



The Canadian Army Journal

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ARTICLES

The Long Engagement: The Case of the Canadian Army's Multi-Mission Effects Vehicles

A Scientific Look at Operational Art

Core Issues Motivating Afghan Insurgents

*Knives in the Night or A Voice of Hope?
The Combined Action Program in
Contemporary Scholarship*

*Light Forces for Rapid Deployment
and Theatre Entry*

*COIN or Conventional?
Resolving the Small Army Conundrum*



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The Canadian Army Journal, a refereed forum of ideas and issues, is the official quarterly publication of the Canadian Army. This periodical is dedicated to the expression of mature professional thought on the art and science of land warfare, the dissemination and discussion of doctrinal and training concepts, as well as ideas, concepts, and opinions by all army personnel and those civilians with an interest in such matters. Articles on related subjects such as leadership, ethics, technology, and military history are also invited and presented. *The Canadian Army Journal* is central to the intellectual health of the Canadian Army and the production of valid future concepts, doctrine, and training policies. It serves as a vehicle for the continuing education and professional development of all ranks and personnel in the Canadian Army, as well as members from other environments, government agencies, and academia concerned with the Canadian Army, defence, and security affairs.

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Unsolicited article manuscripts, research notes, book reviews, and points of interest are welcome. Articles should be 5000–7000 words exclusive of endnotes, research notes 1500–2500 words exclusive of endnotes, book reviews 500 words, and points of interest 1000 words or less. Articles may be submitted in either official language. Authors must include a brief biography. Authors must supply any supporting tables, charts, maps, and images, and these should not be embedded in the article text. Articles may be submitted via email or regular mail. All submissions are peer reviewed and the Editor will notify contributors on the status of their submission. Further details regarding author submission guidelines are available at www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/.

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NAVIGATING THE ARMY'S WAY AHEAD



Major A.B. Godefroy, CD, PhD, Jrcsp
Editor-in-Chief

The army will continue to have soldiers deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Canadian Forces contribution to the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A) until the government concludes its commitment there on 31 March 2014, but the point at which the army will turn the corner on the longest war in its history is soon approaching. The question that weighs heavily on the minds of many, of course, is what happens next?

Those who have a longer view of the history and evolution of Canada's Army know all too well that the conclusion of hostilities is always accompanied, rightly or wrongly, by inevitable army resource and financial austerity. As such, it comes as no surprise that there will be serious challenges and hard decisions to be made going forward, and what the army does to position itself in the short term in order to align essential capabilities over the mid-term through 2016 will ultimately have a great impact on its longer-term capacity for transformation around the year 2021.

Being able to imagine the future is a powerful tool for adapting to and managing real change. And sustainable operational readiness requires a much broader focus than just the day-to-day training of soldiers. Navigating the army's way ahead in the 21st century will greatly depend upon its ability to preserve the integrity of its intellectual foundations as well as its ability to undertake robust, relevant and responsive capability development and experimentation. These activities can directly inform strategic- and operational-level decision making and will become ever more essential to the conduct of smart operations in the coming years.

In this issue of *The Canadian Army Journal*, Colonel R.N.H. Dickson, Director of the newly created Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre, has penned a guest editorial explaining some of the critical steps now being taken to ensure the army has the intellectual foundation and future capability development tools it will need. This is followed by a full spread of articles on a range of subjects examining the army's past experience in capability development as well as arguments for future directions it might take. Dr. Rob Addinall's article on the history of the Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle project offers valuable judgments and insights into how force development works, while Lieutenant-Colonel Lockhart's article on the future potential of light forces offers a different perspective on how capabilities may be pursued in the future. Other articles examining ongoing debates concerning

operational art, conventional warfighting and counterinsurgency, as well as detailed historical case study analyses of influence activities in both Vietnam and Afghanistan, make for another great issue of the army journal. Enjoy, and we look forward to hearing from you!

IN OTHER NEWS...

The Canadian Army Journal is currently inviting readers to submit reviews on any recently published (since 2009) books that may be of interest to the army or to scholars and practitioners of land warfare studies in general, at any time. Visit our website for writing and submission guidelines, and check out some recently published examples in the journal.

Readers will be pleased to know that we are currently in the process of updating the CAJ Index of Articles, first published in 2008. The new edition will be bundled with one of the Vol. 15 issues of the journal and mailed out to everyone on our distribution lists. It will also be made available on the journal's website.

The Fort Frontenac Library is nearing the completion of almost two years of extensive renovations to modernize its infrastructure, make new room for its ever-growing collection, and improve access to its current facilities and resources. Next on the list will be the updating of its digital footprint and outreach program, including a revitalized website as well as the development of digital resources.

ON THE EDITOR'S DESK...

Though many volumes have passed across my desk over the last several months, two books that caught my attention were Timothy Wilford's *Canada's Road to the Pacific War: Intelligence, Strategy, and the Far East Crisis*, as well as *Arms and the Man: Military History Essays in Honor of Dennis Showalter* edited by Michael S. Neiberg. Both books offer refreshing new insights into well-studied subjects, and we'll carry reviews of them in the journal.



Major A.B. Godefroy, CD, PhD, jrcsp
Editor-in-Chief

THE NEW CANADIAN ARMY LAND WARFARE CENTRE



Colonel R.N.H. Dickson, CD
Guest Editor

As the Army prepared to emerge from a decade of complex operations and transition from the current theatre in Afghanistan to the new Force 2013 baseline—setting conditions for the next major force development build towards Land Ops 2021—it became clear that Army governance needed a refresh in order to enhance leadership, staff synchronization, and unity of effort. To that end, starting in early 2011 the Deputy Commander Canadian Army led a major review of the existing Army governance model with a view to making improvements that would ultimately lead to the implementation of command-driven priorities for future capability development. Included in the implementing directive published in August 2012 was direction to stand up the new Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre (CALWC) effective 17 September 2012.¹

For a number of years now, the capability and force development focused elements of Chief of Staff (COS) Land Strategy and Land Force Doctrine and Training System (LFDTs) have strived to function as a virtual warfare centre, coordinating and synchronizing developments in land concepts, design, doctrine, and force structure, incorporating both new ideas and technologies, and lessons from the Army learning process. Establishing the CALWC last autumn was seen as a logical next step to preserve the integrity of the Army's intellectual foundation as well as its war-tested land capability development process. While many of the contributors to the warfare centre will remain virtual members, coordinated through the Warfare Centre Collaboration Team (WCCT), the creation of a core warfare centre organization establishes a single organization with overall lead responsibility for the development of the Army's overarching concepts and capability definition for both the Army of Tomorrow, looking out 5 to 10 years, and the Future Army looking beyond current force development horizons, as far out as the year 2040. It also provides a clear focal point for increased collaboration with CF Capability Development efforts, as well as with the CF, sister service, and allied army warfare centres.

1. Ref: 1180-1 (DLCD) dated 17 August 2012, Commander Canadian Army Directive – Army Governance and the Land Warfare Centre.

The CALWC is mandated to actively develop, advance, experiment, and communicate innovative ideas, concepts, and designs aimed at preparing the Canadian Army to meet the challenges of a dynamic global future security environment. In addition to the provision of subject-matter expertise, briefings, consultations, and presentations, it maintains a fully developed research library as well as a robust and timely publication program. All of those assets combined serve to provide relevant and timely advice to the Army's senior leaders. The centre's concepts and designs teams will deliver concepts-based, capabilities-driven, force structure design tenets and specifications as well as the Army's concept development and experimentation plan, all of which will be supported by advanced graduate-level academic and operational research, outreach, networks, and publication.

There are a number of key efforts currently underway. In addition to ongoing work on the Force 2016 Army Interim Operating Concept, the concepts team is undertaking a historical case study analysis of Canada's postwar army organizations to examine how the Army adapted in the past to post-conflict pressures (backcasting), as well as a series of seminar war games to develop and refine Army 2040 concepts (forecasting). Meanwhile the designs teams are undertaking a series of limited experiments to examine the impact of implementing the All-Source Intelligence Centre (ASIC) construct, a re-examination of the echelon system for sustainment in adaptive dispersed operations, and an analysis of the right CSS vehicle fleet mix for brigade-level operations. Finally, the CALWC is working closely with the Director General Science & Technology Army and his staff to ensure the new Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) Land Portfolio is properly focused on the Army's key S&T priorities.

Beyond those activities, the CALWC continues its foundational research and publication activities, including the ongoing serial publication of *The Canadian Army Journal*, the *JADEx Papers*, as well as other special studies on subjects such as the comprehensive approach to operations, cyber warfare, the future network, S&T trends, and Army operations in the Arctic. The upcoming publication of a novel entitled *Crisis in Urdia*, a design fiction tool examining alternate future operations, will assist the Army in probing new ideas creatively while highlighting the possible risks and opportunities in an ever-changing security environment.

Of course, the future of the Army does not exclusively belong to the capability development community, be that the CALWC, the extended virtual warfare centre, or our broader joint and allied partners. Rather, the future of the Army belongs to each of its members, and no one organization has a monopoly on innovative thought. I encourage you to learn more about the CALWC and the Army's capability development initiatives, and then be prepared to contribute to the conversation. *The Canadian Army Journal* offers a great forum to do both.



Honours and Awards

CANADIAN ARMY REGIMENTS RECEIVE THE BATTLE HONOUR “DETROIT”

In July 1812, American military forces under the command of Brigadier-General William Hull invaded Canada from Detroit with a force of some 2,500 soldiers. On entering Canada, Hull issued a proclamation warning Canadians that, if they resisted American forces, “you will be considered and treated as enemies and the horrors and calamities of war will stalk before you.” His words spread like wildfire through the provinces, with newspapers reporting Hull’s ultimatum as a choice between surrender and “extermination.”

President, Administrator and Commander of Upper Canada (Ontario), Major-General Isaac Brock, reacted quickly to the threat in the western part of the province. To help him counter the invasion, Brock asked for militia volunteers. One Canadian soldier immortalized Brock’s call in a song, *Come All Ye Bold Canadians*, with this verse: “He said: ‘My valiant heroes, / Will you go along with me, / To fight those Yankee boys / In the west of Canaday.’” Canadians responded in numbers exceeding Brock’s expectations. For Upper Canada, it was the first time militia from one part of the province volunteered to come to the aid of another.

Rushing to the defence of the invaded border, Major-General Isaac Brock assembled a force of British regulars (from the 41st Regiment of Foot and the Royal Newfoundland Fencible Infantry), First Nations allies (under the leadership of Shawnee War Chief Tecumseh and Wyandot Chiefs Roundhead and Split Log), as well as Canadian militia units made up of elements of

- The Norfolk Militia;
- The Kent Militia;
- The Essex Militia;
- The Lincoln Militia;
- The York Militia; and
- The Oxford and Middlesex Militia.

Although outnumbered by the enemy, by using a combination of aggressive action and deception, General Brock, aided by his First Nation allies, was able to force the surrender of Detroit and capture the entire invading U.S. force while sustaining only light casualties. In control of Michigan territory, Brock issued his own proclamation, but it was one that promised to respect and preserve the existing laws of the region.

Brock was quick to praise the regular forces, First Nations and Canadian militia units involved in his brilliant victory. Of the First Nations, Brock stated that, “The conduct of the Indians ... [and] the gallant and brave Chiefs of their respective tribes, has since the commencement of the war been marked with acts of true heroism [...]”

With respect to the militia, the general stated, “The Major-General cannot forego this opportunity of expressing his admiration at the conduct of the several companies of Militia who so handsomely volunteered to undergo the fatigues of a journey over several hundred miles to go to the rescue of an invaded district [...] their services have been duly appreciated and will never be forgotten.”

Upon his return to York (Toronto), Brock reiterated his admiration for the militia: “I cannot but feel highly gratified by this expression of your esteem for myself; but in justice to the brave Men at whose head I marched against the enemy, I must take leave to direct your attention to them as the proper objects of your gratitude—it was a confidence founded on their loyalty, zeal, and valour, that determined me to adopt the plan of operations which led to so fortunate a termination. Allow me to congratulate you gentlemen, on



Source: Public Archives 4328110

Major-General Isaac Brock at Queenston.



"Quartered in a far-away colony, Isaac Brock would emerge as one of Britain's most ablest and tragic figures." —Alain Gauthier

having sent forth from among yourselves, a large portion of this gallant Band—and you may confidently repose your hopes of future security. It will be a most pleasing duty for me to report to our Sovereign a conduct so truly meritorious.”

Of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in particular, the general also wrote, “The detachment of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, under the command of Major Mockler, is deserving every praise for their steadiness in the field, as well as when embarked in the King’s vessels.” Its subsequent service in the war, both on land and water, would only add to the regiment’s good reputation.

To publicly honour those involved in this great achievement, the United Kingdom created the Battle Honour “DETROIT.” However, this special award was only given to the British 41st Regiment of Foot. Despite Brock’s promise that the Canadians serving with him at Detroit would “never be forgotten,” their bravery had faded from memory in London.

Nevertheless, Canada has never forgotten what these early Canadians accomplished in this first major battle of the War of 1812.

