthermore, British

... the psychological operations element persuaded the rebels through reconciliation and negotiation to change sides ...

Army Training Teams (BATT) were created, and embedded into the expanded and re-equipped Sultan's regular Armed Forces, at twenty-two advisors per battalion. British soldiers in the BATT required cultural adjustment as the local tribe, the Dhofari, had a very direct communication style.¹⁵ Distribution of small handheld transistor radios in the DLF sanctuaries allowed for the government's messages to be disseminated easily. Interestingly, Tony Jeapes, the SAS commander in Dhofar, claimed that the Ministry of Defence's plan called for five fundamental parts:

- An intelligence cell
- An information team
- A medical officer supported by SAS medics
- A veterinary officer
- When possible, the raising of Dhofari soldiers to fight for the Sultan.¹⁶

These five fundamentals were the focus of a spirited but well-coordinated military campaign that avoided indiscriminate actions or reprisals. The medical part was to provide aid to the 50,000 people living in the Dhofar Mountains and the veterinary part to improve farm stock, including the provision of fresh water. Finally, the information team or the psychological operations element persuaded the rebels through reconciliation and negotiation to change sides, which garnered significant intelligence and targeting value, most of which was non-kinetic.

The modification to the military and civil procedures allowed for improved targeting of the Adoo's lines of communication and support base in Dhofar. Aggressive patrolling supported by air power in the Adoo's sanctuaries coupled with a 'hearts and minds' approach of establishing medical and veterinary clinics, schools, roads and fresh wells all eroded the DLF claims that the Sultan was merely using Dhofar for resources. Finally, as a result of these successes, the DLF was unable to maintain a coherent narrative with the public, which saw support reduce in a vicious spiral.

INSIGHTS FROM THE OMAN COUNTERINSURGENCY

The Dhofar War offers several insights to the conduct of a successful counter-insurgency, particularly from a military and political perspective. The DLF had some justifiable complaints, and the replacement of the Sultan in 1970 addressed many of these grievances. The Taliban's grievances need to be fully understood and, if legitimate, measures are required to address them. Interestingly, according to a Canadian research group, a sizable portion of the South-Eastern Afghan population (14 per cent) still strongly supports the Taliban ideology, so some of the Taliban grievances may have merit, which might well be grounds for an initial approach to commence negotiations.¹⁷

Civil infrastructure improvements in Dhofar contributed significantly to the defeat of the insurgency, which addressed the population's grievances and dislocated the Adoo from the population. In Afghanistan, electricity, roads, wells and schools are but a few requests that the Afghan people present. Reconstruction is underway, but potentially not at the level required to keep the people supporting the national government. Also, the Taliban regularly attempt to destroy any infrastructure that is erected to maintain the current status quo, such as mobile phone towers.¹⁸

The civil and military diarchy was essential for the counterinsurgency to be successful. The Afghan national government's intent, executed through the provincial governors, and the Afghan Security Forces, aided by ISAF, must be seen to have political primacy. For this to occur, a legitimate government at the national level that is seen to hold sway at the provincial levels, is crucial.

Reconciliation through amnesty for the Adoo fighters and protection for their villages on surrender was a key factor in the establishment of the Firquats, which allowed for the sanctuary and support bases to be eroded. Furthermore, it allowed intelligence development to accelerate and long-term post-insurgency planning to be established. This suggests that Taliban amnesty measures need to be more aggressive. Resettlement programs and security for villages is still an issue, as insufficient Afghan Security Forces exist to achieve this. Until security is possible for villages, malleable Taliban are not going to change sides as staunch Taliban control the countryside at night through the dissemination of night letters and other forms of psychological warfare. Furthermore, the capacity for the Afghan national army and police to absorb former Taliban will be difficult, and it may be better to establish irregular fighting units managed by Special Forces, similar to the Firquats, who would then allow for more discriminate targeting of the staunch Taliban in their sanctuaries.

Taliban amnesty
measures need to
be more aggressive.

Aggressive foot and vehicle patrolling, supported by air power and, to a lesser extent, sea power, eroded the Adoo's sanctuaries and lines of communication. In Afghanistan, the same philosophy applies in the border regions along the Durand Line and the mountainous regions in Uruzgan and Dai Kundi Provinces. Unremitting pressure against the Taliban hardliners in their sanctuaries is necessary, so as to disrupt their freedom of movement. This disruption will be needed prior to any real progress being made in negotiations with the more moderate and malleable Taliban. In Oman, the successes of the counterinsurgency, through military action, reconciliation and negotiation, eventually led the DLF to lose sight of its objectives and, when mixed messages started to emanate from the insurgency leadership, public and regional support bases evaporated. This philosophy could also be applied to the Taliban, where a schism could be developed between the hardliners and the moderates. Bringing the moderates to the negotiating table as a cohesive group will be difficult unless they see real benefits for themselves and their community.

In tandem with the Oman insurgency, another disturbance was developing on the South Arabian Peninsula, known as the Aden Emergency. This conflict has many pointers for the South-Eastern Afghan insurgency and they apply primarily at the political level.

ADEN EMERGENCY

The Aden Emergency, although an unsuccessful counterinsurgency campaign, offers several insights for the current contest. Aden had been a British Protectorate since 1845 and was used as a staging post for naval vessels travelling between India and Britain. However, by the mid twentieth century, particularly with India gaining independence in 1947, Aden as a seaport was no longer as important to the British. Furthermore, Arab nationalism was growing in the region. By 1963 anti-British insurgents with varying political objectives began to coalesce into three larger, rival organisations. Firstly, and the eventual dominant group, was the Egyptian backed and resourced National Liberation Front (NLF); and secondly, the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) were the main belligerents. These two groups fought each other as well as the British.¹⁹ Thirdly, a smaller organisation, the South Arabian League, was made up of mainly the middleclass and intelligentsia, but it succumbed to more radical elements and ceased to exist past 1966.²⁰

The insurgency in Aden was initially fought in the mountains of the Radfan and eventually in the alleys and streets of the Crater. At the time it was a particularly brutal campaign where insurgents conducted beheadings and other forms of psychological warfare. However, claims made by Amnesty International, against the British Forces, of widespread torture and inappropriate interrogations also surfaced, allowing the legitimacy of the counterinsurgency campaign to be questioned.²¹

Intelligence collection played a crucial part in the campaign for both sides: the NLF conducted such a successful counterintelligence operation on the British that nearly all Aden Police Special Branch agents were assassinated.²² Furthermore, the Aden Police was compromised with infiltrators from the NLF, which caused British Army and Police units to regularly search Aden Police vehicles. This eventually spiralled into a mutiny as the ‘face’ of the locally employed Aden Police commanders became tarnished.²³ In essence, once the Aden Police lost control of the Crater area, the security forces never fully recovered the initiative. From this point the insurgency shifted into an armed urban battle where sections of the general public were involved in overt insurrection.

British Army special units were tasked with developing intelligence and this was often not melded with the overall campaign plan. Regular units were not informed of intelligence collection or special units’ tasking which resulted in a lack of cohesion or poor unity of purpose.²⁴ National level collection techniques, such as that provided by the Information Research Department, continued to provide intelligence, but this was more at the political and strategic level, rather than the type needed to solve the urban insurgency in the Crater.²⁵ The general public, not wanting to be involved with British rule of law, did not respond to ‘hearts and minds’ tactics and were involved, in passive and active means, in the fight against the British.²⁶

Potentially, the most crucial issue that caused havoc in Aden was the 1962 declaration by the British Government of a withdrawal date. This led the locals to believe that the British were not fully committed to Aden’s government.²⁷ No long-term planning was instituted by the British and this resulted in the local administration’s officials ignoring the British, but maintaining one eye on the future. Significant political manoeuvring occurred where future alliances were formed and the population felt they were being monitored by the insurgents. This was confirmed when the NLF and the FLOSY conducted assassinations of the majority of their future political rivals.²⁸

INSIGHTS FROM THE ADEN EMERGENCY

The Aden Emergency offers several insights, particularly from military and political perspectives, which have application in the Afghan theatre. The loss of the less radical South Arabian League removed the government’s ability to have a rational dialogue or negotiation with the disaffected among the South Arabian population. Additionally, long-term political commitment and post-insurgency planning

... the insurgency shifted into an armed urban battle where sections of the general public were involved in overt insurrection.

was not possible. In Afghanistan, moderate or less radical disaffected elements of the population require nurturing so as to increase the segment of the population capable of rational dialogue and negotiations. These activities may include interaction with the religious Mullahs and the less committed Taliban elements.

British heavy handedness in dealing with captured insurgents eroded international support and legitimacy. Any further torture of insurgents in Afghanistan will erode the ISAF legitimacy in the eyes of the Red Cross and Amnesty International. Popular support locally and abroad will also suffer, as it did during the Abu Ghraib incident.²⁹

The elimination of most of the Police Special Branch informants created an intelligence vacuum. Human intelligence takes careful preparation and, in particular, takes time to establish. In several months the NLF and the FLOSY achieved complete domination of the urban areas by the dismemberment of the police intelligence agent network. Intelligence development, through the use of turned Taliban, would greatly assist in targeting.

The declaration by the British Government of a withdrawal date was instrumental in dissipating any unity of purpose, post-insurgency planning and intelligence. It sent a very negative message to the Aden public that caused support for the British Administration and the South Arabian Government to become futile, as the population perceived that the NLF and the FLOSY would eventually take control. This perception became reality only a matter of days after the British departed; many officials were murdered and others had to flee the country. The Afghanistan population hold very similar views. They feel that the Coalition does not have a long-term view and that they will eventually have to deal with the Taliban. Much of the population are maintaining a 'wait and see' approach, as an Environics poll of South-Eastern Afghans suggests (where the nationally held view and the Kandahar locals' views are recorded).³⁰

Strategic defeat through a series of tactical victories may well be the consequence.

Table 2. Likely Outcome of the Conflict³¹

Who will prevail in the current conflict?		
	National	Kandahar
Afghan Government, with foreign assistance	40	45
Taliban, once foreign troops leave	19	16
Too early to say/Don't know	40	38

Any announcement by a Western government of a proposed pullout date, as some NATO contributing nations have done, only reinforces the notion the population holds: that the Western Coalition is not committed to defeating the Taliban. A military solution is only part of the answer. Negotiations are also required in Afghanistan, but they must be approached from a position of military and political strength and not as an alternative to defeat.

Air power had a decisive effect in the rural and mountainous areas of South Arabia. Close air support was provided by a combination of Army Forward Air Controllers and Royal Air Force pilots. During the campaign these two groups worked extremely well and many insurgents were destroyed through this means.³² Afghanistan has demonstrated that air power in counterinsurgency operations is just as important as in major combat operations. However, it must be used discerningly, as media polling suggests that a third of insurgents joined out of revenge for a loved one killed as a result of coalition air strikes.³³

Finally, the British Government attempted negotiations with NLF and FLOSY on numerous occasions. However, the insurgent organisations believed that they had the upper hand and refused to cooperate. Indeed, these negotiations were not attempted until the twilight of the campaign, suggesting a level of desperation on behalf of the British, which compounded the insurgents' awareness of imminent success.³⁴ This notion has some resonance in Afghanistan. Negotiations need to be conducted from a position of strength, rather than when the insurgents sense that their cause has the upper hand and the end is in sight.

Negotiations need to
be conducted from a
position of strength ...

OMAN AND ADEN AS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFGHANISTAN

The Oman and Aden conflicts represent insurgency cases where negotiation played an instrumental role in the outcome of the campaigns. In the Aden scenario, negotiations were attempted too late into the campaign and failed to get traction due to the insurgents sensing an approaching victory. Whereas in Oman, negotiations commenced early and many of the Adoo were turned as they sensed that their chances of success were limited. It is possible to draw several enduring concepts from the cases so as to shape the Afghan campaign plan.

Host Nation Lead. The establishment of a political civilian head to promote the civil power and not the military was achieved in Oman. Indeed, the Omani insurgents were politically and morally isolated through the conduct of

reconciliation and negotiations and the settling of grievances. This is not occurring in Afghanistan. The lead nations do not support the Afghani desire for a negotiated strategy; indeed, the United States, Britain and Canada have stated they will not negotiate with the Taliban.³⁵

Intelligence Development. In Oman, through reconciliation and negotiation with moderate insurgents, intelligence became available. This allowed the authorities to get inside the psyche of the insurgent, and afforded the Sultan's Forces not only intelligence but additional security forces, albeit not fully employable across the spectrum of operations. Furthermore, it demonstrated good faith that surrendering was not a death warrant. In Afghanistan, turned Taliban units could be established and, similar to Oman, placed under a Special Forces mentoring type arrangement.

Insurgent Isolation. By isolating insurgents from their physical and moral sanctuary, including righting real and perceived grievances, the Sultan's forces dominated the narrative. Negotiation with less entrenched insurgents, deep operations and addressing grievances, achieved insurgent isolation in Oman. This required large numbers of troops in Oman; in fact, the troop numbers far outstretched the insurgents' numbers by factors of up to twenty.³⁶

Offensive Action. Neutralising the insurgent through negotiation or destruction are the two options available. When negotiations fail to disengage radicals from the insurgency, then persistent individuals will need to be destroyed. This should be done as a last resort, as offensive action will trigger the Pashtunwali revenge tenet, and as many Taliban as possible should be reconciled.

Maintaining an eye on the Soviet experiences in Afghanistan, plus drawing on the Oman and Aden campaigns, allows insights into the potential for a negotiated strategy in Afghanistan. A campaign plan that incorporates political and civil policy, such as negotiation and reconciliation, equally with military tenets will have a good chance of success. Indeed, the weighting will tend towards the political and civil lines of operations as the campaign plan progresses and the need for a military response diminishes.

A campaign plan that incorporates political and civil policy ... equally with military tenets will have a good chance of success.

CONCLUSION

The overall strategy for the successful defeat of the insurgency in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan will require a coordinated approach. Indeed, a sole military solution does not exist and it will call for an international and whole-of-government

methodology. On an international level, the Coalition powers must be steadfast in their support of the National Government of Afghanistan. There must be a single purpose and all Coalition members must be aligned and display a commitment towards that purpose. However, intractable support, especially of illegitimate decisions and actions, will be counterproductive and display to the international community that a sense of arrogance, or desperation, is developing in the campaign. The present regime in Kabul, under President Karzai, only controls the urban centres. To boost legitimacy, particularly with rural and regional Afghans, it is necessary for the successful conduct of negotiations. In a survey of South-Eastern Afghanistan, 74 per cent of the population supported Afghan national government negotiations with the Taliban.³⁷

It is likely that negotiations coupled with a surgical military response will be the only way to solve the present impasse. This will cause offense to some, especially those who have suffered as a result of the conflict; however, not every member of the Taliban can be incarcerated or killed, especially those lower level Taliban fighters who are involved through economic necessity.³⁸ In fact, President Karzai has already hinted at a possible dialogue with the Taliban when he stated,

For the security and prosperity of the Afghan people, in order to be freed from al-Qaeda and terrorists and their inhuman actions, we are ready for any type of discussion and negotiations.³⁹

The current actors in Afghanistan, such as the United States and its allies, the Afghan Government, non-government organisations, the Afghan people, and the insurgents and their sponsors will require more dialogue. This discourse may require enemies to come together, discuss points of deadlock and, most importantly, for Pashtuns to subjugate their penchant for revenge under their tribal code, Pashtunwali. This is not suggesting that past transgressions be ignored or that due legal process be neglected in order to display to a media-sophisticated Western public that headway is being made in the Afghan conflict. More so it is to bring the delegates together, to hold discussions and map out a common framework from which a future Afghanistan can be steered on the right course. Nonetheless, it is also important to remain mindful that 'Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation' if not conducted from a position of strength.

ENDNOTES

- 1 John F Kennedy, Inaugural address as President, 20 January 1961.
- 2 Attributed to senior Taliban figures and used as a general message to the local population in Afghanistan.

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- 13 T Jeapes, *SAS Secret War – Operation Storm in the Middle East*, Greenhill Books, London, 1996, p. 29.
- 14 Ibid., pp. 99–113; The wali or civilian governor (Braik bin Hamoud) was given equal status to the military commander of the Dhofar Brigade (Brigadier Jack Fletcher).
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- 21 Walker, *Aden Insurgency*, pp. 186–87.
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- 23 Walker, *Aden Insurgency*, pp. 234–35.
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- 26 Benest, 'Aden to Northern Ireland, 1966–76', p. 121.
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- 28 Paget, *Last Post: Aden 1964–1967*, p. 177.
- 29 D Gardham, ‘Abu Ghraib abuse photos “show rape”’, *The Telegraph*, 27 May 2009, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/5395830/Abu-Ghraib-abuse-photos-show-rape.html>> accessed 21 January 2010. Abu Ghraib prisoners were subjected to physical and psychological abuse and the incident eroded United States legitimacy in the Iraqi War.
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- 32 Walker, *Aden Insurgency*, p. 174.
- 33 G Smith, ‘Portrait of the enemy’, *Globe and Mail*, 22 March 2008.
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- 36 United States, Department of the Army, *Army Counterinsurgency Handbook*, Skyhorse, New York, 2007, pp. 6–21.
- 37 Environics Research Group, ‘2007 Survey of Afghans’.
- 38 Hilary Clinton, the United States Secretary of State, at the Senate Armed Services Committee, 3 December 2009 stated, ‘We understand that some of those who fight with the insurgency do not do so out of ideology, theology or conviction, but frankly due to coercion and money. The average Taliban fighter, it is our information, receives two to three times the monthly salary than the average Afghan soldier or police officer.’
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THE AUTHOR

Lieutenant Colonel Jon Hawkins, DSM and Bar, is a Royal Australian Infantry officer and has served in a variety of regimental and staff appointments in Special Operations Command, Army and Australian Defence Headquarters. He holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering; a Master of Defence Studies, which he completed at Canadian Staff College; and a Master of Business Administration from the Australian Graduate School of Business. He is currently the Deputy Director for Army Headquarters in the Joint Amphibious Capability Implementation Team.

CURRENT OPERATIONS

AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

SUPPORTING AUSTRALIA IN THE 'LONG WAR'

MAJOR IAN LANGFORD

ABSTRACT

An enduring element of Australia's commitment to Afghanistan is the Special Operations Task Group (known as TF66). This force is specifically trained for counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency operations, both of which have been conducted as part of the effort in Afghanistan. The effectiveness of these operations has to date been significant. This has been due to the direct and indirect Lines of Operation, which have been developed into a series of operating methodologies throughout the rotations that have occurred since 2005. TF66 provides the capability to incapacitate the insurgent leadership group, keep them off balance, and ultimately to defeat their plans.

The Australian Special Forces component is comparatively large and extremely capable. It concentrates on anti-leadership (sic) operations in the area where most of the population lives and where most of the Taliban activity occurs. (In addition), the Special Forces conduct operations which assist the other components of the Task Force and the Afghan troops. Their disruptive effect is reportedly huge.

– Major General Jim Molan (Retd)¹

INTRODUCTION²

An enduring element of Australia's commitment to Afghanistan has been the Special Operations Task Group (known as TF66).³ The roles and tasks of TF66 derive from Australian Government intent, the campaign objectives of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the requirements of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA). TF66 is a force that is specifically trained for counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency operations, both of which have been conducted as part of the overall effort in Afghanistan against the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

The effectiveness of these operations has to date been significant.⁴ This has been due in large part to the direct and indirect Lines of Operation, which have been developed into a series of operating methodologies throughout the many rotations that have occurred since 2005. The aim of this article is to discuss TF66 operations and the Task Force's effectiveness in the fight in Afghanistan.

ISAF STRATEGY

The combined efforts of both ISAF and its predecessor (during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM) have largely eliminated many of the insurgent sanctuaries that existed in Afghanistan prior to 2001.⁵ In the past few years, however, ISAF has suffered from one of the most fundamental strategic errors when conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations: insufficient resources to accomplish its overly ambitious goals. After eight years of anti-insurgent operations, ISAF has experienced a strategic 'drift' and has failed to convince native Afghans that it is safe to commit themselves to believe in the authenticity of the GoIRA.⁶ This is in part due to a 'too-heavy' focus by the Coalition on anti-al-Qaeda counter-terrorism operations, as opposed to a counterinsurgency strategy focusing on anti-insurgency operations. There has been too much effort on kinetic destruction of insurgent groups, rather than an effort to 'out-govern' the Taliban Shadow Government and offer a legitimate government that can provide essential security and services

for all Afghans. No longer can a massing of ISAF military force be relied upon to secure solutions to what is an inherently political conflict between Afghans, as any foreign physical presence will be regarded as a military occupation. The latest surge of forces committed to ISAF from the United States echoes this point, and is deliberately limited to a ‘middle option’ of 30,000, rather than the original 80,000 initially requested.⁷

Afghanistan’s problems are further complicated by the nature of the insurgency, with several of the key insurgent groups (al-Qaeda, the Taliban, various narco-trafficking gangs, and criminal elements) colluding and morphing into a ‘Taliban-esque’ organisation, based in remote and inaccessible locations throughout the region. This threat now presents a real and growing emergent problem not only to Afghanistan, but also potentially to the central-Asian region itself.

After more than thirty years of war, as well as the almost complete destruction of human and physical infrastructure, the people of Afghanistan no longer have the capacity to produce anything other than the most modest incremental improvements to their democratic institutions and

basic services to their communities. These circumstances have forced ISAF and supporting governments such as the Australian Government to realistically adjust their campaign objectives into the following tangible goals: preventing Afghanistan from again providing sanctuary to insurgent groups, prevent the collapse of the GoIRA, and legitimise the GoIRA through the provision of basic essential services.⁸ These are now key objectives rather than ISAF’s more lofty aims such as the defeat of the insurgency and the delivery of Western-style democracy and freedom. In a recent speech unveiling the new United States strategy in supporting ISAF, President Obama said the regional objective was (now) to ‘disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qa’ida’ in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but in relation to the Taliban, it was merely to deny them government in Afghanistan.⁹ There was little talk of victory or democracy.

Creating any permanent state apparatus, such as the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), will require a long-term commitment measured in perhaps decades rather than years. In the meantime, the Australian Government (who has limited its primary focus to Oruzgan Province), in partnership with the GoIRA and ISAF are forced somewhat to respond to the more immediate challenges: maintaining pressure on insurgent and terrorist networks throughout the region (in order to provide security to mentoring and reconstruction efforts), as well as preventing

There has been too much effort on kinetic destruction of insurgent groups, rather than an effort to ‘out-govern’ the Taliban...

the overall insurgency from overwhelming the GoIRA. TF66's deployment into Afghanistan occurred to overcome some of these immediate challenges.

TF66 LINES OF OPERATION

TF66 is deliberately located within Oruzgan Province to work in support of and in collaboration with Regional Command-South (RC-S) and Task Force Uruzgan (TF-U), which includes elements of the Australian manned Mentoring Task Force. One of the unique qualities of Special Forces is an ability to have a 'reach' that spans from the local tribal level to the national GoIRA, while remaining integrated to the overall ISAF campaign and its continuing efforts to transition ANSF from a fledgling force to a capable military outfit.¹⁰ This 'reach' is critical to the overall civil-military COIN integration effort that will ultimately harness and synergise the security, governance, development and strategic communications concept.

ISAF, in the immediate sense, seeks to defeat the insurgency via the provision of essential services and training to GoIRA and elements within the government (such as the ANSF) to win the support and loyalty of the people of Afghanistan. In many ways, this is the focus of the TF-U and, by implication, the Mentoring Task Force. TF66 supports these operations through missions designed along four Lines of Operation: conduct counterinsurgency operations, enhance the force protection of ISAF forces, conduct counter-leadership operations, and assist with the training and mentoring of the ANSF.¹¹ These mission sets are generally conducted via an indirect approach, and a direct approach.

The classic 'clear, hold, and build' strategy used in Iraq is a formula for success in Afghanistan

COIN OPERATIONS AND THE TRAINING AND MENTORING OF ANSF – AN INDIRECT APPROACH

Success in COIN results from operating systems and practices that integrate and synchronise political, security, economic and informational components that will reinforce government legitimacy and effectiveness while reducing the effects and influence of the enemy insurgent.¹² The classic 'clear, hold, and build' strategy used in Iraq is a formula for success in Afghanistan, yet there are currently insufficient ANSF and police available to effectively implement this approach. In an attempt to remedy this, TF66 seeks to support RC-S and TF-U efforts to generate ANSF such as the 4th KANDAK Brigade, currently in partnership with the Mentoring Task Force.¹³

COIN operations are not a new mission for Special Forces. Unconventional warfare, civil affairs, psychological operations, and foreign internal defence are all traditional activities of Australian Special Forces. A critical aspect in Afghanistan, however, is the emergent need for a broader integration and synchronisation of counter-terrorism and COIN efforts to ensure unity of purpose and effect. Special operations and conventional operations—whether counter-terrorist or COIN in nature—must be coordinated rather than simply de-conflicted. TF66, in its conception and planning of all operations, seeks to achieve this integration as an absolute priority.

TF66 currently conducts COIN through the integration and cooperation of partners such as ANSF, GoIRA, local tribal and religious leaders, other coalition Special Forces, and other ISAF force elements. Partnering ‘by, with, and through’ ANSF in particular has enabled enduring partnerships between TF66 and ANSF elements that have resulted in several successful joint operations.

Successful COIN throughout Oruzgan Province requires a variety of means, both military and military-enabled, many of which are held in the TF66 mission set.¹⁴ The key capability in this environment is the ability to conduct intelligence-led precision operations at the tactical level that can generate operational effect (campaign and theatre) and, in certain instances, strategic effect. If, for example, a high level insurgent commander from Helmand Province was targetable in Oruzgan Province, TF66 could remove him from the operating environment. These precision operations can range from a carefully timed and targeted information operation (such as a village medical or veterinary clinic), to a key leader engagement in a remote non-permissive area, to a high threat operation against a key insurgent leader. At the less demanding end of the scale, TF66 continues to provide a flexible and responsive presence, influence and situational awareness capability in locations (‘ungoverned spaces’) out of reach of GoIRA or conventional ISAF forces. Further to this, Special Forces’ aptitude for working with indigenous forces and local populations is key to wresting popular support away from the insurgency and the building capacity within ANSF. In time, TF66 seeks to set the conditions for conventional force partnerships with the ANSF and the local population. The persistent presence that these forces can provide can generate lasting positive effects and further allow Special Forces to gain influence deeper into the province.

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ENHANCING FORCE PROTECTION OF ISAF – A DIRECT APPROACH

As part of its mission set, TF66 is specifically focused on *enhancing the force protection of ISAF forces*. These tasks include, but are not limited to: elimination and denial of insurgent sanctuaries within Oruzgan Province; the disruption and defeat of the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) network; the prevention of the Taliban Shadow Government from returning to Oruzgan in significant volume; the gaining of situational awareness through deep presence patrolling and intelligence development; the conduct of enemy anti-propaganda operations (by, with and through GoIRA and tribal networks); and escorting, partnering and hand-off of areas such as Chora township and parts of the Mirabad river valley to other ISAF conventional forces, who then in turn conduct and coordinate reconstruction and presence patrols alongside their ANSF partners, the 4th KANDAK Brigade.

TF66 operations in this regard contribute directly to the mentoring and security efforts within the Mentoring Task Force and, more broadly, TF-U. TF66 attempt to ensure that their operations are synchronised with the main and supporting efforts of both RC-S and TF-U, and are ‘nested’ within the ISAF campaign plan; this should ensure that these efforts are contributing directly to theatre level campaign objectives.¹⁵

COUNTER-LEADERSHIP OPERATIONS – A DIRECT APPROACH

Probably the most direct approach to the removal of the insurgent capability from RC-S is through the conduct of TF66 counter-leadership operations. While this is the lesser priority operation for the Task Force, it is nevertheless the most effective mechanism in removing a particular type of threat from the operating environment.

Amongst the leadership element of the insurgency, there exist a minority number of hard-core irreconcilable ideologues that seek nothing other than total subjugation of the Afghan people and the destruction of ISAF and all Western influences from Afghanistan.¹⁶ They often form elements of the Taliban Shadow Government, operating against GoIRA as well as recruiting vulnerable Afghans to their cause through the promise of money, drugs, weapons or prestige. This group is the most potent and dangerous element of the insurgency, incapable of compromise, and sees nothing other than total victory as acceptable. This is the group that ISAF and GoIRA must target in the event of their refusal to be reconciled. TF66 performs this function, conducting ‘counter-leadership operations’ specifically in support of COIN objectives and to remove the influence of irreconcilable insurgents from the operating environment, which in turn directly generates operating space to enable ISAF to conduct indirect COIN operations. To date, the effectiveness of these operations has had a devastating and dramatic impact on insurgent leadership throughout

Oruzgan Province. This has limited the insurgent's ability to coordinate operations locally, as well as had an impact on their ability to recruit local fighters to their cause. Ultimately, these operations have separated the insurgent from the local population, a key element of COIN in defeating the insurgent's ability to shape and control political power—the central issue in insurgencies and counterinsurgencies.¹⁷

An operating methodology used in counter-leadership and other direct action operations is the targeting cycle known as 'F3EA', or Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, (and) Analyse.¹⁸ F3EA uses elements of both kinetic and non-kinetic capability within TF66, such as persistent intelligence collection, that can allow Special Forces teams to adapt to the situation and the environment as required. This generates tempo and decision speed that exceeds that of the insurgent. This intelligence has on many occasions enabled the insurgent to be 'found and fixed' in his location, regardless of appearance, clothing, operating methods, or rate of effort. Any change to the insurgent is observed and the Special Forces team has the ability to seamlessly adapt to it.

On an anticipated intelligence cue, the Special Forces team can then 'finish' the target, either surgically via precision effects (if in an area of high civilian population), through mass effect (if located in a base area with other insurgents), or by forcing the insurgent to surrender if he so wishes. The Special Forces team remains capable for a range of kinetic and non-kinetic targeting options, making them able to scale their response in a way that is adaptive to the insurgent and environment. This becomes especially important as the nature of the operation changes; for example, insurgent targets become fewer and the focus of the operation shifts towards the support of the population.

The Special Forces team then 'exploits and analyses' the target to gain an insight into the insurgent's operating systems, allowing for further weaknesses to be located. This in turn cues additional TF66 and other ISAF intelligence assets to shape their operations against this discovered weakness, and so the process begins again.

F3EA employs all the true qualitative elements of a Special Operations Task Group—design, planning, adaptation and action—and allows for near autonomous, rapid decision cycles to develop future operations that are not contingent on higher headquarter decision cycles or strategic intelligence feeds. F3EA is enhanced and integrated through the establishment of a Fusion and Targeting Cell, and has proven itself operationally in Afghanistan since 2005—examples demonstrating its effectiveness have been the targeting of high and medium level irreconcilable insurgents operating in southern Afghanistan.¹⁹

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OPERATING RELATIONSHIPS

In order to operate, TF66 actively cultivates and values its interactions amongst the key stakeholders in Oruzgan Province. What is truly ‘special’ about Special Forces is the ability to work through and alongside other stakeholders in the pursuit of mutually beneficial solutions to complex problems. The complexity of the current operating environment demands that TF66 personnel are masters at not only warfighting, but also cultural knowledge. These ‘3D operators’ take a multi-dimensional world view of all actions and seek to understand the human perspective when planning and executing operations. Appropriate mechanisms that mesh TF66 operations within the ISAF campaign are therefore developed, as well as the diplomatic and governance efforts of our partners, including the GoIRA. Much effort is devoted to ensuring that TF66 plans are ‘nested’ and that operational priorities are understood by all force elements.

The most important relationship for TF66 in Afghanistan is with the Afghan people themselves. First and foremost, TF66 operations concentrate on and emphasise that the use of force should be a last resort and any application must not be counterproductive to the wants and needs of the Afghan people, or compromise the ISAF campaign overall. Population support is key to accessing the insurgent; any action that upsets the ANSF, GoIRA, local villagers, or tribal or religious elders is not conducive to mission success. It is this overwhelming priority that drives the planning and conduct of all TF66 missions.

Additionally, while much of the focus on operations can tend to weight itself towards direct COIN activities, more emphasis must be placed on developing the ANSF. Responsibility of all activities and events must eventually be transferred fully to the Afghans. This is the exit strategy for ISAF—an enabled ANSF that can provide the GoIRA with the stability it needs to deliver essential services to the Afghan people.

The second relationship priority for TF66 is with other ISAF elements, most particularly, RC-S and TF-U. All operations must be ‘nested’ whether direct or indirect. The use of liaison officers as well as collaboration during planning and operations ensure a unity of effort for all ISAF forces and reinforce attempts by TF66 to either ‘support’ or be ‘supported’ by their ISAF, GoIRA or ANSF colleagues. Moreover, Australia’s enduring commitment to ISAF gives it influence in the range and type of operations conducted throughout southern Afghanistan.²⁰ TF66’s access to intelligence and coalition collection assets, as well as its reputation throughout ISAF, has established

The complexity of the current operating environment demands that TF66 personnel are masters at not only warfighting, but also cultural knowledge.

a level of support that has the capacity to amplify its tactical effects across the entire theatre through the export of lessons and the migration of skills and knowledge to all stakeholders. This is a regular feature of the operational ‘lessons learnt’ process.²¹

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS/MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Since 2005, TF66 operations have achieved significant outcomes throughout Oruzgan Province. Some *Measures of Effectiveness* include the conduct of hundreds of long-range patrols in the deep northern spaces of the Province, the facilitation of hundreds of Afghan community engagements (that have forged long lasting relationships both with TF66 and other RC-S forces), the successful removal of insurgent group commanders from the area of operations, and the introduction of ANSF to hostile and contested areas within the Province (which in turn re-establishes the GoIRA in these areas and enhances their legitimacy).

In terms of *Measures of Success*, TF66 operations since 2005 have been decisive in opening up the Mirabad valley to TF-U operations, which in turn have gone on to establish permanent bases there. This greatly increases TF-U access to the local villagers and enables organisations such as the Mentoring Task Force to build upon this work and consolidate ISAF control. Additionally, TF66 decisive combat operations through the Baluchi Pass in 2006, as well as the denial of Chora Pass and Chora valley to the local Taliban throughout the period 2005–08, have enabled the permanent presence of TF-U forces, who have seized this opportunity to make contact with the local people and introduced GoIRA and the ANSF to a populace who for several years were under the direct control and influence of the Taliban Shadow Government. Additional successes have been achieved in the disruption and interdiction of the insurgent IED network, as well as the facilitation of significant reconstruction operations, including the placement of an electrical turbine in Helmand Province in 2008.²²

Since 2005, TF66 operations
have achieved significant
outcomes throughout
Oruzgan Province.

CONCLUSION

Success in Afghanistan requires that ISAF seize the initiative from the insurgent and re-establish the political legitimacy of the GoIRA. This requires the use of ‘smarter’ campaign objectives, facilitated via a COIN strategy that employs direct and indirect Lines of Operation that gives ownership of the insurgency problem to the Afghan people. The objectives of ISAF, the Australian Government and GoIRA seem clear,

although they are not well articulated: create an Afghanistan from which global terrorist groups are displaced; assist GoIRA in becoming an apparatus that can provide enough security to its people and borders and can facilitate the conduct of reconstruction operations; and give the GoIRA a degree of legitimacy amongst its people that can generate faith in the government from all Afghan people. In order for this to occur, ISAF must be sufficiently resourced or risk remaining caught in the 'strategic drift' that has got it to this point, eight years after the fall of the Taliban.

The Special Forces from TF66 is an important component to Australian Government efforts in Afghanistan (along with the Mentoring Task Force). The balance between counter-terrorism and COIN is an essential consideration in the formulation of all operational concepts that support the broader ISAF objectives. TF66 has over time, successfully integrated this balance between direct and indirect Lines of Operation by seeking to integrate ANSF and GoIRA in line with the overall aim of one day handing off all responsibilities to the Afghans.

Australian Special Forces provide the capability to incapacitate the insurgent leadership group, keep them off balance, and ultimately to defeat their plan. Insurgents in Afghanistan have witnessed firsthand what TF66 Special Forces can do. To them, the prospect of a high-performance counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency force in partnership with ANSF, able to operate anywhere with speed, agility and lethality, displaying resolve and unity, is highly unwelcome. The insurgent lacks the capacity to counter its strikes. Australian Special Forces hit the insurgents hard and often. This is precisely how TF66 can build and support the road map towards victory in the Long War.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Major General Jim Molan, (Retd), 'How much is enough in Afghanistan?', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 21.
- 2 This article is based upon a collection of conversations, observations and commentary from stakeholders within the Australian Government, ISAF, and within the ADF over the past five years concerning Australian operations and commitment to Afghanistan.
- 3 The Australian Special Operations Task Group has been committed to Afghanistan over three periods: 2001–03, 2005–06, and 2007 to the present.
- 4 Information regarding the details of these operations has been withheld from general release to the public in order to safeguard tactics used by SOTG forces, as well as deny the insurgent access to information that improves his awareness of these operations. Much of what has occurred throughout the SOTG deployments goes unreported due to the nature of the operations conducted and the 'protected identity status' of all members of Special Operations Command.
- 5 ISAF assumed command in 2003, taking over from the US-led coalition, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

- 6 'Afghanistan: NATO showing stronger resolve', *TwoCircles.net*, 6 April 2008, <http://www.twocircles.net/2008apr06/afghanistan_nato_showing_stronger_resolve.html> accessed 25 December 2009. The term 'drift' is attributed in this article to the Australian Foreign Minister.
- 7 Brad Norington, 'McChrystal backs Obama plan', *The Australian*, 10 December 2009, <<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/mcchrysal-backs-obama-plan/story-e6frg6so-1225808789223>> accessed 28 December 2009. Note that the overall adjustment in US strategy now seeks to 'reduce' the insurgency, rather than 'defeat' it.
- 8 'Mission', International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan website, <<http://www.isaf.nato.int/en/our-mission/>> accessed 25 December 2009.
- 9 Paul Kelly, 'Rudd an astute manager of the US alliance', *The Australian*, 9 December 2009.
- 10 This effort could take up to ten years and possibly longer, depending on the rate of effort of the GoIRA and its partner nations.
- 11 NATO, 'Australia increases ISAF commitment', Media Release, 10 April 2007, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-A6E0C04F-8FB0F4BA/natolive/news_8539.htm?selectedLocale=en> accessed 1 December 2009. Specifically, the release states the role of the SOTG is to 'enhance provincial security by disrupting Taliban extremists' command and control and supply routes'. These roles and tasks have continued throughout 2008–09 to evolve in order to adapt to the environment and the nature of the threat.
- 12 United States Government Bureau of Military Affairs, *Counter Insurgency Guide – 2009*, US Government Printing Service, Washington DC, January 2009, p. 17.
- 13 The challenge for ISAF in the training and generation of ANSF forces is significant. The ANSF relies heavily on its partnership with ISAF forces. The ANSF has no institutional memory when it comes to conventional force capability and organisation. While infantry and other combat forces are what is most effective in the kinetic phase of defeating an insurgency, a modern military force needs a greater number of technical specialists, such as logisticians, medics, artillery personnel, combat and construction engineers, and a professional leadership group if it is to take over successfully from ISAF. The timeline for such force generation is uncertain and very difficult to predict.
- 14 The author acknowledges that Special Forces is limited in certain elements of COIN, for example, the ability to generate a 'dwell' capability in a certain area for a protracted period is more suited to ISAF conventional forces. This underscores the importance of close cooperation between all ISAF elements to ensure that both conventional and Special Forces elements are appropriately tasked in order to achieve the best mission effects on the ground.
- 15 The synchronisation of all efforts across the theatre is a significant challenge. Each Task Force and their respective national governments have their own national caveats and considerations to integrate into their planning. This can make collaboration and integration across theatre extremely difficult. This issue is ongoing.

- 16 This comment is based on the author's experiences. The leadership component of the insurgent group is also part of the ideological base; this makes them unable to be successfully persuaded to reconcile or compromise with competing groups such as ISAF or moderate Afghans. This leadership group is critical to the insurgent's ability to operate and, if defeated and removed from the operating environment, can achieve profound positive effects that should negate the need to conduct high intensity kinetic fighting against the entire insurgent group.
- 17 Department of the Army, *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, December 2006, <<http://usacac.army.mil/cac/repository/materials/coin-fm3-24.pdf>> accessed 26 December 2009, p. 1-1. TF66 is currently focused on Oruzgan Province, which is a priority for the Australian Government. As a result, the Task Force has to overcome this operating restriction through effective integration and liaison with other ISAF Special Forces, ensuring that neighbouring provinces do not become sanctuaries from TF66 interdiction.
- 18 Michael Flynn, Rich Juergens and Thomas Cantrell, 'Employing ISR- SOF Best Practice', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 50, 3rd Quarter 2008, p. 56.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Anecdotally, Australian Infantry and Special Forces have a reputation amongst their foreign colleagues for having a specific and unique focus on ground patrolling and physical presence as a mechanism for establishing security, rather than through alternative methods such as 'free fire zones' and through the application of firepower as a means to control and dominate key terrain. This approach is highly valued within the current COIN campaign in Afghanistan.
- 21 Colonel Mark Smethurst, 'Afghanistan the Future: Australian Policy for the Afghan Commitment', Unpublished paper, Australian Defence College Canberra, 2009, p. 22.
- 22 Major General Tim McOwan 'Update on Special Operations', Media Release, 11 December 2008, <<http://www.defence.gov.au/media/SpeechTpl.cfm?CurrentId=8602>> accessed 26 December 2009. The operation referred to was Operation ARMU TANDER II. The commando group contributed to this multi-national operation to install a new turbine at the Kajaki dam in northern Helmand province.

THE AUTHOR

Major Ian Langford is former Commando Company Group commander from 2 Cdo Regt who has deployed as an operational commander with the Special Operations Task Group to Afghanistan. He has additionally served in that theatre with the NATO Special Operations Coordination Centre on the 2008 review of ISAF special operations. He is a Distinguished Graduate of the United States Marine Command and Staff College (2009), and is currently a student at the USMC School of Advanced Warfighting.