Their bravery lived on in the memories of local military units that were formed after them. By 1923, the capture of Detroit by Brock and his “gallant band” was identified as nationally significant by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

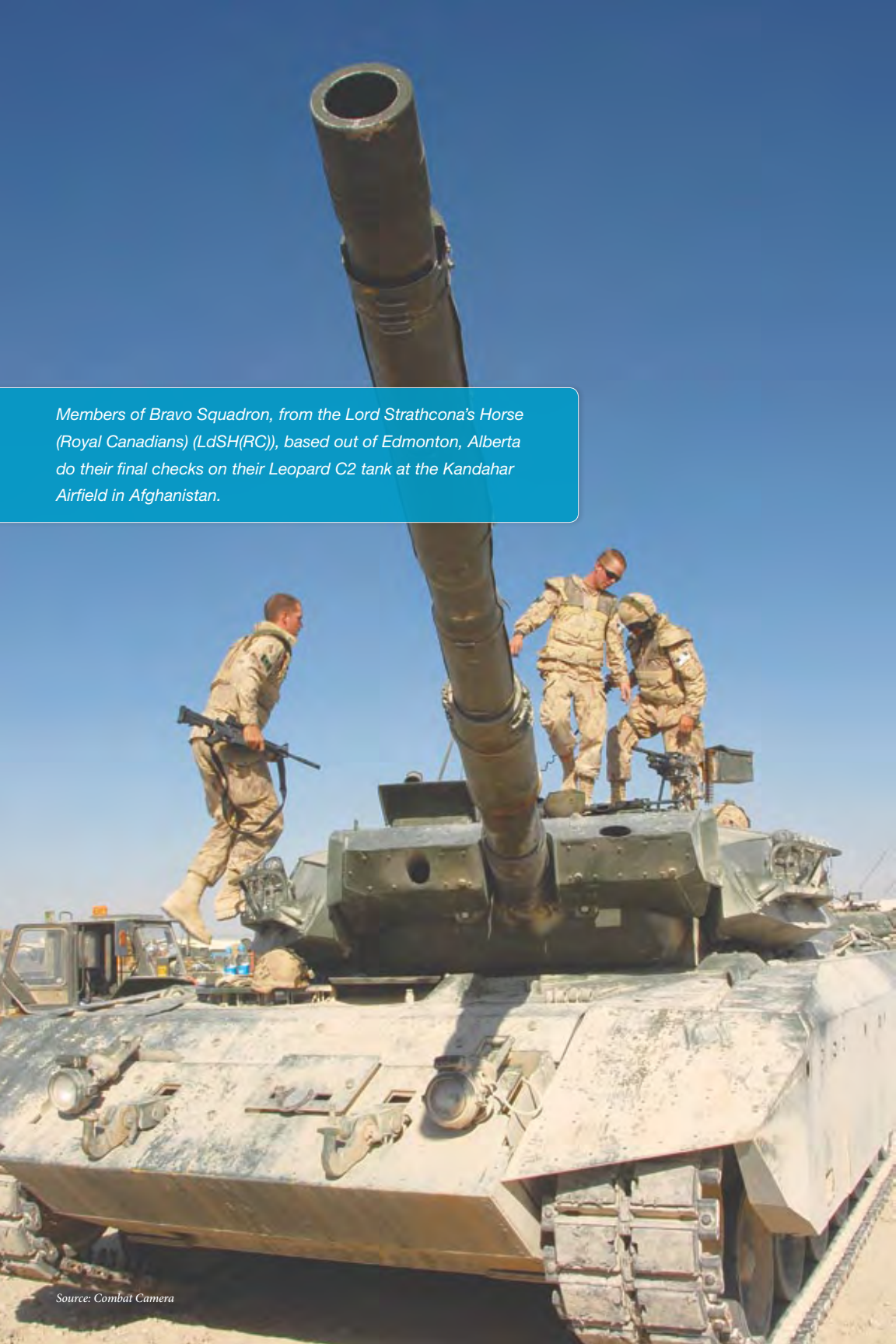
This past year, members of the War of 1812 Bicentennial Advisory Panel recommended that the Canadian Army regiments that perpetuate units that served in the war be permitted to carry the “DETROIT” Battle Honour in order to justly honour the sacrifice and success of Canadians serving there 200 years ago. The same recommendation has been made by the Royal Newfoundland Regiment advisory council.

The Government of Canada has agreed with this recommendation and, as a result, the six Canadian Army regiments that perpetuate the history and heritage of the War of 1812 units that served with merit at Detroit will receive the Battle Honour “DETROIT.” These regiments are as follows:

- 56th Field Artillery Regiment (RCA), Brantford, Ont.;
- The Queen’s York Rangers (1st American Regiment) (RCAC), Toronto, Ont.;
- The Royal Canadian Regiment, Petawawa, Ont.;
- The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment), Hamilton, Ont.;
- The Lincoln and Welland Regiment, St. Catharines, Ont.; and
- The Essex and Kent Scottish, Windsor, Ont.

In addition, to commemorate the service of the Royal Newfoundland Fencible Infantry, the Battle Honour “DETROIT” will be awarded to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment stationed in St. John’s, N.L.

The War of 1812 was instrumental in the development of Canada’s military history and established the basis of the Canada we know today—an independent and free country with a constitutional monarchy and its own parliamentary system. The Government of Canada and the Canadian Forces are proud to commemorate the achievements of those early Canadian soldiers and sailors who fought in the War of 1812. 🍁

A large Leopard C2 tank is the central focus, its long barrel pointing upwards. Three soldiers in desert camouflage uniforms are on top of the tank. One soldier on the left is holding a rifle and looking towards the tank's turret. Two other soldiers are on the right, near the turret, appearing to be inspecting or working on something. The tank is parked on a sandy, dusty ground under a clear blue sky. The tank's hull is covered in dust and has some equipment mounted on it, including what looks like a searchlight or sensor. The tracks are visible at the bottom right.

Members of Bravo Squadron, from the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (LdSH(RC)), based out of Edmonton, Alberta do their final checks on their Leopard C2 tank at the Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan.

THE LONG ENGAGEMENT

The Case of the Canadian Army's Multi-Mission Effects Vehicles

Mr. Robert Addinall, PhD

The Army's combat mission in Afghanistan ended in 2011, but both Canadian experience there, and the experiences of other countries' land forces in combat operations in Iraq and elsewhere, have sustained a perceived need for heavier direct fire ground combat vehicles. Since 2006 the Canadian Army has first leased, and then bought, Leopard-2 main battle tanks,¹ and has also considered acquiring a heavily armoured (25 to 45 ton) Close Combat Vehicle (CCV).² Between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s, however, the situation was quite different. The army's most recent operational experience up to that point was based mainly on peacekeeping operations, and a commonly held political view that deploying heavy vehicles like tanks could be destabilizing in these types of missions. Also, the popularity of the concepts like the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and transformation amongst Canada's main allies supported a belief that achieving information superiority during operations could eliminate the need for the protection of heavy armour on combat vehicles. Within this context, lighter vehicles appeared to allow for rapid strategic deployability and greater operational mobility.

Simple lessons might be drawn from this contrast. First, armies should not assume that the next major deployment will resemble the last one, and second, there is value in the careful analysis of approaches to the future nature of military-technological change emerging from allies. However, the history of the Canadian Army's planning for future armoured combat vehicles between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s provides a more interesting perspective than such general observations. Records show that friction and misunderstandings between elements of the army leadership, the capability development system, and the combat arms can complicate planning for acquisitions that in many respects appear logical at the time. This was the case with the class of conceptual armoured vehicles generally known as "Multi-Mission Effects Vehicles," or MMEVs.

In 1998 the capability development system first studied light armoured vehicles which would have features that would later be characteristic of later MMEV plans. That year the Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts (DLSC)³ produced an *Armour Combat Vehicle Concept Paper*. The author(s) of the paper proposed that a new "phase one" Armoured Combat Vehicle (ACV) replace the Army's 195 Cougars in the period 2002–2005, and that a "phase two" vehicle replace the Leopard-1 tanks "sometime after 2010."⁴ The phase 1 vehicle was to have "accurate firepower, capable of destroying main battle tanks and lesser targets," and it was to "trade off" armour protection for "high strategic and operational mobility, high sustainability and low operating costs."⁵ The authors commented that the phase two project should "leverage the experience gained during (phase) 1... and take advantage of the emerging technologies that will be available post-2010."⁶

The paper also stated that future ACVs should preferably be optimized for transport by strategic airlift,⁷ reflecting the RMA-inspired idea that rapid worldwide strategic deployability would become a paramount concern—and a central feature of U.S. Army plans at the time for its Interim Combat Brigade Teams (ICBTs), which would later become Stryker brigades.⁸ The view that lighter vehicles were needed for greater operational mobility also gained wide acceptance during these years, since 1990s peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, especially Kosovo, indicated that heavier NATO armoured vehicles were unable to operate effectively on relatively undeveloped infrastructure.⁹ It was stated that ACVs should be light enough to operate on "third world country" infrastructure, and should be capable of travelling at the same speed as the Army's then-new LAV-III infantry fighting vehicle.¹⁰ In order to compensate for its lighter armour, the paper's author(s) discussed the possibility that the ACV should use an indirect fire guided missile, either along with—or in place of—a direct fire cannon for stand-off capability against main battle tanks and other threats.¹¹ Consideration was given to incorporating a basic air defence capability into the vehicle, possibly using the same guided missile system.¹²

Other Army studies at the time, however, highlighted the drawbacks of light ACV concepts. Army war games held during 1997–1998, such as Exercise QUARRÉ DE FER, found that a 20 to 30 ton Armoured Combat Vehicle was too lightly armoured and, if equipped with wheels rather than tracks, lacked the tactical mobility to manoeuvre openly when in sight of the enemy.¹³ The QUARRÉ DE FER war game analysis concluded that “the ACV could not be used boldly and aggressively in warfighting situations... The study recommends the MBT not be replaced by the ACV in the armoured regiment for warfighting.”¹⁴

Counters to identified concerns about a lack of armour protection soon emerged at a theoretical level. These arguments reflected RMA-inspired approaches of the late 1990s. In June 1999, for example, a *Future Army* planning team including academics and representatives from military allies held a conference in Kingston, Ontario. Its results were published by DLSC in a study titled, *Transforming an Army: Land Warfare Capabilities for the Future Army*. In one discussion, Don. L. Smith, then Director of Science and Technology Land (DSTL) at the National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) Defence Research and Development Branch, described that organization’s views on armoured vehicles:

LAV III’s [sic.], Cougars, and Coyotes are extremely easy to kill. We are not going to armour them, but move into the notion of protect, sustain, act and sense. The protection issue of the Army is going to be a stealth issue... We are talking about... an Army with topsight [sic], one that sees and knows all. The Future Army will have an instantaneous vision of what is going on with the enemy... When you know your own situation and the enemy’s, you can have small units working in tightly orchestrated fashion.¹⁵

Another future army study by DLSC, published in 2001, stated that increased operational mobility was required in the present and near-term. It argued that the physical space which operations had to cover, or “battlespace,” had expanded significantly during the 1990s. It cited the 1990s example of the Canadian battlegroup area of operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina covering an area of approximately 250 kilometres by 70 kilometres. Such growing areas of operations, the argument went, indicated that the large quantities of fuel, ammunition, and equipment maintenance required by existing heavy forces would have to be reduced. A wide range of what were considered immature technologies, including electrical, hybrid electrical and hydrogen based power systems, were commented on as possible solutions. The possibility that greater use of precision weapons on future vehicles would reduce ammunition expenditures was also considered.¹⁶

In the May 2002 seminar war game *Future Army Experiment: Operations in the Urban Battlespace*, the term “Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle” was first applied to conceptual wheeled light armoured vehicles which incorporated precision missile weapons. Three brigade-sized “exercise force,” or EXFOR, constructs were studied. Students graduating from the Transition Command and Staff Course at the Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College (CLFCS) served as the commanders and staff of the EXFORs. U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Department of Defense, and RAND Corporation personnel also participated, as well as representatives from other allies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The exercise examined whether a force designed for high intensity combat in open terrain could be adapted equally well to conflict in urban terrain.¹⁷

EXFOR A was labelled an “evolutionary design.” It had 5200 men and three battlegroups using 25–40 ton “future armoured vehicles.”¹⁸ These included two sub-units in each battlegroup using a MMEV designed around a LAV chassis, and two-sub units using a “close effect vehicle” (CEV).¹⁹ The MMEV incorporated characteristics that would later appear on different developmental armoured vehicles. Like the Mobile Gun System (MGS) that the Canadian Army collaborated on with the U.S. Army between 2003–2006, and that the U.S. eventually incorporated into its Stryker brigades, this MMEV included a 105mm main gun, similar to that used on the Leopard-1. Like later variants of the MMEV concept, it also included low level air defence missiles for both anti-tank and short-range air defence. For the purposes of the seminar it was described as “the evolution of the tank.”²⁰ The CEVs resembled the LAV-IIIs then being acquired by the Army, being described as infantry carriers with a 25mm gun, general purpose machine guns, grenade launchers,

and also four low level air defence missiles each.²¹ EXFOR A also had two flights of Griffon helicopters with reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition and attack functions, and artillery support from 155mm tube artillery and 120mm mortars designed to fire precision guided rounds.²²

The 4500 man EXFOR B was described as the “revolutionary design.”²³ Vehicles were supposed to be smaller and lighter than those in EXFOR A and also to have greater endurance and range and better resolution in their sensing systems.²⁴ They were to be equipped with various small automated surveillance and combat vehicles systems, both Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGVs) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).²⁵ The individual soldiers in EXFOR B were simulated to have various technologies built into their clothing in order to further network them together, such as heads up displays in their helmets which would feed them real-time situational awareness data.²⁶ In addition, provision was made for multi launch rocket systems with a theoretical range of 100 kilometres, other artillery that fired precision munitions, and two flights of helicopters deemed to be able to process up to 200 targets at a time and to be able to kill T-90 main battle tanks at a range of eight kilometres.²⁷