CONCEPTS

FIVE CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE INFANTRY

THINKING ABOUT ADAPTATION AND CHANGE

COLONEL CHRIS FIELD

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to highlight five challenges for Future Infantry in order to stimulate thinking about Future Infantry's requirement to adapt and change. While this paper is Infantry focused, the challenges outlined will resonate with many people in the wider Army, and are of likely interest to people from Joint, whole-of-government, coalition, contractor and non-government organisations who expect to operate with Army in the future.

In the twenty-first century, Future Infantry—fighting in complex human, physical and informational battlespaces, operating in a combined arms, joint, whole-of-government context incorporating coalition, contractor and non-government organisation partners—will execute Infantry's role:

To seek out and close with the enemy, to kill or capture them, to seize and hold ground, and repel attack, by day or by night, regardless of season, weather, or terrain.¹

While the role of Infantry is enduring, constantly changing operating environments suggest the time has come for Future Infantry to re-examine how it operates in order to inform Army’s modernisation requirements. The purpose of this article is to highlight five challenges for Future Infantry in order to stimulate thinking about Future Infantry’s requirement to adapt and change. These challenges are:

1. Incorporating continuous learning
2. Operating across the five lines of operation in accordance with *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*
3. Balancing the fighting force
4. Employing LAND 400 – Combined Arms Fighting System
5. Employing JOINT PROJECT 2048 – Enhanced Amphibious Capability.

While this article is focused on the Infantry, the challenges outlined will resonate with many people in the wider Army, and are of likely interest to people from joint, whole-of-government, coalition, contractor and non-government organisations who expect to operate with Army in the future.

FUTURE INFANTRY CHALLENGE 1: INCORPORATING CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Successful organisations are able to adapt to changes in their environments in a timely manner—this requires effective learning. For most people, effective learning is continuous and involves a dynamic combination of education, training and the understanding of lessons. For Future Infantry to become an effective, adaptive and learning organisation, the following attributes may be useful: accept honest mistakes, support the free flow of knowledge between people at all levels, mentor subordinates, and reward people who foster learning and cultural change.

To ensure success in increasingly complex battlespaces, Future Infantry must seek to frame problems, understand learning gaps and develop methods and tools to retain, develop and share knowledge in changing circumstances. Examples of resource and knowledge sharing systems available to the Future Infantry, which may assist adaptation and change, include: enhancing leader and instructor skills; formal and informal after action reviews; timely, agile and relevant doctrine; and forums, blogs and/or wikis.

For most people, effective learning is continuous and involves a dynamic combination of education, training and the understanding of lessons.

FUTURE INFANTRY CHALLENGE 2: OPERATING ACROSS THE FIVES LINES OF OPERATION

Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept, released by the Chief of Army on 16 September 2009, is centred on the formation of the Land Force components of which might include, as well as ADF services, government and non-government agencies and Australian Civilian Corps.² The document

...defines the actions taken by the Land Force as part of the military contribution to a Joint and Whole of Government approach to resolving conflicts and advancing Australia's national interests.³

Fundamental to *Adaptive Campaigning* are five interdependent and mutually reinforcing lines of operation: Joint Land Combat, Population Protection, Information Actions, Population Support, and Indigenous Capacity Building.

In accordance with Infantry's role, Joint Land Combat is the primary responsibility of Future Infantry. For the last decade, in Australia, our region and beyond, the Infantry have also employed Population Protection to protect people from immediate danger, and Population Support to establish an environment that allows people to carry out their normal lives with family, work and education.

For the last decade and throughout the Infantry's history, the Infantry have relied upon smart, empowered soldiers and leaders, supported by robust training and professional mastery, to support the Land Force's Information Actions, often while in contact with adaptive, agile and lethal enemies. Well orchestrated Information Actions ensure that the Land Force's message, or dominant narrative, is effectively portrayed and understood by all people within Land Force's battlespace.

Experienced Infantry personnel know that the Land Force's message must be honest and consistent. While the Land Force can tailor messages for different people and different audiences, Future Infantry must understand that it is difficult to send any messages that will be understood in the same way by the many audiences that may hear it.⁴ For example, the message for the enemy differs from the message for coalition partners, and may be different again for the people who actually live in Future Infantry's battlespace. Unless these messages are honest and consistent, the Land Force risks causing effects in the information environment that impede the conduct of friendly operations, or adversely affect friendly forces; this is colourfully dubbed 'information fratricide'

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by the Information Office.⁵ The failure to create consistent messages across intentional and non-intentional recipient groups may lead to conflict-laden messages.⁶ Frequently, information fratricide ‘results in credibility loss [and] contrary messaging’.⁷

Future Infantry, as demonstrated by current Infantry operations, must have the ability to support and empower Indigenous Capacity Building within complex future battlespaces. Future Infantry support to indigenous or local people through training, mentoring, guiding and partnering, in combination with the four other *Adaptive Campaigning* lines of operation, will help to ensure that indigenous force elements can become self-assured, self-sustaining, self-learning and ultimately self-sufficient.

In summary, *Adaptive Campaigning’s* five interdependent and mutually reinforcing lines of operation present Future Infantry with both challenges and opportunities. The starkness of these challenges and opportunities are self-evident to experienced Infantry personnel, who understand that Future Infantry’s need to adapt *and* change will be conducted in direct competition with equally adaptive, agile and lethal enemies.

FUTURE INFANTRY CHALLENGE 3: BALANCING THE FIGHTING FORCE

Infantry personnel will understand that Infantry’s operational tempo is high, and has been high since 1999. This high operational tempo has placed some strain on Infantry’s training models. In the last decade, the Infantry have faced the following challenges:

1. Maintaining a multitude of Infantry skills including: Special Forces, commandos, light infantry, airborne, mechanised and motorised
2. Allowing soldiers enough time to achieve excellence as riflemen, prior to promotion to lance corporal, and beyond
3. Maintaining Support Company skills in reconnaissance, sniping, direct fire support weapons, mortars, assault pioneers and communications
4. Conducting foundation warfighting training and education in the face of unique current operational requirements.

Arguably, these challenges may be exacerbated by Infantry’s lack of balance. Infantry maintains a number of specialised battalions, companies, platoons, sections and individual Infantry personnel. Often such specialised organisations and people are not easily deployable and rotatable which, in an era of persistent conflict, presents a challenge for an army engaged in multiple force rotations in disparate operational environments. Is the Infantry trying to develop and maintain too many specialist skills? As the battlespace becomes more complex should Future Infantry remain a

‘multi-specialist’ force, or should it aim to become more balanced in order to achieve excellence in fewer skills?

Given these challenges in Infantry’s balance and maintenance of skills, what issues should Future Infantry address? The following are some questions for possible Future Infantry adaptation and change:

1. How will Future Infantry demarcate the difference between Special Forces and other Infantry?
2. What is the Future Infantry relationship with the Future Cavalry and Future Armour? How does Future Infantry generate combined arms teams that are modular and interoperable Future Cavalry and Future Armour?
3. What is the future of Support Company? Does Future Infantry need all of the ‘traditional’ Support Company skills, or can other corps fulfil those skills in support of the Future Infantry?
4. What combat team level intelligence and operations capabilities does Future Infantry require?
5. Is the current Infantry platoon structure appropriate for future operations? Do Future Infantry platoons need the ability to coordinate joint fires, see beyond ‘the next hill or village’, and conduct dynamic breaching in complex environments? What other capabilities do Future Infantry platoons need?

Is the Infantry trying to develop and maintain too many specialist skills?

FUTURE INFANTRY CHALLENGE 4: EMPLOYING LAND 400 – COMBINED ARMS FIGHTING SYSTEM

Defence White Paper – Force 2030 (White Paper 2009) states that Army would, in future years, ‘acquire a new fleet of around 1,100 deployable protected vehicles.’⁸ This project, which in the *Defence Capability Plan 2009* is designated as LAND 400,⁹ has been named by Army as LAND 400 – Combined Arms Fighting System (L400-CAFS).

L400-CAFS has the potential to change Army, and change Future Infantry. The following are some questions for possible Future Infantry adaptation and change in the context of L400-CAFS:

1. Will L400-CAFS see a merging of current mechanised and motorised infantry skills into a single, enhanced, networked, mounted close combat infantry capability?
2. What does L400-CAFS mean for Future Infantry’s employment as part of the broader combined arms team? How does L400-CAFS affect Future Infantry’s interoperability with Future Cavalry and Future Armour?

3. Will Future Infantry fight *from* and/or *with* L400-CAFS and its associated combat systems?¹⁰
4. Does Future Infantry require L400-CAFS to carry an Infantry Section? Should Future Infantry crew L400-CAFS?
5. To what extent should L400-CAFS be interoperable with allies/coalition partners?

FUTURE INFANTRY CHALLENGE 5: EMPLOYING JOINT PROJECT 2048 – ENHANCED AMPHIBIOUS CAPABILITY

The 2009 White Paper states that Defence would, in future years, receive an enhanced amphibious capability.¹¹ This project, which is noted in the *Defence Capability Plan 2009* as JOINT PROJECT 2048 (JP 2048), includes: two new Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) amphibious ships with ship-to-shore connectors; a large strategic sealift ship; and six new heavy landing craft.¹²

Like L400-CAFS, JP 2048 has the potential to change not only Army, but the entire Australian Defence Force. The following are some questions for possible Future Infantry adaptation and change in the context of JP 2048:

1. What is Future Infantry’s position on amphibious specialised brigades or battalions?
2. Noting current challenges in maintaining Infantry skills, will JP 2048 require specialist roles for Future Infantry to enable amphibious operations?
3. What amphibious training will be required for Future Infantry? Does the ADF need an amphibious training centre of excellence?¹³
4. Employing JP 2048, how will Future Infantry achieve: ship-to-objective manoeuvre, distributed operations; and sea-based logistics?¹⁴
5. To what extent should JP 2048 be interoperable with L400-CAFS?

JP 2048 has the potential to change not only Army, but the entire Australian Defence Force.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article has been to note five challenges for the Future Infantry in order to stimulate thinking about Future Infantry’s requirement to adapt *and* change. These challenges are:

1. Incorporating continuous learning
2. Operating across the five lines of operation in accordance with *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*

3. Balancing the fighting force
4. Employing LAND 400 – Combined Arms Fighting System
5. Employing JOINT PROJECT 2048 – Enhanced Amphibious Capability.

This article has proposed, in the context of adaptation and change, many questions for Future Infantry. Importantly, these questions are only a beginning. They may not be the right questions. They may not be complete questions. Or they may be questions that Future Infantry will address without significant learning and/or intellectual effort. Alternatively, perhaps Infantry may seek to explore comprehensive thinking on these questions and challenges in order to inform the development of Future Infantry.

There is no doubt that Future Infantry—fighting in complex human, physical and informational battlespaces, operating in a combined arms, Joint, whole-of-government context incorporating coalition, contractor and non-government organisations partners against adaptive, agile and lethal enemies—will need to adapt *and* change.

Whatever rank or position held, the breadth, depth and range of this adaptation and change for Future Infantry is now firmly in the hands of Infantry personnel.

ENDNOTES

- 1 'Rifleman', Defence Jobs website <<http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/army/jobs/Rifleman/>> accessed 10 September 2009.
- 2 *Adaptive Campaigning – Army's Future Land Operating Concept*, Head Modernisation and Strategic Planning – Army, Department of Defence, Canberra, September 2009, p. xii; 'What is the Australian Civilian Corps?', AUSAID website, <<http://www.usaid.gov.au/acc/>>.
- 3 *Adaptive Campaigning*, p. iv.
- 4 This idea was generated by Lieutenant Colonel Chris Smith, Staff Officer Grade 1, Future Land Operating Concept, email to author 13 October 2009.
- 5 FM 3-13 (FM 100-6) *Information Operations: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, Department of Defence, November 2003, p. 1-5.
- 6 Todd C Helms, Christopher Paul and Russell W Glenn, *Enlisting Madison Avenue, The Marketing Approach to Earning Popular Support in Theaters of Operation*, prepared for the United States Joint Forces Command, RAND National Research Institute, Santa Monica, 2007, p. xv.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 8 *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, p. 75.
- 9 'Land Combat Vehicles' in *Defence Capability Plan 2009*, (Public Version), Department of Defence, 2009, p. 17; 'Acquisition Categorisation' in *Defence Capability Plan 2009*, (Public Version), p. 6.

- 10 LAND 125 will preferably, for example, be scoped to include interoperability with LAND 400 – CAFS. ‘LAND 125’ in *Defence Capability Plan 2009*, (Public Version), p. 159.
- 11 Defence White Paper 2009, ‘Amphibious Capability’, para 9.23–9.25, p. 73.
- 12 ‘JP 2048’ in *Defence Capability Plan 2009*, (Public Version), p. 92.
- 13 ‘Expeditionary Warfare School’, Marine Corps University Foundation website, <http://www.mcu.org/mcu_ews.html> accessed 14 October 2009. A possible model for an ADF amphibious centre of excellence is The United States Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School, which was established at Quantico as the Amphibious Warfare School in 1921. It offers a nine-month course providing career-level professional military education, with emphasis on combined arms operations, warfighting skills, tactical decision-making, and Marine Air Ground Task Forces in amphibious operations. It prepares Marine captains to function as commanders and staff officers at appropriate levels within the Operating Forces and Supporting Establishment. In addition, it provides career-level professional military education to selected officers from the Marine Corps Reserve.
- 14 For more detailed descriptions of each of these attributes, see Australian Defence Doctrine Publication (ADDP) 3.2 – *Amphibious Operations*, Second edition, 29 January 2009, Chapter 1, para 1.22–1.25.

THE AUTHOR

Colonel Chris Field is the Director of Future Land Warfare and Strategy, Army Headquarters, Canberra. This article is based on a presentation to the August 2009 Infantry Corps Conference, and is the result of collaborative work and ideas from many fine Infantry personnel and other warfighters in Army.

CONCEPTS

LOOKING FOR THE HEDGEHOG IDEA

JUSTIN KELLY AND MIKE BRENNAN

ABSTRACT

This article examines the limitations of traditional strategic approaches to the resolution of contemporary conflicts. It proposes control as the unifying idea for military action.

Everything in war is simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate...

– Clausewitz

Isaiah Berlin's famous essay *The Hedgehog and the Fox*¹ was an examination of the work of Leo Tolstoy that rested on an observation from the ancient Greek poet Archilocus that 'the fox knows many things but the hedgehog knows one big thing.'² From this platform, Berlin argued that:

there exists a great chasm between those... who relate everything to a single central vision,...—a single, universal, organising principle—and... those who pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory, connected, if at all, only in some *de facto* way.³

Berlin likened the former category to hedgehogs and the latter to foxes.⁴ This simple idea has been taken up by a multitude of writers for a multitude of reasons and there is a need for some caution. In fact, immediately, Berlin himself warns: ‘of course, like all over-simple classifications of this type, the dichotomy becomes, if pressed, artificial, scholastic and ultimately absurd.’⁵ In the context in which he used these characterisations, Berlin was looking only to illuminate the distinctions between hedgehogs, whose adherence to a single organising principle made their actions and thoughts centripetal, and the more centrifugal foxes. Importantly, in Berlin’s mind, hedgehogs were not stupid or limited, they were simply focused.⁶

War is a complex undertaking and armed forces are complex organisations comprising many autonomous entities subject to the vagaries of a myriad of pressures, most of which are beyond their control. In order to provide a measure of cohesion to the preparation and conduct of war, a degree of focus is needed: a hedgehog idea. Failure to find this idea threatens what Berlin warned about: the pursuit of ‘many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory, connected, if at all, only in some *de facto* way.’⁷ As we stumble through the maze of contemporary conflict and find ourselves dealing with wicked problems, design thinking, complex adaptive systems, anthropology, sociology, community policing, development aid, and the provision of reticulated water and sewerage to remote localities in the developing world—as well as combat against a highly motivated and ruthless enemy—the need for a unifying hedgehog idea is greater than ever.

Clausewitz was a hedgehog and believed that war was the domain of hedgehogs. Despite recognising the vast complexity and uncontrollable dynamism of war and accepting the dominance of politics in the interplay between them and tactics, Clausewitz settled on a simple, central, unifying idea for the conduct of wars: ‘the destruction of the enemy is what matters most.’⁸ Interestingly, here he is grappling with the same question that caused Berlin to write the essay mentioned above: ‘what power is it that moves the destinies of peoples.’⁹ Clausewitz understood and discussed the power of moral factors in the execution and conclusion of wars but accepted the limitations of the application of military force as a means to change people’s minds. Therefore, to him, the best that was possible was the destruction of the enemy’s powers of resistance carried out in a way that convinced the enemy’s people that submission was their best option.¹⁰ This was the single, big, hedgehog idea that shaped military theory from the time of Napoleon until very recently. This is reflected in the doctrine, organisation and equipment of the militaries of the world—or at least

Clausewitz was a hedgehog and believed that war was the domain of hedgehogs.

those that were prepared for industrial age warfare. The idea is now discredited, or at best incomplete as a unifying idea for the contemporary development and application of military force.

The aim of this article is to investigate whether there is still ‘a single universal organising principle’—a hedgehog idea—that underpins contemporary warfare, as annihilation underpinned that of the industrial age.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

From the time of Napoleon until the end of the Cold War, the basis of Western military theory and practice was dominated by Clausewitz’s hedgehog focus on the annihilation of the enemy. Whatever their provenance or objectives, wars were resolved through successful battles which, singly or in combination, destroyed the enemy’s military capacity and laid the enemy nation prostrate at your feet.¹¹ This was not simplistic, or even an over simplification, but simply a recognition of the limitations of the utility of force. It also enjoyed the dual advantages of being both easy to understand and, in the social and political contexts in which it arose, of working with reasonable reliability.

Wars arise when frustrations with the distribution of political power become intolerable. Wars are fought to redistribute that political power. Political power rests on the consent of the people. Therefore, warfare attempts to manipulate the consent of the people. Physical force cannot directly influence an abstract concept like consent (except by its abnegation) and so it needs to act through an intermediary. In Clausewitz’s view, manipulation was best done by destroying the web of mutual obligations that join the individual with the state by demonstrably removing the state’s ability to meet its end of the bargain. The individual citizens, motivated by the pressures described by Hobbes in *Leviathan*,¹² are then forced to arrive at a new social arrangement—one that represents a re-distribution of political power in favour of the victor. The beauty of Clausewitz’s hedgehog vision was that it described how political objectives could be translated into tactical actions—that is, whatever the objective of the war, the tactical choices were largely restricted to where and how best to kill the enemy army. These were the good old days.

Because it seeks the physical manipulation of an abstract quality, strategy is always conjectural. In essence, all strategies are based on hypothetical stimulus-response pairings to be applied in an incompletely understood socioeconomic model. As a result, strategies can only be validated by praxis. In the case of annihilation, there can be no certainty that a population that is placed at the mercy

Physical force cannot directly influence an abstract concept like consent...

of an enemy army will admit that it is, in fact, beaten. The 2003 ‘Shock and Awe’ campaign in Iraq is a good example. In this campaign, the enemy state and its army were quickly annihilated, but the Iraqi people were left largely untouched by the war. In addition, the connections between many Iraqis and the Saddam-state were different from those anticipated by Clausewitz and, for them, the annihilation of the state was empowering rather than prostrating. As a result, the chosen strategy (annihilation) failed to sufficiently manipulate their consent to support a transition to the democratic rule initially envisaged by the West.

Existing in parallel with the idea of annihilation, and only temporarily obscured by the shadow of Napoleon, is a set of complementary ideas, collected into so-called strategies of exhaustion. Strategies of exhaustion typically seek to manipulate the consent of populations by acting directly on the people. Until the last few years, this usually involved the laying on of Sherman’s ‘hard hand of war’ to impose such pain that the population sought to alleviate it by re-ordering political arrangements.¹³ This thinking connects the *chevauchee* of the 100 Years War with Sherman’s march to the sea, the bombing of British, German and Japanese cities during the Second World War, and counter-value nuclear targeting in the Cold War. Like annihilation, exhaustion enables the more or less direct translation of political intent into tactical action.

The Second World War strategic bombing campaign against German cities was an attempt to directly manipulate the consent of the people by imposing on them such pain that they would feel compelled to withdraw their support for the Nazi regime. It failed for a number of reasons.

First, shared hardships tend (and tended) to cause communities to coalesce rather than shatter, and so the experience of being bombed apparently reinforced the cohesion of the German people and through that, reinforced the Nazi messages surrounding the singularity of the *volk*. Second, the coercive authority of the Nazi state was substantial and, viewed in hindsight, it was not clear how a people under pressure from all sides could organise themselves to withdraw their consent.¹⁴ Third, the necessary British and US alliance with the USSR played to the atavistic German fear of the Slavic east and made the war an existential matter for both the German people and the Nazi regime—again reinforcing rather than destroying cohesion. Fourth, the Allies’ demand for unconditional surrender meant that no bargain could be struck short of complete submission—which in view of the Russian involvement—could be seen as an acceptance of the threat of the genetic eradication of the German people. The result of these factors was that the exhaustion sought by the strategic bombing campaign of German cities didn’t work during the war.

... exhaustion enables
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intent into tactical action.

However, when the Allies' annihilating military campaign was eventually successful, and the Nazi regime removed, the impact of the strategic bombing campaign was felt in the ready submission of the people. By and large there was no insurgency or resistance movement and people were ready to move on with reconstruction.

Within the broad church of strategies of exhaustion there exists an even more speculative, yet enormously influential, chapel dedicated to the cult of denial. This strategic school has ancient and honourable antecedents: Athens' Periclean strategy during the Peloponnesian War and Rome's Fabian strategy in the face of the Carthaginian invasion of Italy being two examples. In both these cases, faced with a more powerful enemy conducting strategic offensives, the defenders declined to join battle with the aggressors and sought to vanquish them merely by avoiding defeat—the idea being that eventually they would tire of the game and go home. This worked for the Romans, who were able to maintain political cohesion in the face of the Carthaginian onslaught, but not for the Athenians, who eventually found themselves emotionally compelled to adopt a more active strategy.

Strategies of denial are clearly very indirect, seeking to manipulate the consent of the enemy population simply by denying them strategic success while ceding them more or less unconstrained tactical success. This indirectness makes denial even more highly speculative than the other strategic schools. The uncertainties created by long cause-effect chains, the time necessary for discouragement to take root and eventually become dominant, and the uncertainties attendant on predicting the behaviour of humans, all make denial so uncertain that it is typically a strategy of last resort. Because it is therefore a strategy of the weak, it is generally how insurgents win—when they win. In Vietnam, for example, the United States lost heart and went home rather than being militarily defeated although, in that case, exhaustion through denial was not a strategy that North Vietnam settled on until all other options had failed, the war was over, and the histories were being written.¹⁵

These traditional strategic approaches remain important today. Al-Qaeda attacks in our Western homelands were and are intended to propagandise the Ummah and to exhaust our willingness to resist their attempt to establish political control over the Middle East; while in Afghanistan, the Taliban is attempting simply to exhaust us. Annihilation was the West's chosen approach in all of our twentieth century wars (although invariably as part of a larger collective) and, if the recent Australian Defence White Paper is right, we may even have the need for annihilation again. Denial remains the most problematic of the traditional approaches. Although Australia effectively

... the exhaustion sought by the strategic bombing campaign of German cities didn't work during the war.

embraced a strategy of denial (of continental Australia) in the 1980s, it was never tested. Today the implications, particularly for trade and the economy, of implementing a strategy of denial might make it hard to define victory for a market state like Australia. In Australia's circumstances, it might provide the basis for a useful deterrent strategy because it relies on an initial misappreciation by the aggressor and a subsequent inability by both sides to make decisions that are severely bounded by rationality. However, it is not a strategy which degrades gracefully—it will either work as a deterrent or it will, most likely, not work at all. As a result, since Plans A, B and C are probably best left on the shelf for the time being, we need to find a Plan D.

... implementing a strategy of denial might make it hard to define victory for a market state like Australia.

THE EXPANSION OF WAR

To date, nothing has replaced annihilation as the single universal organising principle for militaries. Instead we are faced with a multitude of contending propositions and theories that purport to describe what wars will be like in the future, how they should be waged and how victory might be defined. There are many reasons for this, though none startling or new:

- There is a sense that the modern world is so dynamic that everything that existed before is merely burdensome legacy, which engenders a corresponding urgency in the search for novelty.
- In the last one hundred years, warfare has continued to expand, but the rate of expansion has accelerated. Since the conceptual initiation of the 'nation-in-arms' a little over two hundred years ago, we have seen the industrial revolution and the enhanced economic organisation of states producing lavishly equipped and supported mass armies that enabled them to seek the annihilation of their enemies. In the last one hundred years the same roots have allowed warfare to break the bonds of the surface of the land and sea and expand into the air, space, sub-surface and cyber domains.
- Warfare has been democratised. Instead of being an affair limited to the chosen representatives of states, active warfare now involves anyone who feels sufficiently motivated to pitch in. At the same time, the 'intrusion' of both professional representatives of media organisations and individual cell phone amateurs into the tactical battle has enabled people everywhere around the globe to take a position on the consequences of combat and on the means employed. The immediacy of these issues constantly threatens to overshadow the typically more abstract and remote questions about why we are fighting and what we are fighting for—even

the strategic premise on which the conflict began. As a result, the importance of the informational domain, propaganda, has grown exponentially.

- The modern state is losing its hold over its people. Although war continues to be exclusively for or about states, the relationship between the state and its people is changing.¹⁶ In the advanced market states of the West, the state exists to provide opportunities to its citizens.¹⁷ It does this by nurturing the market, privatising many of its functions, encouraging the growth of multi-national corporations, and through international cooperation. By definition, this form of state has a very limited ability to conscript its people to ‘its’, as opposed to ‘their’, interests. The result of this is that popular support for any war is even more uncertain than in previous ages and that warfare therefore needs to be more intensively managed to connect the tactical with the political. The corollary is of course that, more than ever before, the home front of market states promises to be *the* decisive theatre from an enemy perspective.

... the home front of market states promises to be *the* decisive theatre from an enemy perspective.

General Sir Rupert Smith used the term ‘war among the people’ to describe the result of the continued expansion and democratisation of war. His proposition is that the utility of military force has declined in the face of

the reality in which the people in the streets and houses and fields—all the people, anywhere—are the battlefield. Military engagements can take place anywhere, with civilians around, against civilians, in defence of civilians. Civilians are the targets, objectives to be won, as much as an opposing force.¹⁸

This was also the basic proposition underpinning the 2003 Army concept *Complex Warfighting*, which has been further elaborated in *Adaptive Campaigning*.

The problem thus created is a substantial one: none of the strategic approaches discussed above was intended, or is well suited to, the problem of resolving wars fought among people; hence, our existing unifying ideas are unhinged. In his book, Smith refers to this, explaining that when he was the NATO commander in Bosnia ‘we had no strategies’; that is, not that there was an absence of a specific strategy (although that was also true) but that there was no clear idea of how military force could be used to achieve the aspirations of the mission.

Part of the problem is that we have heightened aspirations for war. We have come a long way since Horace’s exhortation that it was sweet and fitting for a man to die for his country. The notion of individual negation is an absurdity in a market state that exists to create opportunity for individuals. As a result, in modern war, the death of a soldier is accepted as an unquestioned national tragedy. Furthermore, the West

no longer views war as a wholly legitimate means of advancing the interests of a state or group of states. Even if the United Nations grants formal legitimacy, there exists the underlying view that not only is it a last resort but it is not really a resort at all. For example, in reviewing Smith's book, *The Guardian* wrote:

... it seems tautologous to say that there is something wrong with war. Morally wrong, of course, but also wrong in the sense that the function of this dangerous, expensive and ethically dubious institution has become increasingly unclear in the past half century.¹⁹

It is interesting that, at least according to *The Guardian*, the notion that war is morally wrong is a given, whatever its causes, aims or outcomes. Next to this, its failure to deliver desirable outcomes reliably is merely a practical difficulty. Even if we accept *The Guardian's* view as unconsidered and faintly risible, we should also accept that the underlying sentiment exists and that in the view of a substantial portion of our population, war is morally, at least, tainted.

... the notion that war is morally wrong is a given, whatever its causes, aims or outcomes.

If the reader has come this far with us, then we invite that in combination, these two factors mean that the basic mechanism of warfare, combat, is discredited. The moral taint reduces the tolerance that the community, local and international, has for the death and destruction that is an inevitable corollary of combat and constrains the choice of available means—the current trend of demonising air power being one example. The community is equally reluctant either to see its sons die or to employ the weapons that minimise the chances of this occurring. The inability to resolve this dilemma means that instead of being the principal means to an end, combat is reduced to being an undesirable externality of warfare. This is the basic message underpinning *Adaptive Campaigning* and its principal divergence from *Complex Warfighting*.

In response to these pressures: the need to more directly influence the perceptions of populations, acceptance of the limitations of the utility of force; and a general disenchantment with combat, the militaries of the world have been looking for a new organising principle that might replace annihilation. Because this period has coincided with a resurgence in counterinsurgency, and because the 'perceptions of the population' and 'hearts and minds' are apparent synonyms, this search began from a position of adherence to Templar's dictum from Malaya that the answer lies 'not in pouring more troops into the jungle.'²⁰

From this, one comes to the conclusion that there is no military solution to an insurgency and, from there, that direct military action is essentially regressive. As a result, one might conclude that the core business and that for which the military is

trained, organised and equipped is no longer seen as terribly useful. In its stead ‘we’ have committed ourselves to a new order: strategies of inducement.

STRATEGIES OF INDUCEMENT

Strategies of inducement rest on the proposition that ‘we’ can win the competition for the consent of a population by providing to ‘them’ things that are better than the things that the enemy is able to give them. The actual execution of such strategies involves capacities that are beyond the expertise and resources of most militaries, configured as before for annihilation. Therefore, other agencies, both government and otherwise, need to be enlisted into direct participation in the competition. To ensure the strategy is to offer the ‘right things’, it is necessary to consider and address the entirety of the conflict environment: political, cultural, social and military. To coordinate the actions of variously independent organisations within such a complex endeavour, a ‘dominant narrative’ is established as part of the strategy to provide the basic rationale and objectives for intervention and connect the actions of independent agencies with the political proposition being made to the target population. These are the elements of what has become known as ‘a comprehensive approach’: whole-of-government and multipartite effort, a focus on the causes of conflict rather than its symptoms, and the dominance of a political narrative. They are all implicit in a strategy of inducement.

Strategies of inducement have many positive attributes. They make it possible to engage the instruments of national power directly to the resolution of a conflict rather than indirectly through a primarily military effort. Goodwill is often expressed not merely to benefit its recipients but also to satisfy the needs of its practitioners and, because they are seeking to do good, these strategies buttress popular support for an intervention. Because of the effort to build good governance, law and order, democracy and a market economy trading in acceptable commodities, over time, the target population experiences a better standard of living and becomes more like us. The implicit assumption is that they are less likely to present a threat in the future. Perhaps most importantly, in the confluence of influences described above, there are few apparent alternatives.

Like all strategies, however, inducement remains highly speculative. There is a presumption that what we offer is more attractive than what the enemy is offering, and this necessarily invokes problems of cross-cultural perceptions and mores. In many cases, the West finds itself dealing with ethnic, cultural and national

Strategies of inducement rest on the proposition that ‘we’ can win the competition for the consent of a population...

identities that may be confronted by attempts at modernisation. For some peoples and groups, al-Qaeda and the Taliban being examples, modernisation is seen as Westernisation and is both cultural and religious anathema. In these cases, the source of conflict may be a response to the unwitting Western cultural intrusion accompanying the processes of globalisation. In such cases, the inducements we are offering may actually exacerbate resistance rather than undermine it.

Because of the focus of inducement, there is a tendency to see the enemy as peripheral to the conflict. This is a very sophisticated view that is not without merit, but it must be remembered that war is a dialectical struggle and that the enemy may not be content with a peripheral role. Therefore, although the objective being sought by the overall strategy might not have an enemy focus, it is likely that at least part of the journey will. It should also be expected that the enemy will have a strategy of their own. Although we might be committed to inducement, the enemy might have a quite different approach—it has usually been thus. What would be the consequences, for example, if we embarked on a strategy of inducement (which necessarily involves a protracted commitment) while the enemy was committed to a strategy of exhaustion and was content merely to deny us ‘satisfactory’ progress while sustaining a trickle of casualties? Would the rosy glow of goodwill sustain us through to a recognisable victory?

Despite these risks, because of their strengths, until a conflict arises in which there is a compelling need for one of the more traditional strategic approaches, strategies of inducement are likely to remain at the core of Western approaches to war. This raises lower order, but still important, questions for militaries: what is our role in inducement and how should we be organised, equipped and trained for it?

... what is our role in inducement and how should we be organised, equipped and trained for it?

CONTROL: THE HEDGEHOG IDEA

One man with a gun can control 100 without one.

– Lenin

There is, at least in the minds of the authors, some confusion over this question at present. Because of the military’s formidable, and unique, capacity for planning, ability to establish in austere surroundings and capability to cope with violent circumstances, there are obvious reasons why they will usually form the first element of any commitment to a conflict. Equally, there is a natural desire to begin the main work of delivering inducements as quickly as possible. As a result, there is a tendency

for militaries to seek to be jacks-of-all-trades: foxes, rather than hedgehogs. The consequence of this is a trend to dilution of force structure, doctrine and training in preparing for wars and a failure to concentrate effort once deployed.

The core of this trend is the proposition that any organisation is able to prepare itself physically and culturally for only a finite array of endeavours and is able to implement simultaneously only a subset of those prepared for. Attempts to diffuse organisational focus beyond this array threaten organisational fragmentation, cultural confusion and the resulting likelihood of failure.

In 1967, Admiral JC Wylie gave us two profound pieces of wisdom when he wrote: ‘The aim of war is some measure of control over the enemy’²¹ and ‘the ultimate determinant in war is the man on the scene with the gun. This man is the ultimate power in war. He is control. He determines who wins.’²² If we accept Wylie’s proposition that the man on the scene with the gun ‘is control’ then to be in control that man needs to be ‘ours’ and not the enemy’s.

This idea is worthy of some expansion. Whatever convictions individuals hold with respect to the enemy’s political proposition, like the *volk* in Nazi Germany, if they cannot withdraw their consent at a time of their choosing, then it is unlikely that a strategy of inducement can work. Ultimately, unless you are confident in the ability of your government to enforce its peace, then the man with an AK at your door at midnight is your master. It doesn’t matter if you are happy with your electricity, content with your children’s educational arrangements and satisfied with the government’s agenda—you are in thrall to the threat posed to you and your family by that man with the gun. His removal resolves the competition for control and is the first step towards creating the conditions in which a strategy of inducement can be implemented.

This is so glaringly obvious that it appears banal, but even something so obvious is not always apparent. A number of examples from Iraq are pertinent. The Anbar Awakening—which began the process of the creation of Sunni militias to oppose al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and to protect Sunni populations from Shia militias—did not arise without help. Having initially gained a toe-hold in Iraq as an aspect of the Sunni resistance to US occupation and the rise of a Shia dominated government, AQI, essentially foreign, unacceptably extreme and uncomfortably fundamentalist for secular nationalist Bedouins, quickly marginalised itself. It sustained its position only through fierce internal discipline and the elimination of any opposition. Over a period of many months, relentless US Army, Marine and Special Forces operations eroded the capability and capacity of AQI to such an extent that it was no longer able to maintain its control over the Sunni population.

‘the ultimate
determinant in war is
the man on the scene
with the gun.’

As a result, when the Awakening began in far western Anbar, AQI was unable to suppress it. This demonstration of weakness was sufficient encouragement for tribal leaders closer to Baghdad to re-assert themselves and follow suit. In this case there was a local desire to move away from AQI control, but that desire could only be pursued when the local control of gunmen and terrorists was removed by the counterinsurgents. It was only following this destruction of AQI's control that the delivery could proceed of the goods and services that underpin a strategy of inducement.

Only a military can establish control and until it is established, democracy, the economy, the rule of law, policing and social progress must wait. The establishment of control necessarily has two aspects: one focused on the removal (by annihilation?) of the enemy's 'man with a gun', and the other in putting our soldier in that man's place. It also infers establishing sufficient control over the day-to-day existence of the population that they are in no doubt as to who is in charge. In nearly all cases, the hearts of the population are beyond our grasp but, if we are in charge, it doesn't matter.

In nearly all cases, the hearts of the population are beyond our grasp but, if we are in charge, it doesn't matter.

In this model, the national strategy would determine the political objectives being pursued and the dominant narrative to be followed, the campaign plan would lay down the broad agenda to be followed, and operational art would be focused on initially reducing the influence of the enemy to an acceptable level and subsequently preventing a resurgence and establishing control over the population.

CONCLUSION

In the face of a plethora of writings about complexity and the military system, hedgehog ideas remain important if complex organisations are to act purposefully and energetically in the face of complicated and dynamic circumstances. The military's preoccupation with commander's intent and task verbs, the sanctity of the mission and the importance of the 'in order to' are all manifestations of this idea. Previously the hedgehog idea that unified development, training and application was annihilation, but it has fallen into disfavour, at least for the time being. Of the other traditional strategic approaches, neither provides a good fit to the needs of contemporary war—at least to Western market states. Only the relatively new strategic approach, inducement, is genuinely available today.

Within a strategy of inducement there is a tendency for military preparations and actions to become undesirably diffuse. In the absence of full engagement by the nation-state, in preparing for strategies of inducement, militaries risk organisational

and cultural fragmentation with a consequent reduced ability to cope with actual, rather than theoretical, conflicts. In execution, there is the likelihood of the pursuit of ‘many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory, connected, if at all, only in some *de facto* way’.²³ The result is typically a lingering conflict in which, at best, modest progress invokes the popular proclamation of ‘quagmire’, the acceptance of exhaustion, the redefinition of victory, and withdrawal.

It is often easy to forget that for Western states, in any dialectical struggle, if you are not winning, you are losing. The key contribution militaries can make to strategies of inducement is to establish effective control over the operating environment. This will require that the enemy’s ability to establish control is reduced to a negligible level. Clausewitz is still right and the destruction of the enemy is what matters most. Today, as in the time of Clausewitz, the destruction of the enemy—the removal of his ability to contest control—is not an end in itself, but it remains an essential prerequisite for subsequent actions that may deliver victory.

Once the enemy’s ability to contest control has been removed, locally or generally, the establishment of friendly control can set the scene for progress in other aspects of the campaign plan. In some cases, controlling a population will require that they feel ‘the hard hand of war’. Although we would not wish to revisit Sherman or Douhet’s measures, strategists should not shy away from taking control of all aspects of the day-to-day existence of a target population. The challenge we would present to the reader is to find a successful example of a war among the people that has not rested on the establishment of such control.

The beauty of accepting control as the military’s hedgehog idea is that it places the notion of annihilation (to which it is closely akin) within a strategic and campaign context and subordinates violence to strategy. Importantly it does not see combat as an undesirable externality or as a manifestation of failure, but as the core business for armies. In short, it helps describe how a blunt instrument like military force can help create the circumstances for positive political change. In this it creates a conceptual bridge with annihilation, exhaustion and denial.

ENDNOTES

- 1 I Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox, The Proper Study of Mankind*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 1997 p.436.
- 2 Archilochus fragment 201 in ML West (ed), *Iambi et Elegi Graeci*, Vol. 1, Oxford, 1971.
- 3 Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, p.436.
- 4 Ibid., p.437.
- 5 Ibid.

- 6 A possible listing of notable hedgehogs includes the following: Buddha, Darwin, Edison, Einstein, Freud, Gandhi, Steve Ballmer (Microsoft), Bill Gates (Microsoft), Steve Jobs (Apple), Warren Buffet, Tiger Woods, Forest Gump, Lieutenant Columbo, Yoda, Plato, Lucretius, Pascal, Hegel, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Ibsen, Proust, Clausewitz, Napoleon, Dante, Montgomery, Patton and Guderian. (source: Altos Ventures, Isaiah Berlin and the authors <http://altos.typepad.com/vc/2006/09/foxes_and_hedge.html> accessed November 2009; Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, p. 436.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 C Von Clausewitz, *On War*, M Howard and P Paret (eds), Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1984, p. 577.
- 9 Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, p. 453.
- 10 Clausewitz enumerated the three main goals of every war:
 - ‘To defeat the enemy armed force and destroy it. That means to direct the main effort first and always against the opponent’s main army;
 - to take possession of the enemy’s non-military resources, ie. occupation of the country or at least action against the capital and other important strong points [at least partially because the enemy army was most likely to be found in front of such important assets]; and
 - to win over public opinion [that is to convince the population of the enemy state that they were defeated]. This goal may be achieved by great victories or possession of the capital.’ Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 91.
- 11 Here ‘nation’ refers to an ethnic or social group that is sufficiently culturally homogeneous to act collectively in response to some stimulus. On occasions, nations establish states to hold a monopoly over violence within their territory (the law) and to protect them from the predations of their neighbours (defence).
- 12 The thrusts of Hobbes’ *Leviathan* and other works are accessibly expressed in JCA Gaskin’s 1996 introduction to the Oxford Press paperback version of Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. xx and, conveniently, in Google Books: <<http://books.google.com.au/books?id=DhlOzCmNYj8C&lpg=PP1&ots=Ukz6PBuuPH&dq=Hobbes&pg=PR20#v=onepage&q=&f=false>>
- 13 Before embarking on his march through Georgia and the Carolinas Sherman wrote: ‘We are not only fighting hostile armies, but a hostile people, and we must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war.’ As a result the Union forces needed ‘to humble their pride, to follow them to their inmost recesses, and make them fear and dread us...’ because ‘we cannot change the hearts and minds of those people of the South, but we can make war so terrible ... [and] make them so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it.’

- 14 Phillip Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent*, Allen Lane, London, 2008. Bobbitt describes two types of states: 'states of terror' in which the consent of the population is coercively imposed and 'states of consent' in which it is freely given. In Second World War Germany (a state of terror) it could be argued that the Allies were attempting to out-terrorise the Nazis. Until their coercive authority was removed from the population the German people were not able to choose to submit.
- 15 Deterrence falls within the strategic approaches described but is based on perceptions of the threat of annihilation or exhaustion rather than its actuality.
- 16 'State' here is used with its broadest meaning of a polity defined by the existence of a legal framework imposed over a group of people. This definition covers both the modern idea of states being geographically limited and the earlier idea of law being shared by a people regardless of their geographic location. Under this definition jihadis, for example, are representatives of this earlier form of state—the caliphate—which does not yet have a geographical meaning.
- 17 Phillip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History*, Anchor Books, New York, 2003. Bobbitt argues that there are identifiable stages in the evolution of the state, that the dominant form at any time marks an international epoch, and that wars arise as a result of the transition from epoch to epoch. In Bobbitt's terminology we are presently experiencing a transition from the nation-state (which existed to benefit the nation it governed) to the market-state (which exists to provide opportunities to the individuals its governs).
- 18 General Sir R Smith, *The Utility of Force*, Allen Lane, London 2005.
- 19 M Woollacott, 'What is it good for?', *The Guardian*, 12 November 2005, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2005/nov/12/highereducation.shopping>>, accessed on 24 November 2009.
- 20 Cited in B Lapping *End of Empire*, London, 1985, p.224.
- 21 JC Wylie, *Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1967, p.66.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- 23 Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, p.436.

THE AUTHORS

Justin Kelly graduated from RMC in December 1977 and was commissioned into the RAAC. In 1995–96 he commanded 1st Armoured Regiment. He commanded the Peace Monitoring Group on Bougainville in 2000–01, was Deputy Force Commander of the Peace Keeping Force in Timor-Leste in 2002–03 and Director of Strategic Operations in the Multinational Force–Iraq in 2006–07. Justin Kelly has attended a number of training institutions including the UK Armour School (1981–82), the UK Royal Military College of Science (1986), Australian Command and Staff College (1990), Joint Services Staff College (1997) and US Army War College (2002). He retired from the Army in December 2007.

Mike Brennan currently holds the appointment of Director General Simulation in the Australian Department of Defence. His recent appointments include periods as Research Leader Human Systems Integration within Australia’s Defence Science and Technology Organisation and Scientific Adviser–Army. He has a PhD in Physics from the Flinders University of South Australia, and was attached to the USMC Warfighting Laboratory during 1998–99.

CONCEPTS

AUTONOMIC AND SENSE AND RESPOND LOGISTICS

THE 'FOXHOLE TO FACTORY TO FOXHOLE' CONTINUUM OF COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT*

MAJOR RAY HINGST AND GREG GUNTER

ABSTRACT

As the Australian Defence Force (ADF) embarks on an ambitious re-equipment program involving the procurement of multi-billion dollar platforms, enhancement of the logistics required to support this technology will also require careful consideration. Autonomic Logistics is a system that offers the ADF the opportunity to link the current Military Integrated Logistics Information System (MILIS) to real-time platform information through the employment of the Sense and Respond Logistics system. This is a proven system that has demonstrated its effectiveness within the United States (US) forces and can work equally well within the ADF.

* This article has been peer-reviewed.

'The line between disorder and order lies in logistics...'

– Sun Tzu

INTRODUCTION

The ADF is in the midst of an evolutionary change. Whether it is labelled Network Centric Warfare (NCW), Network Centric Operations or Network Enabled Operations, this change concerns the ability to share information seamlessly in order to conduct effective operations into the future. This ability to share information is referred to as the 'network dimension' and has the facility to:

- **connect** units, platforms and facilities through networking, appropriate doctrine, training and organisational processes and structure
- **collect** relevant information using networked assets and distribute it via the network
- **use** the information, and the intelligence derived from it, to achieve military objectives
- **protect** the network from external interference or technical failure.¹

This article will focus on the two 'Cs'—connect and collect—and the way the ADF can develop these abilities, documented extensively in the 'NCW Roadmap'. The Roadmap envisages an ADF in which:

- key logistic function networks within the national support area are linked with those in theatre and provide connectivity and a collaborative ability with industry and coalition partners
- commanders have end-to-end visibility of the logistic system, allowing them to rapidly and effectively prioritise the resources required to generate and sustain deployed force elements
- automated ordering and replenishment occurs as supplies and ordnance are consumed by platforms and field units
- the deployed force has minimised its vulnerabilities and significantly enhanced its mobility through more effective reach back, optimum force presence and precision sustainment for the majority of logistics requirements.²

Yet, based on a review of the NCW Roadmap and the assumption that the supported projects will achieve their desired states, the ADF will still only partially achieve its goal in the critical area of logistics. This is because of the existence of a residual 'air gap' at the platform end of the logistics continuum preventing commanders from accessing aggregated, real-time logistics data from the 'foxhole'.³ As a consequence, the decision-making ability of the operational commander will be less than optimal. Critical support costs will also be higher than necessary. MILIS alone is incapable of generating the data required by the commander in the field, while Autonomic Logistics was developed primarily to meet the needs of the supply

pipeline rather than optimised for the support of operational commanders. Sense and Respond Logistics, on the other hand, combines all the required components to present the commander with complete visibility of the logistics chain.

This article will define the concepts of Autonomic Logistics and Sense and Respond Logistics, and provide an overview of their use through two civilian applications. The way Autonomic Logistics works will be explained with reference to a ‘foxhole to factory to foxhole’ continuum of combat service support and the concept of Autonomic Sustainment currently being developed by the United States Marine Corps (USMC) will also be examined.

MILIS alone is incapable
of generating the
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WHAT ARE AUTONOMIC LOGISTICS AND SENSE AND RESPOND LOGISTICS?

The term ‘autonomic’ refers to the autonomic nervous system within the human body which controls involuntary actions such as breathing or heartbeats which occur without conscious prompting.⁴ Likewise, an Autonomic Logistics system is designed to function autonomously without any form of prompting.⁵ The Autonomic Logistics system discussed here was first developed by Lockheed Martin to support the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. The main elements of this system are the sensors embedded in the Joint Strike Fighter itself to facilitate prognostics and health management.

For ease of comprehension, the concept of prognostics and health management can be broken into two definitions. Prognostics is defined as ‘the actual material condition assessment which includes predicting and determining the useful life and performance life remaining of components by modeling fault progression’. The concept of health management involves ‘the capability to make intelligent, informed, appropriate decisions about maintenance and logistics actions based on diagnostics/prognostics information, available resources and operational demand’.⁶

Prognostics and health management generate data which connects directly to the Autonomic Logistics Information System which, in turn, links the aircraft to the Lockheed Martin facility in the United States through the supply chain and intermediate supporting elements. In the case of the Joint Strike Fighter, the Autonomic Logistics Information System analyses the data obtained from key components on the platform and, where necessary, organises a maintenance event, including the required components, technicians, specialist equipment and tools, necessary consumables and hangar space. The system may even schedule the fighter’s availability as required.

While the Autonomic Logistics Information System optimises the efficiency of resource supply, the analogy with the human autonomic system should not be ignored. The system functions automatically, but it does not think or reason. Deviations required for operational contingencies are not automatically factored into the process. This is where the human element, trained to appreciate and respond to a range of operational variables, becomes important.

Two examples of current practice illustrate the successful application of the Autonomic Logistics Information System in the less complex civilian environment. Autonomic Logistics is employed extensively in the Australian mining industry by heavy equipment vendors, such as Caterpillar, as an element of condition-based maintenance. Sensors embedded in major components of the equipment collect data, which is downloaded into an information system every time the vehicle comes within range of a receiving device. This works well within the confines of a mining site where equipment circulates in a limited area. A more challenging application of the Autonomic Logistics Information System occurred with QANTAS's purchase of the Airbus A380. This required a more tailored application of the system, known as AIRTRAC: 'QANTAS Airbus AIRTRAC system provides a link between the airframe and a dedicated support facility staffed with specialist engineers available 365 days a year.'⁷ Furthermore, 'the A380's onboard software monitors every system and instantly sends an email to AIRTRAC if any anomaly is spotted. The instant the email is received, the required part is ordered so it's ready for the arrival of the A380.'⁸

The system functions automatically, but it does not think or reason.

QANTAS's application of Autonomic Logistics through the AIRTRAC system focuses on bringing together the various elements required for maintenance. This approach represents a departure from scheduled maintenance programs, which are usually based on calculated intervals. Scheduled maintenance involves extensive safety margins intended to prevent failure of the component, but includes, of necessity, significant waste of resources through the replacement of items that are still within their safe, serviceable life. Conversely, condition-based maintenance provides 'the ability to predict future health status of a system or component, as well as providing the ability to anticipate faults, problems, potential failures, and required maintenance actions.'⁹ The aim of condition-based maintenance is to compare the current condition of a component with that required under safety specifications and arrange for timely repair or replacement prior to failure.

In the military context, however, additional considerations intervene in the scheduling of a maintenance event. Sense and Respond Logistics, defined by the Office of Force Transformation as '... a transformational network-centric concept

that enables Joint effects-based operations and provides agile support, involves the same system elements as Autonomic Logistics, but also incorporates the ability to vary actions based on local operational decisions.¹⁰ Such variations could include the repair of equipment by its operators rather than a specialised repairer or, in an operational context which may preclude the removal of the machine for repairs, its use in a reduced capacity.

Equipment health monitoring systems have been in use for decades. One such system was developed by Pratt and Whitney for jet engines used in the F-15 and F-16. The engine monitoring system, which consists of both engine diagnostics and ground diagnostics units, records the operating conditions as well as any anomalies in the performance of the aircraft. Once the aircraft is on the ground, the ground diagnostics unit is plugged into the engine diagnostics unit and the data is downloaded for analysis. The commercial arm of the company applies its engine monitoring system not only to other commercial aircraft engines, but also to automobiles. When a car is taken to a workshop to be serviced, technicians hook it up to a diagnostic analyser—a machine developed from the engine monitoring system—to determine the scope of work required to maintain the vehicle adequately. There is usually no real-time connectivity between the vehicle and the diagnostic system and only data detailing what has already occurred can be downloaded and processed.

The Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) also uses prognostics and health management systems—usually referred to as ‘health and usage monitoring systems’. Until recently, these applications required data to be physically downloaded and transferred for analysis. Both the Autonomic Logistics and Sense and Respond Logistics systems take this process a step further, also including prognostics. The sensor suite located in the platform compares performance data to predetermined standards in order to predict the status and longevity of the component. USMC light armored vehicles (LAV) connect health and usage monitoring systems to a Sense and Respond Logistics system so as to detect component wear and mechanical faults within the vehicle. For example, the LAV may transmit data on the condition of the main wheel bearing on the right front shaft to the Sense and Respond Logistics system, which then calculates that it is likely to fail after twenty hours of further use. Data from the vehicle is continuously transmitted and downloaded for analysis of the vehicle’s performance (see Figure 1, page 64).

The US Army makes frequent use of Sense and Respond Logistics systems to:

There is usually no
real-time connectivity
between the vehicle and the
diagnostic system...

... maximise the readiness and logistics effectiveness of the force. S&RL [Sense and Respond Logistics] requires a network-centric enterprise and mandates collaboration within and across communities of interest. The second goal of S&RL is enabling the logisticians to accurately observe, orient, decide and act faster than the supported customer. Improving the logistician's decision cycle enables more accurate and timely support to the warfighter. With the integration of tracking, platform autonomics, information technologies and flexible business rules, logisticians will be able to proactively sustain the dynamic battlefield of the 21st Century.¹¹

The old concept of 'Factory to Foxhole' is now 'Foxhole to Factory to Foxhole'.¹²

LOGISTICS COSTS

When a new system is acquired, the estimate of its life cycle costs is based on the generally accepted premise that the system itself accounts for one third of the cost. Logistics and operational costs comprise the other two thirds. The Australian Joint Strike Fighter program provides a useful example:

The true cost of owning a modern jet fighter includes 25 or 30 years of maintenance support, and pilot and ground crew training, and this is often twice or more the original purchase price. The JSF program includes a global logistics sustainment system ... That doesn't include the cost of fuel and weapons.¹³

The Australian Government opted to purchase one hundred Joint Strike Fighters. Applying a per aircraft cost of US\$50 million, this amounts to a total purchase of US\$5 billion. Support and operating costs equate to US\$10 billion for a program cost of US\$15 billion. Lockheed Martin, supplier of the Joint Strike Fighter, estimates a 20 per cent reduction in the logistics costs over the life cycle of the aircraft due to the application of Autonomic Logistics. This equates to a US\$2 billion saving for the Australian Joint Strike Fighter program.¹⁴ Of course, these costs do not include the investment required to upgrade the platform and the purchase of requisite items and infrastructure that will provide a 'whole of life' use of this aircraft.

If the same concept is applied to the Australian Light Armoured Vehicle (ASLAV), the original cost would also include:

- acquisition cost (US\$2 million/unit 257 units): US\$514 million
- projected whole-of-life logistics cost: US\$1.028 billion

The Australian Government opted to purchase one hundred Joint Strike Fighters.

- 20 per cent savings: US\$205.6 million on operating costs over the life of the ASLAV.

Obviously this comparison does not take into account the fact that the original unit cost would have been greater with the addition of sensors, communications equipment and upgraded logistics resources. However, it does illustrate that a relatively modest increase in unit acquisition cost could lead to significant savings in logistics expenditure. The comparison also ignores the fact that the ADF has a history of retaining assets for extended periods (as it did the F-111 and M-113AS). This implies increased logistics to acquisition cost savings due to the comparatively long service life of many Australian platforms. Given the number of new equipment acquisitions scheduled in the Army capability development continuum, the embedding of prognostics and health management devices makes sound financial sense.¹⁵

END-TO-END VISIBILITY

In their operational application, Autonomic Logistics and Sense and Respond Logistics systems are anchored at the platform level—the ‘foxhole’—while the destination at the other end differs according to who ‘owns’ the system (the ‘factory’). In the case of the Joint Strike Fighter, the ‘factory’ is Lockheed’s facility in Denver in the United States. Lockheed has visibility of the entire supply chain via the Autonomic Logistics Information System, which is an integrated component of the Joint Strike Fighter program.

The Sense and Respond Logistics concepts discussed here are based on the USMC application. The USMC’s Sense and Respond Logistics system supports both the logistics/supply chain and its operational application. Data gathered for current level usage is transmitted to the next level in the chain of command for aggregation and review:

This implies increased logistics to acquisition cost savings due to the comparatively long service life of many Australian platforms.

With information technology, S&RL receives, recognizes and responds to consumption and requirement patterns through the use of equipment embedded Intelligent Agents. S&RL leverages the capabilities of network-enabled forces to share logistics information, share a common perspective of the battle space, and provide early awareness of consumption and needs, allow commitment tracking and allow for reconfiguration of the logistics system when needed. It will tell the Commander “how much fight is left” in his units.¹⁶

Figure 1 illustrates how accumulated and aggregated data provides input to the decision-making process at various levels:

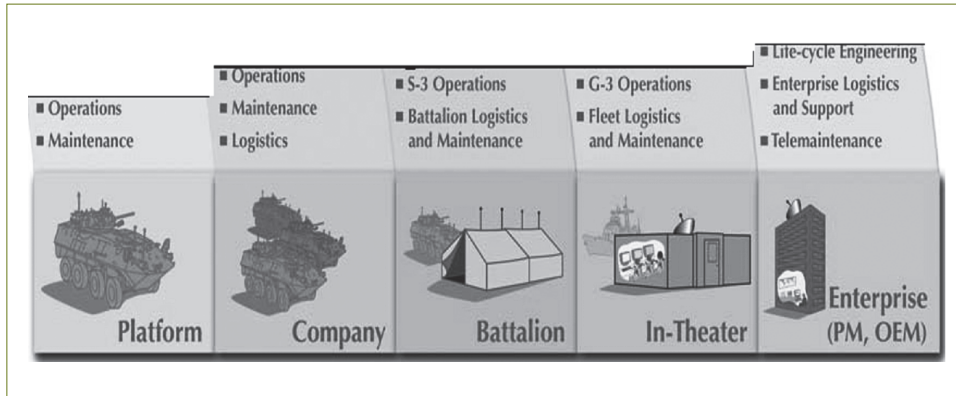


Figure 1: Overview of Sense and Respond Logistics.¹⁷

The logistics projects listed in the NCW Roadmap do not appear to achieve the optimal goals of the NCW vision because MILIS does not ‘reach forward’ sufficiently to obtain platform-specific data. The ADF NCW implementation plans for logistics are based on MILIS (Project JP 2077). While MILIS is an automated supply and replenishment system, and is significantly advanced within current practices, it does not have real-time access to information on the consumption of resources and ordnance as there is an ‘air gap’ between the system and the individual platforms. Although this gap is projected to narrow with the forecast extension of MILIS to sub-unit level, it will not close at the critical platform level.

With the connection of Sense and Respond Logistics to MILIS, a commander could access advice based not only on current and previous performance, but also the projected health of the assets under his/her control. Since all resources would be identified by part number and location, they could be redirected immediately to meet higher priority requirements. This means that supportability and sustainability decisions could be based on accurate data rather than a ‘best guess’ derived from historical patterns.

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TOWARDS AUTONOMIC SUSTAINMENT

The USMC and the US Army have both embarked on programs intended to lift the ‘fog of war’. The USMC vision for Sense and Respond Logistics is:

Marine Corps S&RL is an approach that yields adaptive, responsive, demand driven support for force capability sustainment. The prime metrics for S&RL are speed and effectiveness, relative to commander’s intent, which predicts, anticipates, and coordinates actions that provide an operational advantage spanning the full range of military operations across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. S&RL gives the Operational Commander an increased range of support options that are synchronized with the operational effects. The concept is built upon characterizing and anticipating support problems, early identification of potential constraints, and rapid response to changes in operational tasks and reprioritization.¹⁸

The USMC Sense and Respond Logistics program commenced in July 2008 with the fitting of a sensor suite to LAV-25 platforms (see Figure 2).¹⁹ The retrofit of the entire LAV fleet was projected to be completed by March 2009 (although the timeline has slipped slightly), with plans in place to extend the program to several other platforms in service with the USMC.²⁰

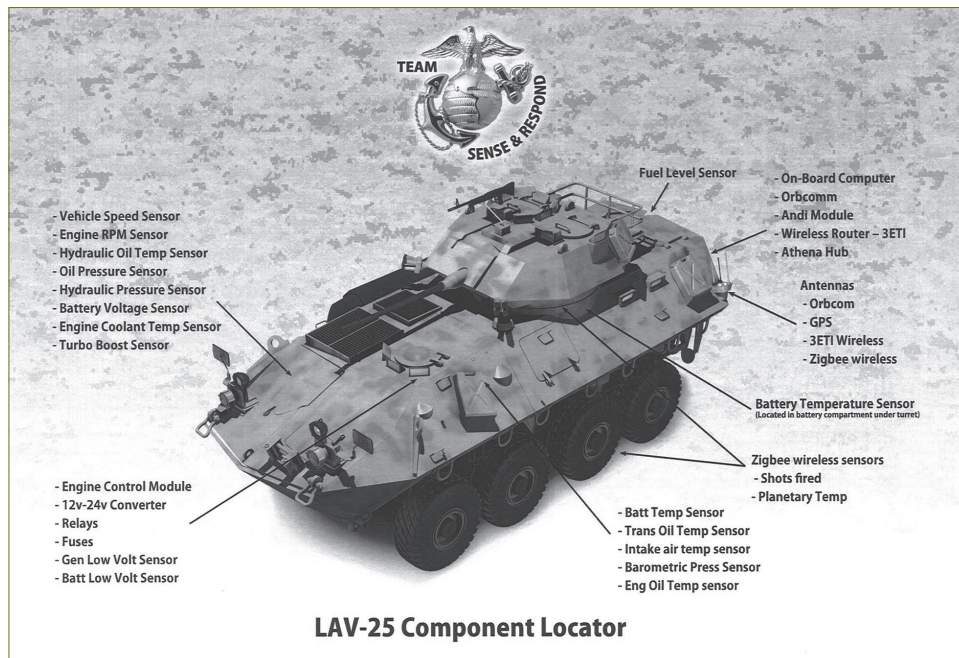


Figure 2. LAV embedded platform sensors.²¹

Figure 2 illustrates the value of the information generated to the platform's operator. This was also starkly apparent during the USMC deployment in Iraq when the planetary hub reduction gear case in some of the LAVs began to overheat, requiring a crew member to dismount and touch the unit to check whether it was running hot.²² The addition of real-time, aggregated logistics data, plus enhanced operational situational awareness are natural consequences of the improved connectivity created by Sense and Respond Logistics. Sense and Respond Logistics provide decision-makers in the chain of command a more accurate and timely gauge of platform condition and the status of critical classes of supply including fuel and ammunition, allowing more effective use of the assets at their disposal and the more efficient function of the logistics system overall.

In future it may be possible to utilise improved situational awareness, provided by a system similar to 'Blue Force Tracking' currently employed on operations by US forces, to focus logistics support on the elements best placed to receive or most in need of resupply. For example, combat teams that have been in contact and require replenishment could be differentiated from those that have experienced a relatively low tempo of operations. Some progress has been achieved in automatically providing convoy commanders alternative routes to avoid enemy action or other disruptions to supply routes, thereby delivering supplies at a reduced risk.²³

Commencing with the LAV25 project, the USMC is developing and extending Sense and Respond Logistics into a concept of autonomic sustainment.²⁴ This offers the potential to provide end-to-end visibility of the health of platforms, maintenance events, and the status of the supply chain. The US Department of Defense believes that the incorporation of Sense and Respond Logistics into the current logistics systems is possible, and indeed, desirable:

Contrary to popular belief, S&RL can be implemented without replacing most of today's major critical systems. That is, S&RL can be an enhancement to current DoD systems since, by design, it adds only a thin layer of functionality over the existing systems.²⁵

Many of the required component information systems required to provide visibility of the supply chain are already included within the scope of Project JP2077. Through an extension of MILIS to interface with Sense and Respond Logistics, the ADF has the opportunity to achieve a broader span of the logistics continuum from 'foxhole to factory to foxhole' and fulfill the logistics goals identified in the NCW plan.

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CONCLUSION

Logistics considerations will become increasingly important as the Army capability development continuum progresses. The ambitious acquisition plans projected for the ADF, combined with the related necessity to deliver significant cost savings in the defence budget through improved efficiency, highlight the need for a logistics system that also provides effective, adaptable and flexible combat service support. In its projected form, MILIS will not integrate real-time platform level or aggregated information derived from a Sense and Respond Logistics system. USMC experience with the LAV25 has illustrated clearly the benefits of an Autonomic Logistics system in providing accurate and reliable logistics information to commanders at the tactical and operational levels.

In order to provide a full spectrum of 'foxhole to factory to foxhole' logistics for the Army and the ADF, MILIS must extend its reach beyond logistics centres to connect at the platform level in real time. Modern logistics systems such as Sense and Respond Logistics and Autonomic Logistics are now proven concepts in the civilian and military environments. The Army has an opportunity to trial, and possibly implement, Autonomic Logistics by applying Sense and Respond Logistics technology to platforms shared with the USMC, such as the ASLAV, and link this to MILIS to create an integrated Autonomic Logistics information system that will realise the logistics goals identified in the NCW Roadmap.

ENDNOTES

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THE AUTHORS

Major Ray Hingst is a Reserve officer posted to the CIMIC Branch of the Headquarters 1st Division. He enlisted in 1988 as a private soldier in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, serving with the 1st General Hospital. He graduated from Officer Cadet Training Unit and was commissioned into the Royal Australian Corps of Transport where he qualified as a Movements Officer. He commanded the Joint Movement Control Office – Brisbane, and has also served with 31st Royal Queensland Regiment and 7th Signal Regiment. In his civilian career he is an academic at the University of Southern Queensland.

Greg Gunter is an academic in the Faculty of Business at the University of Southern Queensland. He lectures in project management and supply chain logistics. He has served with the US Navy in Vietnam and subsequently, with the US Department of Defense in contract administration, inspection and supervision in the military aviation and aerospace industries.

CONCEPTS

HYBRID, COMPLEX, CONVENTIONAL, FOURTH-GENERATION COUNTERINSURGENCY

IT'S DECISION THAT STILL MATTERS MOST

ALBERT PALAZZO AND ANTONY TRENTINI

ABSTRACT

The complexity of modern warfare makes decision difficult to achieve. Conventional wisdom holds that, when fighting insurgents and other asymmetric actors, wars will be long and costly struggles that simply pit political wills against each other in a Clausewitzian kind of 'grey clash of ... moral masses'. In this article, the authors reject this fatalist view and posit that, with the right skill sets, Western commanders may possibly be able to restore their ability to achieve decision on the modern battlefield. While the authors admit their article does not pose a complete solution to this problem, they maintain that addressing this problem is critical, and offer this article as grounds for beginning such debate in the Army. To neglect the Army's inability to achieve decision in 'wars amongst the people' is to consign Western military forces to the irrelevance that General Rupert Smith feared would overtake them.

INTRODUCTION

The most notable feature of contemporary war is stalemate. Despite possessing the greatest technological advantage in the history of warfare, Western armies are unable to achieve decision over warriors little changed from those Arthur Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) faced in the conquest of India. His victories at Srirangapatna and Assaye could not be more different from the indecision that characterises Iraq and Afghanistan. Why has Western military power now become so ineffective?

The Duke's greatness derived from his understanding of the character of war specific to his age. The stalemates of today stem in large part from the failure of Western commanders 'to establish ... the kind of war on which they are embarking'.¹ If the West is to have the means to achieve decision in its wars again, it is essential that its commanders be able to understand the true character of each conflict correctly. This article outlines one such mechanism designed to afford commanders this understanding: the Complex Warfare Branch.

This organisation is designed to help commanders understand and influence the human and informational dimensions of the battlespace—areas neglected by Western military forces that prefer to focus on the tactical and technological dimensions of war. While the West's technology and training provides it with the means for tactical decision, this is also largely irrelevant in the wars the West faces today. It is its enemies who have found the means for true strategic decision—a superior understanding of the nature of modern conflict. How else 'could a mass murderer who publicly praised the terrorists of September 11 be winning the hearts and minds of anyone? How could a man in a cave out-communicate the world's leading communications society?'² It is because he understands the character of his war far better than the West has been able—or inclined—to.

THE PRIMACY OF DECISION

The most important task facing a commander—at any rank—is the need to marshal and employ assets in a manner that makes a favourable decision possible. This is the fundamental responsibility of command, and all resources must be directed towards its attainment. To strive for less is a dereliction of duty.

Decision in the context of a military operation has a particular meaning. A government employs military force to achieve certain political objectives which, to paraphrase Carl von Clausewitz, could not be achieved by other means.³ While Clausewitz wrote in the nineteenth century, his words resonate throughout the history of the Western tradition of war. The essence of the utility of military force is its role as an instrument of national power.⁴

The particular nature or scope of a nation's political objectives in deciding to employ military force is not important in the context of this article. It is merely sufficient to note that a political goal must exist; otherwise there is no legitimate rationale for a government's resort to military force. What is essential for commanders, however, is that they align their actions in ways that either achieves a decision that obtains the government's objectives immediately or, through a series of intermediate steps, lays the foundation for obtaining decision in the future.

It must be stressed that decision should not be confused with victory. This article deliberately uses decision to highlight the difference between defeating the enemy and achieving the political goals which initially led a government to resort to military force in the first place. In an oft repeated anecdote, Colonel Harry G Summers recounts a 1975 conversation he had with a North Vietnamese colonel. In referring to the recently lost war, Summers quipped to his victorious opposite, 'you know you never defeated us on the battlefield'. The North Vietnamese officer rejoined, 'that may be so ... but it is also irrelevant'.⁵ This exchange highlights the subtle nature of decision. Winning battles is certainly better than losing them, but it is a fallacy that victory in the field guarantees winning a war—that is to say, obtaining decision.⁶ If there is a lesson in Summers' anecdote, it is that the primacy of a commander's focus should be on the political objective, not the subservient task of winning battles.

Antulio J Echevarria II has also considered this point in the context of an American way of war. He believes that the West in general has evolved principles for 'military victory' rather than what he calls 'policy success'.⁷ Employing the words of General Anthony Zinni, Echevarria sums this up as a preference for 'killing and breaking' that wins battles but not wars.⁸ The consequences of failing to understand the distinction between battlefield victory and political decision can be seen in the aftermath of the fall of Baghdad in 2003. The premature declaration of 'mission accomplished' by the US president underscored the focus of the United States on battle success rather than the achievement of policy goals, and highlighted the ease with which political and military leaders at even the highest levels confuse the two.

The essence of the utility of military force is its role as an instrument of national power.

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PERCEIVING PRESENT WAR

The overwhelming strength and technological edge that the US military demonstrated during the 1991 war with Iraq, the overthrowing of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, and the opening phase of the invasion of Iraq in 2003 promised to usher in a new era of decision in war. Yet despite an enormous investment in transformative technologies and battle effects this has not proven to be the case. The US military has found its seemingly invincible advantages frustrated by opponents who have shifted the battlespace into arenas in which the superpower's dominance in firepower, sensor technology and systems integration are of little benefit, if not irrelevant. As a result the United States finds itself ensnared in two counterinsurgency wars—for which its forces were unprepared—and fighting enemies who have eschewed conventional operations for other means. Now it is only an extremely foolish, or perhaps suicidal, opponent who would challenge the American military on its preferred ground.

The failure of the seeming military advantage of US might to achieve decisive and rapid success has pushed the examination of the future character of war to the forefront of Western military thinking. The claims for transformative advantage and techno-centric clarity that emerged from the post-Cold War US Department of Defense still have their adherents, but in the face of battlefield reality in places such as Kosovo, Chechnya, Iraq and Afghanistan, other voices have begun to argue that war remains in the realm of uncertainty.⁹ In recent years military observers, analysts and professionals have invested considerable energy in trying to identify war's changing character and to predict its future course. The terms listed in this article's title are by no means comprehensive; others, such as 'three-block war', 'insurgency and counterinsurgency', and 'asymmetric warfare' could have been offered just as easily. A countervailing school of thought has also joined the fray, arguing that the attempt to identify the nature of future war is little more than faddism or even worse a misrepresentation of history, and that war in its essential nature remains unchanged.¹⁰

While a theoretical debate on the nature of future war does have value, it is also a distraction from the reality of contemporary conflict—the difficulty Western military organisations have had in achieving decision in their recent and current operations.¹¹ While the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan do not conjure up the stereotypical image of stalemate—the immobility and slaughter of the Western Front during the First World War—the conflicts do have something in common. The combatants of the Great War struggled to unlock the stalemate of the trenches in order to restore decision to war, an act that took three years of bloody experimentation. While casualties have never approached the levels of those of the Western Front, the members of the US-led Coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan are also

mired in a stalemate. Such a situation also applies to the ADF's recent operations in its own region. The Australian Army has now been in Timor-Leste for a decade and the Solomon Islands for over six years, with no end in sight for either deployment.

One of the conundrums to emerge in recent operations by Western military organisations is that while their forces have the ability to project impressive power anywhere on the globe and then to manoeuvre and sustain their forces in-theatre at will, they lack the means to impose a decision that achieves their nation's political goals. Instead, the Western states now appear resigned to long inconclusive interventions that gradually test the resolve of their own civilian populations. In a way similar to that of their First World War predecessors, the leaders of contemporary Western military organisations find themselves without the means to force their enemies to their will. To borrow Rupert Smith's prognosis, military forces are in danger of finding themselves without utility for their governments.¹² The issue for the West in general, and Australia in particular, is that wars without decision can only result in, at best, conflict without end, and at worst, defeat.

This article addresses an aspect of the inability of overwhelming military force to secure decision in contemporary warfare. It will not advocate a new concept of war, nor will it advance a new label. Rather, it takes a pragmatic approach. In doing so it will outline a new capability for the Australian Army called the Complex Warfare Branch (CWB) that promises to provide commanders with the additional tools they need to impose a decision upon the enemy. In an era when commentators and military professionals concede the unavailability of lengthy operations this article maintains that finding the means to shorten conflict, and in doing so restore decision, may be of more utility.¹³

The CWB is not a field unit, although its members will deploy. Rather it is a brain, whose mission is to lift the veil of complexity that obscures the character of contemporary conflict in order to provide commanders with the information they need to influence the battlespace in ways that will achieve the Australian Government's objective. In brief, the organisation's task is to understand a conflict's environment. Moreover, the CWB capability has utility across the spectrum of military intervention from disaster relief to state-on-state war and is applicable to all conflicts no matter their character. It is, therefore, immune to the tendency of attempting to predict the future of war and thus avoids the grave risk of getting the future wrong.

The combatants of the Great War struggled to unlock the stalemate of the trenches in order to restore decision to war ...

EXPLAINING THE HUMAN CONDITION

War has always been among the most complex of human endeavours. Speaking on the eve of the outbreak of the Second World War, General Sir Archibald Wavell made this case in his renowned series of lectures ‘Generals and Generalship’. Highlighting the complexity of war in his era he wrote that a commander:

to-day has now to learn to handle air forces, armoured mechanical vehicles, anti-aircraft artillery; he has to consider the use of gas and smoke, offensively and defensively; to know enough of wireless to make proper use of it for communication; to understand something of the art of camouflage, of the business of propaganda; to keep himself up to date in the developments of military engineering; all of this in addition to the more normal requirements of his trade.¹⁴

What Wavell acknowledged was that as war’s character changed, uncertainty and complexity became more apparent until a new—if temporary—understanding emerged. At a point of rapid or deep change, such as during the interwar period, the challenge to interpret the new character of war and to find the means to achieve decision would be even greater.¹⁵

Yet the assertions by contemporary commentators on the high degree of current complexity are not without merit. It is the nature of war to evolve, as combatants seek more effective methods with which to secure their goals. For much of the First World War, for

example, the combatants struggled to find a solution to the great crisis of decision of their age: the need to cross a wide fire-swept zone of annihilation with sufficient surviving mass to close with and rout the enemy and thereby bring an end to an opponent’s ability to resist the imposition of their will. Military commanders and theorists recognised the problem as early as the introduction of the breach-loading rifle, but it took decades to find the means to negate the killing zone and restore decision. The solution was eventually found in the rediscovery of combined arms warfare and the integration of numerous new technologies into the art of war. The result was the restoration of mobility in 1918 and the march to victory of the British, French and US armies in the war’s final months. German interwar developments in mechanisation and armour theory built upon the lessons of 1918, resulting in the formidable campaign style that became known as the ‘blitzkrieg’.¹⁶

Today’s war practitioners face another great crisis that hinders their ability to obtain decision: the need to find and defeat or neutralise opponents who operate

What Wavell acknowledged was that as war’s character changed, uncertainty and complexity became more apparent ...

beneath the detection threshold of their own forces, often in cities and amongst the local population. This is not a novel situation and there are numerous historical examples of combatants facing similar problems in the past. What makes today's problem different, however, and which accounts for the perception of particularly opaque complexity, is the gap that presently exists between the West's understanding of the current character of war and that of their opponents. The befuddlement of French and British forces in the face of the German mechanised onslaught during May 1940 demonstrates that the problems facing contemporary commanders are not the first time that military organisations have failed to perceive a change in the character of war in time. To the commanders of the present, what makes the task of dealing with today's great crisis appear even more complex than the tasks confronting previous generations, is the failure of Western technology to deliver on the promise of battlespace transparency. One of the goals of the West's investment in transformation technologies was the lifting of the fog of war. While advancements in detection have made the sea and air environments more visible, the same cannot be said of the land. The inability of sensors to identify an entire Iraqi armoured brigade in 2003 and the failure of an armada of surveillance devices to locate Taliban and al-Qaeda positions during Operation ANACONDA in Afghanistan in 2002 are but two compelling examples of the enduring nature of the fog of land warfare. This is because conflict on the land remains dominated by political, social and cultural factors and these are inextricably bound-up with geography. The result is not the expected clarity of the battlespace but what HR McMaster has termed 'profound uncertainty'.¹⁷

The way forward in the face of this 'complexity' is for the Australian Army—and the West in general—to provide commanders with the tools needed to be able to secure decision again.

The West must adapt to the changing character of war. In the past, the tendency in the West has been to seek advantage over an opponent through enhanced technology. The West must recognise the limitations of this response as it has in the wars of the present proven ineffective. It is a fair question to ask just how much more of a technological edge does the West require if it is to secure decision against opponents who are already manifestly its technological inferiors?

That technology has failed to provide the solution is testament to another aspect of war's enduring nature. War is not a contest between competing technologies. Instead, it is a human activity, and technology is merely one of many different kinds of enablers, and will always remain so. The conduct of war is guided by human

One of the goals of the West's investment in transformation technologies was the lifting of the fog of war.

traits, desires, beliefs and emotions, and their interaction and competition with the values and goals held by an opponent. The nineteenth century French military theorist, Ardant du Picq, encapsulated this in his observation that ‘man is the first weapon of battle.’ His recommendation was to ‘study the soldier in battle, for it is he who brings reality to it.’¹⁸ More recently, Brian Holden Reid has written, ‘warfare is essentially about human beings, men and women, and not about weapons.’¹⁹ In support of these conclusions are two retired US generals who wrote that war is and will remain a ‘contest of human wills, not machines.’²⁰

Further underscoring the importance of the human element in war is that success in a military operation generally does not occur until an opponent is persuaded that it has lost. Most conflicts do not end with the complete annihilation of the enemy’s military forces and civilian population. It is much more common for wars to conclude when one side elects to give up, to submit.²¹ The Australian Army’s most recent version of its operating concept recognises this tendency. *Adaptive Campaigning* describes war as being fundamentally about achieving ‘influence [over] the allegiances and behaviours of individuals, groups and societies.’²² *Adaptive Campaigning* is in alignment with Clausewitz’s thinking on the importance of influence. He wrote that ‘war is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.’²³ After the passage of nearly two centuries his observation remains true wherever there is a resort to the use of military force.

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civilian population.

Moreover, it is often the case that what a commander needs to know about an opponent is often outside the competency of technology to reach. For example, an enemy’s level of skill, motivation and morale are attributes that are not easily measured by a machine.²⁴ They require human assessment. This is because technology cannot, to use the words of Williamson Murray and MacGregor Knox, ‘abolish war’s central essence as the realm of uncertainty and of the clash of wills.’²⁵

Thus if war is considered to be what David J Lonsdale has termed an activity ‘best thought of in terms of human interaction’ or what Martin van Creveld has called ‘an affair of the heart’, it becomes compelling for the Australian Army to possess the capability to analyse, decipher and interpret the human condition, and in doing so recommend courses of action that will adversely affect the enemy.²⁶ This will be precisely the function of the CWB.

The purpose of the CWB should not be confused with another iteration of information warfare. It will not seek to achieve ‘information dominance’ or some other fantasy. The battlespace is already awash with too much data. What is needed

is knowledge and understanding. The background, education and training of the members of the CWB will enable them to provide their commander with sound knowledge, based on understanding and reason—an elusive and much prized commodity on the battlefields of any age. The generation of this knowledge is not the end-point of the exercise. Rather, commanders would use the knowledge provided by the CWB to assemble a ‘sequence of actions that seems likely to change the minds of a hostile population.’²⁷ In this way the CWB would contribute to the commander’s ability to maintain his/her focus on the political aim.

A secondary benefit of the CWB is that it will help save the Australian Army from a common pitfall that has trapped many military organisations across time: namely, the failure to get the future right. The past is replete with societies that have paid the price of having prepared for the wrong war. The performance of the French Army in 1940 and the US military in 2003 are just two recent examples of organisations that faced conflicts that differed so greatly from the ones they had anticipated that their defeat was the most likely outcome. Had the US Department of Defense’s transformation program continued to the desired end point, the US arsenal would have been without peer. That these capabilities would have proven irrelevant to the conflicts the United States had to face would have been another matter.²⁸

It is useful for military thinkers to ponder the future of war, as they should also study its past. What must be avoided, however, is the assumption that a military organisation can predict the future character of war with any degree of certainty. Anticipation with a flexibility of mind allows for adjustment, whereas the more precise, detailed and rigid a prediction, the higher the risk of getting it wrong.²⁹ The ideal in planning for future war is to aspire to the condition outlined in Michael Howard’s seminal essay, ‘Military Science in an Age of Peace.’ In discussing doctrine he concluded that it did not matter if a military organisation has got it wrong at the commencement of a conflict, for it is almost certain that expectations of a given war will be wrong. Instead, what is crucially important is to have the capacity to ‘get it right quickly when the moment arrives.’³⁰

The CWB will thus play a part in providing the Australian Army with the ability to adapt rapidly to emerging requirements. Once conflict occurs, its evolution tends to accelerate, and weapons or techniques that were once dominant quickly become obsolete. What worked for the Germans against the French in 1940 was no longer effective against the Russians a few years later. Amongst the CWB’s capabilities will be the ability to interpret the unique characteristics of each conflict in which the Army is involved. It will provide the context in which others may analyse the

... what is crucially important
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moment arrives.’

changing character of a conflict. To paraphrase Clausewitz again, the CWB will undertake this task through the perspective of the spirit of the age.³¹ In this way the CWB will contribute towards the force's goal of creating an Adaptive Army.

THE ROLE OF THE COMPLEX WARFARE BRANCH

The CWB's role in an operation is to provide the land force commander with the specialist expertise necessary to navigate the complexities of contemporary operations. The recently released *Adaptive Campaigning* suggests that the Australian Army has recognised that the character of war has moved on from a dependence on battle-field victory. It defines the objective of the use of military force in terms of gaining influence over individuals, groups and societies in a way that can 'shape the overall environment to facilitate peaceful discourse and stabilise the situation'. This is to be achieved, *Adaptive Campaigning* continues, in accordance with 'conditions conducive to Australia's national interests'.³² This

... the commander should be influencing the target individual, group or society to do what Australia wants it to do ...

mandate holds true regardless of whatever label one chooses to place on a conflict, be that 'conventional', 'asymmetric' or 'hybrid'. Put simply, the commander should be influencing the target individual, group or society to do what Australia wants it to do, whether this influence is obtained by helping or by killing. It is left to the words of a US 'strategic corporal' to summarise this argument:

every war is a war of persuasion ... [but] persuasion always is culturally sensitive. You cannot persuade someone if you do not understand his language, motivations, fears, and desires.³³

Understanding how best to achieve the necessary influence over individuals, groups and societies—or even which individuals or groups to influence—is a difficult task for any commander, however. Without this understanding, action may prove useless at best or counter-productive at worst. After the fall of Baghdad in 2003, for example, Coalition errors in interpreting the environment resulted in transforming an episode of lawlessness into the insurgency that continues to traumatise Iraq. Identifying who to influence, and how, is obviously one of the most important considerations for the commander. Making this identification is what the CWB will help achieve.