EXFOR C was a baseline similar to a standard Canadian brigade structure of the early 2000s, with three infantry battalions, an armoured regiment, an artillery regiment, a field engineer regiment, and combat service support, and assisted by an aviation squadron.²⁸ Although it had a data processing centre, the flow of information this centre provided, together with the brigade’s other information processing capabilities, were deemed to be “less sophisticated” than those in the two other EXFORs.²⁹

The *Operations in the Urban Battlespace* war game was typical of the late 1990s and early 2000s in that it was organized to pair less sophisticated information processing capabilities with heavier armoured vehicles, while lighter vehicles would be part of a force capable of gaining greater information superiority. After working through the seminar play, the experiment concluded that while technology would enhance individual and collective force capabilities, it would not replace the need for large numbers of soldiers in urban or other complex terrains.³⁰ All three variants lacked sufficient dismounted soldiers, although EXFOR B suffered most significantly from this problem.³¹ It was found that EXFOR A would have benefitted from replacing one sub-unit of MMEVs in each of its battlegroups with an extra sub-unit of CEV infantry carrier/support type vehicles. EXFOR C predictably was found to suffer from a lack of situational awareness and information dominance.³² The game designers concluded that it is difficult to make “one size fits all” force structures, and suggested that creating a Future Army model optimized for complex terrain but adaptable to open terrain would be overly complicated.³³

While DLSC and other branches of the Land Force Doctrine and Training System (LFDTS) in Kingston conducted studies of MMEVs and related vehicles, the office of the Director General Land Staff (DGLS) at NDHQ conducted its own analysis. It examined three alternatives for a wheeled Armoured Combat Vehicle (ACV) with a 105mm tank gun in November 1999. The first was to immediately replace both the six-wheeled LAV-I Cougar, which had a short turret-mounted 76mm gun, and the Leopard 1 with the ACV. The second was to delay ACV acquisition until 2015 to 2020. As in the DLSC 1998 study, the third was to replace the Cougar in the near term with the ACV and replace the Leopard at a later date.³⁴

The DGLS study found that immediate advantages of ACV acquisition would be improved operational mobility, lower in-theatre logistic burden, and near-term interoperability with the U.S. Army (presumably in terms of the light armoured vehicle based Interim Combat Brigade/Stryker Brigade organizations that the Americans were then developing). However, it also found that the ACV would provide no significant improvement in tactical capability over the Leopard 1, and that it would have little “growth potential.”³⁵ As a result, given the Army’s “limited” capital procurement budget, DGLS judged that if the Land Force spent funds in the short term to acquire the ACV, it would be locked into a system that would lead to long term interoperability problems with the U.S. Army.³⁶ As a result, it recommended that option two be pursued, as a way of spending limited funds on “high payoff” equipment, and also as a way of further testing

and refining ACV designs in the context of possible future changes in the security/operating environment.³⁷ Like the capability development organization in Kingston, the NDHQ staff office concluded at the end of the 1990s that a long capability development process lay ahead for new generations of armoured vehicles.

Sometime in 2002, however, then Chief of Land Staff (CLS) Lieutenant General Jeffery, together with then Assistant Chief of the Land Staff (ACLS) Major General Hillier (promoted to Lieutenant General in December 2002), developed the idea of incorporating three different types of light armoured vehicles into a new Direct Fire Unit (DFU).³⁸ The MMEV version 1 (MMEVv1), as it came to be called, was one of these platforms, and was intended to cost-effectively reuse the Air Defence Anti-Tank System (ADATS) on a LAV chassis. Unlike in the *Operations in the Urban Battlespace* war game, the 105mm tank gun was reassigned to another vehicle, the Mobile Gun System (MGS). The third vehicle in the group was a LAV-III mounting the TOW-Under-Armour missile system. These three vehicles were intended to use overlapping ranges of fire, combined with greater information processing and precision targeting capabilities, to engage opponents at longer ranges and avoid the need for the protection of heavy armour.³⁹ In April 2003 Hillier wrote to other senior Army officers that:

Thus we really could replace the Leopard in the direct fire role with a veh [sic., abbreviation for vehicle] that is wheeled, can be carried in a Herc [sic., abbreviation for Hercules cargo aircraft] and that can deliver at least the same capability but, most importantly, deliver it in a theatre of operations where we cannot or don't want to get the Leo [sic., abbreviation for Leopard 1].⁴⁰

In this context, development of a more specific type of MMEV—one designed around a missile based air defence / anti-tank capability—continued. Under the plan, the MMEV would still have been staffed by artillery personnel, but operationally integrated into the DFU organization. It was initially endorsed by at least some members of the Artillery branch, as can be seen in a position paper written at some point in 2002 or 2003. Entitled *Air Defence Anti-Tank System (ADATS) In The Line of Sight Precision Guided Missile Role – Like A Hot Knife Through Butter, And More...*, the paper extolled the capabilities



Source: Public Domain

The Mobile Gun System (MGS) mounted on a LAV chassis.



The Air Defence Anti-Tank System (ADATS) mounted on a LAV chassis.

of the ADATS but argued that the artillery should have operational control of the MMEV. As outlined in the paper, the ADATS was originally acquired through a 1986 low level air defence (LLAD) project to meet the late Cold War threat in Germany.⁴¹ Mounted on M-113A3 tracked armoured personnel carriers, it was to provide short range air defence (SHORAD) to mobile troops and static installations in all weather conditions. The author(s) of the paper stated that it could guard against high speed aircraft, helicopters, drones or remotely piloted vehicles, and cruise missiles, and enthusiastically added that:

What has been not so well known is that the ADATS has an excellent anti-tank capability, which has until now been considered a largely self-defence capability within Canadian AD (Air Defence) doctrine. In fact, the ADATS is capable of destroying armoured ground targets with great precision out to 8 kilometres plus with a minimum engagement distance of 370 metres.⁴²

The paper identified the ADATS as using an active X-band air search radar and passive electro-optic (EO) module using forward looking infrared (FLIR) and low light television (LLTV) for tracking and engagement of targets.⁴³ The FLIR and LLTV systems are described as “extremely effective” at line of sight detection of ground targets, although, being electro-optical devices, they could be limited by rain, mist, fog, smoke, and similar obscurants.⁴⁴ The effectiveness of the system’s load of eight missiles, capable of airspeed in excess of Mach 3, was emphasized, along with the missiles’ warheads being optimized for both air and ground targets.⁴⁵ The missiles were designed to have a range of ten kilometres, which was touted by the paper as: “much longer than any direct fire weapon in the Land Force inventory.”⁴⁶ It was further stated that since the missiles use rearward looking laser receivers to obtain guidance information from the ADATS, an enemy could not jam them without physically blocking the line of sight between the missile and the launcher, which was described as an “impossible feat” due to missile speed.⁴⁷ System accuracy was also highlighted, with the claim that the laser system was accurate to 1.5 square metres at distances of up to eight kilometres.⁴⁸



Source: Public Domain

A U.S. Stryker vehicle crew belonging to the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, fires a TOW missile during the brigade's rotation through Fort Polk's, Joint Readiness Training Center.

As a result of the described capabilities, the author(s) of the paper argued that the ADATS would be both an excellent precision-guided direct fire system against both air and ground targets, and also an excellent intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) and command, control, communications, computing and intelligence (C4I) platform which could feed targeting data to all other systems tied into a tactical internet.⁴⁹

Having made a case for the system, the paper also addresses its potential weaknesses. The writer(s) admitted that, since the ADATS does not have a feature such as gyro stabilization, it cannot acquire and fire on targets on the move.⁵⁰ However, they suggested that this is compensated for because the ADATS is capable of moving "cross country" in stand-by mode, which allows it to fire a missile approximately one minute after it has stopped on a firm and level piece of ground.⁵¹ They also admitted that a "well placed" small arms shot or shrapnel from a mortar or other projectile can damage the turret relatively easily, rendering the system electro-optically "blind."⁵² As a result, they recommended that the turret would require greater protection to allow it to "fight and survive in close contact with the enemy."⁵³

A final concern expressed was that a system mounting the ADATS requires a generator to be run even while the vehicle is not moving, because its sensor capabilities consume a great deal of energy.⁵⁴ This drives up logistic requirements, and also means that the system produces significant noise and heat signatures.⁵⁵ However, the paper's author(s) took the view that this was a minimal drawback, with a short discussion of how much other "high tech" equipment in the Army required a lot of resources as well.⁵⁶ Reaching the crux of their argument, they presented both a problem and an opportunity:

...it is easier to assume a less demanding role or task, than it is to amass the significant experience that makes one an expert in a complex trade. The AD [air defence] has the more technically complex of the two tasks. The ADATS gunners and Detachment Commanders routinely train in the engagement of ground targets in both the simulator and during live fire exercises.

To assume a direct fire precision role requires no further training in the engagement sequence, only on the tactical battlefield and simply require [sic.] the leadership and planning of their officers and Senior NCMs in anti-armour tactics. The converse is not true. You cannot take an anti-armour squadron and employ it in the AD role with the requisite Command and Control skills and equipment to integrate into the theatre AD plan without replicating years of experience and training. No arrogance intended, just fact... ADATS should remain within the AD artillery in order to meet the broad range of missions which may be required...⁵⁷

As can be seen in the paper, the MMEV concept could be quite attractive when an arm of the Land Force believed it might acquire a more significant role through the system. The artillery would be less enthusiastic when it found that the plan was to transfer operational control of the MMEV to the new "all arms" DFU. Its reticence to lose direct control of the MMEV was driven by the belief that a command structure which was familiar with existing procedures for employment of an AD system was necessary for a vehicle based on the ADATS. To some extent this could be taken as an example of inter-arm rivalry, but the artillery arm authors of the paper had a significant point which would recur over the following two to three years of MMEV development: combining air defence and ground-to-ground fire, while impressive on paper, is difficult in practice due to the multiple skill sets that the operators have to learn and maintain.

Outside of the artillery, arguments for the MMEV proceeded apace. A briefing note for the Minister of National Defence dated January 19, 2004, identified the "Army Requirement for a Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle." Prepared by the Directorate of Army Doctrine (DAD), it stated that the Army has identified the potential benefit of acquiring a MMEV as part of its Transformation process.⁵⁸ It was reported that Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) identified a capability to act in direct, indirect, and air-defence roles from a single platform as important during a Future Armoured Vehicle Systems technology demonstration project.⁵⁹ The note stated that war games subsequently organized by DLSC showed that the MMEV concept was "tactically decisive" based upon "improved understanding" of the battlespace and extended range fires.⁶⁰

It was emphasized in the note that these studies coincided with a Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) capabilities review which suggested that the "potential" of the ADATS should be "maximized" by increasing its capabilities in the direct and non line of sight fire roles.⁶¹ The note stated that as a result, the Army would be "seeking authority to proceed with this project shortly after" procurement of the MGS vehicle was fully underway. It also advised that this would require "revisiting" Strategic Capabilities Investment Plan (SCIP) funding timelines to bring MMEV programming into line with Transformation plans, as "the current SCIP timelines are too far out."⁶² More generally, it revealed that the Army was intending the ADATS based MMEV as a first step towards implementing more capable MMEVs like those first considered in late 1990s studies. The MMEV design for which approval was sought was described as MMEVv1, which was intended to address "immediate needs" of the Army, while additional comment indicated that MMEVv1 was equally important because it would lead towards "full development" of the MMEV concept.⁶³

The capability development system, however, was also aware of the organizational difficulties in creating a combined air defence and direct ground fire system. A May 2004 Land Force Doctrine and Training System (LFDTTS) capability development record of the MMEV had a positive outlook for the potential of the system, but noted that air defence systems must operate within a Joint Airspace Control Plan.⁶⁴ The document stated that if the MMEV was to retain any air defence capability, airspace control authority authorized command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) would be required.⁶⁵ Future ground based air defence missile designs with capabilities exceeding the "standard" ADATS were also discussed.⁶⁶ The overall argument was that: "This future GBAD system embodies the flexibility; economy of effort and cooperation required in future operations. The GBAD functional adjustments create new resources and greatly enhance other... combat functions."⁶⁷

Discussion between officers at the artillery, infantry and armoured schools in the spring of 2004 illustrated that concern recurred over how to manage the MMEV. In an April 2, 2004 e-mail, Major R. Lavoie of the Combat Training Centre (CTC) Artillery School at Gagetown stated that after an Artillery Advisory Board discussion: "...for some reason, we believe we are absolutely not being listened to, although we have the experience with the kit and we are the only Combat Arms [sic.] with concerns and appreciation of the complexity of the third dimension of the battlefield."⁶⁸ He wrote that the air defence community and Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA) had "totally accepted" that the ADATS and MMEV role was now anti-tank first, although there had been resistance within the artillery corps.⁶⁹ He also discussed three options concerning how to integrate the MMEV into the DFU, which at this point was intended to be based in western Canada.