The CWB is best described as a pool of expertise that the commander can draw on to:

- help him/her make sense of those individuals, groups and societies (IGS) that Australia is trying to influence (hereafter referred to as 'target IGS');

- subsequently identify the different methods and means for manipulation that those target IGS are most susceptible to; and
- identify and acquire the expertise necessary to properly guide the actions of the forces that have been directed to achieve the commander's plan to influence target IGS.

These are the CWB's three primary missions, hereafter referred to respectively as 'surveying the environment', 'identifying controls' and 'characterising controls'. To illustrate these missions and their purpose, consider the following analogy. Imagine that a commander is a stationmaster who has been given the mission of 'ensuring that the trains run on time'. To do this, the stationmaster must ensure that each train is on the right track at the right time and leaves the station according to the schedule. However, in the complex contemporary operating environment, it is as if the stationmaster has been put in a switching box where there is no light, the levers are all labelled in a foreign language, and the stationmaster's staff have no training in driving a train.

The CWB's first mission—surveying the environment—is like giving the stationmaster a light in the switching box. The stationmaster can now see the railway plan but understands nothing of the switching levers. The CWB's second mission—identifying controls—is akin to putting English-language labels on all of the levers. The stationmaster can now see the track plan and the levers, and understands what levers to pull to get the trains to where they are needed. However, while the commander is now fully *cognitively* equipped to achieve the mission, he or she is still without the people necessary to give action to the plan. Putting untrained staff in charge of driving trains now would quickly lead to disaster, even if the stationmaster knew what each of them were supposed to do. The CWB's third and final mission—characterising controls—is somewhat like hiring a trained engineer for the stationmaster who understands how to drive a train and who can direct the stationmaster's staff in how to do it. With this final step, the commander both understands how to achieve the mission and possesses the necessary resources to do so.

While trained as applied social scientists, these soldiers will be warriors first ...

THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMPLEX WARFARE BRANCH

The CWB will be composed of social scientists—sociologists, anthropologists, historians and representatives of other humanist disciplines—that will use their professional training to interpret and manipulate the human environment for the commander's benefit. While trained as applied social scientists, these soldiers will

be warriors first, no different from members of any of the other specialist trades that already exist in the Army. In fact, it is probable that the best course of action for the Army is to provide tertiary education and training to its personnel who have a social science interest rather than attempting to recruit graduate students from universities.

Moreover, the expertise of members of the CWB need not be limited to a single discipline, nor should they be seen as just ‘sociologists’, ‘anthropologists’ or ‘historians’. Rather, the most germane and practical aspects of each of these various ‘stove piped’ disciplines should be grouped together into a program of studies known collectively as ‘applied social sciences’. This will enable officers so trained to ‘pick and choose’ the most appropriate elements of these disciplines while discarding or ignoring those that are irrelevant. This will, in turn, help to ensure that the CWB’s members are always focused on acquiring only ‘operationalised knowledge’, or knowledge that is relevant to solving the warfighter’s problems.

The descriptions of the desired disciplines that follow are not meant to be thorough or exhaustive summaries. Rather, they are rough (and admittedly imperfect) sketches of those features of each discipline necessary to explain their utility to the CWB mission.

SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is defined by the *Macquarie Dictionary* as ‘the science or study of the origin, development, organisation, and functioning of human society’.³⁴ It is, loosely put, the study of human societies. Trained sociologists are critical to the ‘surveying the environment’ mission. Their work provides the commander with an analysis of the how and why of influencing the target IGS. Accordingly, sociological expertise is probably the single most important skill set for the CWB as it is the primary discipline for achieving a full characterisation of target IGS.

Sociology, however, is far from a unified field of study, with its practitioners adhering to many different—and often contradictory—methodologies and theories. In the face of this variety a fundamentally empirical approach underpins most of the discipline’s work. While a majority of sociologists would probably reject a strict, scientific definition of empiricism, they do generally accept that sociological research reveals causal relationships in societies that concordant policy can subsequently influence with reasonable predictability. This is the sense in which this article uses the term ‘empiricism’. Such empirical approaches to sociology, used in developing theoretical perspectives of a practical and applicable

Empiricism is primarily concerned with isolating causal relationships in societies ...

nature, would provide the CWB with its primary means of environmental controls characterisation.

A broadly empirical methodology is also of utility to the CWB. Empiricism is primarily concerned with isolating causal relationships in societies by manipulating an independent variable (for example, a curfew in a troubled neighbourhood) to observe the way in which a dependent variable (the attitudes of the neighbourhood residents to the group imposing that curfew) reacts. This type of research would be particularly valuable in achieving the CWB's 'identifying controls' mission, as it would help the commander to determine which measures would produce what effects, prior to employing them operationally.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is defined as 'the science that deals with the origin, development (physical, intellectual, cultural, moral, etc) and varieties of humanity'.³⁵ Anthropology is commonly divided into four subsets: biological or physical anthropology; social or cultural anthropology, archaeology and linguistic anthropology. For the purposes of the CWB, the two subsets of most utility are social or cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology.

Social anthropology's strength is its ability to provide the CWB commander with a comparative study of cultures. While sociology would identify the broad outline of a target group or society to illustrate how it works, anthropology would contribute to the CWB's mission by characterising a target group or society in the context of how it differs from the Australian force's 'own' societal and cultural contexts. Identifying these differences would allow other members of the CWB to isolate and counter limiting biases in their own work, helping to improve the objectivity, and hence utility, of the CWB's advice to the commander.

That said, given the differences in perspective and methodology between anthropologists and sociologists, any examination of causal relationships in society conducted by an anthropologist would serve as a useful complement to that conducted by a sociologist.

Similarly, linguistic anthropology provides an excellent complement to any sociological 'identifying controls' work. It is essentially the study of how target IGS understand and express their own identities and relationships through their language, and how they use it. This provides the commander with a very powerful tool for gaining a more complete understanding of what they are being told by target IGS. There is, after all, often much more information to be gleaned from an instance of speech than simply what has been said.

Again, as with the vigorous debate within different branches of sociology, anthropologists are divided on the practical application of anthropology. Some argue that it is doomed to failure, as seen in the controversial US 'human terrain project'.³⁶ At the

risk of oversimplifying a very complex debate, these sceptics argue that anthropologists can never escape their own cultural context sufficiently to produce reliably objective observations and conclusions about another culture. Without objective data, it follows that any conclusions drawn will be equally devoid of objectivity and therefore no conclusions with useful predictive capability can be derived.

While this is obviously of concern, one must remember that commanders must expect to operate in an environment of extreme uncertainty—they should, after all, be the masters of Clausewitz’s friction and chance. It is true that no Australian commander can be certain that the CWB’s advice is 100 per cent objective and an accurate representation of the battlespace, but the same can be said of any advice or information the commander receives from any source. This is why one of the most important responsibilities of command is to make sense of incomplete or even contradictory information.

The absence of ‘total’ information is not an excuse for inaction by commanders, because, though their information may be imperfect, it may still be better than that of the enemy. Practical experience with ‘applied anthropology’ in Iraq and Afghanistan bears out this point, showing that despite the questions

surrounding the objectivity of anthropology, it still has an extremely valuable role to play. For example, one US brigade commander stated that his unit fought 60 per cent fewer actions when social scientists arrived, allowing his force to focus on delivering improvements to local services and training their Afghan counterparts—the very work his superiors believed would lead to decision.³⁷ Such insights are not isolated to US forces, further proving the utility of the discipline in military operations.³⁸

... one of the most important responsibilities of command is to make sense of incomplete or even contradictory information.

HISTORY

A qualified historian provides commanders with the ability to examine the past in a way that informs their actions in the present and their plans for the future. While military officers can and should read military history, only a soldier who has studied history in its breadth, depth and context will be able to serve in the CWB.³⁹

Historians would provide the other staff of the CWB with a factual foundation—and historical context—on which to base their own work. Equally as important, historians can identify the advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action taken by those in the past who have dealt with problems similar to those facing Australian forces today.

Similarly to social and linguistic anthropologists, historians would not usually contribute directly to any of the CWB’s three missions. Instead, they would provide

invaluable enabling products for sociologists who conduct the ‘surveying the environment’ and ‘identifying controls’ missions. Without the historical context and factual basis provided by the historian, the sociologist simply could not produce plausible work.

That said, the analytical skills of historians should not be dismissed lightly. Their assessment of how modern society has assumed the form and function that it has today would be of considerable utility as a complement to any work done by sociologists towards surveying the environment or identifying controls.

Just as the CWB’s sociologists and anthropologists must maintain an applied focus to their work, so too must the CWB’s historians. They must examine published works and primary sources with an eye to how their knowledge may assist a commander in influencing target IGS. While historians must be cognisant of their discipline’s limitations, and the many historiographic debates underway within it, they must not be concerned primarily with these. Instead, they must provide a timely and focused work that covers practical considerations and little else.

Without the historical context and factual basis provided by the historian, the sociologist simply could not produce plausible work.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

As *Adaptive Campaigning* points out, and this article argues, influencing target IGS is now the primary task of the Army and the ADF—be that influence achieved with military force or some other, ‘softer’ national instrument. While military force, the provision of aid, economic sanctions and all the other tools of influence are divergent in nature, they share one key similarity in execution—their meaning must be properly communicated to the target IGS.

Communicating with target IGS in times of war is extremely difficult. The US effort to communicate its message to the Afghan people is just one example of the challenge Western powers face in this area. While there has been some success, former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke’s outrage at Osama bin Laden out communicating the United States illustrates the difficulties inherent to this task.⁴⁰

When compared to the United States’ failure as a communicator, the odds of Australia doing better must appear slight. That need not be the case, however. Melik Kaylan argues that the United States’ lack of success stems from its early fumbling of the issue, and that it is this failure that has led to the seemingly irreparable situation of today. Kaylan believes that it is possible to influence target IGS under

wartime conditions and points out that the United States has succeeded in the past. As an example he highlights the Radio Free Europe program and its effectiveness in informing the world that the United States and NATO stood for freedom and liberty while the Soviet Union stood for oppression—a message that played a not-insignificant role in the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War. It is apparent then that, when directed by knowledgeable experts, success in strategic communications is possible.⁴¹ Experts in communication are therefore necessary to help communicate with target IGS so that the means of influence identified by the CWB are used in such a way that they achieve their maximum effect.

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Scholars of media and communications have the skills and understanding to do just this. Media and communication as a distinct discipline covers many of the mechanisms with which to communicate effectively with target IGS: journalism in all its forms, international communications policy and public relations.⁴² This expertise would allow the commander to translate the advice of the CWB into tactics, techniques and procedures that his forces can use when ‘outside the wire’ to communicate influence effectively and efficiently to target IGS.

Adaptive Campaigning recognises the importance of such specialist support to land forces, stating that

All members of the Land Force ... must be ... regularly briefed on information objectives for media coverage ... so that—in thousands of daily interactions—their actions support the mission by avoiding dissonant actions and seizing fleeting chances to advance informational objectives.⁴³

The media and communications experts within the CWB will provide the foundation of expert advice that enables this to occur.

OTHER DISCIPLINES

Space limitations here prevent the inclusion of even a brief description of the other capabilities that the CWB requires. Therefore, a list will have to suffice. However, it should be noted that in all cases the holders of these skill sets must perceive themselves as warriors, and their intellectual focus must be on applied rather than theoretical outcomes. A list of other capabilities required by the CWB would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Public policy advisers
- Economists

- Non-clinical psychologists
- Public policing specialists
- Civil engineers
- Judicial and governance advisers
- Contract and project managers

LEVEL OF WAR

This article considers the mission of the CWB from the perspective of the tactical and operational levels of war. Limiting itself to this viewpoint was a result of practical considerations alone—the space requirements of this forum and the constituency of its primary audience. In its first stage, the CWB would be an Army asset, possibly a part of 6 Brigade. For the long term, however, this would be insufficient because, as Justin Kelly and Mike Brennan have observed, ‘war needs to be managed as a whole.’⁴⁴

The problems that the members of the CWB will help advise the commander about also exist at the strategic level of war. Arguably this would be their most important level. Recent operations, particularly those in Iraq and Afghanistan, provide compelling evidence of the effect of strategic miscues on the evolution of those conflicts. One of the best examples of this would be L Paul Bremer’s purge of Baathists from the Iraqi Government and his dissolution of the Iraqi Army. Both decisions rebounded against US strategic goals and contributed greatly to the growth of the Iraqi insurgency.

The CWB’s capabilities have a role to play at all levels of conflict, and it is at the strategic level that it may have the greatest effect. It is hoped, therefore, that the CWB concept will also be taken up at the ADF’s joint level, where its members will interpret the strategic environment for the benefit of planners, commanders and government officials.

CONCLUSION

As Brian Holden Reid has written, command is ‘fundamentally about choices’. It is fiendishly difficult for a commander to make the right decision at the right time. The CWB will not make that responsibility any lighter, but what it will do is provide the commander with a better understanding of the environment in which to make these decisions.⁴⁵

If a military organisation cannot achieve decision then it has no utility to its government.⁴⁶ The experience of recent operations suggests that the enablers the Australian Army currently possesses are inadequate for the tasks it faces. Stalemate—conflict without end—in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan and

Timor-Leste are either failures or, at best, likely failures. This is not an acceptable outcome to a government's decision to employ military force. The Army must adapt to the evolving challenges it faces, otherwise not only does the future promise defeat, it also promises irrelevance.

If Western military organisations are to have once again the means to achieve decision they must be able to impose their will on their enemies. In the First World War the solution to that period's great crisis lay in a rediscovery of the combat multiplier effect of combined arms warfare with the introduction new weapon systems. The source of the complexity of contemporary operations lies in the enemy's ability to hide below the detection threshold, often in urban environments and amongst the people. This is the great crisis for today's practitioners of the art of war. Technology will no doubt play a part in its solution; it is after all one of the West's great advantages, but such is the fundamental nature of war that technology can never be the whole solution. If war is to be waged amongst the people then Australia and the West need the means to achieve a better understanding of the people and the environment in which their opponents live. This is a humanist-centric requirement for which the CWB will be well placed to meet.

It is fiendishly difficult
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THE AUTHORS

Dr Albert Palazzo is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Army's Land Warfare Studies Centre in Canberra. His PhD is from The Ohio State University and his BA and MA are from New York University. He has written widely on warfare in the modern age and on the Australian Army in particular. His many publications include: *Seeking Victory on The Western Front: The British Army & Chemical Warfare in World War I*; *The Australian Army: A History of its Organisation, 1901–2001*; *Defenders of Australia: The Third Australian Division; Battle of Crete*; *The Royal Australian Corps of Transport*; and *Australian Military Operations in Vietnam*.

Antony Trentini holds Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts (Strategic Studies) degrees from the Australian National University. He works at the Land Warfare Studies Centre.

CONCEPTS

ADAPTIVE CAMPAIGNING

IS IT ADAPTIVE ENOUGH?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JASON THOMAS

ABSTRACT

The recently endorsed and released *Adaptive Campaigning* had been cited as 'fundamental to achieving the Adaptive Army'. The late Colonel John Boyd, USAF, famed for his work on the 'OODA loop' also conducted a considerable amount of research on adaptation in times of conflict and peace. This article reviews the lessons that Army could learn from his work. The article also argues that some elements of his work have been corrupted in *Adaptive Campaigning*, in particular the new 'Adaption Cycle' seen as central to the concept. Work by Boyd and other theorists on adaptation is then discussed in the context of *Adaptive Campaigning*. The article concludes by highlighting some real tensions in the theory of adaptation and the current state of the Army and the Australian Defence Organisation.

Just as the old German manuals had stamped on the examples provided 'not a formula' so Boyd's ideas cannot be applied in cookie cutter fashion... As it is reduction of Boyd's thinking to 'Boyd's simple version of the OODA loop' is already unfortunately well advanced.

– Lexington Green¹

INTRODUCTION

There is a call in military circles, owing to the increasing complexity of conflict, to be continuously adaptive. The shift to what Rupert Smith has classified as 'war among the people'² has driven Western armies to be more culturally aware and demanded increased flexibility and breadth in combat leaders. Kinetic effects (killing people and smashing things) alone are no longer the *raison d'être* for the modern counterinsurgent army.

'Adaptive' as defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is 'to make suitable for a new use', or 'become adjusted to new conditions'. Both definitions for any large organisation such as the Army pose challenges beyond simply recognising the new. In business, companies that fail to adapt to new market forces will see immediate effect on the balance sheet and in the long term will imperil their very existence. Defence forces seldom have a chance to benchmark prior to the call to task, and rarely will the red ink be seen prior to failure. This makes both the importance and difficulty of adapting high. Some have acknowledged that military organisations can be extremely adaptive.³ This has not been consistently the case and in some cases, the need to adapt is forced upon us in the cradle of conflict itself.⁴

In dealing with this new environment, the Australian Army has recently formalised its Future Land Operating Concept – *Adaptive Campaigning*.⁵ It has had a long and extensive gestation. With over twenty-two versions raised over the last two years, it has seen many revisions. During these revisions, the core tenets have not changed. Mission command, five fixed lines of operation, the dominant narrative and the 'Adaption Cycle' have remained continuous themes throughout. Not one major concept appears to have received any significant modification over two years of development.

The Chief of Army has placed *Adaptive Campaigning* 'as fundamental to achieving the Adaptive Army'.⁶ This is a weighty responsibility for a paper that only has fifty-four pages directly dealing with the concept. Over one third of these pages articulate the environment previously defined in the excellent *Complex Warfighting* concept.⁷ *Adaptive Campaigning* is an important document, yet little real debate has appeared on the concept.

The purpose of this article is to look at *Adaptive Campaigning* primarily through the lens of the one of the most innovative military thinkers of the late twentieth century, Colonel John Boyd. This article will bring other military and business

Adaptive Campaigning is an important document, yet little real debate has appeared on the concept.

theories to this discussion, many of which parallel Boyd's primary theories. It will focus on a pivotal element of *Adaptive Campaigning*, the 'Adaption Cycle', and then broadly look at Boyd's theories on adaptation beyond the confines of *Adaptive Campaigning*. I will contend that *Adaptive Campaigning* as a concept does not go far enough to achieve the Chief of Army's intent.

COLONEL JOHN BOYD, USAF

The influence that John Boyd has had on Western military thought and capability is significant. Boyd by any standard was a zealot, working long hours and letting no one get in his way. While serving as a fighter pilot instructor, he initially focused on the development of air-to-air combat tactics and then shifted to the aircraft design criteria that affected this. An irascible character, he offended many and only survived militarily by overwhelmingly being right more often than wrong.

After a turbulent relationship with the USAF, they and Boyd parted ways in 1975.⁸ He started to expand his interest into conflict in general. The US Army and, even more so, the US Marine Corps drew on his work to develop fighting concepts that have served them well in the past decade and a half. Boyd's research ranged from Sun Tzu to Richard Dawkins to the quantum work of Werner Heisenberg, often taking elements of such work and stitching them back together into a new form. This provided an innovative (even adaptive?) process from which to draw deductions. His thirty years of feverish, argued and considered study does not boil down to one simple loop diagram? To many, Boyd's ideas remain incomplete; this is probably how he would have wanted it; some are contentious, something he no doubt would have relished.

In terms of leaving a legacy for future apostles, Boyd was a poor messiah. He seldom published any papers, and those he did are difficult to read.⁹ Boyd developed sometimes hours-long slide presentations, which were continuously updated. He would not develop concise versions, even at the request of very senior US defence officials. If you wanted Boyd's thoughts, you got them all. Boyd was also concerned that publication would freeze his views, something that was an anathema to him. While all this ensured continuous development, it discouraged the wider debate that the greater transmission of his ideas would have allowed. Fortunately, two recent biographies and Dr Frans Osinga's recent publication of his PhD work on Boyd have rectified this.

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THE OODA LOOP

Boyd derived the OODA loop from the study of air combat in Korea. Theoretically, the Soviet designed fighter of the time, the MiG-15, was a superior aircraft, yet Allied pilots in the F-86 Sabre were able to achieve a greater level of kills. A US Air Force pilot was able to Observe (owing to a higher canopy, giving a better all around view), Orient (owing to hydraulic powered flight controls), Decide (better training) and Act (a combination of all factors) better and therefore faster than a MiG-15 pilot (the OODA loop or Decision Cycle).¹⁰

The benefits to a combatant in using this cycle faster, that is the focus on the tempo within this loop, than an adversary is referred to as 'getting inside his OODA loop'. To be able to take action faster renders the adversary disoriented and ultimately dislocated from the situation, leading to defeat.

The OODA loop has received widespread discussion and assimilation into concept in both defence and business circles. It has also attracted critics, and a few moments' reflection could lead anyone to think of counter arguments to the concept, such as:

- What if an enemy's concept of operations is accepting of a slow decision tempo, regardless of what its adversary does (a protracted guerrilla campaign)?
- What if an enemy has such mass that the actions taken, while causing 'localised' damage, do not affect his overall plan? Providence can still lie with the big battalions.
- The simplified loop is vulnerable to deception operations; the drive for tempo may become a drive to haste.
- The operating environment itself may prevent your force operating at the tempo you desire.

However, the simplified OODA loop has great utility. It is an immensely important tool for the basic understanding and planning of operations, particularly at the lower tactical level. It provides an excellent tool for teaching and understanding tactics and is intrinsic to the Military Appreciation Process (both joint and single service).¹¹ Yet, in no part of Army education does its importance seem emphasised!

THE 'ADAPTION CYCLE'¹²

The current iteration of *Adaptive Campaigning* states that the 'Adaption Cycle does not replace Colonel John Boyd's OODA loop... The Adaption Cycle emphasises understanding a problem through experience, knowledge and planning'.¹³ The 'Adaption Cycle' places 'Action' as the first step in a continuous loop moving next to 'Sense', then 'Decide' and then 'Adapt'. *Adaptive Campaigning* argues that a complex adversary/situation cannot be known until it is probed/tested.

This contrite explanation did not appear in previous editions of *Adaptive Campaigning*. Nor in previous versions was there any acknowledgment given to John Boyd's OODA loop. Unfortunately, this correction does not fix the underlying flaws and raises further questions. On which particular form of Boyd's OODA loop is *Adaptive Campaigning* commenting? How did such an esteemed strategist and air combat veteran miss the need for adaptation, mission command and flexibility of mind in the conduct of war—things the 'Adaption Cycle' apparently considers? Additionally, the Army has been formally teaching mission command since the late 1980s; do we have it so wrong that we need further reinforcement through the 'Adaption Cycle'?

I will demonstrate that Boyd missed none of this and that we have 'dumbed down' a lifetime of innovative and relevant work. This is not a promising start for a key foundation for the future Army.

The authors of *Adaptive Campaigning* did not see the OODA loop as capable of dealing with complexity nor applicable at higher levels of conflict; hence, the derivation of the supplemental 'Adaption Cycle'. However, when you look at Boyd's last version of the OODA loop, which was formed over the last decade of his life, it does deal with complexity. Indeed, dealing with complexity and the need to adapt permeates Boyd's later work.

How did such an esteemed strategist and air combat veteran miss the need for adaptation, mission command and flexibility of mind in the conduct of war...

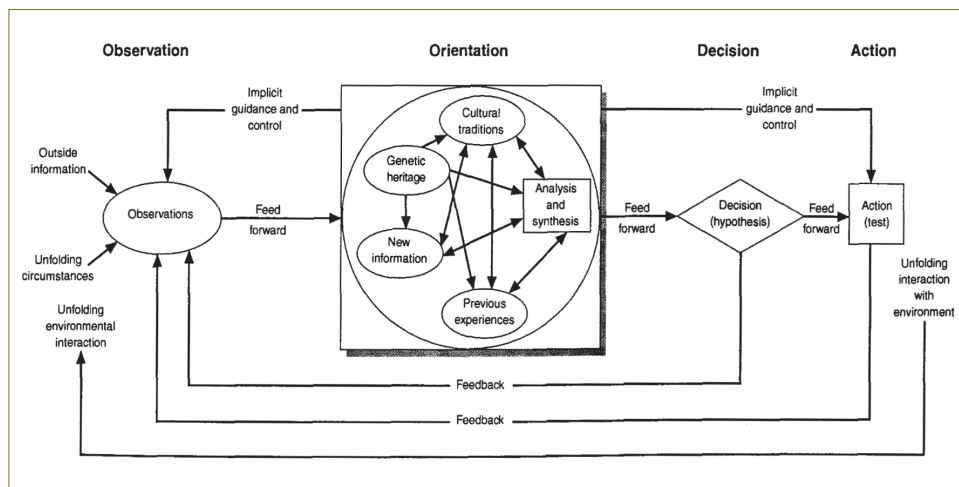


Figure 1. The 'real' OODA loop¹⁴

Osinga calls this the ‘real’ OODA loop. However, it would be better to state that it was Boyd’s last version. I find it hard to believe that if he were still alive now, we would not be considering another amended diagram. As we can see it is not a closed system, and even a cursory examination shows that it demands mission command (top line implicit guidance and control). Studies of other slides generated by Boyd indicate that he understood the complexity of insurgent/terrorist operations and indeed the strategic level of conflict.¹⁵

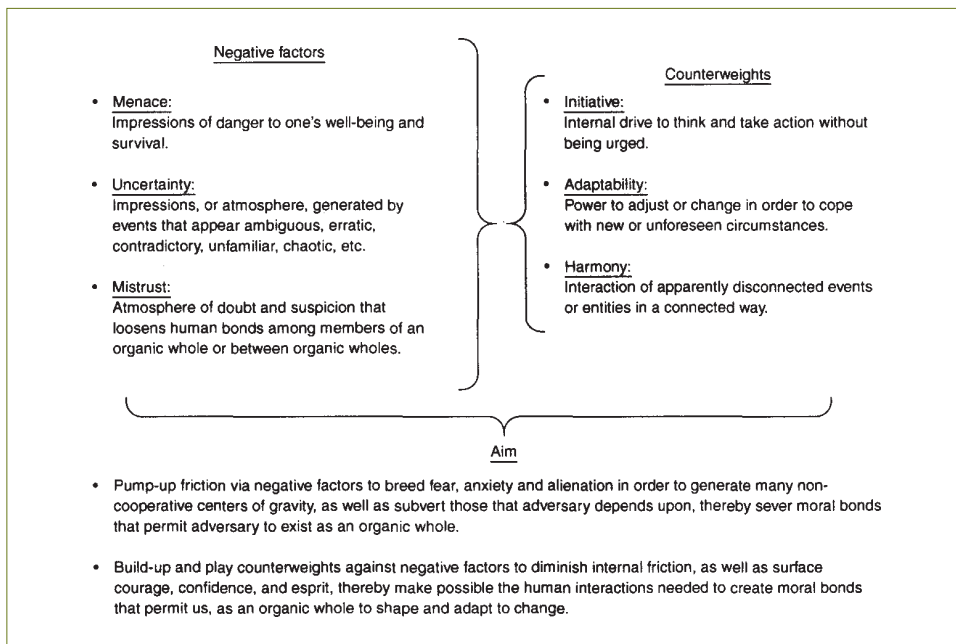


Figure 2. The essence of moral conflict¹⁶

BOYD AND ADAPTATION

We can see without going into the origins of his analysis that Boyd was placing initiative and adaptability central to victory in conflict. He also recognised something not formally acknowledged by the Australian Army: the need for harmony (trust in all directions), a factor that has been recognised by other armies in the past apparently fighting simpler wars!¹⁷

If we are going to consider adaptation as the keystone for the Australian Army of the future, we have more to learn from the master’s voice. Some experts dealing with complex systems tend to reject distillation of a problem into simple components—reductionism. Unfortunately for the military combat leader, other factors force the opposite effect. Fear, fatigue and stress all deteriorate higher cognitive functions.

Drills and standard procedures mitigate this (set patterns). Reductionism is an essential component of success in combat. *Adaptive Campaigning* states that its concept includes the lessons of recent operations and DSTO analysis. It is difficult to conceive this lesson not being present.

Some may say this is not that necessary at the operational or strategic level of conflict, but these levels have their own time sensitivities and pressures that impair decision-making. Boyd placed great emphasis on intuitive thinking—the term he used is ‘pattern matching’.¹⁸

Before taking discussion of either the ‘Adaption Cycle’ or the ‘real’ OODA loop further, there are other legacies from John Boyd we need to discover. Osinga summarises them as:¹⁹

Tempo: Boyd places emphasis on the speed of decision-making. He also stressed the importance of changing speed in order to be unpredictable. Additionally, it *must* be translated into meaningful action; by itself, ‘information superiority’ is useless.²⁰ Tempo is only one area that needs to be exploited. Adversary main efforts and deep objectives must also be considered. Enemy cohesion cannot be shattered by irregular tempo alone.

Orientation: To Boyd, great decision and magnificent actions counted for nothing if the commander was not oriented. Orientation was the essential component of the OODA loop. As already stated, Boyd favoured an experiential learning base that enabled a leader to adapt to a situation by having a ‘repertoire of orientation patterns and the ability to select the correct one’.²¹ The ability to re-orient (adapt?) is vital, but in conflict, the mechanism had to be simple and intuitive.

Some experts dealing with complex systems tend to reject distillation of a problem into simple components—reductionism.

ORGANISATIONAL ADAPTATION

Adaptation and the ‘mechanisms’ of adaptation are perhaps key themes Boyd emphasised in his later work.²² He highlighted the need for this flexibility across an organisation. Additionally, depending on the level of conflict (Osinga defined these levels: tactical, operational, strategic and grand strategic), the nature of how the organisation must adapt changes:²³

- Tactical/Operation Level – movement, attacks, feints, etc, disrupt and confuse the enemy. The ability to adapt is defined in terms of the maintenance of your own cohesion and the reduction of the enemy’s.
- Strategic Level – the adaptation centres on adjustment of doctrine and force structures that disorient an enemy’s own orientation and understanding.

- Grand Strategic Level – a complex array of measures across all potential areas of conflict. Tempo is not as important, but the interplay of multiple lines of conflict is. Conflict revolves around the shaping of politics and society. Grand Strategy is adapted to the environment of the particular conflict.

MENTAL AND ORGANISATIONAL AGILITY

Boyd placed great emphasis on self-organisation at time of conflict. However, like the tenants of directive control, Boyd considered mechanisms (orders, restrictions and constraints) and feedback (reporting both formal and informal) essential. Boyd believed in higher commanders that could ‘trust and coach’ and were prepared to ‘accept bad news, be open for suggestions, lower level initiatives and critique.’²⁴ To institutionalise these qualities in times of increasing strategic military and political oversight should be the challenge—a challenge that is not considered in *Adaptive Campaigning*. Nevertheless, such qualities, if trained for and resourced, will lead to a truly innovative military. Osinga defines the characteristic of such an organisation (based on Boyd’s own work) as:

<i>Positive indicators</i>	<i>Negative indicators</i>
Operating characteristics	
Anticipatory	Reactive
Long-term focus	Short-term focus
Change = opportunity	Change = threat
Adapts to change	Static organization
Culture	
Simple structure	Complex and bureaucratic
Participative management style	Directive/autocratic
Strong networking	Lack of sharing/disconnected functions
Open flow of information	Information used as power base
External scanning encouraged	Insular/lacking external contacts
Encourage questioning and review	Closed mind-set/tunnel vision
Innovation/experimentation encouraged	Non-risk-taking

Figure 3. Positive and negative indicators of learning organisations²⁵

Recent work by the Harvard Business School has defined an even simpler list of characteristics to describe an ‘adaptive organisation.’²⁶ These five characteristics are:

- Elephants in the room are named (no issue is too sensitive to be raised at an official meeting and no questions are off-limits)
- Responsibility for the organisation’s future is shared

- Independent judgment is expected. (personnel are able to comment on issues based on abilities, not just responsibility or authority)
- Leadership capacity is developed
- Reflection and continuous learning is institutionalised

The parallels with Figure 3 are obvious and a tribute to Boyd's thought processes. Boyd always focused on military organisations. He also commenced pioneering work on the moral aspect of conflict, in particular dealing with guerrilla warfare (Figure 2); this work focused on the physical dislocation and destruction of the enemy, but the growing need for a moral framework and legitimacy in conflict is also apparent. Close associates extended this work into the debate about 'fourth generation warfare' after Boyd's death.²⁷

Boyd placed great emphasis on self-organisation at time of conflict.

DISCUSSION

Osinga credits Boyd with being the first 'post modernist' strategist. That I leave for others to judge and debate. A valid criticism is that Boyd unlike some (for example, Richard Simpkin²⁸) did not work holistically, considering organisational, technical and well as cultural changes in his analysis. This he left to others. This aside, the breadth of Boyd's work merits greater study and teaching.

Robert Polk in his 2000 critique of Boyd considers his work worthy of greater study and cites the need to use the *relevant* pieces of Boyd's work in shaping future US Army doctrine.²⁹ Lieutenant Colonel David Fadok, USAF, in his 1997 work criticises Boyd for placing too much importance on tempo in conflict. However, he still concludes that Boyd's work is well worth further study by air power theorists and strategic planners.³⁰ The USMC provided the honour guard at John Boyd's funeral in 1997, and as a sign of respect the eagle, globe and anchor were buried with him.³¹ The Commandant of the USMC stated the he and the corps would miss their counsellor terribly. That Boyd's work could have such widespread influence and earned respect from his colleagues confirms the merit of a more rigorous consideration of his work by the Australian Army. If we are going to use Boyd's work though, we must use it in the right context and have a sound initial understanding.

Unlike the authors of *Adaptive Campaigning*, Boyd built on previous work and did not place an unproven concept at the core of any of his work. This does not mean that the 'Adaption Cycle' is invalid. However, to place it centrally in our key future planning document at the expense of either version of the OODA loop does perhaps show hubris, regardless of the amount of DSTO analysis.

The importance of *Adaptive Campaigning* depends on its utility. It must be a document grounded in the fundamental and timeless aspects of military theory, as well as preparation for the future. It needs to sell itself to the next generation of leaders. It must be easy to teach, understand and apply. In its current form, *Adaptive Campaigning* is not. A recent US example of an easily understandable concept is the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*. While in intent some aspects of this document do not suit Australia's situation in terms of structure and style, it is worthy of analysis as a document that can be easily taught, understood and applied.³²

Adaptive Campaigning seems to claim that the Army of the past and present does not understand the basic tenants of mission command,³³ and it re-educates us with further definition. I must have been lucky with my commanders, as I served and watched other personnel thrive in the conditions Boyd highlighted. Additionally, the *Adaptive Campaigning* definition of mission command remains hierarchical (true mission command places emphasis on lateral synchronisation with higher commanders facilitating this) and actually places too much freedom of action with the subordinate.

Boyd built on previous work and did not place an unproven concept at the core of any of his work.

THE 'ADAPTION CYCLE' AND THE PROBING ACTION

It is too late to learn the technique of warfare when military operations are already in progress, especially when the enemy is an expert at it.

– General Alekse A Brusilov

The first stage of the 'Adaption Cycle' is to 'Act', and this is where unfortunately the entire concept becomes unhinged. The articulation of a need to test or confirm the 'understanding of the battlespace' immediately surrenders the initiative to an adversary. The use of probing action to enable the force to learn surrenders initiative. It exposes the force conducting the action to the risk of defeat in detail by an enemy that commits early to decisive engagement. Additionally, learning actions could have a coincidental damaging effect on future 'decisive action'. A probing action in the wrong place at the wrong time could set a section or an entire community against a deployed force.

Such learning actions are also vulnerable to deception. If we are relying for our design of battle primarily on the initial contacts, then we again enable a cunning adversary to shape us. However, a supporter of the 'Adaption Cycle' would say the

‘sense’ phase would filter this out. This is again problematic without a frame of reference or prior orientation.

Against a peer competitor,³⁴ a land force using the ‘Adaption Cycle’ as its core operating concept will surrender the initiative, risk early decisive engagement when not prepared for it, and be vulnerable to deception. The ‘Adaption Cycle’ paradoxically means that a deployed land force will behave in a rigid manner—it is a reactive concept. As both Boyd and General Brusilov alluded, we must be professionally skilled and culturally/politically aware prior to contact. While we cannot be fully oriented prior to deployment, we can achieve much beforehand.

The ‘Adaption Cycle’ paradoxically means that a deployed land force will behave in a rigid manner—it is a reactive concept.

A WAY AHEAD

The literature on adaptive organisations in both military and business spheres is growing. Authors range from behavioural psychologists to military personnel.³⁵ Like Boyd, we face a myriad of viewpoints. What is apparent in the majority of literature is that, while military organisations can be extremely adaptive, they are not structured to be routinely so. Additionally, at what level do we wish to instil this trait—throughout the organisation or just into the leadership base?³⁶ Even this can be complicated; Johnson *et al* states that ‘adaptive risk-taking’ in individuals may actually be a double-edged sword and engender military incompetence in battle.³⁷ To develop a truly adaptive culture, the breadth of the military organisation needs to be considered.³⁸ The insertion of the nine core behaviours (developed independently of *Adaptive Campaigning*) into the document does not remediate this conceptual gap.

Recent initiatives in the training of junior leaders in the US Army have focused on a training regime that currently serving Australian personnel would find familiar.³⁹ The leadership base that the United States draws from is far more variable in experience and time in training. Therefore, this initiative for us is only a point of reference, not a way ahead. Additionally one of main architects of the program in previous work has cited a far broader range of initiatives;⁴⁰ it is unclear if the US Army has attempted to take on these larger organisational issues.

There is acknowledgment in combat operations that the military have shown incredible flexibility. However, there is significant concern that the hierarchical structures and self-replicating personnel management practices of the military stifle adaptation. In some cases even the traditional ‘crawl, walk, run’ approach to training

can constrain adaptability in tactical decision-making and execution.⁴¹ One author even cites that adaptive leaders are not enough—you need adaptive teams.⁴² This harks back to Boyd’s preference for self-synchronisation.

The Chief of Army’s design rules within *Adaptive Campaigning* highlight some important adaptive tenets. However, many are self-evident necessities of any competent land force. There is no consideration of how we are to comply with these rules, or define where we are currently. No benchmark is discussed. You cannot simply have an ‘adaptive’ deployed land force in isolation. It comes from an army that itself nurtures and behaves in this way. The ten rules may even be an anathema to the principle itself.⁴³ ‘Be adaptive, but you are to have these structures and characteristics.’ An example of this tension is the drive to sustain five fixed lines of operation (rule 4); this is a big ask for an army of one division, regardless of the conflict. We may place ourselves in a paradox before we start. Organisational adaptation at all levels is required, not just small unit and individual tactics.

You cannot simply have an ‘adaptive’ deployed land force in isolation.

Organisational reform must occur that resources and supports land forces in focusing on tactical flexibility. Adaptability, like mission command, not only needs to be fostered but resourced and managed. No Army or Joint documentation defines how rapid changes are to be funded or controlled.⁴⁴ Innovation and adaptation is expensive, because *mistakes must be made* by definition and *wastage will occur*; the tension with the Strategic Reform Process is obvious. We must resource the changes we see as necessary rapidly, in terms of both physical and personnel resources but also that most precious resource—time. Not in accordance with the current development rules of Army or Australian Defence Organisation, but as each new situation dictates.

The rules themselves may be a response to the certainty the government is demanding of the Department of Defence. So, creating an Adaptive Army will require the ‘whole-of-government’ support that *Adaptive Campaigning* lauds, but in the other direction. The search for greater and greater certainty in Defence programs lies in direct tension to what the Army is seeking. It is a concern that these higher organisational aspects of adaptation are not being considered or even acknowledged. They must be.

An example of incongruity in the drive to adaptation has already occurred within the personnel reporting process. I cite the recently implemented supplemental personnel report for O-5 officers and above. Its assessment of that leadership group’s support of the Adaptive Army and Strategic Reform Program will not engender the behaviour traits we require.⁴⁵ Institutionalising Boyd’s or Hiefetz’s adaptive organisational characteristics will.

In the application of adaptation, the Army must pick the low hanging fruit. Shifts in education and training are some of those low cost and potentially high yield first steps. Human resource management practices also have the potential to yield more adaptable units and sub-units,⁴⁶ and a more balanced and better-trained staff. While the Army as a 'learning organisation' is highlighted in *Adaptive Campaigning*, the organisational reforms (and the higher command and control changes of the Adaptive Army are not reforms) required are not articulated.

CONCLUSION

No future warfighting concept will be perfect, nor should it be. *Adaptive Campaigning* not only contains significant flaws, it remains, despite numerous rewrites, difficult to read. It is also incomplete in defining what is required to make the Army truly adaptive. The solid work of the late John Boyd has been corrupted into an unproven, intuitively risky and inflexible 'Adaption Cycle'.

This is unfortunate because the intent behind *Adaptive Campaigning* is perhaps one of the boldest and strongest the Army has taken in decades. The intent has the potential to reform and reshape the Army. However, the lead document as it currently stands will not be enough. Weak concepts do not change or endanger armies when fighting conflicts of choice, but they slowly die a natural death. If faced with a conflict of necessity though, time and opportunity to develop cohesive adaptation from strong concepts may be lost, something that we can ill afford.

While some may say that current operations are forging this adaptability already, this can be a two-edged sword. Operational experience can also develop a singular focus. The Army has to make a decision as to at what level it wants to engender adaptation and how it will achieve this. Additionally, it must recognise that bureaucratic and government processes must change if Army wants to foster this throughout its structure. It is unlikely that this change can be implemented under current operational demands. Training and management systems must always provide a 'brilliant at basics' framework, but the student must be allowed to experiment; this will take more time and resources than the current training continuum allows. We may have to simply invest in the next generation of leaders and ask them to carry the flame.

An adaptive organisation, reading between the lines, is one that harnesses both the physical and mental abilities of all the personnel within it. The Defence

... the intent behind *Adaptive Campaigning* is perhaps one of the boldest and strongest the Army has taken in decades.

catch cry of ‘people first’ is not just about support and education, it is about harnessing human capital. War is a human interaction, and Boyd was primarily about understanding how to harness this interaction and create human capital, how it operates in the stress of conflict and how to prepare it for success in that environment. Other management theorists have stated that there is no such thing as a dysfunctional organisation; any organisation produces outcomes they tolerate or with which they are comfortable. A study of Boyd forces us not to tolerate this status quo.

The ‘Adaption Cycle’ needs to be reassessed against the complete work of John Boyd. *Adaptive Campaigning* itself would benefit from feeling the heat of Boyd’s torch and other experts on organisational and military adaptation. A solid military concept will stand on its own merit. Those that are easy to comprehend, teach and are intellectually and intuitively sound will be enthusiastically adopted. Once this has occurred, the staff of Army Headquarters will have far less work pondering the future both near and far—the rank and file of the Army will be doing that for them. That to me is only the start of the truly Adaptive Army.

There is no absolute knowledge, and those who claim it, whether they are scientists or dogmatists, open the door to tragedy.

– J Bronowski as quoted by John Boyd⁴⁷

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THE AUTHOR

Lieutenant Colonel Jason Thomas is a Royal Australian Armoured Corps officer who has recently returned from service as the Commander of the Australian Contingent on Operation PALADIN, the Australian contribution to UNTSO. Prior to this, he served in a variety of training and command appointments.

MILITARY CULTURE

CITIZEN SOLDIER

MAJOR CATE CARTER

ABSTRACT

In response to a recent essay in the *Australian Army Journal*, which continued the current debate about ‘Cultural Awareness’, this article examines the place of the Australian soldier in the community.¹ It questions whether it is counterproductive to remove the soldier from the very community that could teach him the valuable skills in human relations he needs on operations. The author draws examples from current recruiting and accommodation practices, pre-deployment training, recent operations and current ethical discourse.

With the current thirst for cultural awareness in the operational theatre, and the growing acknowledgment of the gap between that ambition and the reality, the question needs to be asked whether we are doing the mission a disservice by increasingly isolating the soldier from the community, and thereby diminishing his culture.

Colonel Michael Lehmann’s recent article on the subject² makes the point that cultural awareness includes ‘...an awareness of one’s own culture and the way this influences perceptions of what the “other bloke” is doing.’³ This point reveals an unfortunate fact of the modern soldier—that his culture is manufactured, and likely to prevent him from achieving the depth of human engagement required by the mission. Moreover, that this awareness of one’s own culture is ‘...the baseline against which we often subconsciously consider others’ actions,’⁴ could be alarmingly

predictive of inappropriate behaviour and possibly poor judgment. This manufactured culture is unlikely to dissipate if we continue to maintain several practices.

RECRUITING

The main effort for current Army recruiting campaigns is played to non-captive audiences within the community. This is to say the target audience is not, at the time of the message broadcast, demonstrating a previous interest towards military life (like at a career exposition, for example). This means that the Army is relying on the message appealing to the citizen who is otherwise occupied. However, even at this early stage of a potential military career, the message seems to portray a slightly superior air.⁵ While this attracts an ambitious candidate, it starts to alienate the soldier from the civilian; but it is those civilian traits that we are now saying we need. We even try to give them back to the soldier later in his training. It must also be asked whether this concept of superiority, rather than elevating the position of 'soldier' in the community, might actually provoke resentment.

Oddly enough Army Reserve recruiting messages have always emphasised the 'normality' of military life, making it possible for the civilian to slip in and out of the role with ease. Both messages claim Army life as a profession, but market one as 'pro community' and the other 'elite'. The interested candidate may well wonder what, other than the environment, makes this job so superior to his own. He may also make the decision to sign up for part time service, lest he lose his civilian identity to this 'elite' force. We cannot expect the soldier in theatre to demonstrate any understanding of his enemy's community, if we strip him of his own.

We cannot expect the soldier in theatre to demonstrate any understanding of his enemy's community, if we strip him of his own.

ACCOMMODATING

Current Defence housing policy requires single members to 'live-in' barracks for the first twelve months, and then offers a choice to most: to continue living in the barracks, or to find accommodation in the surrounding community.⁶ Rental Allowance is generally available to single members if there is no suitable 'live-in' accommodation, and because many capital cities are currently experiencing low rental markets, 'living-in' is in demand. Because of this situation, single accommodation facilities are springing up everywhere, as seen in the three recent latest barracks redevelopments.⁷ All three projects include concentration of single accommodation

built within the perimeter of the barracks. Population concentration of this kind is always something of a social experiment, and will have different degrees of success depending on the demographic of both the soldiers and the supporting community. Previous onsite initiatives include the building of impressive sports bars within Lavarack Barracks, to curb soldiers' constant trips into the city. It was a manufactured social scene; the soldiers voted with their feet, and the deserted bars were closed down.

The latest accommodation project is nearing completion at Gallipoli Barracks, Brisbane. What is most concerning about these rather gloomy monoliths is not that they are shut off from the lively, multicultural community right outside the front gate, but that they do not offer the soldier any community inside the front gate. An already overcrowded barracks will put accommodation where it fits; in Gallipoli Barracks, that means near the communal facilities on the main roads. The result is a complete lack of privacy for occupants, affording little or no distinction between the end of the working day and the beginning of leisure. Now, the soldier, returning 'home' at the end of the day, has neither retreat from the glare of the barracks population, nor opportunity to commune with colleagues, because he has his own bathroom, kitchenette and fully wired entertainment hub. He does not have to shop, cook, clean, pay bills, walk dogs, or talk to anybody. Thus he withdraws to his virtual life.

This isolation may have worked for the soldier who was sent to 'seek out and close with the enemy', but this is the 'Strategic Corporal'. This is the one we send to the shura,⁸ who negotiates the water contract, who talks to the parent of the son killed by a roadside bomb, who questions the child who has witnessed atrocities. We are putting the soldier in danger, and the mission in compromise, when we send this cloistered individual to the complex human terrain that is today's battlefield.

Likewise, the married member is not immune from the cloister. The 'married patch' may be further from the barracks perimeter, but becomes its own ghetto, with lack of individual identity and constant turnover of occupants. There is need neither for friendships, nor community responsibility. There is certainly no history. Many short moves make community integration almost impossible. Families and individuals desiring community integration expend much energy, only to be disappointed on both sides. The member is disillusioned that they are not accepted, and the community is disrupted by another fly-by-night military posting. The familiarity of the barrack room and the 'married patch' becomes irresistible.

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TRAINING

The effect of this isolation has become evident in preparation for deployment. Combat Training Team observations of Mission Rehearsal Exercises reveal that soldiers arrive at the final preparation stage with little understanding of what human interaction skills are required, and scant ability to adapt their style to their audience.⁹ We sit our soldiers in a classroom and teach them ‘personal liaison skills’, while outside the community liaises like mad. Logically, the next step is to adopt a simulated liaison training tool, like the one currently on trial with the US Army.¹⁰ In this type of training, the student plays the part of a US Army officer chairing a local meeting with a group of computer simulated local elders.

In one campaign the student is tasked with understanding why a US built marketplace is not being used. The student must gather information on the social relationships among the characters in the scenario.¹¹

The student must also establish his or her own relationships with these characters and be sensitive to the character’s cultural conventions.¹²

The argument for the success of training aids like these is the familiarity the student feels for the simulated environment; but the whole point of social relations is that they involve real people with *unexpected* responses. These responses are influenced by more factors than just reaction to the other person’s comments. To his detriment the soldier will discover that the local elders are flesh and blood. Australian soldiers training for meetings and interviews regularly use role players,¹³ but too often these come from within the uniformed community. We need to keep asking whether this is the most robust preparation we can give our soldiers for the human task ahead.

DEPLOYING

The Australian Defence Force deployment now comes in three standard lengths: four, six or eight months.¹⁴ It is designed to suit the deployed force, rather than the receiving nation. It promotes sustainability, which guarantees a lengthy commitment, but not necessarily a successful one. The cultural awareness reached during such a deployment is limited by the soldier’s time in theatre, access to the community, rules of engagement and location of his accommodation; yet the ‘Adaptive Army’ requires him to be a ‘tactical ambassador ... achieving the appropriate degree of empathy and engagement with the population.’¹⁵ Furthermore, we understand that ‘all personnel in theatre (including inter-agency elements and service providers) must be empowered with basic cultural, social and language skills...’¹⁶ Let us address this question of language skills first.

Currently, Operation ASTUTE in Timor-Leste is running out of linguists. Not only has the abundance of Tetum speakers seen ten years ago in the Army seemingly disappeared, but when a speaker is found for a position, he has often not had the required security clearance, specialist training or physical ability for the job. Not having a language is a problem, but having the wrong language is another. Despite the best efforts of Dili-based staff to communicate to locals in Tetum, everyone under 30 years of age (including, importantly, the civilians employed on service contracts) wanted to speak Indonesian. Older ADF staff who had come from the era when the default second language for ADF was Indonesian, suddenly found themselves highly sought after. Moreover, the language that is most needed in Operation ASTUTE now is Portuguese. As the mission turns from security to nation-building, the language best suited to the mechanism of Timor-Leste governance, the language taught to and spoken by Timor-Leste army and police officers, the official language of the country, and the language of the most important bilateral partner—Portugal—is not being cultivated with enough vigour. Thus the Adaptive Army soldier (who teaches himself *Pashto* while in Timor-Leste) is not empowered with these ‘basic cultural, social and language skills’.¹⁷

As financial and temporal pressures force us to restrict the soldier’s training for *the* war, the cultural awareness gap tends to be filled by specialists in civil-military relations (sometimes at great risk), or resident diplomatic staff, both of whom are in country for longer than an ADF rotation. The approach to deployment may be better served by a custom made length, as it is with a custom made force—but how could we do this?

Despite initial statements of intent regarding duration of deployment, it is very difficult to project the outcome of a force lodgement. We would like to assume that operations such as evacuations, recoveries and disaster relief have an end-state sufficiently well defined to plan an exit date. However, this is not the case for stability operations, humanitarian assistance and nation-building. These are operations for which we are often at the request of a third party, need to plan for long-term sustainment, and need to be prepared to react to an escalation of violence or unforeseen event.¹⁸ These are also the operations requiring the deeper level of human engagement we now promote.

What we have found in this long period of high operational tempo is that having completed a dozen or so rotations, we find ourselves *still there with the same force*. This has fortified our deployment cycle mastery, but perhaps not achieved the

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optimum result in theatre.¹⁹ It certainly has required an intense period of lead-up training, followed by a standard deployment length, *regardless of job*.²⁰

This perhaps does not give the soldier sufficient exposure to the nation's culture to do the tasks we now require of him. On the other hand, there are other Australians in theatre who do seem to have a deeper level of human engagement. These workers have developed their understanding over longer, less intense, sustained periods of time. They are the contractors who work month on / month off; and the diplomatic staff and non-government organisation representatives who live and work in country for a number of years. They are certainly reliant on someone else for security, but they maintain the duration of the mission by deploying accompanied by their families, or fly home regularly to see them. In Operation ASTUTE, The Defence Cooperation Program goes some way to solve this problem. The ADF members posted to this program live in country longer, are embedded within Timor-Leste Defence Force, may in some instances be accompanied by their families, and are beginning to address the language gap. Their supporting force, however, is isolated from them by a strict rotational model. By designing the deployment to fit the mission in the manner of contractors and non-government organisations, we depart from the primary function of the armed force and start to enter the domain of other agencies;²¹ however, the tasks we now ask of ourselves must cross those inter-agency boundaries.

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INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONS

It is through our relationships with other agencies that we can get a head start on understanding more of our own culture, and how to work with others. Working with other agencies is a free gift in terms of developing human communication skills, by being around people whose jobs exist wholly within the community.

Domestic Event Support Operations (DESO) provide great opportunities to practice this. As stated by Brigadier Andrew Smith, the characteristics of DESO include the forces being *ad hoc*, and almost always acting in support of leading civil agencies.²² This means inter-agency standard operating procedures need to be put in place quickly. Good standing relationships between key personnel within the agencies, a common vocabulary, and a history of working together will assist this. National Security Advisor Duncan Lewis suggests making this *ad hoc* arrangement more formal, with inter-agency secondments, and a possible Security Academy.²³

Despite civil primacy, Army leads the way again and again in DESO because of our strength in rapidly effecting operational teams of virtual strangers through common language and procedures. During Operation TESTAMENT²⁴ it was immediately apparent that Army's decision cycle was spinning much faster than those of other government agencies which were not used to working in such a time critical environment. Army tasks were successfully completed with minimum but sufficient planning, effective communications and timely logistics. The reason for this success was largely due to the operation's proximity to the previous DESO, Operation DELUGE,²⁵ and the personnel chosen for the job. In fact, the lead security agency for Operation TESTAMENT, the New South Wales Police Service, specifically requested Army personnel who had worked on Operation DELUGE to work in their Joint Operations Centre. Like DESO, the success of long-term engagement in regional nation-building operations is true inter-agency operations coordinated at government level.

The second personnel success during Operation TESTAMENT was achieved through the use of Reservists. The more successful Reservists were the ones whose civilian roles were associated with one of the agencies working on the operation—they could speak both languages. The less successful Reservists were the ones who were performing a role foreign to both their civilian and Reservist professions—they could speak neither language. Here is a situation where the soldier's experience as a citizen must surely shine; however, the least successful *regular* Army members were those who had no inter-agency experience, and very little concept of community events.

Even greater was the Reservist role on Operation ASTUTE. The Combined Operations Liaison Team (COLT) was an essential unit within JTF631. These ADF Liaison Officers were dispatched to organisations such as UNHQ, UNPOL, Timor-Leste Police, Timor-Leste Defence Force, Australian Federal Police and international non-government organisations. These officers were mostly Reservists on full-time duty, trained in civil-military relations and from a similar civilian profession, which gave them a common vocabulary with their host agency. The COLT model works well and can teach us lessons in cultural preparation and operation.

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THE ROLE

The role of the soldier as citizen is by no means a contemporary or easy issue. Classical authors make the important connection between citizen and soldier within a democracy.²⁶ Modern philosophy sustains the dialogue of that relationship between Church, State and Military, and since the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, there has been constant ethical debate about the moral obligations of the soldier in a war among the people.

In defining a ‘good citizen’ today, we would probably echo classical sentiments with words like ‘responsible’, ‘ethical’ and ‘just’, and we can probably say that there is an expectation from the public that servicemen will uphold these values, as will others in public service. Dr Tom Frame sees a distinct difference between the way the soldier and the police officer are perceived by the Australian public.²⁷ These reasons revolve around the degree of influence the police, as opposed to the soldier, has on their lives. The police officer is visible every day, because his domain is local crime, and it is widely agreed that he should fight it. The soldier’s domain is, by and large, outside Australia, and it is much debated whether he should be fighting it or not. The soldier is an instrument of government, but also politics, and he is certainly not as visible to the community as he once was.

The soldier and community need to be, in fact, mutually supporting. The presence of the soldier promotes the fundamental questions of human existence—‘what is justice, is anything worth an ultimate sacrifice of life, what or whom shall I serve, is killing ever permitted...?’²⁸ The community, as a voting body, decides on a government which will use the army in domestic and foreign policy. The community also ultimately produces the individuals for the army, and therefore has a responsibility to cultivate the optimum candidate. ‘Armies do not provide the main influence on their soldiers,’ says Jim Wallace. ‘Society will have had him for at least 16–19 years longer.’²⁹ The soldier is in some ways their investment.

The problem lies in the separation. Exclusion is necessary for security, safety in training and indoctrination, and has been for thousands of years. The soldier has to play both roles simultaneously: soldier and citizen. He must live under two sets of codes: a military law and the civil law. The Reservist is often touted as the dual professional, but the regular soldier is perhaps more so. This is not an easy duality. It is why we have a Department of Veteran’s affairs. It is why we have transition

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seminars for separating personnel. It is why Returned Service League clubs thrive. Exclusion is necessary. However, we must now ask if we can breed robust *humanity* in such an environment. With a fairly narrow arc of dissent in the barracks, how well can we expect the character of the soldier to develop? The soldier must ultimately be prepared to sacrifice his life, but without a clear idea of what he is sacrificing it for (that only he can decide), then he becomes the extremist form of the professional soldier—the mercenary.

Exclusion has revealed only glimpses of the soldier to the community. The moments are fleeting, ceremonial and often tragic. They include ramp ceremonies for the return of bodies, ANZAC day parades, brief visits by leaders, and sometimes atrocities. The community also witnesses the soldier alleviating a natural disaster. For a century, embedded journalists have increasingly enabled the community to see the reality of the soldier on operations. The saturation has now reached ‘participatory’ level. These images carry the risk of placing the soldier in a confusing context.³⁰ In Tom Frame’s words, ‘Even those who have never worn a military uniform are now war veterans ... television has made combatants of them all.’³¹

The absence of the soldier from the community is having an effect on the way the young generation perceives the Profession of Arms. With the recent resurgence of interest in Australian military history and ‘battlefield tourism’, and without contemporary role models, there is a real fear of creating a ‘digger mythology’ based on images of Gallipoli, rather than today’s fight.

The absence of the soldier from the community is having an effect on the way the young generation perceives the Profession of Arms.

THE ATTITUDE

At the beginning of the current operational frenzy, the Australian Defence Force placed a high regard on understanding other cultures. Being able to speak a language, witnessing ceremonies and rituals, and knowing appropriate methods of communication enriched your life and gave you an advantage in your career. Sadly it has started to be replaced by a disdain, a kind of cynicism, even by persons who have not yet deployed. Relying only on the (traumatic) experiences of those who have returned, soldiers are deploying with ingrained bias, an Arabic phrase book and hoping for the best. What chance does the operation have? And what *closed camp* allowed this before he deployed? If he is the tactical ambassador, then he is answerable to his nation and his community.

If we make small changes to the *status* of the soldier in society, the performance of the soldier will follow. These changes start at recruiting: time to stop elitism. Let us allow and enable the soldier to live in the community, in some cases in the neighbourhood which raised him. The more he sees of his neighbours, and the more they see of him, will make the human aspects of his job easier. It may also strengthen his purpose. Let him train with real people of different ages, creeds and emotions. Let him live on deployment, amongst the people, for sufficient time to understand them. Let him make a comparative and social study of the environment in which he lives and in which he fights. If he is resolved to fight, he needs to know why.

It is a somewhat hardened army, hardened *not* by horror and atrocity, but perhaps by losing itself in a gargantuan coalition force, that returns from the battlefield now.

It would be a pity if the spirit of the innovative and cunning Australian soldier was suffocated by this disengaged military machine. That spirit needs to be supported by both the Australian Defence Force and the community, so that we remain the force of choice, rather than just another force. Moreover, we need to review our insistence that the soldier, *because of the unique nature of his duties*, must be protected and isolated from the community.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Gender specific pronouns are used throughout the text to represent my target group of the Australian Soldier being male and aged between 18 and 30. This by no means omits the wider demographic of Army personnel from being affected by my conclusions.
- 2 Colonel Michael Lehmann, 'Military Operations in the 21st Century: A Cultural Cringe?', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. V, No. 3, Summer 2008.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 5 Recent themes include 'Have you got what it takes?' 'Challenge yourself' and 'Rise'.
- 6 PACMAN, Chapter 7, Part 3, Div 1: 'Suitable living-in accommodation', Department of Defence, December 2009.
- 7 Single Living Environment and Accommodation Precinct accommodation projects have been implemented at Holsworthy Barracks, RAAF Amberley and Gallipoli Barracks. When finished, they will include 1395 individual, self contained rooms, each with ensuite, meal preparation area, internet, phone connections, car park and secure storage facilities. More information can be found at <<http://www.woodsbagot.com/en/Pages/SingleleapPhase1HolsworthyEnoggeraRAAFAmberley.aspx>> and <http://www.defence.gov.au/id/sla/sla_forumQ&A.htm.SingleleapFAQs>.

- 8 'Shura' is Arabic for consultation and contextually refers to a meeting between tribal elders in the Afghanistan Area of Operations.
- 9 Battle Command Wing of Combat Training Centre (CTC) writes, conducts and observes Mission Rehearsal Exercises for all deploying units as part of force preparation. Discussions with Operations staff from CTC throughout 2007 and 2008 revealed various cases of soldiers' lack of understanding of host cultures or the need to adapt their own behaviour to suit.
- 10 ELECT BiLAT is a simulation tool currently on trial with the US Army. Designed for a recruiting purpose, it has been adopted by soldiers preparing for deployment to the Middle Eastern theatre, and anticipating bilateral negotiation.
- 11 'ELECT BiLAT', Institute for Creative Technologies, <http://ict.usc.edu/projects/elect_bilat>, accessed on 7 February 2009.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 The Defence Intelligence Training Centre has extensively used paid civilian actors to play roles in security interview training; and Australian Intelligence regularly uses linguists (civilian and uniformed) to play roles in tactical questioning training.
- 14 The standard deployment for formed bodies has now been extended from six to eight months. Staff officers deploying individually as part of a headquarters generally deploy for six months. Aviation units and Reservists deploy for four months.
- 15 Head Capability Development Army, 'Adaptive Campaigning 2009 – Realising an Adaptive Army', Version 19, 7 November 2008, p. 20.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 The 11 February 2008 shooting of Timor-Leste President, Jose Ramos Horta, was one such event where deployed Australian forces assisted in both the evacuation of the president and security operations immediately following the incident.
- 19 In General Sir Rupert Smith's essential reading, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, Penguin, London, 2005, p. 374, he says, 'In international affairs we tend to place the highest priority on what we do rather than on what will achieve our ultimate object.'
- 20 An exception to this is the Australian Army Aviation deployment, which is structured around aircraft deeper maintenance schedules which are not performed in theatre. This is still a deployment to suit the deployed force, rather than the supported nation.
- 21 DFAT, AFP and AusAID, are examples of other agencies that have a primary task of liaison, training and mentoring nation populations during humanitarian operations.
- 22 Headquarters 7 Brigade Training Publication, *Domestic Event Support Operations*, Version 2, 30 July 2007, p. 8
- 23 Duncan Lewis, Keynote address, Chief of Army Exercise, (CAEX08), Brisbane Convention Centre, November 2008.

- 24 Operation TESTAMENT was the name given to the ADF support to World Youth Day (WYD08), held in Sydney 15–20 July 2008.
- 25 Operation DELUGE was the name given to the ADF support to the APEC Conference, held in Sydney, mainly 2–9 September 2007.
- 26 Socrates, Aristotle and Plato all wrote about the characteristics of the ‘good citizen’, and the relationship between the city and the military. See Plato’s *Republic*, Wordsworth Editions, Ware (Hertfordshire), 1997, about the role of the ‘phulakoi’ or guardians of the city.
- 27 Tom Frame, *Living by the Sword? The Ethics of Armed Intervention*, University of NSW Press, 2004, p. 199.
- 28 John P Hittinger, ‘The Soldier and the Citizen: Lessons from Plato and Aristotle’, Joint Services Centre on Professional Ethics Conference, 1995, <<http://www.usafa.edu/isme/>> accessed on 5 February 2009.
- 29 Brigadier (Retd) Jim Wallace, ‘Torture – Whose Fault Really?’ *The Canberra Times*, 10 May 2004.
- 30 Dan Baschiera, ‘Defence Force “should help fight fires”’, *The Age*, 11 February 2009.
- 31 Frame, *Living by the Sword? The Ethics of Armed Intervention*, p. 53.

THE AUTHOR

Major Cate Carter has served as an Australian Intelligence Officer for fifteen years. She has recently returned from Timor-Leste as the J2 of the International Stabilisation Force, and has been posted to the 16th Aviation Brigade, the Defence Intelligence Training Centre, Land Warfare Development Centre, Deployable Joint Force Headquarters, and the 1st Intelligence Battalion. Currently undertaking graduate studies in International Relations, Major Carter is currently posted to Army Headquarters working in the area of Network Enabled Warfare.

MILITARY CULTURE

NOTES ON COMMAND FOR COMMANDING OFFICERS

FROM A BRIGADE COMMANDER

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY

ABSTRACT

The article gathers together a collection of thoughts on command from the perspective of a brigade commander. Most will not be new. They are aimed at commanding officers, though some will resonate with more junior commanders. The article has been derived from a speech delivered at the 2008 and 2009 pre-command courses in Canungra by the then Brigadier Stephen Day.

I worked with ten different commanding officers while I was a brigade commander. They were the ablest of soldiers. We learnt much in our service together. I have eight thoughts that I have distilled from those experiences, coupled with some of my own, for current and prospective commanding officers.

One. As a commander, you need to continually ask yourself: what are we trying to achieve? And you need to be able to articulate the answer clearly and concisely. This requires personal understanding and effort; something that your staff can help with, but not do for you. This is not easy, it takes time and intellect. Command is an

intellectual endeavour. And if you cannot answer the question, you will need to go back and do some more work.

Some of you will be thinking about a command directive or the like, to issue to your new command. Something that outlines the shape you want for your unit. If you are about to take up a command appointment and are still thinking about a directive, then good. If you have written it, my advice is to think of it as an early draft, and put it aside until you arrive in your command. A command directive needs to be informed by the realities of the unit today; and you need to see them for yourself.

Colonel Harry Summers was a distinguished US Army strategic thinker, though was more famous for his conversation with a North Vietnamese officer during peace negotiations at the end of the war in Hanoi. Summers pointed out to his opponent ‘You know, you have never beaten us on the battlefield’, to which the North Vietnamese officer responded, ‘That is true, but also irrelevant’. So my first point is: continually ask yourself what you are trying to achieve.

Two. As you go about your business, implementing your plan, making decisions, don’t let process or policy dominate your humanity.

The old Greek philosopher, Aristotle, declared that being persuasive required you to address three things—logos (reason), pathos (emotion) and ethos (ethics—in this case to reflect credibility). The Army does the logos bit quite well, the ethos is fine enough, but the pathos is often wanting.

When I was a commanding officer in Townsville I got it wrong. A married soldier was the only support in the world for his long ill sister, who lived in South Australia. He was away on military business when he received word that his sister’s health had weakened and that she might not recover. Unable to return in a timely fashion, he asked that his compassionate travel entitlement be transferred to his wife, so that she could be by his sister’s side. I asked the chief clerk to check the policy and ‘not allowed’ was the advice. The soldier was so informed. He promptly responded that it would not cost the Army an additional cent to grant his request, in fact we would benefit, as he would still be at work and he asked me to reconsider. As I was doing that his sister died, alone. I wish I had that time over again.

The staff will generally give the policy line, the logos. You need to overlay it with the pathos and then make your decision. This may involve taking some risk, and I will talk about risk later on.

Three. You will need to have courage. Many of us are physically brave but morally weak. Yet I have never known a soldier with moral courage who did not own the other lesser attribute of physical bravery. Physical courage is important, but moral

... don’t let process
or policy dominate
your humanity.

courage is more challenging and more important. Moral courage demands that you do and say what you know to be right, even though you will catch several different kinds of hell for doing or saying it. It requires you to take the harder right, not the easy wrong. Always act in accordance with what is morally right without fear of the consequence for you or your team.

Moral courage is required in ordinary day to day business. And to have it means not being afraid to be unpopular. You may have been confronted with some inattention from a soldier ... he didn't salute when he should have. And you have been tempted to let it pass ... 'perhaps he didn't see me,' 'he's from another unit with low standards,' or 'I will let the RSM deal with it.' Well, each time you let it pass you weaken your own moral courage. And each time you fortify yourself, and address the inattention, you strengthen your moral courage. And if you do it properly, you increase the respect the soldier has for you.

As a commander you have a duty to establish the atmospherics so that a free exchange of views can be had—so that moral courage can be exhibited. The rank you wear and the experience you

have relative to your subordinates can intimidate, so you need to work at it. The RSM should be a reliable source to advise whether your team are telling you what they actually think, or whether they are giving you what they think you want to hear.

Four. And so to risk, about which there are three points that I wish to make.

In February 2006 while serving in Iraq we had a problem. The issue centred on a place called Spaghetti Junction in Baghdad. Lawlessness was keeping other than the unsuspecting away from there. Contractors would not traverse the area. Attacks against coalition and Iraqi security forces were launched from there. An Iraqi Division commander was killed by a sniper nearby. And a week after the Samara Mosque bombing the local population, a mix of Sunni and Shia, started to kill each other. The Force Commander, General George Casey, wanted Spaghetti Junction made quiescent; he wanted a brigade of tanks to be deployed to the area overnight and for operations to commence at dawn.

Now his staff, including me, thought this was unwise. Firstly, the tank commanders would not have time to reconnoitre the area properly and would be vulnerable to the enemy who had been ensconced there for some time. Secondly, we would have to uncover one of our vital supply routes by taking a tank battalion from a route security mission. Thirdly, we would be sending confusing messages; we had just finished telling governments and the press how well things were going and that we were reducing our profile—it is difficult to hide a brigade of tanks. Lastly, it

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exchange of views can be had...

was unnecessary; a combination of ISR, attack helicopters and infantry who knew the area were available and could do the job.

I thought we had a good case. The commander accepted our points, and told us to get the tanks there anyway. Within 48 hours the enemy had been silenced, the locals calmed down and the press were congratulating us. This was a bold and successful decision, one that demonstrated the commander's willpower; no one on staff had said that his idea was a good one. In fact, all of us who spoke suggested it was not.

A week earlier the Golden Mosque had been destroyed. This was the most confronting and inflammatory attack against the Shia since the war started—and we knew it. We, the operations staff, recommended immediate measures be put in place to protect against the likely Shia retaliation. We proposed an immediate vehicle ban, a curfew from last light, and increased security forces in mixed areas in Baghdad. A decision was taken to move cautiously with any emergency measures. The population was tiring of them and we risked losing further popular support. The decision was made to wait 24 hours to see how things went. Overnight there were over one hundred people killed in reprisals in Baghdad and forty-seven were kidnapped, never to be seen again. We had been too cautious, too risk averse.

Now I suppose I could find some examples where being cautious paid off, but I have none where we were bold and wish we had not been. My first, and most important message about risk is that, in war, if you have a choice, take the bold option.

Point two. When you present your plans for endorsement to your boss you will probably include the risks associated with the proposed course of action. This is a good thing. But I have found it to be just as necessary to include the risks associated with not taking up the proposal; such an inclusion is helpful to keep otherwise cautious decision-makers moving forward.

In August 2005, again in Iraq, we prepared a plan, known as the 'outside Baghdad strategy'. It was a good plan. General Casey tasked us with briefing it to senior Iraqi generals. The brief was taken by an elegant and well spoken three-star. He had served as a major general under Saddam Hussein. Early in the briefing we moved onto our assumptions. After the first one was explained he interrupted:

Ah yes, assumptions. It is particularly important to get these correct. I learnt this the hard way. When we were planning for the invasion of Kuwait, we established a set of assumptions. One of these was that Saudi Arabia would not permit foreign troops to be based on their soil ... this was not a good assumption!

My first, and most important message about risk is that, in war, if you have a choice, take the bold option.

My final point on risk is to be careful about writing it off in your planning.

I offer these observations because in barracks, back home here, there is pressure on us to reduce risk, to be cautious, to be predictable. This is necessary in peace. We must always minimise the chance of injury to those whom we have the good fortune to command; few soldiers would be happy to follow the lead of a commander who did not. But the best way to minimise risk to you and your command when you go from peace to war, is to switch from cautious to bold.

Five. Resources are a commander's business. Ask for what you need with conviction. But you need to do your homework before you put your case. In 2008 the commanding officer of the gun regiment, in my brigade, started to realise that if APEP went the way he was hearing then he was going to struggle with ... well a bunch of things. And that was the problem; he had not put sufficient intellectual energy into the challenge and so could not clearly explain what he needed addressed and why. When he saw that he was not getting any traction, he thought about things a bit harder. 'If you do not give me fifteen more gunners, then I can guarantee only one gun next year. And if that is all I can provide, then I cannot train the JOSK for MRTF3 and will not be able to accept Excalibur into the regiment next year.' Now he got attention—and most of the human resources he needed.

You also need to get personally involved in the allocation of resources to subordinates. There is a tendency amongst staff to 'nickel and dime' resources when there is not enough to go around—you need to place weight on the main effort. And you will need to look up as well, to ensure that the higher headquarters staff do the same for you.

Six. The higher you get, the more the keys to success lay outside your organisation. You need to identify these and then get out and meet them. Tell them what your plans are, remembering the need to be able to tell it simply and concisely. And talk to them, don't tell them, about how they can assist you.

Some of the key ones for commanding officers will be the Defence Support Group—the supporting third line health facility, especially with mental health as an increasing challenge for us—the Defence Community Organisation and the Defence Housing Authority. You will find these folks very receptive to a visit by you into their space early on in your tenure. Do your best to start on a positive note. Even if you have had a demoralising experience with Defence Housing Authority during your move, keep it separate from your introductory meeting. Identify your point of contact in the unit for normal business, but let them know that they can call you if the matter warrants it.

Resources are a
commander's business.
Ask for what you need
with conviction.

You need also to consider the relationship with your boss. And this is my seventh point.

Seven. The more senior you get the more you have to think about your look up duties. We are taught, for most of our professional careers, about our responsibilities to our soldiers and we receive some very decent education in how to do this. The look up piece is usually dealt with by the need to be loyal both ways—up and down. For most this is not an issue—you usually work pretty close to your boss and see him very regularly; in a unit it is just about every day, so communication is frequent and personal. But as a commanding officer things will be quite different. Your brigade commander will not be just down the corridor and you will not see him daily; once a fortnight is more usual. Much happens in two weeks, some of which will be important to your boss.

What I suggest you do when you first call on your commander is to seek direction about his wake-up criteria: what are those things that you will need to tell him quickly and personally, and what can be left to standard reporting. You should also have a chat about how you will routinely communicate with each other: by email, SMS, phone or in-person meetings. A mix is the most practical, but difficult matters should be dealt with in-person or over the phone. And if nothing has happened worthy of discussion for a few weeks, then give the boss a call anyway. Tell him you are still on the end of the k-phone and all is well—he will appreciate it. I think a reasonable rule of thumb for commanding officers is to spend 60 per cent of your time looking down in your unit, 30 per cent looking out and across and 10 per cent looking up.

Eight. Take care of yourself, mentally, physically and emotionally. Read, sleep, think and exercise.

I read every night, sometimes not for long. I usually get about ten pages in before I doze off. This serves two purposes. It helps build my knowledge; I read military history and a little philosophy. And it helps me wind down at the end of the day. Reading history can also be consoling.

In the first half of the 1990s there was much melancholy about as Defence adopted a policy of reducing numbers in uniform and contracting out services. Around this time I read an account of Napoleon's 1796 invasion of Italy and his post operation report. Though the campaign was an extraordinary success, he had a complaint. Hitherto, the horses drawing his artillery had been ridden by soldiers, but now, on direction from Paris, they were operated by contractors. And these were less robust, worked shorter hours and were fussy about their food. So outsourcing

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and the military is not new; the challenge was, and remains, to outsource the right things. I, at least, felt less troubled about the concept.

Sleep deprivation is a significant hindrance to effective decision-making. Sleep is personal; so if you need four hours then take four, if you need seven hours then take seven.

You need to find time to reflect and think as command is an intellectual endeavour. Schedule thinking time in your diary for an hour, two or three times a week; do it just before lunch so that you can combine both periods to give you a couple of hours by yourself.

Of course physical exercise is part of the job. And despite the demands on your time you must find time to do it. Apart from the obvious health benefits you will find that exercise is a good opportunity to think and reflect. So doing it on your own, or with the RSM, is sensible—though physical training tests and combat fitness assessments are best done with the soldiers.

However you go about your command, never forget that there is no greater privilege than to be given command, lawful authority and responsibility of your fellow citizens.

THE AUTHOR

Major General Stephen Day was born into a military family, with his father and both grandfathers having served with the Australian Army. He was commissioned in 1982 and served in a variety of engineer units including as Commanding Officer of the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment. Operational service has included deployments to Namibia, Timor-Leste and Iraq. He has instructed at the Royal Military College, Duntroon; been a Staff Officer to the Chief of Defence Force; and attended Defence Colleges in Australia and Malaysia. His most recent appointment was as Commander 7th Brigade.

MILITARY CULTURE

APPLYING NAGL

MILITARY ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND AMERICAN COUNTERINSURGENCY IN IRAQ

DAVID KUEHN

ABSTRACT

In 2002, John Nagl wrote an influential book titled *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* that analysed counterinsurgency attempts in the Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War. With this book in mind, this article examines some of the counterinsurgency actions taken by US General David Petraeus during his tenure in Iraq in 2007 and 2008. It provides a comparison of the elements that Nagl details as necessary for an organisation to learn or adapt to new and challenging environments.

INTRODUCTION

Most organisations are dynamic and complex social systems formed to accomplish goals. Organisational change is a field of study that focuses on the organisation as a system and how the framework of that system interfaces and influences the performance of the individual.¹ As military organisations are inherently hierarchical, bureaucratic and sensitive in nature, the principles and practices governing this type of organisation generally devalue the need for change, and subsequently, little has been written concerning the necessity of change

within the military context. In 2002, John Nagl published a book based upon his doctoral thesis, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, which highlighted the fundamental importance of organisational change in the military. Nagl's focus was the success of British counterinsurgency operations in Malaya and why, in contrast, American efforts failed in Vietnam.

The connection to organisational change is most evident in the chapter 'Hard Lessons', in which Nagl summarises the elements that the military must embrace to 'learn' or adapt to new and challenging environments. The first is *tactical innovation*, in which the organisation recognises that they are currently not accomplishing their goals, and must adopt new methods in order to succeed. The second is *strategic vision*, which, when considered in the context of counterinsurgency, is the ability to recognise that the military component forms only one critical aspect of a counterinsurgency campaign. The bigger picture view, which is critical for the defeat of insurgents, also considers the link with economic and political components. The final element is that of *The Man*: a person with a vision or sufficient charisma who can persuade others to believe in his ideas.² The inspiration for authoring this article stems from both reading Nagl's interpretation of the ways in which organisational change elements were applied to the US presence in Iraq, and also a personal interest in change management.

BACKGROUND

In his influential 1964 text, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, author David Galula wrote that 'the ideal situation for the insurgent would be a large land-locked country shaped like a blunt-tipped star ... in a temperate zone with a large and dispersed rural population and a primitive economy',³ a scenario which is almost perfectly demonstrated in Iraq. Possessing a hot climate, and home to 24 million people, Iraq is largely rural, with a handful of urban centres exceeding populations of one million.⁴ Iraq is a land-locked country, with the exception of Umm Qasr, a small port located in the south. The country is surrounded by six countries, three of which are considered hostile to US efforts—specifically Iran, Jordan and Syria.

The rise of the Iraqi insurgency is well documented. The US-led invasion occurred in March 2003, yet by May 2003 a local insurgency (initially perceived to be comprised of 'regime dead-enders'⁵) had suddenly accelerated in strength and number. The impetus for this uprising was two decrees, which displaced some 500,000 Iraqis from their employment.⁶ The insurgency was exacerbated by the

The insurgency was exacerbated by the US Army's culture of being unwilling and unable to fight a guerrilla war.

US Army's culture of being unwilling and unable to fight a guerrilla war. According to John Nagl, the US Army 'was focused from its inception on the idea of fighting decisive conventional conflicts'.⁷ Locked in a conventional-tactic mindset, the US Army commenced building large Forward Operating Bases (FOB) and garrisoning large formations.

Although then-Commander General George Casey recognised that Iraq required a new way of fighting, he failed to implement his vision during his command.⁸ With an organisational culture not suited to counterinsurgency, then-President George Bush, recognising the need for a fresh approach, appointed General David Petraeus as the new commander in Iraq. According to Australian Major General Jim Molan, this appointment came at a time marking the start of a fifth phase of the Iraqi war.⁹ As such, January 2007 represents the turning point at which the United States fundamentally changed its methodology and style of fighting within an extremely short timeframe.

TACTICAL INNOVATION

Yet, before this January 2007 milestone, successful examples of counterinsurgency had occurred. After the 2003 invasion, General Petraeus secured the town of Mosul and initiated a variety of projects, remaining unhindered by the insurgency. In 2005, Colonel HR McMaster led the notable Operation RESTORING RIGHTS in Tal Afar (from which the phrase was coined 'Clear, Hold and Build'). When taking back the town of Ramadi in the Anbar province in 2006, Colonel Sean MacFarland championed many of the same techniques used by Colonel McMaster in helping the Anbar awakening.¹⁰ However, these examples were the exception. Most units maintained the 'kill-capture' approach, or focused on force-projection to contain the insurgency, in which 'success was measured in the number of insurgents and of top-level Baathists from the deck of playing cards who were eliminated'.¹¹ Naturally, this tactic generated inconsistent results. Preceding the first Iraq national election in 2005, Major General Molan noted, 'every time they tried to focus on a particular city, we had to go and fight somewhere else'.¹² As recognition increased that the application of conventional fighting techniques was failing, a new appreciation for the use of minimum force in dealing with the insurgency was reached.

Until 2007, issues with the 'kill-capture' approach were augmented by the preference to house troops in large FOBs. This tactic gave the insurgency the freedom to

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manoeuvre at will, and also allowed them to choose the field of battle, set ambushes and deploy Improvised Explosive Device (IEDs). In short, remote living via FOBs gave the insurgency the advantage. Most military command courses teach the importance of OODA (Orient, Observe, Decide, Act), and the necessity to get inside the decision-making cycle of the enemy. The FOB strategy meant that US forces were reactive instead of proactive, and could never seriously have an impact on the decision-making cycle of the enemy. This was generated by the incorrect assumption that US forces were the problem.