The first option, which had been preferred by the Army senior leadership since 2002–2003, was to create troops of four MGS, two LAV-TUA, and two MMEV vehicles. Lavoie commented that this option was "rejected immediately and reverently" by the Artillery Council.⁷⁰ Based on previous experience with artillery assets being under the operational control of other organizations, the Council believed that it would "fail" or "at least be inefficient and ineffective."⁷¹ The artillery considered the second option, to create a MMEV sub-unit under the DFU, to have advantages and disadvantages. It preferred the third option, an organization independent of the DFU, but co-located with it.⁷² Even in the case of option three, Lavoie reiterated early concerns about the drawbacks of the MMEV in a direct fire role:

The ADATS is not a LAV, a tank or even an APC. It is slow, hard to manoeuvre and requires specific technical aspects of the firing position to be effective. To expect to use the ADATS as a Tank or even a LAV is not possible. We can certainly trail it, but we should manage our expectation... We should expect the same differences between the MMEV and LAV as was the case with the M113 and ADATS; extremely top heavy and very slow moving... Trials will likely demonstrate that the skills required to manage such a system as the MMEV will demand a lot of training and generate a high risk of skill fade.⁷³

The above positions, stated informally, were further outlined in an April 27 transition concept paper signed by Lieutenant-Colonel M. Lavoie, Commanding Officer of the 4th Air Defence Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA) in Moncton, New Brunswick, sent to the Director Land Requirement/Director Artillery at NDHQ. In it, the perception emerged that the transition of the MMEV into the DFU was the result of the Army being forced through a period of "rationalization and realignment" of resources, equipment, and personnel.⁷⁴ It suggested that all Air Defence Artillery personnel and equipment be centralized in Edmonton. It described the ADATS operators as "the smallest yet most technically advanced combat arms trade," and once again underscored the difference of a system based on the ADATS compared to other armoured vehicles:

The MMEV primary role is anti-armour but... we must retain Air Defence Artillery capability as a secondary role. The MMEV concept cannot be examined in isolation as an Air Defence Artillery system, nor be seen as a LAV TUA with extended range. Our experience with ADATS has clearly demonstrated that when employing ADATS it must be used as a minimum in a troop of four due to high maintenance and support requirements, mainly fuel.⁷⁵

Another untitled internal Canadian Forces (CF) document from the time provided additional detail concerning some of the points in the documents above. It stated that switching a MMEV from air defence to a ground engagement task could be as simple as a "sniping gun" scenario in which the vehicle would receive information about a target, rules of engagement, and proceed to engage.⁷⁶ It outlined, however, that completely re-tasking an entire troop would be more complex because additional information would have to be received and time taken by the troop to assimilate it.⁷⁷ Switching from ground fire to air defence was to be the most complex transition, since it would have likely required the vehicles to be repositioned, briefed on the air threat and rules of engagement, and then loaded with current identification friend or foe (IFF) data.⁷⁸ It was specified that any coalition Canada would likely be a part of would not allow the activation of an air defence umbrella without prior coordination at a formation level, and that if MMEVs were to activate their radars without prior warning they would likely be targeted by friendly anti-radiation missiles.⁷⁹ As a result, the document came to the conclusion that:

Although technology supports the simultaneous air/ground role MMEV concept, the procedures and human factors inherent in today's system and in the foreseeable near future (2010) limit the employment of ADATS/MMEV to one or the other. It is easier to move from an air defence task to a ground task than in the opposite direction.⁸⁰

Resistance in the artillery to the changing role of the ADATS continued through the summer of 2004. For example, the concerns seen above were raised at an August 20, 2004 discussion of a Direct Fire System Working Group. At the meeting, Lieutenant Colonel Clarke of the 4th Air Defence Regiment reiterated concern over assigned sub-units of two MMEVs to troops of vehicles within the DFU, and "deep concern" that the Army leadership did not understand the "full implication" of transitioning ADATS to a primarily direct ground fire role.⁸¹ He also discussed, however, future developments which could improve ADATS direct fire capability including using modified rockets and possibly launching Hellfire missiles for indirect precision fire.⁸²

In July 2004 Exercise PERFECT KILL was held, using existing ADATS equipped vehicles to simulate the MMEV.⁸³ Initial test results produced 88% aircraft kills and 31% kills against armoured fighting vehicles, but final test results produced 95% kills against aircraft and 96% armoured fighting vehicle kills.⁸⁴ M113 ADATS limitations were found to be a limited field of view, a turret that was "locked in" while on the move, needing to engage with radar "up," vehicle orientation limiting field of fire, and the ADATS power unit exhaust being on the front of the vehicle and thereby creating a strong heat signature.⁸⁵ Logistics and missile load were additional concerns.⁸⁶ Further development and refinement of tactics, training and procedures (TTPs) for the ADATS in the ground role was found to be necessary.⁸⁷

In his comments on Exercise PERFECT KILL, Colonel T.J. Grant, then the Commander of First Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (1 CMBG) found many shortcomings in the implementation of the exercise, but commented that the soldiers and NCOs had "found solutions to problems that others had stated were insurmountable."⁸⁸ He added that the exercise had achieved a "much better understanding of the abilities and limitations of the ADATS" amongst the organizers of the Direct Fire Unit/Direct Fire System war game, and expressed confidence ADATS elements could be integrated into the new DFU armoured vehicle organization.⁸⁹



Source: Combat Camera

Sergeant Stéphane Gauvreau and Bombardier Kevin Guy engage an air target with the Air Defence Anti-Tank System (ADATS).

Gradually, the chain of command asserted itself and acceptance of the changing role of ADATS developed in the artillery. A directive written by Colonel Gunn, then Director of Artillery, stated that the arm: "...cannot blindly fight for the continued existence of 4th Air Defence (4 AD) Regiment as a unit based on past missions or roles. The organizational models of the future must be based on first principles and mission requirements."⁹⁰ He outlined a discussion with Colonel Kampman, then the Director of Land Strategic Plans (DLSP) in Ottawa, in which it was decided that the Artillery needed to produce a position paper outlining proposals for organizations, roles, locations and details pertaining to future ADATS capabilities.⁹¹ He reiterated that the primary role of the MMEV would be ground engagement, and that the artillery had to develop a plan to surge up to three rotations of MMEV troops in order to support a tactically self sufficient unit.⁹² He also clarified that DLSP staff still envisioned a tactical organization of a six MMEV troop broken up into two MMEV per direct fire troop, for a total of three DFU troops deployed at a time.⁹³ He wanted proposals for alternatives to this organization with analysis on the best options.⁹⁴

Despite Colonel Gunn's acceptance of the Army leadership's plans for the ADATS, then Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS), Vice-Admiral R.D. Buck, was not convinced. Although the land force capability development system had some flexibility within the Army, projects were still required to gain joint approval at the Joint Capability Requirement Board (JCRB). In September 2004 the JCRB deferred approval for the MMEV, with an explanatory letter from Buck to Lieutenant General Hillier, who was by then serving as Chief of the Land Staff (CLS), giving the reasons.⁹⁵ Buck made criticisms in four areas. First, he outlined how the MMEV project had identified capability deficiencies in GBAD, long-range direct fire, and precision indirect fire. He then commented that the proposed improvements would improve GBAD capability, but that he was concerned about the apparent relegation of GBAD to a secondary role behind direct fire. He asked:

Does this change in focus adequately address a key joint capability? I would be reticent to endorse any plan that would lead to the erosion of this key joint GBAD capability. Of note, from briefing material provided, the anticipated MMEV contribution to operations, in a CF context, suggests that the principal role in fact remains GBAD—related.⁹⁶

In his second set of criticisms, Buck discussed the Army's concept of a direct fire system, stating that the articulation of a precision indirect fire capability deficiency raised further questions.⁹⁷ He pointed out that a number of indirect fire projects were rolled into a Future Indirect Fire Capability (FIFC) project in May 2003, and that it had yet to fully qualify a specific capability deficiency.⁹⁸ From this point he argued that it was important to clearly develop a broader, presumably joint, CF indirect fire capability before investing "strategic resources" to address "a possible component" of an "undefined deficiency."⁹⁹

His third main area of criticism was that, although the MMEV Project only received Senior Review Board (SRB) endorsement to proceed with an options analysis phase in June 2004; "...the preferred solution to the capability deficiencies has already been identified, presented, and indeed, published for some time as the ADATS turret on a LAV III chassis. I am concerned that the scrutiny of possible choices may not yet have been conducted with the degree of rigour necessary."¹⁰⁰ His final concern had to do with the impact of Defence Force Structure reallocations which would have the effect of reducing the overall GBAD personnel establishment by 169 people.¹⁰¹ He stated that: "Reinvestments to achieve the required GBAD structure must be substantiated with offsets identified."¹⁰²

Nonetheless, the MMEV was ultimately endorsed by the JCRB on March 10, 2005. On April 12, 2005, the Senior Project Advisory Committee approved procurement of the MMEV on a sole-source basis from Oerlikon-Contraves Canada.¹⁰³ Acquisition of 33 MMEVs was officially announced on September 22, 2005.¹⁰⁴ The official press release claimed that the MMEV would improve situational awareness by providing around-the-clock surveillance and by sharing intelligence data between vehicles and command posts. It stated that:

The Canadian Forces are acquiring new, technologically advanced Multi-Mission Effects Vehicles... that will combine anti-tank and anti-air defence capabilities on one platform. Firing with its non line-of-sight weapons system, the MMEV will be able to engage targets that are hidden behind surrounding landscape features such as hills and buildings.¹⁰⁵

The first phase of the project was expected to provide three prototypes and an initial fleet of six vehicles with interim logistics support, and full production of the MMEV was expected by 2010.¹⁰⁶

Despite the announcement, ongoing capability development war game studies of the MMEV and its role alongside an MGS and a LAV-TUA in the DFU revealed continuing concerns. These included a Director General Land Combat Development war game seminar from May 3 to May 7, 2004, and Army Experiment 8A, a computer based simulation conducted at the Army Experimentation Centre.

A DAD summary of the May 3–7 event was that the war game illuminated many areas where the Army “clearly” didn’t know enough.¹⁰⁷ Communications difficulties for the MMEV in urban terrain were identified, because large buildings and other structures interfere with radio communications and block laser communications.¹⁰⁸ Reliance on sensors to constantly identify the enemy at a distance was found to be imperfect, and a “readily apparent” need for human intelligence was identified.¹⁰⁹ The capacity of the MMEV to leave and rejoin air defence networks was also questioned.¹¹⁰ War game participants suggested that the MMEV could become a “transformational, battle winning capability” only if the potential of its precision indirect fire capability could be achieved,¹¹¹ and that it should perhaps operate independently from a distance, also performing the LAV-TUA’s missions and rendering that vehicle unnecessary.¹¹²

Like the May war game, Army Experiment 8A found that ideally the MMEV would operate independently from other armoured vehicles.¹¹³ It was found that its non-line of sight fire capability was a “transformational attribute” especially if laser designators could be provided throughout the battlefield to guide its missiles.¹¹⁴ Three MMEV variants were studied: one using a relatively unmodified ADATS system, one with laser designation capability, and one with “fire and forget” missiles.¹¹⁵ The two latter versions were found to be “significantly” more effective, especially the fire-and-forget variant.¹¹⁶ A DAD working group meeting from July 5 to July 9, 2004, came to the same conclusions, although, similar to Artillery concerns about the vehicle, it emphasized that significant planning and skill would be needed to use the MMEV effectively, operating it from a “considered position” and not exposing it to the enemy.¹¹⁷ An August 2004 DAD briefing reiterated concerns about the limitations of the current version of the ADATS in “complex terrain” (such as urban areas).¹¹⁸

Both the July briefing, and another on September 1, 2004, also reiterated the belief that the MMEV was simply complementary to other armoured vehicles, but would not operate best closely integrated with them into direct fire troops.¹¹⁹ This led DAD to begin a new study of armoured vehicle organizations, including proposals for MMEVs to be organized into squadrons separate from other systems.¹²⁰

Ultimately, doubt that MMEVs grouped together with other LAV based armoured vehicles would be a financially and tactically effective solution affected the Army’s senior leadership. On January 20, 2005, Major-General Marc Caron was promoted to Lieutenant-General, and on February 3 of that year he replaced Lieutenant-General Hillier as CLS.¹²¹ Hillier was at that time appointed to the position of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).¹²² A letter from Caron to the VCDS, dated March 8, 2006, explained that he was halting the movement of elements of the 4th Air Defence Regiment to the DFU in western Canada.¹²³ Referencing a meeting with the Director General Land Combat Development (DGLCD) on February 20, 2006, and a meeting with CDS Hillier and VCDS Buck on March 3, 2006, Caron indicated that the decision had been made to re-orient Canadian Forces GBAD capability “towards a less costly and more appropriate solution to meet present and future air defence requirements.”¹²⁴ Caron further indicated that during the meeting Hillier accepted that the Army should conduct an “in-depth review” of the MMEV project from a cost/performance basis.¹²⁵





A row of Leopard 2A6M Main Battle Tanks from the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (LdSH (RC)) and part of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, prepares to depart a forward installation for operations in the volatile Panjwai and Zhari Districts of Kandahar Province.

In a related official letter to Hillier, Caron wrote that Personnel, Research & Development, Infrastructure and Organization, Concepts, Doctrine and Collective Training, Information Management, and Equipment, Supplies and Services (PRICIE) analysis had established that the movement of GBAD to Edmonton would require \$40 million, which he called “extremely costly.”¹²⁶ He also wrote that analysis had revealed that the movement would be “impractical if not impossible” in the short term, since the operational, training and support components of air defence capability were interdependent and would need to be moved at the same time.¹²⁷

In early 2006 two other changes took place. First, the Army’s task force in Afghanistan was redeployed from Kabul to a combat role in Kandahar, and combat casualties increased rapidly.¹²⁸ Second, the Liberal minority government under Paul Martin was replaced by a Conservative Minority government under Stephen Harper.¹²⁹ According to Hillier, the Conservatives appeared ready to spend unallocated money in the defence budget.¹³⁰ Under the circumstances, it appears that the Army leadership decided that reversing its armoured vehicle procurement policy—from buying lighter vehicles to buying Leopard 2 tanks, which were heavier than Leopard 1s—had become politically easier.

Also in 2006, a Director General Land Combat Development (DGLCD) briefing by Colonel Jim Simms recommended cancellation of the MMEV as well as the MGS. It indicated that the view had developed that analysis of both vehicles had occurred outside of the proper capability development process of identifying a needed future capability to fill a capability gap and then planning for procurement accordingly.¹³¹ It included the revised analysis that “Low tech enemies can escape modern sensors—you need to lead with protection.”¹³² Regarding the MMEV, the briefing concluded that: “Multi-mission platforms remain a viable concept, but there is significant work that must be completed before they can be employed effectively.”¹³³ The Army’s long interest in MMEVs, dating back to the pre-ADATS versions studied in the late 1990s, was therefore not outright rejected. However, it was lowered significantly in terms of priorities.

What had happened? Capability development organizations such as DLSC/DLCD had undertaken detailed study of possible future requirements for armoured vehicles in the late 1990s, and had continued detailed analysis of MMEVs through the mid-2000s. However, it had been difficult to arrive at detailed conclusions as to whether the multi-mission concept was viable based on seminar war games and computer simulations alone. Those studies had also been influenced by allies; as seen above, U.S. military personnel and RAND Corporation analysts were directly involved in some of the Canadian work. As a result, the mainstream approach of the time that the RMA would lead to armies being equipped with lighter armoured vehicles than during the Cold War was at least partially adopted by elements within the Canadian Army. These limitations were most likely the result of relatively constrained funding of the Canadian Forces in the 1990s, meaning that little money was left over for extensive research and development.

After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S., Canadian military budgets began to increase gradually, and the likelihood increased that the Army would be committed to campaigns which would entail a greater element of combat than most of the 1990s peacekeeping operations. Also, while many studies suggested that the Leopard 1 tanks would remain usable until 2015, some senior Army leaders were concerned about the condition of the vehicles;¹³⁴ and may also have been influenced by the fact that some CF procurement projects have taken decades to complete. In these conditions, it appeared that vehicles such as the MMEV, which would reuse existing weapons such as the ADATS and which would also presumably have significant logistical commonality with other LAV-based vehicles in the Army fleet, would be a cost-effective option which would also make the Army more combat effective. As a result, pressure from the leadership to move from conceptual studies to procurement grew.

In the case of the MMEV, one of the combat arms which would have been most affected, the artillery, began to dispute the plan for reorganization and vehicle procurement that developed. For those involved in the debate at the time, it was perhaps difficult to see whether opponents of the plans for the MMEV in the artillery were raising legitimate concerns or “blindly” impeding an important new acquisition.

Changing political conditions and combat experience in Afghanistan, combined with continuing doubt about the effectiveness of a “version 1” ADATS based MMEV raised by capability development and the artillery, ultimately led the Army leadership to cancel the project. Although the specific outcome in this case was for the concept of multi-mission vehicles to be “shelved” for the immediate future, more generally what can be seen is that significant friction and confusion existed between capability development, the artillery, and the senior leadership.



Source: Combat Camera

A LAV III of Alpha Company, (A Coy), 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group (1 RCR BG) returns from one of the run-up positions at Forward Operating Base Ma'Sum Ghar (FOB MSG).

There is likely no simple solution to this type of friction, and moreover, it is likely that every major procurement will be different; in some cases an organization may raise legitimate concerns, while in others it may simply object because a proposed change seems to go against the traditional way of doing things. To use political science phrases, this type of friction can be described as a clash of bureaucratic politics and organizational logic.¹³⁵ While it may not be easy to resolve such friction, understanding that it happens can most likely help both in managing it and in encouraging senior leaders, analysts and members of combat arms to take others' objections seriously and attempt to gain fresh perspective on their own preferred positions. Today, Canada's LAV-III's, which were new in the late 1990s and early 2000s, have been run hard in Afghanistan and are undergoing major refurbishment and upgrade.¹³⁶ The Leopard 2s, not quite new when bought, have also seen extensive use in only a few years. Possible CCV studies aside, the bulk of the current armoured vehicle fleet will doubtless operate well into the 2020s or 2030s. However, that timeline means that today's generation of junior officers may find themselves in senior decision-making positions when the need to procure a new generation of armoured vehicles arises again. Perhaps multi-mission platforms will reappear, but more importantly, consideration of past procurement projects such the MMEV may help future Army leaders understand and manage the friction of bureaucratic politics. 🍁

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

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ENDNOTES

1. The Army loaned twenty Leopard 2A6M tanks and two associated armoured recovery vehicles from the German government for operations in Afghanistan in 2007, and then purchased 100 surplus Leopard 2 tanks from the Netherlands. See: Letter from The Honourable Gordon O'Connor, Canadian Minister of National Defence, to Dr. Franz Josef Jung, German Federal Minister of Defence, April 3, 2007, Department of National Defence. Accessed through the Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act, file number A0213219. See also: Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces, “Renewing the Canadian Forces’ Tank Capability,” <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/news-nouvelles-eng.asp?cat=00&id=2252> (accessed September 28, 2010); and: Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces, “Protection the top priority with tank acquisition, posted April 12, 2007. <http://www.admpa.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/news-nouvelles-eng.asp?cat=00&id=2251> (accessed September 28, 2010).
2. See, for example: Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces, “Close Combat Vehicle (CCV) Project,” <http://www.materiel.forces.gc.ca/en/ccvp.page> (accessed February 7, 2012).
3. DLSC evolved through a series of titles to eventually become the Directorate of Land Concepts and Designs in 2007. Effective 17 September 2012 this organization evolved again to become the Canadian Army Land Warfare Center.
4. Department of National Defence, *Armour Combat Vehicle Concept Paper* (Kingston, Ontario: Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts, 1998), 1.
5. *Ibid.*, 9.
6. *Ibid.*, 1.
7. *Ibid.*, 11–12.
8. Then U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Shinseki stated that there was a goal to be able to put a “combat-capable brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours” without “pre-deployment planning and rehearsal” when formation of the IBCTs was announced in October 1999. Louis Caldera and Eric K. Shinseki, statements made during press conference, October 12, 1999. Transcript publication information: Association of the United States Army, *Press Conference Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera and Chief of Staff of the Army General Eric K. Shinseki* (Washington, D.C.: Association of the United States Army, 1999). Archived by the Federation of American Scientists: <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/army/unit/docs/r19991014 ausapress.htm> (accessed March 27, 2008).
9. See, for example: Don Snft, “Leopards in Kosovo: The Solution for an Armoured Combat Vehicle?” *The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin*, spring 2000, 56–62. At 47 tons and with a relatively narrow hull the Canadian Leopard 1s were able to operate in areas where 60+ ton tanks like the Leopard 2, British Challenger, or American Abrams could not. The smaller Leopard 1s could navigate narrower roads, cross bridges and concrete culverts classed for 50 tons or less, and do minimal damage to the infrastructure used by the local populace.
10. Department of National Defence, *Armour Combat Vehicle Concept Paper*, 11–12.
11. *Ibid.*, 12.
12. *Ibid.*, 13.
13. *Ibid.*, D-1 to D-2.
14. *Ibid.*, D-1 to D-2.
15. Department of National Defence, Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts, *Transforming An Army: Land Warfare Capabilities For The Future Army*, edited by Shaye K. Friesen (July 1999), 17.
16. Department of National Defence, Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts, *Future Army Capabilities: Sustain, Sense, Command, Act, Shield* (January 2001), 24–36.
17. Department of National Defence, Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts and Fort Frontenac, *Future Army Experiment: Operations in the Urban Battlespace* (May 2002).
18. *Ibid.*, 4.
19. *Ibid.*, 6.
20. *Ibid.*, 6.

21. *Ibid.*, 6.
22. *Ibid.*, 6.
23. *Ibid.*, 7.
24. *Ibid.*, 7.
25. *Ibid.*, 7 and 11.
26. *Ibid.*, 7 and 13.
27. *Ibid.*, 7.
28. *Ibid.*, 7-8.
29. *Ibid.*, 8.
30. *Ibid.*, 17.
31. *Ibid.*, 12.
32. *Ibid.*, 18.
33. *Ibid.*, 19.
34. Directorate of Army Doctrine (DAD) comments on the second draft of the *Mobile Gun System Statement of Operational Requirements* (MGS SOR), fall 2003. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109893.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. This account is given in a chain of e-mails between then Director Land Strategic Planning (DLSP) M.D. Kampman and a number of other Army officers. M.D. Kampman, e-mail to other senior land force officers, Friday February 27, 2004. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109954.
39. The organization, expected tactical employment of, and expected operational capability of, the DFU are best illustrated in the following April 2003 CLS briefing: Department of National Defence, Chief of Land Staff, *Implementing Army Transformation (Opportunities, Limitations & Risks)* (Ottawa: April 30, 2003). Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0042354
40. Rick Hillier, e-mail to Mike Jeffery, P.J. Holt, M.D. Kampman and others, Monday April 28, 2003. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0032670.
41. Department of National Defence, (Land Force, presumably Artillery Branch, given statements in the paper) *Air Defence Anti-Tank System (ADATS) In The Line Of Sight Precision Guided Missile Role – Like A Hot Knife Through Butter, And More...* (Ottawa), 1-2. Undated, but from historical context appears to be written in 2002 or 2003. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109843.
42. *Ibid.*, 1.
43. *Ibid.*, 1-2.
44. *Ibid.*, 2.
45. *Ibid.*, 2. This effectiveness is described as due to the missiles having a dual purpose blast / fragmentation charge. These characteristics are stated to enable the missile to penetrate up 1 metre of Rolled Homogenous Armour, and make it deadly within fifteen metres of an air target.
46. *Ibid.*, 2. By contrast, the indirect fire 105 mm howitzer has an 11 km range.
47. *Ibid.*, 2.
48. *Ibid.*, 2.
49. *Ibid.*, 3 and 7.
50. *Ibid.*, 2.
51. *Ibid.*, 2.
52. *Ibid.*, 3.
53. *Ibid.*, 3.
54. *Ibid.*, 4.
55. *Ibid.*, 3-4.

56. *Ibid.*, 4.
57. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
58. Department of National Defence, Directorate of Army Doctrine, *Briefing Note For The MND Through DM/CLS – Army Requirement For A Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle* by R.C. Rankin (Kingston, Ontario: January 19, 2004). Accessed through the Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act, file number A0283157.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. Department of National Defence, Director General Land Combat Development, Land Force Doctrine and Training System, *Capability Development Record (MMEV)* (Kingston: May 2004), 5. The document information/tracking block notes that it was prepared by Major C.F. Leeming of the Directorate of Army Doctrine, but it is unclear whether he has authored or edited the document or re-edited it. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file numbers A0110349 and A0110355.
65. *Ibid.*, 5.
66. *Ibid.*, 31.
67. *Ibid.*, 8-11.
68. Major R. Lavoie at the CTC Artillery School in Gagetown, Lieutenant Colonel S.J. Bowes at CTC Armoured School Gagetown, Lieutenant Colonel M.J. Pearson at CTC Infantry School Gagetown, Lieutenant Colonel I.R. Creighton at CTC headquarters, Gagetown, Colonel C.J.R. Davis at CTC headquarters Gagetown, and Major L.J. Hammond at CTC Artillery School Gagetown, e-mail correspondence. Subject line: *MMEV Force Generation – Position Of The Royal Regiment Of Artillery*. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109924.
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. No author, *ADATS/MMEV – A Transition Concept*. Moncton, New Brunswick: 4th Air Defence Regiment, RCA, April 27, 2004. Signed by Lieutenant-Colonel M. Lavoie, unit commanding officer. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109944, 1.
75. *Ibid.*
76. No author, untitled internal document (or possibly this information has been redacted) regarding the ability of an ADATS/MMEV detachment or troop to switch between direct fire ground task and air defence task. Ottawa: Canadian Forces, undated. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109842, 1.
77. *Ibid.*, 1.
78. *Ibid.*, 1.
79. *Ibid.*, 1.
80. *Ibid.*, 2.
81. Department of National Defence, CFB Suffield, *Record Of Discussion – Direct Fire System Working Group (DFS WG) – 20 August 2004*, edited by S. Schreiber (Alberta: 2004), 1. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109910, 3.
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83. The war game is dated to July 5, 2004 in: Department of National Defence, *Comments on Exercise Perfect Kill (EX PK)* by T.J. Grant (Alberta: September 2004). Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109936, 1.
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85. *Ibid.*, 10-11.
86. *Ibid.*, 11.

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88. Department of National Defence, *Comments On Exercise Perfect Kill*, 2.
89. *Ibid.*, 1.
90. Department of National Defence, untitled directive by R.D. Gunn. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109852, 1.
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92. *Ibid.*, 1.
93. *Ibid.*, 2.
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95. R.D. Buck to Rick Hillier, *Joint Capability Requirement Board Deferral – Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle* Official explanatory letter, September 2004, Department of National Defence. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0101639, 1.
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98. *Ibid.*, 2.
99. *Ibid.*, 2.
100. *Ibid.*, 2.
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106. *Ibid.*
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108. *Ibid.*, 4.
109. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
110. *Ibid.*, 20.
111. *Ibid.*, 16 and 26.
112. *Ibid.*, 15.
113. Department of National Defence, Army Experimentation Centre, *Report AEC-R 0401: Army Experiment 8A Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle In The Direct Fire System* by James S. Denford, John Steele, Roger L. Roy, Eugenia Kalantzis (Kingston, Ontario: December 2004).
114. *Ibid.*, see, for instance, the Abstract.
115. *Ibid.*, i.
116. *Ibid.*, i.
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119. Department of National Defence, Directorate of Army Doctrine, *DF TTP Development Brief to LdSH (RC)* by Chris Rankin, Kingston, Ontario, September 1, 2004, 57 and 63-71. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109851.