Under General Petraeus, and acting upon the advice of advisors like David Kilcullen, the FOB strategy was slowly abandoned and US troops began to 'get out and walk'.¹³ Outposts were planned across Baghdad, similar to those devised under Colonel McMasters' post-attack plan of Tal Afar in November 2005. To help stem the violence, these outposts were traditionally located in abandoned buildings, at selected positions in which the majority of hostilities were occurring.¹⁴ As the 'surge' units arrived in theatre and were deployed, they were positioned in these outposts around Baghdad, in concentrations ranging from thirty-five to one hundred personnel (platoon to company sized).¹⁵ This affirmed Galula's belief that the 'crux of problems for the counterinsurgent is to keep an area clean'.¹⁶ Practical counterinsurgency Key Performance Indicators were introduced to company commanders (for example, what percentage of your force is continually operating outside the FOB?). This is best illustrated in an example cited by Ricks, in which the 1st Cavalry unit were told that having two-thirds of their strength working amongst the population was not enough; a goal of 75 per cent was to be achieved.¹⁷

The intention of these Key Performance Indicators was also to achieve more than just the security of the population. The medium-term goal focused on population control. To prevent sectarian attacks, gated communities were established, and thousands of cement barriers erected (the barriers separating Adhamiyah from a Shiite area were twelve feet high and three miles long).¹⁸ As previously conducted in Tal Afar, a census was taken of residents around the outposts in Baghdad, recognising the criticality of comprehending where citizens were located. As Iraq entered Spring (March–May 2008), over 15,000 concerned Baghdad citizens had volunteered to be registered in a US tracking system.¹⁹ These results were not immediate, and required two or three months of constant patrolling by the same static units to build a basic level of awareness (that is, knowledge of who

Following the invasion of Iraq, this was the first time that all units were operating to the same policy as detailed in the new counterinsurgency manual...

was in your area and who belonged there). Following the invasion of Iraq, this was the first time that all units were operating to the same policy as detailed in the new counterinsurgency manual (issued in December 2006), specifically the population protection policy. It was not until June 2007 that all the necessary troops and vital population protection mechanisms were established, against a background of insurgency attacks, and al-Qaeda began to lose ground, their lines of communication and the freedom to manoeuvre. From February 2007 through to July 2007, there was a steady increase in American fatalities, but a decrease in Iraqi civilian deaths.²⁰ General Petraeus remained firm even as 2007 became the deadliest year for US forces. Paradoxically, the final quarter of 2007 represented the lowest three-month death toll of the war. Yet under General Petraeus, US forces had more than just policy, they also had doctrine and from that, tactics to fight with. They had started to regain the strategic initiative.

STRATEGIC VISION

Ricks wrote that good tactics can't fix a bad strategy, but a good strategy tends to fix bad tactics.²¹ In a 2007 interview, Nagl stated that 'the establishment of a legitimate, functioning government is the surest means to fostering a lasting peace.'²² From 2003 until 2006, a strategy of transition was the only way to achieve this goal, with very little time or money spent on protecting the population or providing security. Key metrics from 2005 and 2006 were focused on the speed with which the Americans were handing control of Iraqi provinces to national security. A notable statistic included in Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster's article 'Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations' highlights that:

Ricks wrote that good tactics can't fix a bad strategy, but a good strategy tends to fix bad tactics.

[in] an analysis of 127 US pacification operations in Iraq between May 2003 to May 2005, most ops were reactive to insurgent activity—seeking to hunt down insurgents. It is important to note that only 6% of ops were specifically directed to create a secure environment for the population.²³

At first there was a refusal to admit that an insurgency existed. George Packer's anecdote in *The Assassins' Gate* discusses a meeting between a retired American counterinsurgency expert and a Special Forces colonel, in which the colonel declares that there was no insurgency in Iraq, just a high level of domestic violence.²⁴ Possibly the best summation of the reluctance of senior American officials is from an anonymous officer in Iraq, who said:

They did not want to say the ‘insurgency’ word, because the next word you say is ‘quagmire.’ The next thing you say is ‘the only war America has lost.’ And the next thing you conclude is that certain people’s vision of war is wrong.²⁵

How then, did the United States recognise that the strategic vision was wrong, that the policy of transition was a failure, and that initiative and focus were required to provide security for the general population?

An organisation’s strategy is susceptible to external factors, and the US presence in Iraq was no exception. Several incidents occurred that fostered the desire to change the strategic focus of Iraq. These included the failure of Operations TOGETHER FORWARD I and II in late 2006, the ‘thumping’ of the Republicans in the 2006 mid-term election, and importantly, the transition of the role of Defense Secretary from Donald Rumsfeld to Robert Gates. These events began to generate a strong desire, at the least, among the political leadership of the United States to listen to advocates for change and respond in kind. Consequently, President Bush and his advisors were now more willing to listen to alternative ideas about Iraq, namely for a ‘surge’ of troops.

Yet this wouldn’t be the first time US forces had surged in Iraq; in fact, this was actually the third surge. The first surge, between June 2004 and February 2005, increased personnel in theatre from 138,000 to 155,000.²⁶ Major General Molan acknowledged that they ‘could not have successfully conducted the first Iraqi election in January 2005 without those extra troops.’²⁷ By June 2005, the first surge had ended and service personnel numbers in Iraq fell to 135,000.²⁸ By December 2005, a second surge saw in-theatre personnel increase to 160,000 before falling away to 126,900 by June 2006. In contrast, the third surge in 2007 was underpinned by a greater appreciation of how to deploy, maintain, and use these members.

Much of the debate and decision-making concerning an increase in the number of deployed personnel appears to have occurred well before General Petraeus assumed command in Iraq, and was driven largely behind the scenes by retired General Jack Keane. As the notion of a surge found favour, Keane was also responsible for recommending and supporting Petraeus as the sole candidate to lead the revised US approach.²⁹ This new approach focused on putting counterinsurgency within the economic and political context. Against this, there was still opposition to the surge proposal, as the senior leadership believed that the motivation for the insurgency was the presence of American soldiers. The proposed ‘surge’ increase was firmly

... senior leadership believed that the motivation for the insurgency was the presence of American soldiers.

opposed by General Casey and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and numerous compromises sought and suggested.

With this in mind, General Petraeus wanted to ensure that the 'surge' personnel would be deployed in the most beneficial way and appointed the Joint Strategic Assessment Team (JSAT) to create a new campaign plan with a 'detailed political strategy for achieving reconciliation from the bottom up, based on confidence-building measures and improved security in 2007'.³⁰ Strategically, it was also recognised that the United States faced a Long War,³¹ and that the conflict could be a protracted and generational fight. The issue had narrowed to the consideration of what the United States wanted as the result in Iraq. The focus on democracy and transformation in the Middle East was replaced with one of stability, and the desire to keep Iraq as one nation with many cultures.

THE MAN

To quote David Lloyd Owen, in an insurgency, 'you need a man with a lot of imagination to run this kind of war, and one with an understanding of the political nature of the war'.³² As discussed earlier, Petraeus' actions in Mosul in 2003 was one of a handful of successful examples of counterinsurgency. Then, General Petraeus arrived in theatre with a clear understanding of how to fight with a new direction. Once there, General Petraeus immediately adopted a 'population-orientated approach',³³ which highlighted the differences between him and other commanders, a notable distinction at the time. While other American units conducted operations in which they applied overwhelming force to kill the enemy, General Petraeus conducted counterinsurgency aimed at reducing support for the enemy, and fostering relations among the community.³⁴ This point is crucial; Petraeus endeavoured to 'create as many Iraqis as possible who feel they have a stake in the new Iraq'.³⁵ General Petraeus ensured that he controlled³⁶ all intelligence and operations and strove to 'restore economic activity and generate a functioning Iraqi administration'.³⁷

A second assignment for General Petraeus was rebuilding the Iraqi Security Forces, a task to which he was appointed in 2004 after his actions in Mosul. General Petraeus quickly recognised that the Iraqi units were being trained to be a mechanised force, and were unsuitable for fighting an insurgency. By April 2005, he had raised, trained and overseen the equipping of nearly one hundred Iraqi battalions (albeit of mixed quality due to the lack of 'seasoned' leaders). In October 2005, one month after completing his second tour in Iraq, General Petraeus took up a new post at Leavenworth, and was responsible for the first update in nearly twenty years of the counterinsurgency manual used by the US Army and Marine Corps.³⁸ In his role, overseeing publication, General Petraeus included lessons learned from Afghanistan and Iraq, and stressed 'cultural awareness, personal contacts, reconstruction

strategies and close cooperation with non-military agencies.³⁹ All too aware of the significance of the manual, General Petraeus stated: ‘This is about institutional change, and the whole Army is included. It is a kind of a generational change.’⁴⁰

As General Petraeus took command, he endorsed the call for a third surge of troops. This included an additional 36,000 soldiers over time,⁴¹ and increased personnel numbers in Iraq from 135,000 in February 2007 to 171,000 by October 2007.⁴² General Casey, along with other detractors,⁴³ maintained their stand against the surge of numbers; the ‘boots on the ground’ strategy, it was claimed, would ‘simply force the militias into temporary hiding ... wasting thousands more Americans lives in the process.’⁴⁴ The pressure on General Petraeus was immense, with impatience towards Iraq from all sides—even the Iraqi Government, it was said, was ‘lukewarm on the idea.’⁴⁵ One US Senator stated that ‘this is the last chance for the Iraqis.’⁴⁶ Such was the pessimism, that the chances of success for the ‘surge’ strategy were put at one in three.⁴⁷ Both supporters and opponents of the surge thought that it would create a significant increase in US casualties. General Petraeus understood this, and took to his role with ‘a sense of urgency and an understanding that it was “now or never” in Iraq.’⁴⁸ General Petraeus explained his perspective by saying:

If we fail here nobody will ever care what we did next. If we succeed it won’t matter. So we need to act like this is the last job we will ever do.⁴⁹

General Petraeus conducted counterinsurgency aimed at reducing support for the enemy, and fostering relations among the community.

CONCLUSION

To survive, an organisation must recognise when it is not meeting its objectives, and learn from its mistakes, a task made extraordinarily complex in an authoritative and hierarchical organisation like the United States Army. In his classic work, *On War*, Clausewitz wrote of *coup d’oeil*, or flexibility of thought. Yet, flexibility of thought is irrelevant if it does not drive the institution to achieve its objectives. In reviewing the tactical decisions, shift in strategy, and ‘championing’ by General Petraeus, there is little that is revolutionary. Many of the tactics implemented by the surge simply demonstrate that General Petraeus did learn from the past. However, when placed in context, the three facets as suggested by Nagl (Tactical Innovation, Strategic Vision and The Man) are clearly evident.

As written in FM 3-24, ‘the primary objective of any [counterinsurgency] operation is to foster development of effective governance by a legitimate government.’⁵⁰ This doctrine has now been adopted via a ‘strategy of protecting the population, co-opting and winning over the reconcilables, expanding the “center” of Iraqi politics, marginalizing the extremes, and eliminating the irreconcilables.’⁵¹ President Barack Obama’s recent call to revert back to a discredited policy of ‘transition’ after only two years of remarkable success, will be tested by whether the Malaki Government can successfully remain legitimate, and can govern a cohesive society following the pending departure of the Americans.

ENDNOTES

- 1 JW Gilley, PJ Dean and LL Bierema, *Philosophy and Practice of Organizational Learning, Performance, and Change*, Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, 2001, Chapter 7.
- 2 Nagl covers these points in greater detail using British and American experiences in Malaya and Vietnam respectively. See J Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2002, pp. 192–204.
- 3 D Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1964, p. 38. This is one of four prerequisites Galula states is necessary for a successful insurgency.
- 4 These facts are based upon a summary from ‘Iraq Military Guide’, *GlobalSecurity.org*, 23 January 2008, <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/images/map-pop.jpg>>, accessed 2 January 2009. Although Baghdad has a population of over 5 million, only seven cities have a population over 500,000. Much of the country is either uninhabited, or has a population density between 0–50 per square kilometre.
- 5 A Hashim, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, Hurst & Company, London, 2006, p. 59.
- 6 The de-Baathification of Iraq Society order was issued on 16 May 2003 and not only removed 85,000 people from their positions, but banned them from future employment in the public sector. A second order, the Dissolution of Iraqi Entities order (issued on 23 May 2003), did away with the Iraqi armed forces (some 385,000) people, the staff of the Ministry of the Interior (some 285,000), and the presidential security units (some 50,000).
- 7 Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, p. 218. Nagl goes on to state that ‘The “Weinberger doctrine” of 1983 made such involvement less likely by creating a series of tests that in practice precluded American participation in any ways that did not allow full exploitation of American advantages in technology and firepower’, p. 207.

- 8 This is not to say that Casey did nothing; he created a counterinsurgency school, and improved the degree to which American and Iraqi forces worked together (most notably during Operations TOGETHER FORWARD I and II). To overcome Iraqi inexperience, each Iraqi battalion was assigned a team of US personnel to help train and fight with them.
- 9 Major General J Molan, *Running the War in Iraq*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2008, p. 345. The first four phases were: March–April 2003 (the invasion), April 2003–August 2004 (the emergence of the insurgency), August 2004–January 2006 (the creation of institutions), and February 2006–January 2007 (the shift to sectarian violence).
- 10 In July 2006, a confidential report for the US Marines declared that the Anbar province, about one-third of Iraq, was lost to al-Qaeda. Colonel MacFarland's efforts in re-taking Anbar are well documented in T Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006–2008*, Penguin Press, New York, 2009, pp. 59–72.
- 11 T Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Penguin Books, Camberwell, 2006, p. 305. Krepinovich (in Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 17) makes a similar point that, when asking of a campaign plan, he was given a book of metrics detailing '...how the effort was being measured such as the amount of money being spent, or electricity produced'.
- 12 Molan, *Running the War in Iraq*, p. 141.
- 13 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 140.
- 14 By March 2007, over thirty-two outposts had been created across Baghdad. D Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, p. 135.
- 15 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 165. Ricks states that by the summer of 2007, there would be seventy-five outposts across the city, p. 200.
- 16 As stated in Colonel D Caraccilo and Lieutenant Colonel A Thompson, *Achieving Victory in Iraq: Countering an Insurgency*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, 2008, p. 53.
- 17 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 169.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 173. Civilian deaths fell by two-thirds after the wall went up.
- 19 Caraccilo and Thompson, *Achieving Victory in Iraq*, p. 145.
- 20 'Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq', *Brookings*, 26 February 2009, <<http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex>> accessed 28 February 2009, p. 4.
- 21 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 160.
- 22 Operational Leadership Experiences Project, *Interview with LTC John A Nagl*, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <<http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/p4013coll13&CISOPTR=331>> accessed 17 June 2009, p. 4.

- 23 Brigadier N Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations', *Military Review*, November–December 2005.
- 24 G Packer, *The Assassins Gate: America in Iraq*, Faber and Faber Ltd, London, 2005, p. 305.
- 25 Packer, 'The Lesson of Tal Afar'.
- 26 'Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq', p. 26.
- 27 Molan, *Running the War in Iraq*, p. 346.
- 28 'Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq', p. 26. The numbers would rise again to 160,000 as at December 2005, but would again fall away to 126,900 by June 2006.
- 29 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 100.
- 30 Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 133.
- 31 In late 2005, Casey commented that 'the average counterinsurgency in the twentieth century has lasted nine years. Fighting insurgencies is a long-term proposition, and there's no reason that we should believe that the insurgency in Iraq will take any less time to deal with' in Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 148.
- 32 As quoted in Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, p. 196.
- 33 Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 232.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 231.
- 36 According to Ricks, Petraeus ensured that all intelligence and operations were brought under his control: Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 232.
- 37 S Metz, 'Learning from Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy', *Strategic Studies Institute*, January 2007, p. 28.
- 38 Prior to the writing of the new counterinsurgency manual, the most relevant source of counterinsurgency was FM 3-07: *Stability Operations and Support Operations*. However, its focus had originally been based upon American efforts in the Balkan campaigns.
- 39 V Crawley, 'Military Counterinsurgency Manual Stresses Cultural Awareness: Army, Marine Corps team up to distil lessons of Iraq, Afghanistan', *America.gov*, 9 January 2007, <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/January/20070109144558M_VyelwarC0.1186334.html> accessed 2 January 2009.
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- 41 B Bender, 'General seeks another brigade in Iraq', *Boston Globe*, 16 March 2007, <http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2007/03/16/general_seeks_another_brigade_in_iraq> accessed 2 January 2009.
- 42 'Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq', p. 26.
- 43 This included retired General Colin Powell. See Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 93.

- 44 'General Petraeus: Man with a Message of Hope', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 31 December 2007, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1574021/General-Petraeus-man-with-a-message-of-hope.html>>
- 45 Ricks, *The Gamble*, p. 93.
- 46 C Hurt, 'Patience for Iraq War waning on all sides', *The Examiner*, 20 March 2007, <http://www.examiner.com/a-628513~Patience_for_Iraq_war_waning_on_all_sides.html> accessed 2 January 2009.
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- 48 Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 134.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Department of the US Army, FM 3-24 – *Counterinsurgency*, <<http://usacac.army.mil/cac/repository/materials/coin-fm3-24.pdf>> accessed 15 June 2009, pp. 1–113.
- 51 Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 184.

THE AUTHOR

David Kuehn is an employee with Capgemini Australia in the Public Sector stream, and has been engaged for several years on an Australian Defence project. A former soldier in the New Zealand Army Reserve, David holds a Bachelor of Defence Studies degree from Massey University in New Zealand and has commenced working on a Masters of Defence and Strategic Studies.

TRAINING, DOCTRINE AND EDUCATION

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

ARMY SIMULATION WING AND MISSION-SPECIFIC TRAINING

MAJOR STAN CARNES AND STEVEN HOLLOWAY

ABSTRACT

It is recognised that the application of simulation is a key enabler in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency in the conduct of training, and supports the adaptation required to maximise performance on operations. The development of the mission specific training program has witnessed the use of live, virtual/hybrid and constructive simulations within a single training activity. The aim of this article is to define the mission specific training concept and discuss its evolution and methodology, which includes the application of deliberate practice. The article will then discuss the rationale behind its development, its associated benefits and the way ahead.

INTRODUCTION

The 'Adaptive Army' restructure constitutes the most significant change to the Australian Army since the implementation of the Hassett reforms in 1973. Adaptive Army aims to change the Army's approach to and conduct of its core business, seeking to effect profound reform in training, personnel management, knowledge management, learning cycles and, eventually, the culture of the Army.

The key feature of the Adaptive Army restructure was the raising of the Land Combat Readiness Centre (LCRC) in December 2008. The LCRC's aim is to realise the 1st Division's force preparation vision of 'leading edge, mission ready land forces'. The LCRC is destined to become the Army's centre of excellence in preparing forces for deployment while also assuming responsibility for supporting post-deployment reintegration into Forces Command.

The LCRC's role is to provide practised, ready and certified forces for operations and contingencies. The centre also conducts warfighting training to support achievement of Army mission essential task requirements. In addition, the LCRC supports Commander 1 Division by coordinating higher level training and assessment in order to raise training standards across the Army. The centre aims to standardise procedures for the mounting, assessment, certification and demounting of force elements so as to maximise the Army's success in current and future operations. This will inevitably lead to further efficiencies in the way the Army employs its resources.

The Combat Training Centre is an integral element of the LCRC. Throughout 2009 the Combat Training Centre was primarily responsible for the conduct of mission rehearsal exercises, while Army Simulation Wing provided the opportunity for units to undertake mission specific training (MST) as a precursor to mission rehearsal exercises. Towards the end of 2009, following a review of the Army Simulation Wing MST program by Commander Land Warfare Development Centre, responsibility for this training was transferred to the LCRC. The transfer was formalised in a Commander's Directive issued in mid-December 2009, with transition scheduled to occur during 2010.¹ The transfer of responsibility for simulation support for all pre-deployment training activities from LCRC to Army Simulation Wing will also be examined as part of the LCRC establishment review scheduled for the second half of 2010. Army Simulation Wing currently supports a number of pre-deployment training activities under the direction of the Combat Training Centre.

... Army Simulation Wing provided the opportunity for units to undertake mission specific training (MST) as a precursor to mission rehearsal exercises.

This article will describe the origins of the former Army Simulation Wing MST program, what the program delivered, and how this training capability will be integrated into the LCRC force preparation continuum, otherwise known as the ‘Road to War’.

WHAT IS MST?

On 17 February 2005 the Australian Government decided to deploy additional Australian troops to Iraq, raising the force known as the Al Muthanna Task Group (AMTG1). The AMTG1 was based on Headquarters 2 Cavalry Regiment, a cavalry squadron and a mechanised infantry company from 5/7 RAR, all located in Darwin. The Combat Training Centre was tasked with assisting 1 Brigade in the conduct of a mission rehearsal exercise for AMTG1, scheduled for the early part of April 2005 prior to its deployment to Iraq. The Hamel Battle Simulation Centre in Robertson Barracks was directed to provide suitable simulation to support the training that underpinned the mission rehearsal exercise.

In concert with the Combat Training Centre’s Battle Command Wing, Army Simulation Wing provided a commercial off-the-shelf simulation known as Steel Beasts Two (SB2) to meet this training requirement at the Battle Simulation Centre. The simulation was used to familiarise AMTG1 soldiers with the area of operations, provide troop-level tactical training, and assist Commander AMTG1 and his headquarters staff in their operational planning. An additional off-the-shelf simulation, Virtual Battle Space One (VBS1), was also deployed to add combined arms elements largely absent from SB2, which is vehicle-centric.

The Battle Simulation Centre supported this pre-deployment training, allowing soldiers, particularly tactical level commanders, to be exposed to the simulation systems. Anecdotal reports from soldiers suggest that they benefitted from exposure to simulation; likewise Commander AMTG1 also recognised the value of simulation in providing his soldiers an accelerated force preparation.

The inclusion of a ‘virtual’ games-based simulation training package as part of the Combat Training Centre mission rehearsal exercise for AMTG1 was another key step in the exploitation of simulation within the Army. The provision of training for AMTG1 provided the impetus for the opening of the Land Command Battle Laboratory in 2005, which subsequently evolved into the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer within the Combat Training Centre.

The Combined Arms Tactical Trainer often provided the first opportunity for units to be exposed to simulation-based training at the collective level in a mission specific environment. The ‘whole of exercise’ support model was employed using current operational experiences and designed by exercise planners familiar with the operational environment. This was an effective mechanism for training that provided sound

preparation for units prior to their participation in mission rehearsal exercises. In 2007, the Combat Training Centre relinquished responsibility for the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer to Army Simulation Wing for the purposes of conducting pre-mission rehearsal exercise training. This led to the development of the MST program.

In 2008, Army Simulation Wing undertook a six-month ‘proof of concept’ pilot for its support to MST. The pilot was initiated to support Reconstruction Task Force 4 field training at Wide Bay Training Area over a period of five days. The Army Simulation Wing team provided three platoon-level simulation rotations using Virtual Battle Space Two (VBS2). Each rotation involved the receipt and issue of orders by the platoon commander and the conduct of battle procedure, followed by the execution of simulated platoon-level tactics, techniques and procedures in response to improvised explosive device, ambush, and other simulated activities over a 24 to 36-hour period. An after-action report followed the completion of each platoon rotation, covering the full spectrum of learning from orders preparation, delivery and conduct of tasks. Other support tasks saw the pilot program supporting force preparation for deployments to Afghanistan, the Middle East and the Solomon Islands.

Following the successful conduct of this pilot, additional operational funding was secured to initiate a rolling MST program available to units over a three-year period. In late 2008 and early 2009 a series of unit liaison visits and planning conferences established MST programs to support selected operational deployments occurring throughout 2009. During that year, support was provided to units deploying to Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor and the Solomon Islands. Scenarios were designed based on the experiences of those recently returned from operational theatres, and from data collated by the Centre for Army Lessons. The scenarios were flexible and adjusted to meet the unit commanders’ training requirements and applicable directed mission essential task lists. By the end of the year Army Simulation Wing had supported over thirty discrete training activities, each lasting around a week.

While foundation warfighting training involves preparation for an unspecified conflict, MST as defined during the course of the program was *unit-led* training for a *defined* conflict. MST itself is defined as,

the training for directed tasks that delivers the particular knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare the individual, team, or task force to deploy on operations in a specific theatre, role or environment. The content of MST is driven by the mission, environment and threat.²

The ‘whole of exercise’
support model was
employed using current
operational experiences ...

Simulation support to MST was developed by Army Simulation Wing to provide a flexible capability to unit commanders as part of the force preparation cycle. The MST program is principally a technology-based, contractor-supported, unit-led preparation for attendance at a mission rehearsal exercise conducted by the Combat Training Centre. MST is a component of the initial concentration period for units deploying on operations, and focuses on the practice of techniques, procedures and drills prior to the mission rehearsal exercise. MST activity development and execution is often a collaborative arrangement between Army Simulation Wing and the unit, the level and type of training ultimately developed and delivered at the unit commander's discretion and tailored to meet unit training requirements. Consequently the focus, level and type of MST varies between units. Its delivery also occurs primarily in the respective battle simulation centres of each brigade and uses other training facilities as dictated by the activity.

A key aspect of MST activity design is the application, where practicable, of 'deliberate practice'. The concept of deliberate practice has emerged from the work of cognitive psychologists who determined that the best performers achieved their success through a combination of both deliberate and reflective practice.³ Practice is generally accepted as a necessary part of the acquisition of expertise. Exceptional or expert performance typically results from extended periods of intense preparation and training or 'deliberate practice':

Deliberate practice occurs when individuals, who are highly motivated to develop a skill, engage in a carefully sequenced set of structured practice activities aimed at developing a target skill. Optimal learning takes place when a student performs a well-defined task, at an appropriate level of difficulty. The student then receives informative feedback, and is given opportunities for repetition to correct errors and polish the skill before moving to the next task.⁴

Deliberate practice therefore promotes adaptive thinking based on the premise that practising some skills may 'free cognitive resources for higher level decision-making'.⁵ Some key characteristics of deliberate practice as applied to MST are described in Table 1.

WHAT THE PROGRAM DELIVERED

The MST program developed throughout 2009 featured activity design based on deliberate practice with repetition in either a lane-based approach or a command post exercise. The basic MST activity was usually lane-based with a linkage between

The MST program is principally a technology-based, contractor-supported, unit-led preparation ...

Table 1. Deliberate practice characteristics applied to MST

Character	Description
Repetition	Task performance occurs repetitively rather than at its naturally occurring frequency. <i>MST provides the opportunity to practise procedures, techniques and drills.</i>
Focused feedback	Task performance is facilitated by the coach and learner during performance. <i>MST includes focused feedback sessions during the activity and formal after-action reviews at its conclusion.</i>
Immediacy of performance	After corrective feedback on task performance there is immediate repetition so that the task can be performed in accordance with expected norms. <i>MST activity conduct allows repetition as required. Virtual training activities also allow training scenarios to be quickly reset and hence allow the trainees more exposure.</i>
Emphasis on difficult aspects	Deliberate practice will focus on more difficult aspects. <i>MST is dictated by the training objectives determined by the unit commander. Simulation allows us to replicate the difficult aspects (e.g. air support) that cannot be achieved in traditional 'live only' training.</i>
Focus on areas of weakness	Deliberate practice can be tailored to the individual and focused on areas of weakness. <i>In MST this is dictated by the training objectives determined by the unit commander. Live and virtual 'lanes' can target specific areas of weakness.</i>
Active coaching	Typically, a coach must be very active during deliberate practice, monitoring performance, assessing adequacy, and controlling the structure of training. <i>Observer trainers or mentors are employed during MST.</i>

virtual and live lane activities. Training supported by simulation is applied in vignette-style lane-based scenarios or supporting command post exercises. All training is conducted by the unit against the achievement of training objectives through the deliberate practice of techniques, procedures and drills.

Training lanes are provided up to platoon/troop level and can include the employment of attachments configured for operations such as a section of armoured vehicles. The complexity of lanes depends on the training objectives and level of

training. The lanes can be conducted both in a virtual environment using gaming simulations such as the Virtual Battlespace Simulation, and the live environment using the Tactical Engagement Simulation System and aids for simulated battlefield effects.

Virtual lane training is an activity designed to train individual soldiers and small teams in various techniques, drills and procedures used on operations. Training is conducted in the battle simulation centre with computer-aided simulation such as Virtual Battlespace Simulation or Steel Beasts Professional. These simulations can introduce soldiers to scenarios and the use of equipment not normally available in a field setting including armoured vehicles and helicopters.

While virtual training has its benefits, it is usually only employed in scenarios that cannot be replicated in a live environment. By using virtual simulations as a precursor to live training, leaders can train for more complex events often neglected due to resource limitations. A virtual training environment that allows units to exercise and refine standard operating procedures, rehearse reporting procedures and ground tactical movement can save unit commanders valuable resources that are typically expended during the first thirty-six hours in the field when sections and platoons are preparing to conduct training.

Under the MST delivery model, up to two virtual lane training activities are conducted at platoon/troop level or below. Each training activity lasts five days and can be conducted as a precursor to live lane training. Live lane training, usually conducted in the field utilising the Tactical Engagement Simulation System, is designed to train individual soldiers and small teams in various techniques, drills and procedures to be used on operations. Subject to the availability of equipment, the activity can involve the use of armoured vehicles including the ASLAV and Bushmaster, and may also include battlefield effects to simulate mines and indirect fire.

The MST program involves the conduct of up to two live lane training activities at platoon/troop level or below over a five-day period. This training can be conducted in conjunction with virtual lane training.

Collective and staff training is undertaken primarily through the conduct of command post exercises. A command post exercise is an activity primarily designed to train headquarters staff. Ideally, this training should closely replicate the operational environment, be it an office, tent or command vehicle. Command post exercises can be supported by either 'constructive' simulations such as the Australian

Training supported by simulation is applied in vignette-style lane-based scenarios or supporting command post exercises.

Brigade and Battle Simulation (known as AB2S) or scripted events through a master event list. The conduct of a command post exercise includes the establishment of an exercise control to ensure training is executed as planned and that training objectives are achieved. Where practical, command posts are constructed within the battle simulation centres or other training locations to replicate both the layout and the command and control systems used in theatre. The training is structured to allow the repetition of events so that standard operating procedures can be practised until perfected. A military appreciation process exercise can also be conducted as a staff training activity and would normally precede the conduct of a command post exercise. Both activities are supported through the use of observer trainers and mentors for commanders and their staff.

The training is structured to allow the repetition of events so that standard operating procedures can be practised until perfected.

Under the MST delivery model, up to two command post exercise activities are conducted at battle group and/or combat team level. Each command post exercise is conducted over a five-day period. A military appreciation exercise for key battle group staff may be included in lieu of one command post exercise.

The MST objective is to ensure that units are better prepared for mission rehearsal exercises. The various 'building blocks' that underpin MST also produce a number of key benefits which result from and contribute to the desired end-state. These are illustrated in Figure 1.

MST provides commanders and key staff the opportunity to practise and learn in the early stages of the force preparation cycle. MST can also be used to provide sustainment training, particularly for units with high personnel turnover, in order to capture subject matter expertise and experience. Changes to key leadership positions in a unit following a deployment tend to erode the experience base of the unit. With the current high operational tempo, standard operating procedures, reporting procedures, tactics and techniques need to be taught quickly to new personnel and rehearsed collectively so that the unit retains its operational effectiveness. This ensures that any weaknesses are identified early and can be addressed prior to the unit's mission rehearsal exercise.

Preparation time immediately prior to a deployment is limited, particularly if the unit is being rounded out through attachments from other units. Deploying units often do not have sufficient people, time and resources to properly train in both individual and collective skills. Resources may also be retained by higher headquarters because of tight deployment schedules, land restrictions and logistics constraints. Most unit commanders welcome any support that assists

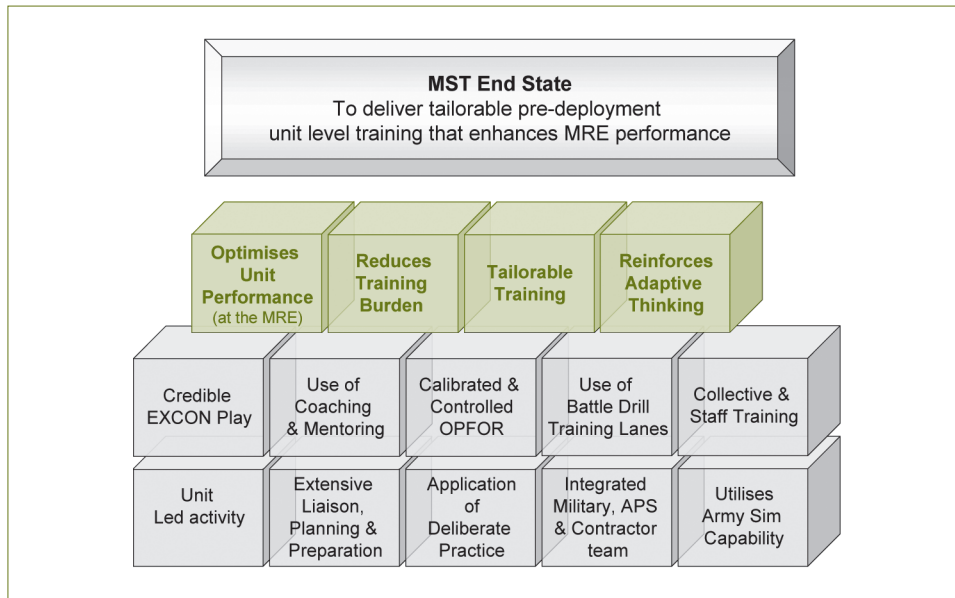


Figure 1. MST building blocks and key benefits.

force preparation programs and provides relief for unit headquarters staff and subordinate commanders.

As MST is an activity based on collaboration between the unit and Army Simulation Wing, there is a high degree of flexibility in the type of training environments that can be used. MST is designed to achieve training objectives in the time available as part of the unit's pre-deployment training. During the conduct of MST activities there is some scope to adjust the training tempo and repeat activities to practise key procedures under varying conditions.

Adaptive thinking is an active process—it is a form of behaviour. Repetitive performance allows thinking processes to become automatic so that they can be performed quickly and accurately with less mental effort. As more elements become automatic, complex models can be developed without a proportionate increase in mental effort. This allows experts to use their knowledge flexibly and creatively in complex situations. An increase in automatic action and cognitive flexibility is characteristic of expert performance. By providing an opportunity for units to conduct repetitive training, MST subjects units to greater pressure during the mission rehearsal exercise, allowing a more rigorous application of their techniques and procedures.

Adaptive thinking is an active process—it is a form of behaviour.

THE NEXT STEPS

Early 2010 has seen the integration of the Combat Training Centre and Army Simulation Wing capabilities and led to the adoption of a partnered planning approach between the two organisations. This has led to greater recognition of the way each organisation can best support unit force preparation. The approach that will see the current simulation capabilities within Army combined to deliver the optimum effect in terms of replication, instrumentation and training delivery is still evolving. Initial discussions between the Combat Training Centre and Army Simulation Wing have led to the proposal of a possible model for training within the live simulation domain, illustrated in Figure 2.

The integration of virtual and constructive simulations was also tested in MST activities in late 2009. Command teams experienced virtual immersion in computer-aided training scenarios that were linked as part of the command post exercise. Those involved in these virtual vignettes regarded this as highly effective training. Ideally, the Combat Training Centre’s ‘Road to War’ construct will be characterised by further progress in the optimum application of simulation technology.

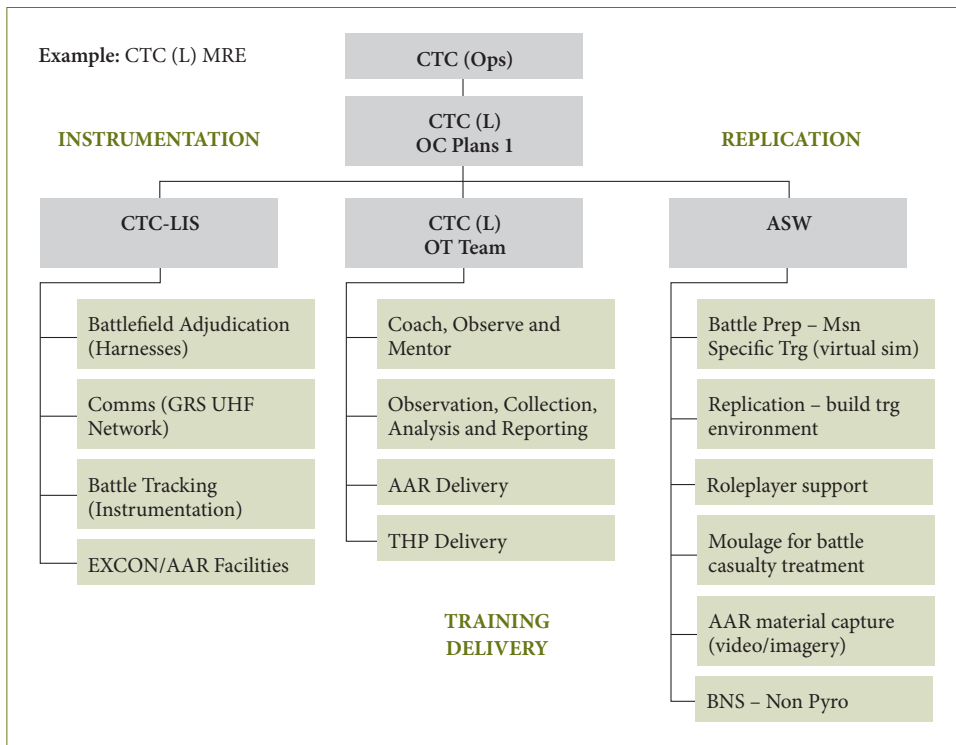


Figure 2. Combat Training Centre/Army Simulation Wing live training integration.

CONCLUSION

The last five years have seen significant development in the application of simulation training within the Army. The former Army Simulation Wing MST program has been one of these developments. The program provided commanders with the ability to train within their unit location and tailor their training to hone their unit's core skills through the application of deliberate practice.

While the MST program has enjoyed some success, Army Simulation Wing still faces a number of challenges before its role in MST and, to a larger extent, in simulation itself, are fully embraced by the Army. These challenges primarily concern the synchronisation of Army Simulation Wing support to individual and collective training activities within the force preparation continuum. Thus far, progress towards the integration of Army Simulation Wing into the LCRC 'Road to War' has been encouraging.

As the Deputy Director of Simulation Development, Robert Carpenter, stated in 2005, 'the challenge is to *institutionalise* [the] use [of simulation] and continue to demonstrate its value.'⁶ Likewise, the initiatives of the former MST program, particularly its use of simulation, must also be 'institutionalised' to ensure that its benefits for the Army are maintained and sustained over the foreseeable future.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Australian Army, *COMD LWDC Directive 04/09 – Transition of the Army Simulation Wing Mission Specific Training Program to the Land Combat Readiness Centre*, Department of Defence, 14 December 2009.
- 2 Australian Army, *Adaptive Army – An Update on the Implementation of the Adaptive Army Initiative*. This differs from a mission rehearsal exercise which is defined as 'a realistic, relevant and demanding training environment that will deliver into theatre a cohesive and sustainable force element thoroughly prepared, practiced in and capable of executing all expected operational tasks'. See p. 12.
- 3 K A Ericsson, R T Krampe and C Tesch-Roemer, 'The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance', *Psychological Review*, Vol. 100, 1993, pp. 363–406.
- 4 A Ericsson, *The Road to Excellence: The Acquisition of Expert Performance in the Arts and Sciences, Sports and Games*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996, pp. 1–20.
- 5 M Cohen, J Freeman and B Thompson, 'Critical Thinking Skills in Tactical Decision-Making: A Model and a Training Method' in J Canon-Bowers and E Salas, *Decision-Making Under Stress: Implications for Training & Simulation*, American Psychological Association Publications, Washington, 1998, p. 155.
- 6 Robert Carpenter, 'Australian Update 2005', presentation to IITSEC, Department of Defence, Puckapunyal, 2005, p. 16.

THE AUTHORS

Major Stan Carnes is an Infantry officer who has served in a variety of regimental postings in 5/7 RAR and 51 FNQR. As a specialist, he has completed postings at the Army Battle Simulation Group and the Combat Training Centre where he was the Officer Commanding the Land Command Battle Laboratory. Major Carnes holds tertiary qualifications from UNSW and RMIT, where he completed a Masters of Systems Engineering. He is currently the MST Program Manager at Army Simulation Wing.

Steven Holloway completed twenty-five years' service as an Army officer, including two years at the US Army's National Simulation Centre at Fort Leavenworth followed by a posting as the Chief Instructor, Combat Training Centre (Battle Command). He is currently a Senior Associate with Booz & Company and leads the Booz & Company team supporting the Army Simulation Wing MST Program.

TRAINING, DOCTRINE AND EDUCATION

CLOSE COMBAT

ARMY'S FUNDAMENTAL SKILL

MAJOR JAMES DAVIS

ABSTRACT

Army's doctrine is absolutely certain of the importance of close combat. *Land Warfare Doctrine 1* (LWD-1) in fact describes close combat as Army's fundamental skill—is this true? Is the doctrinal focus of close combat reflected in the training areas and schools of the Army? The anecdotal evidence is that it is not. An examination of recent works on distributed manoeuvre identifies the essential characteristics of any close combat training 'system'. Training close combat is at the forefront of United States Marine Corps thinking, and they have institutionalised this as part of Exercise Enhanced Mojave Viper (EMV). The EMV construct is broadly applicable to the Australian Army, and its adoption represents an opportunity to align actions with doctrine.

*Battles are fought by platoons and squads. Place emphasis on small unit combat instruction so that it is conducted with the same precision as close-order drill.*¹

If anyone requires convincing that the Australian Army is serious about succeeding in close combat then *Land Warfare Doctrine 1* (LWD-1) should be their first stop. In the opening chapter it states:

The Army's mission is to win the land battle. The Army achieves its mission by providing a potent, versatile, adaptable and agile land force that can be applied with discrimination and precision to protect and promote Australia's national interests. *Close combat is the Army's fundamental skill. Mastery of close combat underlies the application of land power.*²

The italics are mine, added to highlight the absolute centrality of close combat to Army's capability and mission. If there are still any doubters, LWD-1 continues:

An army adept at close combat possesses the essential foundation for undertaking the full range of military operations. The ability to be successful in close combat is imperative to the application of manoeuvre theory. Close combat skills are the result of an ethos and training regime that emphasises the importance of the fighting soldier, a willingness to endure hardship, to apply force appropriately and an ability to function as part of a team in lethal circumstances.³

Following these convincing opening salvos it is probably superfluous to remind readers that the Chief of Army's first core competency is that every Australian soldier is an 'expert in close combat'.⁴ Given the absolute importance given to close combat in our doctrine we must be thinking and training this stuff furiously, right? Right? Alas, the anecdotal evidence is that we are not. There are many combat arms officers who have never planned or conducted combined arms live fire breaches at any level, and soldiers who have never felt, seen or heard what intimate suppression looks like. Other symptoms are Tactical Exercise Without Troops and Command Post Exercises conducted without 'consideration' for gun target lines and minimum safe distances of supporting arms. I acknowledge this is anecdotal evidence and it would be foolish to assume that excellent close combat training hasn't or isn't occurring in units. The point I make is that there doesn't appear to be an organisational or institutional approach to close combat training in the Australian Army.