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121. See: Department of National Defence, "From a young platoon commander to head of the Army," DND/CF Army News website, press release February 4 2005 <http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/land-terre/news-nouvelles/story-reportage-eng.asp?id=407> (accessed September 23, 2010).
122. Department of National Defence, Land Force, "New Army commander appointed," Canadian Land Force news site, press release, January 21, 2005. <http://www.army.dnd.ca/land-terre/news-nouvelles/story-reportage-eng.asp?id=392&sortOrder=desc> (accessed September 23, 2010).
123. J.H.P.M. Caron, "Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle (MMEV) And Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD)," letter from the Chief of Land Staff to the Vice Chief of Defence Staff, also distributed to the Chief of Defence Staff and Director General Strategic Planning, March 8, 2006, Department of National Defence. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0283179.
124. *Ibid.*
125. *Ibid.*
126. J.H.P.M. Caron, "Future Of The MMEV And The Direct Fire Unit (DFU)," letter from the Chief of Land Staff to the Chief of the Defence Staff, also distributed to the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff and the Assistant Chief of Land Staff, February 20, 2006, Department of National Defence. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0283179 (Contained in same file as the previous letter).
127. *Ibid.*
128. On non-continuous deployments between April 2002 and November 2005, a total of eight Canadian military personnel were killed in Afghanistan. Between March 2006 and May 2006, another eight died. Statistics compiled by CBC: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "In the line of duty: Canada's casualties," <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/casualties/list.html> (accessed September 25, 2010).
129. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "Harper sworn in as 22nd prime minister," <http://www.cbc.ca/story/canadavotes2006/national/2006/02/06/harper-ottawa060206.html> (accessed September 25, 2010).
130. Rick Hillier, *A Soldier First* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009), 348-350. Specifically, Hillier writes that in 2005-2006, funding had been allocated for a number of projects that the military considered high priority, including replacement of the C130 Hercules transport aircraft fleet, heavy lift helicopters, a new fleet of transport trucks, and new naval replenishment ships. However, he describes that at a meeting during which he laid out plans to proceed with the purchases, he was faced with an indecisive Liberal Cabinet. Concerns were raised about such things as the appearances of spending large sums of money and appearing to be sole-sourcing contracts. This situation, Hillier believes, provided the Conservatives with an opportunity to demonstrate their support of the military without having to find additional money in the federal budget. \$13 billion had been allocated to defence, but it had not been spent. He states that: "The Conservatives, on election, were presented with this plum, organized themselves to spend it and branded themselves as the party to support the CF"
131. Department of National Defence, Director General Land Combat Development, *Recommendations to Cancel MGS and MMEV* by Jim Simms (Kingston, Ontario: undated but from the context must have been produced during the spring of 2006), 4. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0283169.
132. *Ibid.*, 8.
133. *Ibid.*, 12.
134. Some internal Army correspondence from 2004 indicates concern about tanks with "thin hulls." For example: Christopher Hunt, e-mail to a number of other land force officers, March 1, 2004. Accessed through the *Canadian Access to Information and Privacy Act*, file number A0109885. "Thin hulls" likely refers to the concern in the Army that the underside or "belly" armour of many Canadian Leopard 1 tanks had been worn thin between the late 1970s and the early 2000s during training exercises and deployments, when the vehicles were scraped over rough and uneven terrain. Former CDS Rick Hillier discusses this in his autobiography: "The Leopard tank was completing a significant upgrade program, but it remained an old tank, with belly armour that had been scraped over the ground until it was paper thin. We knew we faced major challenges just to keep those beasts running," Hillier, *A Soldier First*, Toronto, HarperCollins Publishers, 2009, 262.
135. A significant work concerning bureaucratic politics, and a good introduction to the concept, is: Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Longman, an imprint of Addison Wesley Longman Educational Publishers, 1999).
136. The Project Management Office Light Armoured Vehicles "is now developing and executing" procurement of the LAV III Upgrade project, currently valued at \$1.4 billion. See: <http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/stampg-lamsnp/pvb-avp-eng.html> (Accessed February 7, 2012).



A Coyote armoured reconnaissance vehicle with the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) armoured reconnaissance squadron, drives past the ruins of the King's Palace enroute to a Vehicle Check Point (VCP) outside of Kabul, Afghanistan.



Lieutenant Michael Hovi, the Intelligence Officer for the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, has a conversation with the Operations Officer over a secured phone while he reviews the locations and movements of the Canadian companies, during Exercise COLD RESPONSE in Norway.

A SCIENTIFIC LOOK AT OPERATIONAL ART

Mr. Vincent J. Curtis

"The army isn't a doctor, it's the penicillin."

—Unknown

In previous work the author published in this journal, a basis for a rational military science was laid.¹ The subject matter of this new rational science was military operations. In the course of the work, a definition of art was made, and the relationships between strategy and the art of tactics, and politics and the art of strategy, were explained. Operational art was touched on, but only briefly.

The object of this article is to explore in greater depth the conception of "operational art" within military science, to clarify the relationship between strategy, tactics, operational art, and the centre-of-gravity concept, and to draw attention to analytical weaknesses in current literature on operational art. One problem of analysis in particular derives from the attention paid to an "art" instead of the unnamed underlying science of the art. The theoretical problems and ontological commitments that this misdirection of subject matter create need to be cleared up prior to an analysis of current theory on operational art.

The questions which will be answered are: What is the "art" in operational art? What are the modes of existence of operational art? Is operational art really a level between strategy and tactics? What is the relationship between operational art and literature on operational art? Since there is truth in science, is there also truth in operational art? Furthermore, what is the mode of truth? What is the scientific analysis of the literature concerning operational art and the unnamed underlying science of operational art?

WHAT IS AN ART?

Art is a productive state of mind under the guidance of true reason. The end of art is production, and the finished product, especially when excellent, is said to be a work of art. Art has to do with the creation of something whose existence is contingent, and whose original cause lies in the producer. Utilitarian arts, such as architecture, the military arts, and even the wiring and plumbing of houses are kinds of applications of sciences, but we are more in doubt about arts than sciences. Science is concerned with the invariable, and we are more in doubt about art than science because science provides knowledge of determinant validity and significance while art does not. Arts are guided by sciences, but are not sciences or bodies of knowledge themselves. The "true reason" of an art is different from a science or a body of knowledge. Reason is what transforms knowledge into inferences, and science—an organized body of knowledge—is the product of reason.

Since knowledge is of the true, what is meant by the expression "true reason?" Let us start with the word "true." The word true is used here in its broadest denotation. In respect of the definition of art, it means more than simply the opposite of false. We say, for example, that the archer's arrow flies true, and when the archer's arrow flies true, it strikes the heart of the stag. Since the aim of the archer involves complex calculations in his mind concerning, for example, the pull weight of the bow, the effects of wind, the movement of the stag, and the fall of the arrow as it flies through the air, the archer's reason was essential to the success of the shot arrow. His reason was true since the stag dropped dead from the arrow that pierced his heart. The archer's successful shot expressed a kind of excellence in aim, and that excellence is the product of practice and experience. Such is the art of archery.

Art admits of excellence. Supposing Leonardo da Vinci wrote a book on how to paint and, in the course of the book, described how he produced a particular artistic effect on the canvas by the manner in which he rolled the brush in his hand. A non-painter might well read this passage and be able to recall those propositions in his mind. Though he may be able to recall the passage accurately, it is quite another thing for the non-painter to be able to reproduce the effect on canvas that Leonardo said how to do. The non-painter might do a better job of it if Leonardo himself were to demonstrate the technique to him, and he might be even more successful if Leonardo guided the non-painter's hand with his own as the technique

was attempted. Thus, under the guidance of true reason, passing through Leonardo's hand through the hand of the student, the paint is applied to the canvas in the manner required to produce the artistic effect, and the excellence in the effect is seen in the mark on the canvas. Without the guiding hand of true reason, the effect of the mark would lack excellence; the reason would be less than true. True reason in art means more than the mere possession of knowledge of facts—it is actual knowledge of how, for the arts are learned by doing them.

We call artistic painting a *fine* art. But there is an art to wiring and plumbing houses, as any neophyte do-it-yourselfer can testify. There is science, or at least a body of knowledge, associated with electricity and with water flow and with connecting parts together in the manner of the arts, and a master electrician or plumber can wire or plumb a house in a way that demonstrates an economy, an adequacy, and even an elegance that those who are less experienced and knowledgeable cannot match (economy, adequacy and elegance are qualities of excellence in the art).

So it is with the military arts. A man may be an expert ballisticsian, but it is quite another thing for a marksman to put a bullet into the centre of the target at long range, especially when the target is trying to do the same thing back! A commander may be instructed in tactics, but he learns the *art* of tactics through practising them. Military arts are for *practical* purposes: they are cultivated for the products of the art, not for the sake of the art itself. The arts of the infanteer are cultivated because the commander needs the products of those arts for success in battle. The products of the art of tactics are employed by the commander in pursuit of success in his campaign. The products of the art of strategy, in turn, are employed by the political power in pursuit of the aim of the war. Expediency is therefore the dominant consideration in military arts.

One does not apply art; one possesses it in the mind. The sign of art is the transformation of matter, but art first comes into existence in the mind of the creator. The art does not exist in the painting, the statue, the shot stag, the cured patient, and the bull's-eyed target. These are finished *works* of art. The relationships among knowledge, science, production, "true reason," and the art it guides are thus explained.

OPERATIONAL ART: ITS MODES OF EXISTENCE

Operational art is said to exist. One may therefore begin an enquiry into the nature of operational art by asking: What are that art's possible modes of being or existence? We start the enquiry with other arts [and discover their modes of existences.² The term "artist" is applied to human beings, and the artist is the *efficient cause* of the art he produces. We call a person an artist if he has the power to produce this or that thing or to do this or that performance; and the particular products of that person's art are his works of art. We can divide works of art into two types: the localized and the non-localized, that is to say, those that exist at one place or locality and those that do not have a singular place or locality.³ Localized art is art whose products exist and can be sensibly apprehended at a given time and place. Non-localized art is art whose products can be apprehended anywhere at any time because they are apprehended by the intellectual imagination.

Both types of art, the localized and the non-localized, involve the transformation of matter. In the case of localized art, each work of art is transformed matter that exists in only one place and has a unique and singular existence. If that work is destroyed, it no longer exists anywhere. The arts of painting and saddle-making are productive of works of that sort.

Some works of literature are examples of works of art that do not exist at a singular locality and are, therefore, non-localized art.⁴ Works of literature that are works of art are imaginative in nature: epics, dramatic poetry, novels, plays, short stories, tall tales, and so on. The reason for the distinction between literary works of art on the one hand and literary works of history, philosophy, science, and mathematics on the other concern the nature of the truths they contain. The kinds of truth there are will be dealt with later. Similarly, works of

literature exist in books, and since a book can be reproduced indefinitely, works of literature cannot be said to have a singular location. The destruction of a copy of a book does not necessarily entail the destruction of the work of art of which that copy is one of many instantiations.

Sheet music, stories, and plays are other examples of works of art that do not have a singular location. A story does not have a singular location except when told, and then the instantiation of it comes into existence and passes out of existence with the telling at a particular time and place. A flute-player can read a piece of sheet music and transform the symbols on a piece of paper into the sound and notes indicated on the page. Thus the art of the flute-player combines with the art of the composer to create an aural instantiation of that work of musical composition. That work of musical art can be said to have had two modes of existence: one as it was being played and the other as symbols on the sheet of paper. The difference between the art of the flute player and that of the composer of the music the flutist plays is that the flute player plays his instrument at one or another particular time and place, while the musical score can be reproduced indefinitely, can exist at any time and place, and can be heard imaginatively by the inner, not the outer, ear by anyone who can read music.

Given those distinctions, we are now in a position to determine the mode of existence of works of operational art. *Works of operational art must exist in the military operations of forces commanded by the person said to be the operational artist. In the course of conducting his operations, the commander is engaged in artistic activity*, the end product of which, if performed well, is a satisfactory outcome: victory. In that respect, the conduct of operations by the commander is like the flute player performing with his flute: the work of art exists at a particular time and place and comes into being and passes away in the course of the performance. If performed well, the outcome of the performance is satisfactory. Unlike the flute player playing a composer's musical score, the commander, while conducting his operation, is engaged in creating his own composition and his performance is singular. The excellence of that finished work of art turns upon truth in the art of operations, as will be shown later.

Given the extensive literature on operational art, it can be fairly asked whether a work of operational art can also exist in books, as a Shakespearian play can exist both on paper located anywhere as well as on the Stratford stage at a particular time. Whether a mode of existence on paper is also possible for operational art as well as in instantiations in the field can be discovered by examining the kinds of truth that pertain to art.

TRUTH AND OPERATIONAL ART

A survey of philosophy reveals three kinds of truth for our purposes: logical truth, poetical truth, and ontological truth. Logical truth is defined as correspondence between the judgments made by the mind and the facts that exist outside the mind and are independent of it. The singular truths of history and the universal truths of science and philosophy are logical truths about actualities. Logical truth *consists in the conformity of statements* asserted by historians, scientists, and philosophers with an independent reality that exists. Logical truth is exclusionary: if a statement is logically true, then any statement incompatible or inconsistent with it is factually false. Thus, if a historian says that the Battle of Vimy Ridge began on April 9, 1917, he states what is true, and the possession of this truth in the mind is knowledge of a historical event. If the historian asserted that that event occurred on July 1, 1867, he would be in error, for the opening of the Battle of Vimy Ridge can have occurred on either date or neither but not both; and we have certain corroborating evidence of what occurred on both dates.

Similarly, the universal truths of science and philosophy, found in the conformance with an independent reality that exists, are exclusionary. Newton's laws of motion are either true or they are not, and the truth content or validity of Newton's laws can be determined by reproducible experimentation. The truth of Newton's laws lies in the correspondence between the *forecasts* of the laws and the results of actual experiments, and that unflinching correspondence is what makes Newton's laws significant. Between the singular truths of history and the universal truths of science and philosophy stands the truth of poetry. Poetic works of art are intended to inform and delight. The truth that exists in poetical narratives

is not based on actual realities, as those of history are; poetical truth exists in the realm of possibilities. If a story, say, the *Defense of Duffer's Drift* or *The Defense of Hill 781*,⁵ has the ring of possibility or probability—verisimilitude—it has poetical truth. A poetically true story is a likely story.

Poetical truth does not exclude other narratives that tell quite different stories from being poetically true, i.e., that exist within the realm of the possible. One poetic story does not replace another, requiring us to reject one of them as false. The instruction of a poetical or imaginative work of art derives from the poetical truth and also perhaps the logical truth it contains, while the delight derives from the beauty of the work.

The third kind of truth is ontological truth, and this form of truth lies close to the concept of excellence in art. An ontological concept of truth in works of art is that the truth of these works lies in their beauty. When the work produced by the artist conforms to the creative idea in his mind, then it can be said to have ontological truth. If it is the intention of the artist to produce a work of beauty, the resultant beauty may be concurrent with its ontological truth. This is only true if there is objective beauty, an excellence intrinsic to the work and not just beauty in the eye of the beholder.⁶

Thus the flute player who plays a musical composition flawlessly and expressively may be said to have had ontological truth in his performance. The arrow-shot of the archer that surely kills the stag is another example of a work of art that contains ontological truth. The commander whose operations unfold in accordance with the plan in his mind may be said to have ontological truth in those operations.

Given this exposition of the kinds of truth there are, it is now possible to answer the question of whether another mode of existence of works of operational art is as markings on a written page.

To restate the question squarely: We have said that a work of operational art, if it exists, must exist at a unique time and place, as a Shakespearian play exists on a summertime Stratford stage, but like a Shakespearian play, which exists both in books and on the stage during a performance, can a work of operational art also exist in books? We are able to answer the question in the affirmative, in the following sense, when we consider a historical account of a work of operational art, such as the German invasion of France in 1940. As a work of literature, the account can contain logical truth, poetical truth, and ontological truth. The propositions that state factually accurate historical occurrences, propositions that affirm historical truths, are propositions of logical truths, and the possession of those truths in the mind constitutes knowledge of the events of that operational masterpiece.

The account may possess poetical truths in two senses: (1) as a well-written work of literature, and (2), as statements of particular events that seem to confirm probable generalizations, as a story with a moral to it. The account may contain ontological truth in two senses: (1) as an especially well-written work, it conforms to the artistic intentions of the author, and (2), in the words of the historical account, the artistic merit of the operation can be seen in the mind's eye of a person able to appreciate such artistry—as a person who can read music can appreciate the musical score in his inner, as opposed to his outer, ear. In this second sense of ontological truth, as a quality possessed by a historical narrative and distinct from poetical truth, can a work of operational art exist. Thus, there are two possible modes of being or existence of a work of operational art: in the actual doing of the operation and in a historical account of that operation.

THE OPERATIONAL ART ANALYTICAL PICTURE

The conception of operational art was developed as a generalization of manoeuvre warfare. Manoeuvre warfare was a style of operating that was conducted in the largest aggregations: divisions, corps, and armies. The Canadian Army, however, insists that its operating doctrine, which pertains to a unit no larger than a battle group, is also founded upon manoeuvre warfare, that is, in operational art. *Adaptive Dispersed Operations* is a work of doctrine for operating in theatres such as Afghanistan, in which the largest manoeuvring formations are an order of magnitude smaller in size than a division. How is it possible to reconcile the positions that manoeuvre warfare is a style of grand tactics intended for the largest military formations and, at the same time, also for the smallest, those held traditionally to be

engaged in tactics, not grand tactics? A reconciliation is possible if it is held that operational art is a conception from a different analytical picture, or formalism, for addressing the problem faced by all militaries at all times, which is, “how are we going to win?”⁷

Physics has three equivalent analytical pictures or formalisms in which the problem of forecasting the trajectory of a body in motion can be solved: the Newtonian, the Lagrangian, and the Hamiltonian. One picture can be more expedient for solving certain classes of that general problem than others. For example, the Newtonian picture cannot solve the problems of quantum mechanics at all, and the Hamiltonian picture is best adapted for that class of problems. Fourier transforms and Green’s theorem are means by which certain problems of mathematics and engineering can be transformed from one kind of problem into another kind that is easier to solve than the original. Thus mathematics, engineering, and the science of physics employ different formalisms as expedient means of rendering some of their problems easier to solve.

It seems that an analytical picture for “operational art” is adopted as an expedient means of solving the central military problem of “how are we going to win?,” as that problem exists in particular situations and in certain classes of situations. The operational art analytical picture is different from the classical tactics-strategy-centre-of-gravity analytical picture of the 19th century. The operational picture is most applicable when a decisive trial of strength between main forces is not expected to occur in the course of the campaign, and victory in either of its senses can be achieved nevertheless.

In previous work, it was said that one basis for classifying the subject matter of military operations was to observe the distinction between battle and campaign. The art of tactics pertained to battle, while the art of strategy pertained to campaign. When the distinction between battle and campaign disappeared, the distinction between tactics and strategy disappeared. Tactics and strategy were logically connected in that tactics were temporally prior but conceptually posterior to strategy, and both together were aimed at overthrowing the enemy’s centre of gravity.

The tactics-strategy-centre-of-gravity system was said to be but one scheme of classifying military operations so as not to beg the question of what the art of operations (or grand tactics) was. It seems that the operational art picture, or formalism, is founded upon a denial of the distinction between battle and campaign, and in fact *ignores the problem of fighting*. Therefore, as a formalism, it is incomplete. Fighting is ignored, perhaps because acts of fighting are indistinguishable from the process of attrition and annihilation. By denying the distinction between battle and campaign, and hence the distinction between strategy and tactics, the distinction of “grand tactics” also disappears. Classifications being smudged, there is nothing to say that battalions cannot be engaged in manoeuvre warfare in their operations.

The business of tactics and strategy that does find its way into the incomplete operational analytic picture is applied at the very low and the very high end of some arbitrary scale of importance as an afterthought or imposed condition. It is easy to slip from one analytical picture into another. Moreover, it is impossible to deny that sometimes actual fighting occurs in operations and that sometimes high-level decisions are made about where operations are to be undertaken, which correspond historically to tactics and strategy. Operational art theorists do not concern themselves with the business of section attacks, which are at the low end of the scale of importance, or with where to begin the invasion of Europe, which is at the high end of the scale of importance, and so the incompleteness of their analytical picture is not manifest. Operational art theory concerns itself with that big chunk of military doings that are intermediate in importance. Positioning on this arbitrary scale of importance is why some military theorists mistakenly state that there is an operational level, distinct from levels of tactics and strategy. In fact, operational art theory is offered in a different analytical picture—one which denies the distinction between battle and campaign and therefore the distinction between tactics and strategy. Operational art theory uses the terms “tactics” and “strategy” to refer to things outside of its domain of primary interest.

Things different in kind are not comparable, and the conception of tactics is different in kind from the conception of an operation. In the first place, “tactics” is the name of a discipline and the name of a subject matter, whereas “an operation” names a particular thing. What is a tactic? A tactic is a form of use of forces for fighting: right flanking, infiltration, hit-and-run, pepper-potting, fire-and-movement, withdrawal, feint, and advance to contact are the names of different tactics. All of them include the sense of fighting and none of them include the sense of completion as “an operation” does. This sense of completion in the basic unit of thought is what distinguishes the operational analytic picture from the tactical-strategic analytic picture. An operation has a beginning and an end, whereas a tactic and a strategy do not have temporal components innate to them. Moreover, “operations” bear the sense of activities, of which fighting is an accidental feature; that is not the case with tactics and strategy.

There is an ambiguity latent in the term “operations.” When a general speaks of “my operations,” he refers to the things he does in war with his army *qua* army. When DND refers to “Operation ATHENA,” it names a collection of activities, not all of which are necessarily related to war. A unit said to be “operational” is one that is ready to perform the real task assigned to it, such as conducting information operations or recovering vehicles broken down at LFCA TC Meaford. This breadth of meaning in “operational” and “operations” further confirms the difference in analytical perspective between the tactics-strategy-centre-of-gravity picture and the “operational” picture.

Operational art theory has borrowed the conception of a centre of gravity from the older tradition. It is not clear that the centre-of-gravity conception of the operational art theory is identical to the conception of that same name in the tactical-strategic picture. Clausewitz very carefully specified what a centre of gravity was; if overthrown, it leads to the overthrow of the entire body. The property of a centre of gravity is that it belongs to a whole, not a part, and if it exists, it must be, in the context of a campaign, a person, place or thing. Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Osama bin Laden are persons; Paris, Baghdad, and Richmond are places; and the Army of Northern Virginia is a thing. Religious piety, democracy, freedom, anti-Baathism, and Pashtun nationalism are things also, but these do not have singular instantiations.

Lacking singular instantiations, it is difficult to conceive how military force can be focused or even applied against them. Things that lack a singular physical instantiation cannot be overthrown by physical force like a statue can be. Physical force can only be applied to material instantiations that bear these abstract things accidentally. The Clausewitzian centre-of-gravity conception is useful not only in helping to identify that against which military force is to be directed, but also to delimit that against which the application of military force is unavailing.

Operational art theory seems to ignore these crucial limitations of the centre-of-gravity conception of the Clausewitzian picture. Clausewitz spoke of overthrowing a centre of gravity, while operational art theory speaks of “manipulating” a centre of gravity. Disregarding the hubris evident in the term, manipulation is a generalization of overthrowing, but Clausewitz believed that an army *qua* army achieves its goals by battle and the threat of battle and by nothing else. To use “manipulate” instead of the more specific “overthrow” means that operational art theorists either are open to believing that there is something else or view an army as *qua* something else (e.g., a disciplined group of community organizers). Hence, the conception of centre of gravity, what can be done to the instantiation of it, and how to do it are different in the two schemes of analysis, despite bearing the same name.

The “operational” picture is a different way of thinking from the tactical-strategic picture. An “operation” is a convenient way of organizing activities in thought and action for the achievement of some specific purpose. Hence, an operation is both an activity in itself and an organization of activities. The specific purpose of an operation may, or may not, serve some strategic aim, and the activities organized for the purpose of the operation may or may not include tactical activities. Because it is not necessary that an operation serve a strategic purpose or involve tactical actions, the operational picture is independent of the tactical-strategic picture.

To illustrate that the operational picture is parallel to and independent of the tactical-strategic picture, consider the following: the pursuit phase of battle can be thought of as strictly tactics in action, or it can be said that tactical units involved are engaged in “pursuit operations.” The Battle of Vimy Ridge may be thought of strictly as a tactical action or, if one includes the rehearsals and other preparations, as an operation for the purpose of, and which culminated in, the capture of Vimy Ridge. The convoying of ships across the North Atlantic were naval operations, which may or may not have included tactical action, and were the organization of activities for the specific purpose of bringing as many ships as possible safely into port. The operational picture is a way of organizing thought, action and activities for a specific purpose.

Because the purpose is specific, an operation is limited in scope. A complex war is not an operation, for war in general is too big a conception for it to be usefully thought of as being one big operation. The thinking about a large, complex war is made simpler and more understandable by dividing up thought into manageable portions, some of which are conceptions called operations.

There is no operational level that fits in between strategy and tactics, but thinking in terms of operations is a useful way of tackling some of the problems of war and sometimes achieving strategic purposes. It is a mistake of theory to try to force an operational level between strategy and tactics. The mistake in thinking arises because, in some operations, tactics play a subordinate role in the entire conception of “the operation.” One could just as easily say that tactical operations are subordinate parts of the whole operation, which formulation illustrates again that the operational picture is parallel to and independent of the tactical-strategic picture.

GENERAL ANALYSIS OF WORKS OF LITERATURE ON OPERATIONAL ART

One can therefore accept the understanding that one does not *apply* an art—an artist *possesses* his art and expresses it in works of art. The kind of truth that pertains to art is ontological truth. Works of operational art have two modes of existence: actual existence in a well-conceived and well-conducted operation with forces in the field, and virtual existence in the imagination sparked by historical accounts in which the ontological truth or excellence of the operation as performed can be appreciated. We turn now to an analysis of the large volume of the literature on operational art.

Works of literature on operational art do not stop at historical accounts of operations that the authors of those accounts happen to appreciate. Some works propose to instruct in operational art while others engage in speculative analysis in the art. Both instructive and speculative works exist as propositions that take the form of definitions, descriptions, ratiocinations, and prescriptions. Those works of literature are not in themselves works of operational art, for operational art is not an analysis. Operational art is not a theory or set of prescriptions. Definitions, theory and analysis pertain to sciences or bodies of knowledge, not to art as such; and prescriptions are the product of a theory or analysis.