Why the Australian Army isn't training close combat as well as it potentially could is a difficult question to answer. I will only briefly touch on this *en route* to the main objective of this article, which is to understand what improved close combat training could look like in the Australian Army. This will be examined in two parts: first through an examination of the characteristics of close combat from a training perspective, and then

... there doesn't appear to be an organisational or institutional approach to close combat training in the Australian Army.

briefly constructing a straw man for institutionalised close combat training in the Australian Army. Many of the ideas for the straw man come from the United States Marine Corps (USMC) exercise Enhanced Mojave Viper (EMV). EMV is a twenty-eight day Operation ENDURING FREEDOM pre-deployment training package conducted at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in California.

A necessary preliminary to this discussion is to define the term ‘close combat’, which has been obscured by a melee of related terms such as ‘close battle’, ‘close quarter battle’ and ‘close quarter combat’. The definition of close combat provided by *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*, and that which is used in this discussion is:

Close combat is that carried out with direct fire weapons, against identifiable individuals, supported by indirect fire, air-delivered fires and nonlethal engagement means. Note: Close combat defeats or destroys the enemy forces or seizes and retains ground.⁵

This definition implies close combat occurs in offensive and defensive manoeuvres, but for the sake of simplicity I will discuss close combat in an offensive context only. The exclusion of the defensive phase of war would no doubt please the author of the opening quote, General Patton. Patton’s quote is quite explicit as to level of command at which close combat training should be conducted and the method used to conduct it. However, the absence of any clear instruction on ‘what to train’, delivered with similar conviction, is conspicuous and reflective of our own conceptual difficulties.

Understanding which close combat skills to train requires detailed understanding of the tactics, techniques and procedures required in close combat. Doctrine is an obvious start point for this understanding. Unfortunately the close combat explanations are somewhat simplistic and close combat, ‘closing with the enemy’ and ‘fire and manoeuvre’ are treated as largely synonymous. Fire and movement is explained in ‘The Rifle Platoon’ as ‘the technique of using fire to cover exposed movement. Within the platoon, one or more sections may cover the movement of another.’⁶ This explanation hardly does justice to the complexities of close combat. *Mounted Minor Tactics* introduces swarming, autonomous teams, the close combat cycle of observe–suppress–move–clear–observe and sensor shooting coupling in the opening chapter, but then reverts to simplistic examples and descriptions of linear tactics in subsequent chapters describing tactics, training and procedures.⁷ The effect of these simplistic explanations is simplistic understanding and subsequently simplistic training. We are all familiar with this type of simplistic training: assaults in extended line, movement occurring regardless of the effectiveness of suppression, or suppression being deemed effective without confirmation of where the rounds are impacting or the effects they are having. Other manifestations are: the Tactical Exercise Without Troops solution, for which the mortar firing position is not identified; allowing the gun target line geometries to be assumed away; or attack aviation fires being

employed ‘freestyle’, regardless of direct fire locations and artillery gun target lines. These observations lead to a deduction that Army is potentially losing clarity in its collective understanding of realities, difficulties and complexities of close combat. Not knowing what close combat ‘looks’ like makes it difficult to train.

If our doctrine provides only simplistic explanations of close combat, from where might we get a better understanding? David Kilcullen’s analysis of assault tactics in his article ‘Combined Arms and the Close Battle in Complex Terrain’ is a useful start point for understanding the relationship between fire and manoeuvre in close combat and formulating ideas of how to train it. Kilcullen illustrates the passing of the simplistic linear assault tactics as follows:

Soldiers in close combat engagements tend to move using covered approaches that are often non-linear in character while fighting in a cycle of ‘observe–suppress–move–clear–observe’. In the close fight, soldiers tend to operate in small, semi-autonomous teams that ‘flock’ or ‘swarm’, rather than move forward in large linear-based groups. Because of the reality of close combat, it probably makes more sense to consider terrain in terms of representing a network of points and nodes, rather than as a sequence of lines. Under a point or nodal model of attack, *manoeuvre supports fire*. In other words, troops manoeuvre in order to generate effective fire, and then apply this fire in order to neutralise the enemy and achieve victory.⁸

Brigadier Justin Kelly and Dr Michael Brennan present similar ideas in their working paper on Distributed Manoeuvre as follows: ‘the inter-relationship between “lines” and “columns” is the basic mechanism of tactics. It is universal, has been continuous since pre-history, and remains evident even on the relatively formless battlefields of today.’ Kilcullen’s view is that the movement from node to node is performed as a column because it presents the smallest face for the enemy to engage and allows manoeuvre and control through difficult terrain. The column becomes a line when the situation requires the maximum number of weapons to engage the enemy, and the terrain or friendly suppression permits this with acceptable risk. In this way, movement in columns (node to node) ‘enables the attacker, at least initially, to maintain a “limited liability” posture in which the forces gambited are sufficient to prompt the defender into a response, but not so large as to allow the attacker to become decisively engaged.’⁹ This idea is important as in all probability our threat will exist below our Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) threshold¹⁰ and it needs to be identified through what *Adaptive Campaigning* calls discovery actions.

Not knowing what close combat ‘looks’ like makes it difficult to train.

The logical follow-on from the identification of the crust of the enemy's defence is the attrition of the strong points. 'This attrition is fundamental in forcing the defence to adapt and thereby creating signatures that the attacking force has postured itself to collect.'¹¹ The purpose of this collecting of signatures is obviously to then allow the destruction or suppression of the newly discovered enemy forces and for the close combat cycle to repeat. In summary, 'close combat' in the offense generally consists of groups of soldiers manoeuvring from point to point. The purpose of this manoeuvre is to identify and attrite enemy strong points, as the act of doing so forces a response from the defender which creates a signature. To respond to the actions of the offensive force the assaulting force is then able to manoeuvre to apply fire (either directly or through a sensor shooter relationship) to the elements of the enemy's system that revealed itself. This completes an evolution of the close combat cycle. To design training that reflects these characteristics, it should be asked what it is in combat that forces soldiers to adopt this means of attack as opposed to linear assault tactics. The answer, as it is with most innovations in warfare, is the basic human desire to avoid effective enemy fire. The obvious deduction is that genuine close combat training requires an enemy that can return effective fire (a glimpse of the blindingly obvious, I know). This return of fire and other responses is important to replicate the 'prod/sense' dynamic inherent in close combat. Similarly, the terrain cannot allow the attacker an information or position advantage such that the enemy can avoid Distributed Manoeuvre. Not stated but implied is that the enemy will generally attempt to disrupt movement between nodes through the use of obstacles.

... 'close combat' in the offense generally consists of groups of soldiers manoeuvring from point to point.

Kilcullen's second major point is that 'fire', not manoeuvre, is the thing that leads to winning in close combat and manoeuvre is simply a method of getting fire where it can kill the enemy. As Patton said,

I think, if we should say 'Fire is the Queen of Battle', we should avoid arm arguments and come nearer telling the truth. Battles are won by fire and movement. The purpose of the movement is to get the fire in a more advantageous place to play on the enemy. This is from the rear or flank.¹²

The follow-on is that close combat is a battle to gain support by fire, and attack by fire locations (nodes in Kilcullen speak) which enable the suppression or destruction of the enemy. In Patton's view, and intuitively in our own, we know that destruction is more likely to result from fire at the enemy's least protected areas. Supporting the idea of fire as the dominant factor in close combat, a 2001 study into attrition and suppression in close combat concluded that:

Modelling and historic analysis agree that success in offensive close combat is significantly improved by capabilities that: provide intimate support to the assault, and destroy threats to the assault group after all remote (from close combat) supporting fire has ceased; provide direct fire to support the assault as it finally closes with the defence; and provide indirect fire support to suppress the enemy's defences as the assault closes.¹³

It is significant that all three 'success factors' relate to fire, not manoeuvre. The deduction is that close combat training should focus on the delivery and assessment of fires.

Determining where to focus our efforts in training the delivery and assessment of fires requires analysis of how fire is arrayed or employed in close combat. I will sidestep any examination of the evolutionary trail from single system engagements at Agincourt to the multiple system engagements of Fallujah and simply state as an assumption that, because the enemy presents himself in different guises (mounted, dismounted, dug in, etc) the location from which our fire is delivered will change by range, system and nature. These differences necessitate the use of an array of weapons to achieve suppression and destruction across the geographic and material depth and breadth of the enemy. It is rare that a single Support By Fire or Attack By Fire weapon system will achieve the suppression or destruction effectively, though I have trained this folly many times at troop/platoon level. Small teams using or directing multiple Support By Fire and weapons systems require effective sensor shoot 'links' or 'coupling' in *Adaptive Campaigning* terms. Thus for the close combat training 'problem' to be realistic, the enemy and the terrain should generally not allow destruction or suppression by a single weapons system or single firing location. The enemy will contribute to this problem through the emplacement of obstacles, which the attacking force will be required to reduce if they are to move to positions of advantage. The follow-on is the desirability of training that allows employment of the maximum number of weapons systems from the widest number of locations with the most permissive arcs. These weapons effects should be able to be directed or controlled by the soldier best able to observe the target and effects of fire.

The other obvious implication of multiple firing points is the need for an instinctive understanding of the geometries of fire. Only by making 'safety' the domain of the exercised force do we compel an understanding of minimum safe danger distances, gun target line restrictions and minimum engagement ranges at the lowest level. Thus the onus for effective and safe employment of weapons systems should lie with the exercised force and be executed in the 'manner expected in combat'.¹⁴

... destruction is more likely to result from fire at the enemy's least protected areas.

In short, if we don't know what the rules are to begin with it is difficult to assess the risk in breaking them. It would be naïve to assume that safety restrictions aren't valid considerations in combat, and as such an understanding of geometries of fire is paramount to prevent fratricide. Furthermore there is a requirement of deploying forces that intimately understand and feel confident in the balance between the risk of fratricide and the risk of exposing friendly forces to an unsuppressed enemy. Lieutenant Colonel Robert Stevenson's paper *Not So Friendly Fire* summarises this in the chronologically dated but nonetheless relevant comment:

...developing targeted doctrine, hard, realistic training, and appropriate safety procedures can also play a role in minimising friendly fire incidents. However, unless the technology is underpinned by high-quality education and training, the Army will be left with a mismatch between its human and equipment capabilities. This will be the real challenge of HNA [Hardened Networked Army], to harness the synergistic effects of combined arms and joint operations without exponentially increasing the danger of large-scale fratricide incidents. This, unfortunately, can only be achieved by accepting some risk in peacetime training. Otherwise, the whole risk will simply be transferred to operations, where the threat is higher, the loss of life potentially greater, and the implications more severe.¹⁵

Finally, multiple attack points or nodes implies there is need to plan, control and resupply ammunition during the assault. I will not discuss this facet in depth, but wonder out loud if we still own or practice this skill?

Thus far this analysis has revealed the following requirements for a 'close combat training system', complex terrain, and a responsive enemy which forces an adoption and practice of Distributed Manoeuvre. Distributed Manoeuvre in turn requires that the small teams or nodes are capable of destroying or suppressing enemy strong points. For a small team to do this successfully they are reliant on a dynamic sensor shooter coupling, understanding of geometries of fire, in-contact resupply, and an ability to assess the effects of fires. Exercising geometries of fire understanding and sensor shooter links requires the widest latitude possible in the number of weapons employed and the locations and circumstances in which they can be employed. Close combat training should demonstrate a bias to training fire over manoeuvre. Excepting a 'responsive enemy', these factors point overwhelmingly to live fire as the close combat training system of choice.

So what might such a 'close combat training system' look like? Are there systems operating in other militaries that might serve as a model for the Australian Army? Any training activity that addresses the identified close combat characteristics is likely to be complicated and require non-standard safety procedures. Acknowledging this,

... an understanding
of geometries of
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the USMC has outsourced the most realistic of its close combat training to the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group (TTECG). The mission of TTECG is to

Conduct block IV (TF LFMX) pre-deployment training and assessment of tactical elements of the MAGTF [Marine Air Ground Task Force] in the execution of the core competencies of combined arms techniques and procedures during full spectrum operations [in order to] prepare units for OEF [Operation Enduring Freedom].¹⁶

You can imagine TTECG as a Combat Training Centre (CTC) equivalent. TTECG performs three functions which allow the conduct of close combat training. I will examine each of these with an eye to CTC performing similar training.

Firstly, TTECG provides a safety backstop; this eliminates the need for exercising units to devise and develop the range safety architecture. If you want people to do something, make it easy. This is not to say that units don't have the imagination and wherewithal to coordinate this training, but a dedicated control group allows economies such as standing waivers for reduced safety distances, standing risk assessments and a standing series of instructions. Further enhancing the economy of effort is TTECG's use of gazetted purpose-built ranges. These ranges allow the use of all-organic infantry and light armour weapons at platoon and company level and have been designed to provide complex terrain likely to induce Distributed Manoeuvre, and mitigate potential risks through intelligent development of terrain which supports sound geometries of fire.

Using a gazetted purpose-built range reduces manoeuvre options for the exercised force. This is entirely in keeping with the characteristics of close combat training and is reflected in the TTECG mission, which focuses on 'techniques and procedures' only. It may appear that the presence of safety staff is contradictory to the idea that the exercised force should be responsible for the conduct of safety in the manner they are expected to in combat. In practicality there is no such contradiction and the phrase 'safety backstop' is an excellent description of a covert safety architecture that is there to 'catch the exercise force if they fall' and nothing else. Our range doctrine permits such an approach, but I am less convinced of the supportiveness of our philosophy and outlook. It is conceivable that this expertise and these ranges could be developed by CTC to allow the conduct of close combat training as part of a warfighter series. A standard company training iteration could consist of a live fire attack per platoon and company attack. The weapons support, such as mortars and machine guns, should be provided to local high readiness units or the parent battalion.

Any training activity that addresses the identified close combat characteristics is likely to be complicated...

Secondly, TTECG staff brings the range to life by providing feedback to the range participants as to the enemy's actions. This is enabled and controlled through the 'corridor', which ensures the consistency and accuracy of the enemy picture. Throughout their training Marines are instilled with three basic 'paints': 'heavy fire', 'effective fire' and 'sporadic fire'. The Marines understand the implications of these 'paints' for their movement, and respond by adjusting movement techniques or suppression as appropriate. 'Fighting the enemy' enables the corridor to manipulate the range for achievement of training objectives and forces the use of Distributed Manoeuvre and fires.

Finally, TTECG staff provides assessment. I take it as universally agreed that assessment is a good thing and is already within the CTC remit, so I won't laud it here; if, however, Army wishes to claim close combat as its fundamental skill it should be assessed in detail.

The EMV close combat training model is 'a way' of training close combat. On the surface it seems feasible to adopt in the Australian Army. The key enablers of this training are the gazetted purpose-built ranges, modified safety restrictions and dedicated safety staff. Many of these things require effort to develop but once in place require little effort to maintain. Conducting this training in a single organisation removes the burden of reinventing the wheel by units. Only by making this training directed and assessed will Army achieve the focus that close combat's importance merits. Without an institutional approach, individual units will be too easily consumed by the effort to make EMV-style close combat training work.

In conclusion, the Australian Army's doctrine leaves no doubt that close combat is at the heart of its capability. However, the anecdotal evidence is that this is not reflected in training areas and schools across the country. While doctrine is very good at identifying the importance of close combat, it is less successful at outlining the nuts and bolts of its conduct that might form the baseline of a training methodology. Two relatively recent examinations of Distributed Manoeuvre have identified the principal characteristics of modern close combat. In broad summary, close combat generally consists of the movement of small teams from location to location to attrite enemy strong points and elicit a response from the enemy defensive system. Mounted Minor Tactics identifies this as the close combat cycle of observe-suppress-move-clear-observe.¹⁷ From this a training system to support the practice of close combat was generically identified as one that had a responsive enemy, used complex terrain, allowed the use of the widest array of weapons in the widest range circumstances, placed the onus on safety on the exercised force, practiced sensor shooter coupling

Using a gazetted purpose-built range reduces manoeuvre options for the exercised force.

and had a bias for training in the use of fire as opposed to manoeuvre. A training system with these characteristics is used as part of USMC pre-deployment training. The system is enabled by gazetted purpose-built ranges, a dedicated safety staff and rigorous assessment. Such a training system could be considered by CTC to conduct close combat training in the Australian Army. Much of this may seem obvious, but it seems to have escaped Army's collective attention for some time. Institutionalising close combat training ensures that it gets done and cannot be postponed, diluted or fragmented. Our doctrine makes it clear that compromising close combat training undermines achievement of the Army mission.

ENDNOTES

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THE AUTHOR

Major James Davis has served as a Troop Leader and Squadron Commander in the 2nd Cavalry Regiment as well as the Cavalry Officer Instructor at the School of Armour. He has also been employed as the 2IC of Tank Squadron. Major Davis has served in staff appointments at HQ 1 Bde and Land Headquarters. He has deployed to Timor-Leste and Iraq in staff and command appointments. Major Davis is currently posted as Second in Command of 1st Armoured Regiment. In 2009–10 he was the contingent commander of Australian Instructor Support Team Twenty Three which supported the conduct of Exercise Enhanced Mojave Viper.

STRATEGY

WAR AND THE STRATEGIST OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

BRIGADIER DAVID COGLAN

ABSTRACT

Although fraught with difficulty, predictions of the exercise of power, and therefore the basis of the nature and conduct of warfare in the twenty-first century, can be found in two general schools of thought: those who believe that there has been, in the wake of the end of the Cold War, a discontinuity and accompanying paradigm shift in the conduct of international relations; and those who believe claims of such a shift are overstated, and that a realist approach will remain the dominant paradigm for the foreseeable future. This article will assess these schools of thought and then advocate that Carl von Clausewitz is the strategist best suited to the nature and conduct of warfare in the twenty-first century.

THE FUTURE WORLD – DISCONTINUITY VERSUS CONTINUITY

Those who subscribe to the paradigm shift argument contend in an increasingly globalised world that a range of factors (including international economic interdependence, powerful transnational corporations, international crime, terrorism, immigration and environmental issues), most of which transcend national borders, are contributing to a significant decline in the relevance of the traditional, Westphalian-based state. Predictions of the demise

of the state abound¹ with an accompanying belief in the decline of inter-state war and the emergence of new types of conflict that will change the nature of war in the twenty-first century. To commentators such as Martin Van Creveld, ‘interstate war as a phenomenon is slowly but surely being squeezed below the historical horizon’,² while others like John Keegan go further: ‘it is scarcely possible anywhere in the world today to raise a body of reasoned support...that war is a justifiable activity...it seems just possible to glimpse an emerging outline of a world without war.’³

Even if there are wars, they will not be between mature democracies.⁴ Rather, conflicts in the twenty-first century will be ‘new’, ‘uncivil’ or ‘internal’ wars between those who are part of the globalised world and those who have been excluded from it (the ‘periphery’).⁵ Within this periphery new conflicts will often be conducted in failed states with little sense of political coherence.⁶ Such conflicts are unlikely to lend themselves to resolution through the application of overwhelming Western firepower. Conversely, because of the technological superiority of Western forces, competitors to Western interests in these conflicts will be forced to adopt asymmetric strategies.

The realist approach rejects the majority of the discontinuity argument and believes that the state will remain the dominant factor in the international system, albeit with increasing competition from non-state actors.⁷ While not totally rejecting the notion of a bifurcated world and the impact this may have on the nature and conduct of future war, this school of thought rejects the notion of a world without war. Coral Bell suggests three distinct but interrelated stages in twenty-first century warfare. The current stage, which she describes as a ‘Jihadists’ War’ is an attritional-style, asymmetric conflict that will last as long as the unipolar world remains. In the medium term, perhaps from around the 2040s, she sees the emergence of up to twelve great powers (although not necessarily mature democracies) that in the long term will develop into a serious challenge to the US hegemon.⁸ To Bell, the transition from a unipolar to multipolar world will be a period of increased tension where ‘as in the past, it will make conventional war between the great powers much more likely than at present.’⁹ If conventional war is possible, realists accept that in the short to medium term irregular, asymmetric conflict, labelled by some as fourth and now fifth generation warfare,¹⁰ will be the dominant form of conflict for the foreseeable future and that, despite the hopes and promises of what Eliot Cohen has labelled the ‘technophiles’,¹¹ no technological silver bullet is likely to emerge to decisively win such wars.

... the transition from a unipolar to multipolar world will be a period of increased tension ...

CLAUSEWITZ – STRATEGIST OF CHOICE

Despite these competing visions, Clausewitz is the strategist of choice in the twenty-first century and in *On War* he has achieved his ambition to write a book ‘that possibly might be picked up more than once by those who are interested in the subject.’¹² Integral to *On War*, and a telling discriminator between him and other strategists, is the intellectual framework of theory that pervades his work. To Clausewitz, theory ‘will have fulfilled its main task when it is used to analyse the constituent elements of war...to define clearly the ends in view’ and that such analysis is ‘meant to educate the mind of the future commander...not to accompany him on the battlefield.’¹³ Theory is not sacrosanct—it must always be subject to critical analysis and re-evaluation.¹⁴

For Clausewitz, war ‘is the continuation of policy by other means.’ Therefore, warfare cannot be autonomous from policy: ‘the political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.’¹⁵ The nature of war is characterised by factors such as chance and uncertainty,¹⁶ which finds expressions in friction, ‘that force that makes the easy so difficult’¹⁷ and the factor that distinguishes real war from paper war.¹⁸ Friction is further compounded by the fog of uncertainty.¹⁹ Such concepts allude to the importance Clausewitz placed on the human dimension of war. While war may be rational as an instrument of policy, it is the ‘moral elements [that] are among the most important in war.’²⁰ In turn, this points towards Clausewitz’s duality of war consisting of both an eternal and universal objective (*logic*) and an ever-changing subjective (*grammar*).²¹

If war at its highest level is an act of policy, the object of war is an ‘act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.’²² No one should start a war without understanding the political purpose and objective of the war.²³ It was the responsibility of the policymakers to set out these objectives—the first and foremost act of the statesman is to determine the type of war.²⁴ The clear subjugation of the military to policy explains the difference between absolute (theoretical) and real war—absolute war was the ideal form of war—total and with no limits on escalation. But as a continuation of policy, restricted by the limitations imposed by policy, the conduct of war moved from the theoretical absolute to real or limited war.²⁵

It is the role of the commander to achieve victory. To Clausewitz, this was achieved, and wars could be won, through decisive battle. At the tactical level, victory in decisive battle is an end in itself. At the policy and strategic level, the tactical victory is the means to achieve favourable policy outcomes. Although

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preferred, decisive battle is not essential: favourable outcomes can be achieved, even if engagements are not fought.²⁶ To aid the tactical commander, Clausewitz introduced two concepts that have enduring relevance. The Centre of Gravity, ‘the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends’,²⁷ is the point at which ‘all our energies should be directed’ and could include the enemy army, his capital or a stronger ally.²⁸ The culminating point is the second concept: the position at which an attacker can no longer effectively protect himself from counterattack.²⁹

Criticisms of Clausewitz fall into two areas. Those generally supportive acknowledge that some aspects of his theories fall short. He is land centric, weak on the analysis of the enemy, probably more wrong than right in his assessment of intelligence, does not adequately consider the utility of irregular forces or the role of technology and, for such a central part of his theory, the concept of policy is not well developed.³⁰ These criticisms are valid, reflect the context of the environment within which Clausewitz wrote, and tend to deal more with the *grammar* than the overall *logic* of his theories.

Other more vocal critics question the validity of Clausewitzian *logic*. Basil Liddell Hart viewed Clausewitz as the ‘mahdi of mass’ and believed him responsible for the doctrine of the offensive that produced such mass casualties in the First World War.³¹ More recent critics align themselves with the discontinuity school previously discussed. John Keegan contends that war is not the continuation of policy by other means. Rather, he advances his argument that war is primarily a cultural phenomenon (and therefore not necessarily of an enduring nature).³² Martin Van Creveld, an outspoken critic, believes that the Clausewitzian understanding of war is obsolete (based on his view that Clausewitzian war is exclusively the purview of the state).³³ Mary Kaldor, although less strident, has similar criticisms.³⁴ However, critics of the critics have not been silent and suggest that Keegan, Van Creveld and Kaldor are making their case based on a too narrow interpretation of Clausewitz (which was fashionable in the 1970s).³⁵ Of course, Clausewitz believed that theories need to be constantly reviewed: he would probably support the criticism of his *grammar* but would have been far more sceptical of those who questioned his *logic* based on what may happen in the future.

Despite such criticisms, Clausewitz’s theory of war has no credible rival or competitor. Although Martin Van Creveld’s lament of the end of strategy is too strong, no other strategist or school of thought has emerged to seriously challenge Clausewitz. Reasons for this vary. Van Creveld contends that most twentieth century theorists concentrated on the *how* of war and, while fixated with the application of technology, showed inadequate regard for the *what* and *why* aspects of strategic thought.³⁶ Others

Clausewitz’s theory of war has no credible rival or competitor.

believe, as I do, that there has been steady and slow development in strategic thought, by a range of theorists. However, progress has only been incremental. Space precludes an adequate discussion of such theorists who include, but are not limited to:

- Julian Corbett and his maritime strategy of sea control, which recognises the interdependence of sea and land power as part of a national military strategy
- Basil Liddell Hart and his concept of the indirect approach
- Edward Luttwak and his observation of the inherent paradox of strategy and warfare
- John Boyd's Observe, Orient, Decide and Act loop, which seeks, through temporal dislocation, to impose strategic paralysis on the enemy, and
- Admiral JC Wylie and his general theory on war with its emphasis on control and the utility of cumulative and sequential strategies.

There is a third reason for Clausewitz's dominance: '*On War* is the gold standard for general strategic theory. So intellectually inescapable is Clausewitz that...most strategists are all either neo-Clausewitzian...or self-avowedly post- Clausewitzian.'³⁷

Despite this 'gold standard' and a lack of serious challenge to his theories, is Clausewitz future proof? Of course, the answer to this is impossible to predict with certainty. However, the question can be addressed by looking back. Written in the first half of the nineteenth century, much of *On War* remained relevant, and was gaining in influence, throughout the remainder of that century. Throughout the tumultuous twentieth century, the relevance and popularity of Clausewitz steadily increased as theorists and practitioners of war, even with such technologically driven changes to the *grammar* of war as air power, acknowledged the value of Clausewitzian *logic*. That Clausewitz's concepts, more than any other, could survive and even prosper throughout a century of such far reaching changes and tragic conflicts, suggests that Clausewitzian *logic* is enduring and will continue to provide a cogent and relevant theory, despite the inevitable changes in the *grammar* of war, for the twenty-first century.

In the foreseeable future, the realist, state-centred approach will remain the paradigm of international relations ...

SUMMARY

In predicting the nature and conduct of war in the twenty-first century there is no certainty. Of the competing visions presented, there is convergence to the view that sovereign states will have a reduced influence in an increasingly bifurcated world. However, forecasts of the demise of the state are premature. In the foreseeable future, the realist, state-centred approach will remain the paradigm of international relations,

albeit with a significant increase in the number of non-state actors. Conflicts will range across a wide spectrum, from those irregular and asymmetric in nature, where victory is unlikely to be achieved by technological overmatch, up to and including conventional inter-state clashes. As such, given the uncertainty of the future, the human element of warfare and conflict will remain dominant and, despite the hopes of those who believe such conflict is on the wane, war will continue to remain a viable instrument of policy in the twenty-first century.

Given this view of the world—of state and non-state multi-spectrum conflict, often asymmetric in nature and where clear victory is unlikely to be delivered by technology, of uncertainty and the enduring centrality of the human aspects of war—Clausewitz remains the strategist of choice for the twenty-first century. Despite incremental and gradual, albeit worthy, contributions by a select few to the school of strategic thought, there are no rivals to Clausewitz. He is the only theorist that provides us with the *what*, *why* and, to a lesser extent, the *how* of war in a comprehensive and cogent general theory. This does not mean that Clausewitz is the one-stop shop for strategy for the twenty-first century—the prudent practitioner, for each strategic dilemma presented, must weave together threads from throughout the school of strategic thought to come up with the best solution. However, Clausewitz is an essential part of any such consideration. His critics seem to get bogged down into narrow interpretive issues and often forget that Clausewitz, especially in respect to the *grammar* of war, was a product of his times. Tellingly, none of his critics have effectively challenged the veracity of his *logic*. The vision of the world for the remainder of this century is of continuity in the essentials of war. So far, Clausewitz's *logic* transcends time, and despite his contention that 'in strategy everything has to be guessed at and presumed'³⁸ there is every likelihood that Clausewitz will be the strategist of choice for the twenty-first century and beyond.

ENDNOTES

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THE AUTHOR

Brigadier David Coghlan graduated from the Royal Military College in 1984 to the Royal Australian Artillery and specialised in ground-based air defence. He has had operational experience and held a range of command, operations and plans related appointments. Academic qualifications include a Masters of Defence Studies from the University of New South Wales and a Masters of Strategy from the US Army War College. He is currently Director General of Military Strategy in the Strategy Executive of the Department of Defence.

ANZAC REFLECTION

VIETNAM WAR MEMOIR

BRIGADIER NICK JANS

The flight comes into view. Nine machines, enough to lift the whole company. Purple smoke marks the landing zone as the helicopters wheel over the jungle perimeter and ease themselves fussily onto the ground. The soldiers emerge from the nearby trees and clamber aboard, section by section, awkward with their heavy packs and weapons. Together with others of the company headquarters group, the captain is assigned to the lead helicopter. The flight is airborne again within five minutes. Aloft, the deafening clatter of the rotors allows no opportunity for conversation. He uses the time as he usually does, either poring over maps of a new operational area if the company is being repositioned, or dreamily contemplating a shower and that first beer if the flight is inbound to Nui Dat.

I hear a helicopter landing on the Channel 7 roof nearby and am instantly back in Vietnam. Like Proust and his madeleines, the ‘thoc-thoc-thoc-thoc’ sound of rotor blades brings a whole set of sensations flooding back; less intense these days, but still almost tangible. The heat: hot like only the tropics can be, whether it be muggy summer when you were almost always wet, or dusty winter when you were almost always parched. The smells: rank stink of jungle greens that have been sweated in for 24 hours a day for anything up to a fortnight, and the aroma of the peasant east—the curiously-not-unpleasant reek of human waste used ubiquitously as fertiliser, the wood smoke and cooking smells from the villages. The fatigue: the sheer exhaustion at the end of a day’s slog through scrubby jungle, when you still have to help to dig a weapon pit and to plot, code and transmit a defensive fire plan; and the back-from-the-dead effort of rousing yourself in the early hours of the morning to attend to a request over the command net.

Curious that it is sounds like these that have the greatest power to remind me of what it was like to be a foot soldier in Vietnam. Certain songs from the era will do it too—for example, ‘Magic Carpet Ride’ by Steppenwolf. I hardly hear it these days but when I do I am instantly back in Fire Support Base ‘Helen’, in the sapping heat of the dry season, when Armed Forces Radio played it almost every day. Movies and books won’t do it for me. It’s not just that there are so few of both, and it’s not just that most of the movies are about Americans with perfect teeth winning effortlessly. A real Vietnam evocation needs to get into your guts and your soul; to capture the ache of sexual longing of young men recently separated from wives, lovers and girlfriends; to bring back the perpetual uneasy, queasy sensation in your stomach, the consequence of inevitable hygiene inadequacies on operations, the feeling that it was never quite safe to fart. And, above all, it would evoke that special kind of tedium: the tedium of a routine where, for long stretches of time—for days at a time—nothing really happened but in which you had to remain vigilant, because to switch off might have fatal consequences.

The other day I saw a picture of Australian soldiers in Vietnam. It’s one of those iconic photos that adorn the dust jackets of histories of the event. Soldiers wait beside a cleared area in the jungle, half-turned away from the dust kicked up by a light helicopter landing fifty metres away. Hatless, scraggy heads leaning slightly forward to balance the weight of their packs, jungle-greens stained with the sweat and grime of a long patrol. Young faces, grizzled faces—Aussie faces. Enough to make you shout for joy, to weep for the costly pointlessness of it all.

Another iconic photo. Four men are in the frame: one, in black pyjamas, sprawled and lifeless, the others instantly recognisable as Australian soldiers. A jungle track runs up the axis of the image, scrubby trees and undergrowth on each side. The trained eye reads the situation at a glance. Plainly there has just been a contact and probably the briefest of fire-fights. The rest of the section—perhaps no more than the section commander and the two-man machine gun group—are out of the picture, but you sense their presence. The man in the foreground is half-crouched, facing slightly towards the camera looking upwards, M16 rifle at the ready position. Early 20s, eyes wide, mouth half open. Little more than a boy, but the stance shows self-confidence and competence. You can almost see his deliberate movement: lower body tense, almost still; upper body slowly, carefully and consciously rotating; eyes searching for danger. He wears a light webbing belt, to which are attached three large water bottles and two small pouches; a machete in its sheath is just visible on his off-side; on his head the ubiquitous floppy cotton ‘giggle hat’. His pack and those of the others were probably shrugged off at the moment the contact began.

In a fire-fight, officers are usually so busy that they haven’t got time to be scared. Soldiers—the ‘diggers’—are usually not so lucky. Lying prone, hearing bullets over

your head, praying that the boss will not be panicked into giving unwise orders—there's a lot that can pass through a soldier's head in just a few seconds. Anyone would be scared, but you can tell this soldier isn't. And it's not just adrenalin and the fight-rather-than-flight reaction to danger. That can take you just so far. Reliability in a tight situation depends mainly on training and the self-discipline coming from the feeling of being a member of a cohesive team. Australian soldiers in Vietnam had both factors in spades.

Two photos, both evoking the young Australian soldiers with whom I served, and their quiet presence, their understated competence. Half were national-servicemen, but no less professional. In fact, the only way you could tell the difference between them and the regulars was that the national-servicemen were generally better soldiers. Brighter, sharper—hard to put your finger on, but you felt it. Two young gunners with whom I worked went on to distinguished careers in statistics; one as a professor of mathematics, the other as a Tax Office executive. But the three I got to know best were just ordinary blokes and, wherever they may be now, chances are they still are. Brian, Gubby and Peter.

MEMORY OF BRIAN:

A fire-fight: the leading section is in contact; cacophony of shouting, rifles and machine guns. The captain runs forward, half crouched, to find a spot from which to direct artillery fire from the battery that is over seven kilometres to the rear. A swift glance backwards confirms that Brian is close behind, pack with radio aerial poking out bouncing around the back of his neck, freckled face sweating. They go to ground. 'Fire Mission Battery!' he yells back over his shoulder. Brian conveys the order and all those that follow over the radio net. Brian is all business, despite the dangers not fifty metres away, recording the time and the gist of each message, as procedures dictate all signallers must, but on the magazine of his rifle with a chinagraph pencil rather than on the more usual notebook. Brian will transcribe it later, when he can find a calmer and drier situation. He is 22 years old, a national-servicemen, country boy, and headed back there on RTA—the epitome of military professionalism in the interim.

MEMORY OF GUBBY:

Early morning at the Nui Dat helipad: the company is about to depart for a seven-day patrol. Morale is high; the day's main heat has yet to bite and the company, now four months into its tour, is pleased with its performance so far. Gubby fits into this up-beat environment perfectly. If Brian is an introvert, Gubby is an out-there-in-your-face

extrovert. He seems to have decided that, if he has to play the role of soldier for two years, then he might as well do it with style. He has acquired a macho swagger and an outrageous Pancho Villa moustache. But the style is matched by the substance. Stooped forward under the weight of a huge pack, he carries not only four water bottles, rations, light bedding, toilet gear and a handful of personal effects, but also a radio set and two spare batteries. As a signaller, his routine load is the heaviest in the company. Brian and Peter are similarly affected, but Gubby has gone one further. In order to—as he puts it—‘pull my weight with the grunts’, he totes a rifle with a long magazine in lieu of the more conventional shorter and lighter version, together with an extra 100 rounds of ammunition. This adds several kilos to a load that is already considerable—in fact, as revealed by some scales on the helipad, his pack weighs as much as he does—but he’d rather sweat than lose face with his infantry counterparts.

MEMORY OF PETER:

It is minutes before the company is due to assault a bunker system. For the last two hours, through Peter on the radio, the captain has directed a bombardment with every artillery battery at the task force’s disposal: all three Australian field batteries and an American medium battery. By rights the bunkers and everything in them should be pulverised, but he is not optimistic. The soldiers are tense as they wait for the order to go in. Amid this, Peter is having a snack. He smears one half of a hard tack biscuit with jam from a tube and then tries to break it off; the biscuit shatters and jammy bits fall to the ground. ‘Bugger!’ ‘Peter, why not try this? Bite a piece off your biscuit then squeeze some jam straight into your mouth.’ Crackle of small arms fire in the background. ‘Oh yeah.’ He tries it, and his boyish, grubby, sweaty face creases in a grin. ‘Good one, boss’. The captain cannot begrudge the familiarity; they are about to go forward together into heaven-knows-what.

I never saw better soldiers, and we, their officers, did our best not to let them down. We trained them and we trained ourselves. We were diligent in the minutiae of our duties, we attended to their needs.

And like generations of officers in Australian units before us, we practiced ‘the professionalism of small things’. If you wanted a patrol program to dominate the local jungle, if you wanted to lay ambushes to deny the VC easy access to the villages, we were your men.

We were good, but not, as I later realised, as good as we thought ourselves. Strategically and politically we were naive to the point of being inept.

Take one incident. A minor event, but it sums up a lot:

*June 1968, the peak of the Viet Cong Tet Offensive. It is late afternoon. The company has just been dropped off by a swarm of helicopters; they have come from one operation to this one. They are tired and somewhat disoriented, they need time to regroup and rethink, and in any case last light is little more than an hour off. There is a small knoll near the drop zone, and nearby a Vietnamese village; the company commander decides they will harbour on the knoll for the night. The company shakes out, trudging in extended formation towards the knoll. The villagers in the sodden paddies scarcely give them a glance as they go by. The soldiers are edgy; this is a new area. The fighting in the region in the last few days has been intense. American artillery is active a few kilometres away. Something big is on, and the villagers' sympathies are unknown. The company reaches the knoll, deploys, and the men shed their packs and begin to dig in. Then, a few metres from the company headquarters group, a soldier gives a low cry of surprise. He emerges from his embryonic weapon pit and presents to the company commander, on the blade of his portable spade, a bone. Somehow no-one needs to be told it's human. Now some of the immediate features in the area are making sense: the low, bare, gravelly mounds and the orderly white rocks. 'Faack! We're in a graveyard', exclaims the CSM, looking to the company commander. The question—'what now, sir?'—hardly needs to be expressed. 'Bloody irrelevant!' (it's the end of a long day). 'Bloody inconvenient, but irrelevant. We're here, it's too late to move again, and what the f**k anyway.' We return to the preparation of our pits, more careful, apprehensive now. A few more bones, even a skull. The artillery continues to thump, reminding them that these pits might be needed tonight. So, regardless of sensibilities, dig they must, and quickly, because it is almost time for stand-to.*

The night passes without incident and at first light the company is on its way. Much happens that day, and on those that follow. But a week later, back in base, when he casually relates the event in the mess, the Intelligence Officer splutters his beer. 'You drongos! The Vietnamese are ancestor worshippers. And you dingalings were digging up the local cemetery.' The IO laughs. 'Winning hearts and minds, eh?' The feeling of professional shame is so profound that he can't even call forth the traditional soldier's expletive.

A former university colleague once remarked to me that men who had not been to war were subconsciously envious of those who had. Well, I don't know about that, although he, as a veteran of sixty missions with RAF Bomber Command in the Second World War and with a long post-war career as an historian and philosopher, was well credentialed to say so. (He maintained—and in this I do believe him—that his experience was the most exciting of his life. 'You cannot imagine the feeling you get when you've landed, all the engines are shut down, and you are *back!* How *exhilarating*, how *vital* is that feeling. Never since have I felt as alive as in that time!')

What I do know is that no man who has been to war is untouched by the experience. For some, of course, this is fundamentally negative; but for many—maybe most—it is curiously fulfilling. Vietnam was tedious, it was uncomfortable and, as we ultimately learned, we were *had*. (The universal lot of the soldier.) But to have trained and served with an Australian military unit on operations is to have shared an experience rarely paralleled by anything else that you subsequently do in your life. I had very little in common with most of the soldiers in the company. I never knew, in any meaningful sense, those other than with whom I had daily dealings, and I never tried to follow them up once it was all over. But while we marched together we were bound together by mutual dependence and respect that was stronger than friendship and affection. Imagine the feeling of cohesion in a winning sports team, then double that, and then double again. Just as it is with brothers, you don't have to like those with whom you live but you are compelled to mutually support each other, if only because to do otherwise risks your survival—even if 'survival' means just seeing it through. Feeling wanted—it's a heady drug, especially for people who may not have had the experience in their life before.

The village graveyard incident described above was the first chink in the armour of my belief in Australia's Vietnam mission. By the end of my tour, the breastplate was like a sieve. I doubt, however, that many of my comrades shared my misgivings. Australian soldiers, like their compatriots in general, are pragmatic to a fault and tend not to think of such things. And, at the soldiers' level of the war, a strong sense of self and collective competence and teamwork sustained their belief in themselves and what they were doing. When you are doing what you are trained to do, and you are doing it well, and nothing is telling you otherwise, it's inevitable to believe that you are 'winning'. That's what it was like for many—maybe most—of us in the Australian Army in the 1960s, and that's why many found their return to be so traumatic.

Vietnam—whether we loved the experience, loathed it or just stuck it out, all of us who were there felt part of 'a team'. We may have little in common other than that, but the memory of that intense shared experience stays in our souls for a long time afterwards.

Peter and the captain, together with the rest of the company, assaulted the bunker system that day. And, as he had feared, there were still many very-much-alive VC left in there. His bombardment had been pretty well useless, except as a morale booster to get the attack going. Nevertheless, within 15 minutes the lead platoons had subdued the opposition and it was all over. But at a price. When he came up with the company headquarters group, the platoon commander reported seven Australian wounded and one dead. The dead soldier lay nearby on his back. Head pillowed by his pack, his face covered by his camouflage scarf, he might have been taking a nap. Another soldier,

sobbing like a little boy at kindergarten, knelt beside him. The platoon sergeant gently led him aside as company headquarters began the tasks of organising a MEDEVAC and then preparing to move on to whatever was next.

I sometimes reflect on the strange juxtaposition of my two most vivid memories of that eventful day: Peter and his snack, and the dead digger and the disconcerting peace of his pose—the essence of ordinary life and the aftermath of violent death. It's those two images, especially the latter, that invariably occupy my thoughts at the minute's-silence moments on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. But at the time I was scarcely moved. Although I had witnessed a human tragedy a short time earlier, there was now much to be done. The company needed to regroup, a route needed to be plotted to the next destination, and regimental headquarters needed a report on the bombardment so that it could piece together some lessons for general consumption. So I gave no thought to the dead digger for the next few hours, and neither on the next day nor on the successive weary days as they shaded into a general memory of the patrol. A day moves on and you have little choice but to move on with it. It wasn't indifference or inhumanity or callousness, and there was no reason to think that the others did not feel the same way. I suppose it must be a soldier's protective mechanism: you put it away, no time to think about that now. You move on, and your life moves on. It's only at unguarded moments that the memory draws you back.

THE AUTHOR

Brigadier Nick Jans is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, serving in the Australian Regular Army for twenty-five years in field artillery, training and personnel policy development. A brigadier in the Army Reserve, he is currently Visiting Fellow in Leadership and Military Sociology at the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics at the Australian Defence College.

REVIEW ESSAY

Peter R Neumann and Michael L R Smith, *The Strategy of Terrorism – How it Works and Why it Fails*, Routledge, London, 2008.

Reviewed by Major Jason Harley

This book is a valuable contribution to military studies. Terrorism is a most misunderstood term in both society and academia, and for military practitioners equally so. While the book explores the strategic aspects of terrorism in first principles, it is written in a simple clear manner. It unearths a number of flawed assumptions in popular understandings and ideas, bringing the study of terrorism back on the track of rational inquiry. Terrorism is misunderstood because it is a word that is essentially an abstract noun, devoid of actors or materials. Within general societal discourse, the word ‘terrorism’ is laden with many implicit socio-cultural assumptions. These assumptions need to be understood because they affect the critical study of terrorism and its application to domestic policy.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON TERRORISM

The first assumption implicit in the popular understanding of terrorism is that it automatically uses violent methods. While this is a typical observation, this is not necessarily so, as the production of fear can be generated without resort to violence (e.g. animal rights activism). It is important to make this point because many activities undertaken by terrorist organisations are in fact non-violent. It would seem that while violent actions are newsworthy, verbal threats issued by terrorist organisations do create fear in the target audience. The second assumption is that terrorism is implicitly immoral. And while many acts of terrorism are clearly horrendous, this assumption interferes with understanding the processes of strategic formulation within the minds of terrorists. In studying terrorism we are not necessarily interested in the moral question itself, but the thinking processes of the terrorist in order to apply Sun Tzu’s maxim ‘know thy enemy as well as yourself’.

The third assumption is that terrorists operate in some sort of irrational ethical void. While some terrorists may be mentally unstable, it is a leap of reasoning to assume all terrorists are mentally unstable. Especially in the context of Western militaries where in any case up to 3 per cent of soldiers may be sociopaths.¹ The fourth assumption is that terrorism is the 'weapon of the weak'. While this is a valid assumption in some cases, it is not a universal principle, especially since state actors as well as non-state actors conduct terrorism.

One flawed approach in studying terrorism is the popular crusade in search of the 'root causes' of terrorism. These 'root causes' have been typically understood as a product of environmental factors such as poverty, ethnic suppression and economic inequality; resulting in despair and alienation. But of the hundreds of thousands of alienated youths that exist in Western countries (a typical terrorist recruitment demographic), only a very small minority actually chose terrorism as a mode of operation. As an analogy, all terrorists breath oxygen, but that does not mean oxygen is the cause of terrorism. Therefore 'root causes' are hardly a good starting point for research and policy.

Without understanding the limitations of these bias and assumptions, one is automatically led to the conclusion that terrorists operate outside the realm of rational activity. The problem with using these assumptions is we potentially assume terrorism is an irrational response to a rational escalation of problems. The assumption that terrorism is the product of irrational people clearly does not fit the flawed but rational 'root cause' model in any case. How can you declare that the 'root causes' of terrorism are rational when your assumptions of terrorists imply that they are irrational? Hence, all assumptions need clarification in order to avoid category mistakes. Assuming terrorism is fundamentally abnormal leads to a skewed research agenda. When one assumes that terrorism is irrational then one effectively rules out the possibility of understanding the phenomena.

Another issue is the inaccurate fuzzy language many commentators use to communicate the phenomena of terrorism. The search for the 'root causes of terrorism' is as flawed as the notion of a 'war on terror' ... or a 'war on war'. Abstract nouns have no causes. Effectively those who solely argue for a 'root cause' of terrorism may miss crucial opportunities to objectively evaluate the phenomena of terrorism. Instead terror is transvalued to serve the political preferences of state or anti-state agenda rather than understanding the issues at hand. In order to bring the study of terrorism back on track, a better starting point is to understand terrorism as the use of military strategy by actors who believe, rightly or wrongly, that through such means they can advance their goals. This unashamedly follows the Clausewitzian dictum that 'war is politics by other means'. In this context, terrorism is an act of force to compel an enemy to do our will. This is a better starting point than assuming terrorism as simply a product of 'root causes' or a nihilistic immoral irrational act that defies enquiry.

FEAR AS AN INSTRUMENT OF TERRORISM

Terrorism can be defined as a ‘deliberate creation of a sense of fear, usually by the use or threat of use of symbolic acts of physical violence to influence the political behaviour of a given target group’. This highlights some important facets, namely that the violent quality of most terror acts focuses on inducement of fear. Also the nature of violence is ‘extra-normal’, that is it must go beyond the normal limits of acceptable violence in society and communicate the symbolic character of any violent acts. Thus the aim of any strategy of terrorism is not to attrite or kill but to break the spirit and create a sensation of fear within the target to initiate political change. Terrorism is therefore a form of psychological warfare: a battle of wills played out in people’s minds. So while third generation warfare (manoeuvre warfare) proponents saw the application of strategy to influence and destroy the will of the enemy commander, terrorism represents an application of strategy that influences and destroys the will of the target audience. Both are contextually different, yet both can be explained within the Clausewitzian paradigm.

WHY TERRORISM IS A FLAWED STRATEGIC OPTION

The Strategy of Terrorism discusses research that supports the idea that terrorism is generally not a successful strategy for achieving goals. As early as 1991, researcher Leonard Weinberg found that of the seventy-five terrorist organisations he studied, none stood a decent chance of surviving for more than ten years. The common experience for terrorist organisations is not success, but failure and disappearance. Recently, Max Abrahms reproduced similar conclusions, stating that only 7 per cent of terror groups in history (Irgun and FLN) have achieved their aims, and even then the link between the terrorist organisations’ operations and the factors that shaped ‘success’ remain somewhat doubtful.² The obvious idea that drives terrorist organisations is that overwhelming fear creates desired change within the target audience. However, even these ideas are flawed.

The first flawed strategic idea is that terrorism creates stress that undermines society. While terrorism in the United States kills less people than lightning strikes or allergic reactions to peanut butter, it is the sensationalised fear that creates disorientation. While fear and mental discomfort is a cost to society, it does not completely dislocate the supporting pillars of society, unless that society is already very weak. Society does actually manage to continue and PTSD studies conducted after the recent London bombings, 11 September 2001, and the Madrid train bombing conclude that PTSD effects were surprisingly low. Within days of the event, the majority of the population generally recovered their sense of routine. Residual levels of disquiet did continue within the minds of the target audience, but overall, people

coped fairly well and did not disengage from society or succumb to paranoia. So while terrorist organisations aim to achieve complete societal dislocation, at best they can only achieve moderate disorientation.

The second flawed strategic idea is misjudging the level of resilience that resides in target populations. This idea proceeds on the notion that disorientation is more pronounced when terrorist acts are not 'one-off events' but are part of an ongoing campaign design to wear down the target audience. Terrorist organisations believe that ongoing terrorist activities will produce chronic fear that will tip target audiences 'over the edge'. Yet terrorism is shocking and disturbing not because of the violence involved but primarily because it is 'extra-normal'. A degree of violence exists in all societies and most people cope with 'normalised violence' such as pub brawls. Even in the most crime-ridden cities, ordinary people manage their fears. So the advent of repetitious terrorist acts is likely to create normalising, coping mechanisms rather than disorientation. This situation creates a 'law of diminishing returns' especially if terrorist attacks occur at regular intervals, at similar targets, using recycled modes of operation. Obviously from a terrorist point of view, the application of surprise would defeat any onset of normalisation of the target audience. However, there is doubt that most terrorist organisations have the real ability to maintain high tempo operations and the momentum of surprise and unpredictability over long periods of time, especially from an organisational resource perspective. Any rapid paradigm changes in tactics will increase the likelihood of mission failure due to lack of prior experience and learning, imploding internal cohesion and further expose terrorist organisations to detection. Extended terror campaigns ranging from the Second World War air raid bombings in Europe right through to the extended Palestinian terror campaigns have eventually led to numbing and indifference rather than disorientation. In fact rather than achieving the terrorist's aim of instilling chronic debilitating fear in large sectors of the target audience, it has produced resilience.

The third flawed strategic idea is propagating the 'blame game'. It is typical for terrorist organisations to target governments in their information operations in order to discredit them. Terrorist organisations aim to force governments into over-reaction with the hope that target audiences view governments as brutal and oppressive. The other course of action is to force governments into under-action, where government loses legitimacy because it cannot protect its people. Douhet, the famous Italian air power theorist, promoted the idea that massive aerial bombardments of towns would cause such fear and dread that target audiences would rise up against their government. While Douhet's theories have been criticised as unethical they are also clearly unworkable. The strategic Second World War bombings on London and Germany as well as the strategic bombing of North Vietnam did nothing to weaken target audience opinion of homeland government. In fact, for the United States in Vietnam it was actually part of its strategic undoing. These conventional examples provide useful pointers for terrorism. Namely that blame and legitimacy cannot be effectively

influenced by terrorist organisations unless government legitimacy is already too low. The IRA experienced the ‘blame game’ backfire when they commenced its terrorist offensive on the British homeland in the early 1980s. The IRA was aware that the British public were uncomfortable with government policy on Northern Ireland. The IRA believed that bringing the fight onto British soil would knock Britain out of its complacency and force the British Government to reverse their long-standing policy. The IRA was completely right in their assessment of the high ambiguous nature of British public opinion but completely wrong in assuming terror attacks would align British public opinion to the IRA cause. The end result: British public opinion regalvanised in support of tougher measures against the IRA.

The fourth flawed strategic idea is that the government in power has a ‘breaking point’. A prolonged terrorist campaign against the government will create a situation in which governments will dissolve, hand over power or compromise terms to the wishes of terrorist organisations. This idea draws its origins from the many examples of separatist or anti-colonial campaigns involving indigenous populations against colonial governments after the Second World War. While there is great strength in the nationalistic causes of indigenous populations against foreign colonial powers, it is difficult to transfer that ‘template’ to countries where strongly indigenous, homogeneously cultural-ethnic, or strongly democratic population exists. Yet this has been the thinking of many terrorist organisations such as the IRA, who were captive to the ‘template’ of British failure in Aden. Also Fatah (PLO) studied and routinely used FLN’s methods used in Algeria. Hence ‘templating’ the methods of Irgun and FLN is dangerously flawed as both campaigns were in the context of foreign colonial occupation where regime legitimacy was already dramatically low and opportunities to fill power vacuums were plenty.

THE ESCALATION PARADOX

War is a clash of two living organisms each seeking to achieve its aims. Clausewitz supported this idea when he stated that ‘if the enemy is to be coerced, you must put him in a situation that is more unpleasant than yours.’³ Because war is a reactive environment, the only way to deal with Clausewitz’s maxim is to ‘escalate’. However, escalation is a difficult task for terrorist organisations because of the following question: if the strategy of terrorism fails to sustain an adequate level of fear, how can it escalate that level of fear without further recourse to greater physical destruction? The tension existing in any strategy of terrorism is that terrorists aim to wrestle legitimacy from governments by maximising the impact of attacks, while minimising death and injury to the target population. Yet if a terror campaign is to succeed it must create sustained fear and crisis through an information operation supported by continued indiscriminate attacks. Hence the impulse for terrorist organisations is to ‘escalate,’

otherwise they risk becoming irrelevant. But the paradox working against them is the loss of target audience support. The indiscriminate nature of attacks creates more anxiety, yet it also potentially erodes target audience support for terrorist organisations. And herein lies the problem: terrorist organisations can easily create fear, but the real problem is sustaining that fear. The Clauswitzian escalation trap is further realised when a terror campaign provokes a counter-escalation response from a target government. In the case of Uruguay and Argentina, the standing government of the day successfully wiped out terrorist organisations despite using brutal widespread measures. Even liberal democracies have and are willing to defend their position and harshly deal with threats. The escalation paradox is a real issue that any strategy of terrorism needs to deal with in order to achieve its aims; however, the historical hit rate and the nature of terrorist organisations suggest that mission success is slim.

The Strategy of Terrorism ends with case studies highlighting the flawed strategic ideas of two terrorist organisations and why they failed to deal effectively with the Escalation Paradox: the Gamaat Islamiya (GI) group of Egypt in 1992–97 and the IRA in Northern Ireland 1972. In both of these situations, the terrorist organisations' decision to escalate violence provided the perfect excuse for government security forces to increase security measures and operational tempo. The end result: repressive government measures countering the threat received support from a wide cross section of society.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although some conclusions on specific terrorist organisations and outcomes may invoke disagreement or debate, the military strategy aspects of this book are immense. A strategy of terrorism is not about trying to neutralise the power of a stronger opponent, but about influencing its behaviour in a manner that favours the goals and interests of the terrorists. However, time and time again, those who have sought to implement a strategy of terrorism have chosen to ignore the fundamental power correlations that exist between the target and the terrorist, leaving them prone to ill-considered acts of escalation. The most frequent outcome being political and military failure—or disappearing into irrelevance.

ENDNOTES

- 1 'An Anatomy of Killing – Aggressive Predisposition of the Killer' in D A Grossman, *On Killing – The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, Back Bay Books, Boston, 1996, p. 182.
- 2 Peter R Neumann and Michael L R Smith, *The Strategy of Terrorism – How it Works and Why it Fails*, Routledge, London, 2008, p. 56.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 78.

BOOK REVIEW

David W Cameron, *'Sorry, lads, but the order is to go' – The August Offensive, Gallipoli: 1915*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2009.

Reviewed by Rhys Crawley

After the months of stalemate that followed the failed Gallipoli landings, the Allied high command began to look for new options. They decided to mount a breakout manoeuvre from the Anzac sector to seize the northern heights and eventually cross the peninsula. At the same time there was a new landing at Suvla Bay which aimed to both support the Anzac left flank and provide a logistical base for the subsequent phases of the offensive. This was the August Offensive, and it was the largest and last major effort to defeat the Ottomans at Gallipoli.

It is this offensive that forms the subject of David Cameron's second book on the Gallipoli campaign. Like his previous foray into the first 24 hours of battle, Cameron successfully focuses his narrative on the individuals who took part in the actions of August 1915. He provides an evocative and emotional read throughout and is able to successfully convey the confusion of battle, while at the same time telling an interesting and historically correct story.

Despite this, Cameron provides little more than was previously known about the August Offensive. He relies heavily on secondary sources, especially the works of Charles Bean, to construct his narrative. Where primary materials are used, Cameron has largely drawn from previously published accounts. Some unseen records do appear, but these are in the minority. One must, however, be conscious of the audience for whom Cameron was writing. The book was never intended to be an academic text, nor an educational tool for the professional soldier. Rather, it was written for the general reader, and therefore strove to introduce those with little or no prior knowledge of the August Offensive to this important period of Australia's military history.

There can be no doubt that the author has an extraordinary grasp of the various battles that constituted the August Offensive. He presents a succinct, yet detailed and accurate understanding of the plans and objectives, followed by an impeccable blow-

by-blow account of what, how and when units fought. By examining the Ottoman story, Cameron also presents his audience the bloody reality of war on both sides of no-man's land. Cameron's real strength, however, is his ability to accurately describe the landscape, constantly reminding the reader of its key features and the difficulties these posed for the planners and troops.

That said, there are aspects of Cameron's approach and content that let him down. His focus on the soldiers' war is at the expense of the operational and strategic levels of the war. Similarly, his reliance on narrative is at the expense of an analysis of the reasons for failure. One of the major shortcomings of this book is that like many authors before him, Cameron briefly succumbs to the age-old myth that the Anzacs 'almost managed to pull it off' (p. xiii). This is not only incorrect; it is ignorant of the inherent impossibility of the task. The principal drawback, though, is the scant attention paid to the equally chilling and pointless saga of the British at Suvla Bay. By focusing almost entirely on the fighting at Anzac, Cameron tells only a portion of the story. As such, the book sits as just another volume of Anzac-centric rhetoric in the historiography of this failed campaign.

The book is also let down in its presentation. While sufficient for someone with an avid knowledge of the Gallipoli campaign, and given its intended general reader audience, its maps are merely adaptations of the thumbnail sketches used by Bean in 1924, and offer nothing for those who want to understand the particularities and peculiarities of the terrain. The endnotes are also brief, confusing and inconsistent. On a positive note though, the author should be congratulated for his selection of interesting, and not often seen photographs.

Despite being an amalgamation of previously seen material, this was a long overdue book about the August Offensive. It does not provide many educational lessons for the professional soldier, but it does remind one of the importance of adequate command and practical planning. If you are after a captivating story, then Cameron's narrative is for you. But be warned, it is not the full story.

BOOK REVIEW

Jean Bou, *Light Horse: A History of Australia's Mounted Arm*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2009.

Reviewed by John Donovan

Jean Bou has written a useful institutional history, which focuses on the roles, development and eventual decline of the Australian mounted arm from colonial times until the last horsed regiment was disbanded. Descriptions of battles are used to illustrate points in the discussion, not as the principal focus of the narrative.

Dr Bou explores why the Australian colonies were increasingly willing to maintain forces beyond a particular crisis after the Sudan expedition. Support for mounted militia forces was strengthened by Canadian-based theorist George Denison, whose writings influenced Edward Hutton. Hutton commanded the New South Wales military forces, and then a mounted infantry brigade during the Boer War. After Federation, he commanded the Commonwealth forces. Hutton's pivotal role in the development of the light horse is a major element of the book. He wanted a focus on dismounted action, and generally got his way.

Many books on Australian military history criticise the concept of the 'natural Australian soldier'. Dr Bou puts this criticism into a broader context, recording that this belief was held both by political/journalistic elements (as could be expected) and by experienced British regular officers like Hutton. He notes that, 'like all good myths, [it] had some basis in fact', and that in South Africa 'the supposed strength of Australia's mounted men ... was [not] completely mythological', but lack of training remained a limitation. Most contingents took about a year to 'become genuinely efficient'.

Dr Bou records that this mythology was maintained alongside a strong emphasis on training, suggesting that, regardless of public pronouncements, those responsible for developing the Australian forces recognised that training was necessary to build on a good foundation. He notes that the mythology of the frontiersman as natural soldier also existed in other English speaking nations. One wonders whether this was a recruiting device to appeal to the self-image of citizens in nations with voluntary military service!

The belief in the potential effectiveness of part-time militias also focused on 'irregular' warfare, or theatres where defences were less developed. Indeed, the battlefield success of mounted forces during the First World War was principally in secondary theatres, where the development of defensive systems was less extensive than on the Western Front.

Dr Bou discusses in detail the role of the light horse, concluding that for much of its existence it operated as mounted rifles, but that there was a change to an emphasis on the cavalry role from about the time of Beersheba. His differentiation between the mounted infantry and mounted rifles roles, however, sometimes involves hair splitting on functions like outpost duties and skirmishing.

Dr Bou sees mounted infantry as a mobile form of traditional infantry, with its principal role as dismounted attack and defence while sometimes also undertaking outpost and reconnaissance duties. Mounted rifles undertook the duties of cavalry, but using a firearm. Hutton, however, wanted his mounted rifles to be 'capable of dealing in dismounted action with an enemy's infantry', which is a broader mandate, more appropriate to Dr Bou's definition of mounted infantry. The difference seems to pivot on the capability to attack or defend dismounted, largely a function of dismounted strength (a dismounted light horse brigade was 'barely equivalent in strength to an infantry battalion').

The difference became a problem in the Sinai and Gaza operations, when limited dismounted numbers and firepower reduced the effectiveness of the light horse. The mounted rifles concept seemed to fit more into irregular warfare, and was not as effective as was hoped. Some *arme blanche* or 'cavalry spirit' mythology seems to creep into the book, and the examples of successful mounted charges often stand out as opportunistic occasions providing the exceptions that prove a rule. However, when the militia light horse regiments were reorganised after the war to continue the traditions of the wartime units and reflect wartime experience, all were 'trained as cavalry'.

Dr Bou follows the decline of the light horse, which started in the home-based militia regiments during the First World War. Financial reality in the 1920s cut training time, and reduced numbers of suitable horses. This ultimately finished the mounted troops. Unfortunately, the Army neglected mechanisation during the 1930s. Raising two armoured car regiments, incorporating light car elements in selected regiments, and converting six light horse regiments to machine gun units were the principal efforts made to mechanise the light horse during the 1930s. Dr Bou concludes that the military authorities between the wars 'abrogated their responsibilities in regard to the development of the mounted arm'.

By 1939 the importance of mounted units had waned. The remaining mounted units were intended to operate as irregulars in country not suitable for mechanised operations. Their final days were spent patrolling.

Dr Bou, in an appendix, analyses a photograph claimed to be of the charge at Beersheba. The evidence is summarised well, and he is probably right that the photograph was not taken there. Whatever photograph Eric Elliott took that day, it does not seem to have been this one.

It would have been useful had this book included lists of light horse units at selected times to enable the reader to follow organisational changes and changes in numbering systems. It is, however, overall a valuable book.

BOOK REVIEW

Paul Ham (ed), *Captain Bullen's War: The Vietnam War Diary of Captain John Bullen*, Harper Collins, Pymble, 2009.

Reviewed by Bob Hall

Captain John Bullen was posted to Vietnam as the OC of the 1st Topographical Survey Troop, part of the 1st Australian Task Force at Nui Dat. To brief his successor on developments, and to inform his family of his activities there, he kept a diary. The diaries were edited by Paul Ham into a lively account of Bullen's Vietnam tour. Ham's editorial hand was light. Bullen displays a keen writer's eye for an illuminating detail, a wry observation or a description of the underlying tension of combat operations.

Bullen's diaries begin on 17 January 1968 when he boards HMAS SYDNEY bound for Vietnam. He arrives at Vung Tau on 3 February 1968 just days after the Tet Offensive erupted, with provincial cities, towns and military bases under heavy attack by the Viet Cong and the People's Army of Vietnam. Together with 350 other Army personnel—a mixed bag of all corps—Bullen disembarks on a shingle beach somewhere in Vietnam. No one is there to meet them. They have one rifle between them—but no ammunition. A US Army jeep screeches to a halt and a US Military Policeman tells Bullen and his fellow Australians, 'There's VC coming this way! Take cover and prepare to defend yourselves!'¹ So begins *Captain Bullen's War*.

It ends thirteen and a half months later with Bullen, exhausted after an 'often desperately demanding' year, boarding HMAS SYDNEY for the return cruise to Australia. Between these dates Bullen treats us to an often wittily observed picture of the day-to-day workings of an Australian Task Force at war.

In addition to his job as OC of the Survey Troop, as a 'spare' captain within the Task Force Headquarters, Bullen does regular stints as duty officer in the Task Force command post, dealing with a host of tactical problems such as casualty evacuations, enemy probes of the defensive perimeter, and granting clearances to fire artillery and contacts. He also acts as a board member or defending officer in a number of courts martial. He records in his diary the details of production of maps, the conduct of

survey and the administration and leadership of his small unit. But interspersed within this story are the highlights of Task Force operations through one of the most hectic periods of the war and Bullen's wry observations of the Army disciplinary system going inexorably about its business. Bullen's job also takes him regularly to Saigon, Baria, Vung Tau and the US Army base at Long Binh. He records an acutely observed wartime travelogue of the bases, bars, beaches and brothels he encounters. Punctuating the story are Bullen's sharply observed snapshots of the sometimes hilarious, sometimes dramatic, incidents that war brings forth.

A wonderful cast of characters pass through the spotlight of Bullen's attention. There are the men of his unit, particularly Grant Small who emerges as competent, energetic and a natural leader, but is denied his opportunity for promotion by the powers that be. There are the various Task Force and US Army officers Bullen meets in the course of his work. There is the laundry proprietor, the Vietnamese Major and the shoeshine boy, along with a bevy of finely observed bar girls, prostitutes and madams.

I enjoyed the story of 'Gazza', the Task Force Officers' Mess steward with a larrikin streak who tipped a bowl of soup over an unpopular officer and was charged and fined \$10 for the offence. It later emerges that the offence was premeditated. Gazza picks up \$25 in bets, making his soup spilling offence a tidy earner. Gazza, presumably seeking further supplementation to his Army pay, later invites Bullen and others to nominate targets for similar treatment.

In another *Python*-esque interlude, Bullen, who speaks fluent French and German, is on duty in the Task Force command post. Two visiting American Colonels are ushered in by another German-speaking Australian officer. For the benefit of their American audience the two Australians begin an argument. The German-speaking Australian demands to know if this is the Australian Task Force command post, to which Bullen replies in fluent French that it is not; it is, he says, the last French Resistance command post operating against the Viet Minh.

But more serious episodes are never far away. Mine incidents, friendly fire episodes, contacts, air strikes and other combat events pepper the diary.

Bullen acknowledges that his diary records only what he saw or heard at the time, and the field of view for junior officers and soldiers in war is severely limited. Thus, there is no sense here of the broader impact of the Tet Offensive or the 'mini-Tet' Offensive of May 1968, the beginning of the Paris peace talks, or world events having an impact upon the Vietnam War, such as the 1968 US Presidential election campaign bringing Richard Nixon, who promised the phased withdrawal of US forces, to the Presidency in January 1969. The book, in other words, is impressionistic. And some of Bullen's impressions of 1ATF operations need to be treated cautiously. For example, he asserts that 'outside major battles ... SAS patrols... kill more [enemy] than the rest of the ... Task Force put together.'² This is incorrect.

Excluding major battles, during calendar year 1968 the SAS killed 175 of the enemy, whereas Infantry killed 646.³ He also overstates the effectiveness of helicopter gunship support. But many of the details of combat operations he records in his diary are accurate and add depth to the colourless accounts to be found in official Task Force Headquarters war diaries.

This is an easy and enjoyable read. It shows Bullen to be a man sensitive to the violence and suffering of the war, caring of his men and the units doing battle with the enemy, but equally alert to the ironies, human foibles and the comic always present in war. The soldiers of the 1st Topographical Survey Troop could have done much worse than to have Bullen as their commander. *Captain Bullen's War* gives a vivid impression of the Australian Task Force in wartime Vietnam.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Paul Ham (ed), *Captain Bullen's War: The Vietnam War Diary of Captain John Bullen*, Harper Collins, Pymble, 2009, p. 23.
- 2 Ibid., p. 199.
- 3 Analysis of the Vietnam Combat Database created by Dr AT Ross. But SAS loss ratio was far better than that of Infantry (1:19.8 for SAS compared with 1:3.8 for infantry). However, Infantry loss ratio improves substantially relative to SAS loss ratio when Infantry performance in major battles (of which there were several in 1968) is included.

BOOK REVIEW

Jim Storr, *The Human Face of War*, Continuum International Publishing, London, 2009.

Reviewed by Justin Kelly

Many readers will be aware of Jim Storr through his contributions to various British journals over the last twenty years. A retired Infantry officer, he is a forensic thinker with a strong empiricist bent—one who works from the observed facts towards a theory rather than the other way round. In the latter stages of his military career he was deeply involved in operational analysis, doctrine production and the analysis of lessons. *The Human Face of War* is his first book and is very reflective of the author's professional experience.

This is an important book, albeit one with an audience that is probably limited to specialists. It opens with a review of the sources and character of military theory. By investigating the distinctions between arts and sciences it discloses the uncertain foundations on which many of our presuppositions are based and, convincingly, argues that we are whistling in the dark. On the way to this conclusion, in a wonderfully grumpy first chapter, Storr disposes of Fuller's principles of war, dismisses Boyd's OODA loop, aims some passing blows at Clausewitz and Sun Tzu, and derides most of the key ideas that have shaped the military debate since the end of the Cold War. For anybody involved in doctrine or concept development this chapter alone is worth the price of the book.

Storr, does not, however, propose a theory himself. This is refreshing in an era in which anybody with a computer seems to deem themselves qualified to have a view on a unified theory of war. Rather, Storr argues that warfare is so chaotic, so fundamentally human, so replete with exceptions, that attempts to encase it in some theoretical framework are bound to fail. So instead of a theory of war, Storr proposes that, as true empiricists, we approach each situation with perfect openness of mind and, by making better decisions faster, win.

To support this line of argument he leads the reader through an examination of a number of ideas that are important to understanding combat: shock, attrition, the

structure of tactical organisations, command and the role of leaders. In this, Storr focuses clearly on conventional combat, which is presently unfashionable, but if the reader looks beyond the specific examples to the techniques of analysis being used there is much that can be learnt along the way. This is a good book because it demonstrates the utility of combining experience, either actual or vicarious, with critical thinking to arrive at conclusions that are independent of fashion, and which avoid defaulting to the latest buzzwords. As a book on the methodology of military theorising, at least about combat, it is probably unique.

The Human Face of War is not, however, perfect. Although Storr is clearly erudite he is equally impatient with abstractions and so he tends to be dismissive of things that can't be measured. For example, he discounts Luttwak's propositions about the paradoxical logic of war portraying them as theoretical weaknesses. Yet his central thesis is based on the same precept—that real enemies will constantly avoid your strengths and circumvent your preparations, and that therefore speed and agility are crucial. There is a related reluctance to draw from his stated examples those generalities that are the first step towards the development of coherent theory. To this reviewer, if Storr went up a couple of layers of abstraction he would find that he is strongly Clausewitzian. Instead, by rejecting abstractions, Storr's empiricist bent leads him to argue that the exceptions invalidate the derivation of rules and, mostly, the book discounts rather than proposes solutions other than 'select and prepare your people well and hope for the best'. The book is also wrongly titled. It is not a book about war, but one about combat, and these two subjects, although closely related, are not the same.

This is a valuable and important book for the specialist reader and one that is chock-full of fascinating insights, examples and analysis. Although, to this reviewer, it occasionally draws premature and incomplete conclusions, these do not overly detract from its very useful methodology and confronting propositions. Storr is a good writer and the voice of the book is strongly reminiscent of the late Richard Simpkin, rich in conviction and, surprisingly given the nature of the subject, compelling. It is recommended for anyone with an interest in the theory of combat.

BOOK REVIEW

David Finkel, *The Good Soldiers*, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 2009.

Reviewed by Major Andrew Shum

David Finkel's *The Good Soldiers* is raw, confronting and more than a timely reminder of the lessons learnt, hardships faced and indelible physical and emotional scars that are left on those engaged in close counterinsurgency fighting in the modern era. As the current focus of the Coalition and its political masters remains firmly entrenched in the ongoing Afghanistan fight and surge, Finkel recounts the fifteen month tour of the soldiers of 2-16 Battalion, 4th Infantry Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division during the Iraq surge in 2006/2007.

Finkel, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist who was embedded with 2-16 for most of its tour, doesn't target the strategic or operational levels of the surge and provide a sugar-coated summary of a resounding success born from a remarkable strategy. Finkel has instead produced an insight of the surge at the tactical level, and in doing so tells its true story from the perspective of the man on the ground—achieving powerful and unforgettable results. The men of 2-16 were like many others in the Iraq surge. They were deployed at short notice and allocated a section of Baghdad, thrown a copy of the newly published FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* manual and given an intent echoed all the way down from their Commander-in-Chief President: 'Our troops will have a well defined mission: to help the Iraqis clear and secure neighbourhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to ensure that the Iraqi forces left behind are capable of providing the security that Baghdad needs.'

The 2-16 sets out true to the mission, the manual and the population. Guided by the battalion commanding officer, the men of 2-16 look to embrace counterinsurgency basic principles and from the first days begin expanding their footprint within the population, embracing and mentoring the local security forces, and taking every opportunity to reaffirm to the public that they are working towards a safe and secure environment for them. Over the ensuing fifteen months, 2-16 is tested to beyond personal and professional limits at each and every rank level in

attaining these goals. Finkel presents this friction candidly and to great effect. The reader is not spared the horrors of explosively formed penetrator IED blasts and their resulting effect inside a Humvee, the lingering thoughts in the mind of soldiers in the hours and days after such events, the frustrations of dealing with questionable loyalties in local counterparts, and the emotional rollercoaster for the families left to care for the shattered minds and bodies of those wounded and returned home. By presenting each chapter as a new month in the surge and introducing it with a 'same-time' quote from the strategic leadership, Finkel subtly allows readers to make up their own minds regarding realities of the surge and its successes and failures. This masterful presentation contrasting the commentary that helped shape public opinion of the day, emphasising the success of the surge with the harsh realities endured by the soldier on the ground, reinforces Finkel's own intent of documenting the 2-16's corner of the war, unshaded and without agenda.

This book is a must-read not only for the junior leaders within our ranks, but all the way up to and beyond uniformed decision-makers at the highest levels. There is no glorification within Finkel's account of 2-16's part in the surge, instead an honest, compelling and powerful story of what it is truly like to fight in the modern battlespace. While *The Good Soldiers* is focused on the Iraq War surge of 2006/2007, it would be both disrespectful and dangerous to relegate it to history. *The Good Soldiers* is a remarkable, warts and all story that presents lessons, dilemmas and undeniable truths that will outlast the fighting in all current theatres. Just as it was for all those who have been on the ground in Iraq, this story does not have a happy ending. It is far more appropriate, and very simply implies the emotional impact on all those involved, that the final pages present a roll call of all the members of the 2-16 who fought in the surge, including the seventy-seven recipients of the Purple Heart, and the faces and names of their fourteen killed in action. *The Good Soldiers* is a great read.

BOOK REVIEW

Garth Pratten, *Australian Battalion Commanders in the Second World War*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2009.

Reviewed by Craig Stockings

Despite its rather uninspiring title, and the fact that it began life as a PhD thesis—and at times reads as such—Garth Pratten’s book, *Australian Battalion Commanders in the Second World War*, is an important contribution in an under-represented area of Australian military historiography. Over the decades the acolytes of Charles Bean have done a comprehensive job at idolising the heroic deed and sacrifice of Australian ‘diggers’ at war. So too, a healthy tradition of military biography has ensured that our generals have had their time in the sun. But what of that vital link in between? What about the ‘Old Man’? What about the commanding officers that ran the war at a unit level? It is at this historical ‘gap’ that Pratten’s book is aimed—and where it squarely hits its target. Key issues such as the background, role, influence and conduct of Australian commanding officers are all examined in this book—most for the first time.

In its overall form, style and subject matter, Pratten’s work is unique. In a field too often clogged with repetitious narratives and ‘ripping yarns’, Pratten’s analytical approach to the issue of unit command in the Second World War is refreshing. So too, his willingness to move past commemoration or hero worship of the deeds of past servicemen into the realm of real critique and judgment is a healthy contribution. Alongside accounts of successful command relationships and decision-making at a unit level, he is unafraid to call poor leadership by its true name—and describe its consequences. Pratten does not pull his punches. This is not a popular or dominant tradition within Australian military history, but it is a key strength of his book.

The second factor that sets Pratten’s work apart, and which should earn it a place on military reading lists and on the bookshelf of anyone interested in military history rather than military myth, is the breadth and scope of the research that underpins it. Pratten’s judgments of various commanders, command institutions, practices

and performances are based on a balanced reading (and understanding) of a wide range of sources. His personal opinions surely shine through—but they are opinions based on careful analysis, not private fancy. His arguments are logical and insightful. His points are well made. The rather scathing appraisals of unit commanders in 8 Division during the Malayan Campaign, or the (in)actions of certain commanders a little earlier in North Africa and Greece, are cases in point in this regard. So too, his careful statistical arguments that demonstrate that Australian commanding officers during this conflict were not necessarily the democratic, representative cross-section of Australian society that Anzac imagery might have us believe.

Given the numbers of Australian commanding officers that fought, the wide variations in combat circumstances for Australian Infantry units in battle from 1941–45, and the enormous variations in character and leadership styles on display, it is no small achievement to have put together a coherent work on the issue of battalion ‘command’ in the Second World War. Pratten, however, has succeeded— and with considerable aplomb.

Those with a passion for military history—I recommend you buy this book. Those more comfortable with new versions of the same old Anzac fables, however, may perhaps be better served sticking to the bestsellers.

TITLES TO NOTE

Listed below is a selection from the review copies that have arrived at the *Australian Army Journal*. Reviews for many of these books can be found online in the relevant edition of the *Australian Army Journal* at: http://www.defence.gov.au/army/lwsc/Australian_Army_Journal.asp

- *North Korea on the Brink*, Glyn Ford with Soyoung Kwon, Pluto Press, ISBN 9780745325989, 249 pp. (Distributed in Australia by Palgrave Macmillan)
- *Reporting the War: Freedom of the Press from the American Revolution to the War on Terrorism*, John Byrne Cooke, Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 9781403975157, 272 pp.
- *The US Military Intervention in Panama: Origins, Planning, and Crisis Management June 1987–December 1989*, Lawrence A Yates, Center of Military History, United States Army, ISBN 9780160794193, 313 pp.
- *This Has Happened: An Italian Family in Auschwitz*, Pierra Sonnino, Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 9780230613997, 218 pp.
- *Inside the Stalin Archives: Discovering the New Russia*, Jonathon Brent, Center of Military History, United States Army, ISBN 9781921372827, 335 pp.
- *Honor and Fidelity: The 65th Infantry in Korea, 1950-1953*, Gilberto N. Villahermosa Brent, Scribe Publications, ISBN 9780160833243, 329 pp.
- *Danger Close: Commanding 3 Para in Afghanistan*, Colonel Stuart Tootal, John Murray, ISBN 9781848542594, 306 pp.
- *The Tiger Man of Vietnam*, Frank Walker, Hachette Australia, ISBN 9780733623660, 356 pp.
- *East Asian Multilateralism*, Kent E Calder and Francis Fukuyama (eds), Johns Hopkins University Press, ISBN 9780801888496, 281 pp.
- *'More than an Ally?': Contemporary Australia-US Relations*, Maryanne Kelton, Ashgate Publishing, ISBN 9780754673675, 226 pp.

TITLES TO NOTE

- *Political Islam in Southeast Asia*, Gordon P Means, Lynne Rienner Publishers, ISBN 9781848542594, 306 pp.
- *Political Economy in a Globalized World*, Jorgen Orstrom Moller, World Scientific, ISBN 9789812839107, 442 pp.
- *Terrorism, War and International Law: The Legality of the Use of Force Against Afghanistan in 2001*, Myra Williamson, Ashgate Publishing, ISBN 9780754674030, 277 pp.
- *Toward the National Security State: Civil-Military Relations during World War II*, Brian Waddell, Praeger Security International, ISBN 9780275984083, 200 pp.
- *The Army Medical Department 1917-1941*, Mary C Gillett, United States Army Center of Military History, ISBN 9780160839702, 644 pp.
- *Religion, Conflict and Military Intervention*, Rosemary Durward and Lee Marsden (eds), Ashgate, ISBN 9780754678717, 186 pp.

Are you interested in writing a book review for the *Australian Army Journal*? Please contact the *AAJ* at army.journal@defence.gov.au, stating your areas of interest, and we can provide you of a list of the books available (you will be provided with a free copy that is yours to keep).

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editors of the *Australian Army Journal* welcome submissions from any source. Two prime criteria for publication are an article's standard of written English expression and its relevance to the Australian profession of arms. The journal will accept letters, feature articles, review essays, e-mails and contributions to the *Point Blank* and *Insights* sections. As a general guide on length, letters should not exceed 500 words; articles and review essays should be between 3000 and 6000 words; and contributions to the *Insights* section should be no more than 1500 words. The *Insights* section provides authors with the opportunity to write brief, specific essays relating to their own experiences of service. Readers should note that articles written in service essay format are discouraged, since they are not generally suitable for publication.

Each manuscript should be sent by e-mail to <army.journal@defence.gov.au>, or sent printed in duplicate together with a disk to the editors. Articles should be written in Microsoft Word, be one-and-a-half spaced, use 12-point font in Times New Roman and have a 2.5 cm margin on all sides. Submissions should include the author's full name and title; current posting, position or institutional affiliation; full address and contact information (preferably including an e-mail address); and a brief, one-paragraph biographical description.

The *Australian Army Journal* reserves the right to edit contributions in order to meet space limitations and to conform to the journal's style and format.

GENERAL STYLE

All sources cited as evidence should be fully and accurately referenced in endnotes (not footnotes). Books cited should contain the author's name, the title, the publisher, the place of publication, the year and the page reference. This issue of the journal contains examples of the appropriate style for referencing.

When using quotations, the punctuation, capitalisation and spelling of the source document should be followed. Single quotation marks should be used, with double quotation marks only for quotations within quotations. Quotations of thirty words or more should be indented as a separate block of text without quotation marks. Quotations should be cited in support of an argument, not as authoritative statements.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Numbers should be spelt out up to ninety-nine, except in the case of percentages, where arabic numerals should be used (and *per cent* should always be spelt out). All manuscripts should be paginated, and the use of abbreviations, acronyms and jargon kept to a minimum.

BIOGRAPHIES

Authors submitting articles for inclusion in the journal should also attach a current biography. This should be a brief, concise paragraph, whose length should not exceed eight lines. The biography is to include the contributor's full name and title, a brief summary of current or previous service history (if applicable) and details of educational qualifications. Contributors outside the services should identify the institution they represent. Any other information considered relevant—for example, source documentation for those articles reprinted from another publication—should also be included.