Prescriptive works of military literature are those that say how military forces are to be used for the end of gaining victory (a military prescription amounts to a judgment concerning the form of use of forces. A judgment is not the same thing as a decision, which is a choice concerning acts or means to an end). Prescriptive works declare what is deemed wise or expedient in respect of the use of the military forces of a political entity in a particular conflict. Works of military doctrine are prescriptive.

Instructive and speculative works on operational art appear intended to condition the understanding, judgment, and process of reasoning in respect of the “true reason” of the art:

- Understanding is conditioned by means of conceptions. Conceptions, such as “disruption” or “strategic paralysis” or “force vectors,” do not affirm or deny anything and contain no truth value. They are merely objects of thought, and frequently they are objects of thought that belong to a system of thought.

- An act of judgment affirms or denies statements of existence, facts, and whether or not an X stands in a certain relation with respect to a Y,⁸ which may involve the conceptions mentioned above. Judgments are testable for truth or falsity, and a judgment is either true or false or probable. Judgment and reasoning concerning the art are conditioned by positing *a priori* certain things to be true in a system of thought.
- Reasoning is a discursive sequence of acts of judgment in the process of inference, and that process is graded as either valid or invalid, correct or incorrect, cogent or not. The end of the process is an inference that is either true or false or probable, depending upon the truth content of the premises that entered into the process correctly reasoned. The truth content—logical truth—of the premises that enter into the process of reasoning is crucial to ascertain because valid reasoning produces false inferences when the premises used in the process are false.
- Induction is not reasoning but an act of generalization—an act of intuition—and can lead to the grasping of principles. The results of induction characteristically lack certitude.

The goal of operational art is practical: the gaining of victory. The goal of the art being practical, the purpose of speculative theory of the art, and of prescription, is to aid in the carrying out of decisions or execution of choices of means resulting in overt behaviour by people in pursuit of the goal, the gaining of victory. Theoretical problems—problems of knowledge—surround practical ones, and getting knowledge for the sake of solving the practical problems of operational art is a subsidiary purpose of operational art theory. For example, military planners routinely make use of maps, which are the joint product of the empirical knowledge of geography and the art of cartography.

Because military problems are all practical ones and require decisions about what to do and how to do it, operational art theory must address itself to the decision-making process. There are three levels of practical reasoning that enter into military decision-making by the commander-artist:

- (i) the principles of the art;
- (ii) general rules for producing a certain kind of work; and
- (iii) particular decisions that the commander-artist must make in the process of creating the work of art.⁹

The distinction between a judgment and a decision means that operational decisions are made solely by the commander-artist, while the author of a work of literature solely makes judgments concerning what is wise or expedient in respect of the form of use of forces in certain situations. Since authors do not make operational decisions, works of literature on operational art can be classified in accordance simply with the higher two levels of practical reasoning. Analysis of the decisions made at level (iii), those of the commander-artist, often are the basis of induction found in literary works pertaining to levels (i) and (ii).

Examples of works of literature that pertain to the level of principles of operational art include *Cannae Studies*¹⁰ and Books 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 of *On War*.¹¹ At the level below principles—general rules for expedient application—are found works of doctrine as well as works of speculative analysis. Works of doctrine at the general rules level would include *Truppenführung*,¹² *Adaptive Dispersed Operations*, and *The Infantry Section and Platoon in Battle*. Works of speculative analysis include those found in some articles published in *Canadian Army Journal* and in books such as *Operational Art: Canadian Perspectives*.

Confidence approaching scientific certitude in the validity and significance of judgments is possible only at the universal level—the level of principles of the art. At the lower levels, the levels of general rules, the soundness of the rules (rules being prescriptive judgments concerning the form of use of forces) and,

lower down, of the decisions made by the commander-artist, fall within the realm of doubt. We are more in doubt about the rightness of particular decisions than about general rules, as one would expect moving to art from science.

The distinction between a decision by a commander-artist and a judgment-prescription of an author points to the following problem: given that each new war is a new experience, a new program, and a new experiment, how can works of description, analysis, and prescription on the subject of operational art convey with confidence “true reason” or expediency when subjective judgments about ontological truth are involved, to say nothing of other commitments made *a priori*? (The content of literature is the opinions, empirical knowledge, common sense generalizations, and judgments, albeit of experts,¹³ but it is not in the nature of military actions that it be reproducible in the same manner as, say, works of culinary art are.) Moreover, operational theorists have not yet taken seriously the requirement that they show that objective beauty exists in the art of operations. Until they do that, what they hold to be excellent or beautiful in operational art is sheer opinion.

Speculative theorizing at the level of general rules concerning what should be expedient, distinct from prescription of what is expedient, is the last kind of literary work we will consider. Good speculative theorizing of any kind is governed by the rule of William of Ockham: It is unnecessary to posit what can be concluded.¹⁴ Under the guidance of this rule, the doctrine laid down is spare and trim; its posits are few and offered only because they are indispensable to the explanation of the facts to be accounted for. It makes no prior philosophical commitments about the shape of the world, the structure of reality, the character of its constituents, or their relationships, whether disguised under the cloak of the philosopher’s logical system or not. It avoids ontological, epistemological, and psychological commitments prior to consideration of the problem.¹⁵ Its posits are made *a posteriori*—it does not begin analysis with the laying down of an idiosyncratic world view. It makes no attempt to condition the reason, but to appeal to it.

With an emphasis on ontological beauty or excellence in operational *art*, the speculative theory concerning the expedient use of forces offered by an author can become an urging of the author’s idiosyncratic and prior commitment of what excellence or beauty in operations is. The goal of military operations is to procure victory, and therefore the goal of the operational art theory in books and articles is to answer two questions: “How are we going to win?” and “Why is that so?” In the content of those answers, the author usually declares a way that demonstrates economy, adequacy, and elegance—that is to say, a way possessing excellence or beauty—in the opinion of the author. Operational art theory thus creates for itself subsidiary problems of analysis: the question of whether or not there exists an objective beauty in operational art (and if objective beauty does exist in operational art, whether the ideal of operational art as prescribed in a work of literature happens to conform to it). An example of a prior, idiosyncratic commitment to beauty in operational art theory is its abhorrence of “attrition” and devotion to “manoeuvre,” disregarding comparisons of adequacy and efficiency rather than weighing them. Science, on the other hand, is only concerned with logical truth, not ontological truth or style.¹⁶ Scientific results can aid practical wisdom in making judgments about what is wise or expedient, without the prejudice of prior commitments.

A theorist of operational *art* has already made a prior commitment to beauty or style in operations, whereas a scientist has not. An author saying what operational art ought to be is declaring what excellence in winning ought to be like in a certain style. Consequently, what constitutes especially artful operations in his mind are those which conform to his prescriptions. The difference between the ontological commitments of an author on the subject of operational art and the ontological truth found in operations that conform to the creative idea in the mind of the artist-commander is as distinct as the difference between an art teacher and a painter.

No one urging a military doctrine of practical wisdom in the expedient use of military forces goes so far as to say that the method of operations they prescribe is the *only* one causal of victory. Their position is that the method prescribed is the best or the most practicable one that the author can conceive. Nevertheless, questions of adequacy and efficiency among methods, including the ugly ones, are legitimate theoretical questions belonging to military science.

PRACTICAL WISDOM

The faculty of the human mind responsible for making practical judgments and decisions in the realm of action through experience gains know-how. By habitually making prudent choices among ends and means, this know-how ripens into a practical wisdom. While art admits of excellence, practical wisdom does not. For practical wisdom, operational art is a means.

The German invasion of France in 1940 is widely regarded as a masterpiece of operational art. But the method of operation by which that work of art was produced is analytically distinct from the work itself. A scientific analysis would, by comparison with other methods, extract that which made the method more efficient and adequate than others current at the time and, consequently, what made the method more practically wise or expedient at the time would be isolated. A formulation of this as doctrine would be a statement of practical wisdom, and it would be offered as a prescription in the hope that in the hands of another commander-artist it would be productive of another masterpiece of operational art in the future. And so it might, with luck, and so long as it remained the height of practical wisdom.

To judge a method or means preferable on the basis of its presumed military elegance is not an act of wisdom but of imprudence. By scientific analysis or intuition, one may discover a superior method of operating yet again. Clearly, prior commitments to elegance or any other kind of shackle analysis hamper intuition, and thus they hamper the fullest development of practical wisdom. Speculative works ought to be about what should be, or should not be, deemed expedient in the use of the military forces of a particular political entity in a particular conflict.

COMMON WEAKNESSES IN CURRENT SPECULATIVE WORKS ON OPERATIONAL ART

William of Ockham's articulation of the KISS principle largely has not been embraced in current literature. A brief survey of the literature shows that many military theorists have embraced instead the mistakes made by philosophy since the 18th century. They are addicted to creating world views and building systems of thought with an associated specious technical jargon even though such things baffle reason and lead to inferences of unknown validity and significance. They also fail to observe the distinctions among what is expedient absolutely and what is expedient relative to a particular political power and relative to a particular conflict.

The article "Complexity, Design, and Modern Operational Art: U.S. Evolution or False Start?" and its associated references are an excellent review of the current state of speculative thinking in operational art,¹⁷ and "Design and Joint Operation Planning"¹⁸ is a good example of a particular paper on the art.

Let us begin a brief review of current thinking with this quote from *Complexity*:

"MCDP-6 describes the military organization as an 'open system' that interacts with its surroundings and the enemy: 'Like a living organism, a military organization is never in a state of stable equilibrium but is instead in a continuous state of flux—continuously adapting to its surroundings.'"

Apparently, a sentence like "military organizations change and adapt to new circumstances" offers too simple an explanation of a common experience—if such an obvious fact as change needed an explanation. The message that change happens is presented in dazzling jargon of a system of thought: "open system," "stable equilibrium," "continuous state of flux," "adapting to its surroundings," and that the force is a "living organism." The specious technical jargon in which the quoted statement of causality is couched merely adds sizzle to a pedantic explanation of what is obvious from common sense experience. Simple, everyday experience, it seems, cannot be declared in current literature in simple, everyday language; instead, an exegesis of reality needs to be made on the basis of prior ontological commitments of some philosophical system. What is said looks more impressive that way, and the paucity of actual content is obscured.

The problem with offering conceptions, judgments and reasoning within the parameters of a conditioning system of thought is that one is forced to make judgments about the real existence of a conception offered as true within a system of thought that posits the conception as true. For example, consider Boyd's OODA loop. An OODA loop is posited to exist in his analysis. The Boyd system of analysis does not say when or how an OODA loop comes into existence or passes out of existence, what its modes of existence are, where it exists or how many of them there are, and the cause of interaction that obtains between two or more OODA loops is a complete mystery. Because OODA loops are posited to exist in Boyd's world view, we can make only one of two judgments concerning whether or not one or more OODA loops exist in reality and actually do what is said they do: to accept or to reject Boyd's entire system of thought. Rejection is not a great loss since Boyd's OODA loop theory was a dazzling repackaging of what we have known about human thought processes since the time of the ancient Greeks.¹⁹

Beyond exposing the habit of expounding the obvious in the formalism of a world view or system of thought, and of presenting common sense knowledge as the product of a formalism, the review of the current state of theory of operational art shows a body of work that is saturated with prior ideological commitments that come mainly from sociology. Now, sociology is not an empirical science. The kind of knowledge it contains, largely that of raw empiricism, is not *significant* empirical knowledge, for it offers no etiology. "Complexity theory," "wicked problems," "post-positivism" and so on are the names of intellectual constructs of sociological ideologies or systems of thought. Those constructs—affirmed to exist—seem to be major topics of discussion within the domain of theory of operational art. Since sociology is not an empirical science, the validity and significance of those constructs and the world view of which they are products are unknown. These are not like the constructs of "gravity" and "electrical resistance" of physics. Consequently, the use of sociological propositions in the process of inference—reasoning—in solving military problems ought to be avoided.

The demonstration that a sociological theory can retrospectively explain a phenomenon in a particular case does not establish that theory as valid or significant.²⁰ What matters are its *forecasts*. For that, an etiology is necessary, which, in an empirical science, takes the form of a correlation of variables. In the absence of a correlation of variables, there is no measurable correlation of cause and effect.

The consequence of employing intellectual constructs of *unknown* validity and significance that come from some world view or system of thought is that discussion and ratiocinations involving them turn into an argument about underlying, undeclared, and prior philosophical commitments, and the end product, if it ever gets that far, is a prescriptive inference of unknown expediency. Not being an empirical science, what sociology offers are opinions and common sense generalizations.

There is nothing wrong with importing the *empirical knowledge* of one discipline into another. If a military analysis is going to import *opinion* into the process of reasoning, the opinion should be of a kind that military experts are able to judge for themselves its validity and significance in order that they may evaluate properly the inferences of the reasoning that employed those opinions. The decision to launch Operation OVERLORD on June 6, 1944, rather than on June 5 was famously made on the basis of a weather forecast, and the Supreme Commander, General Eisenhower, was able to judge for himself the confidence the meteorologist had in making it by personal questioning.

To properly apply sociology to military problems, military theorists must first solve the problems that sociologists themselves have yet to solve *prior* to solving the problems of military theory. A person trying to solve the problems of sociology is a sociologist, not a military theorist; and a sociologist pursues knowledge for its own sake, whereas a military theorist is trying to solve practical problems.

By saturating operational theory with the contents of sociology, military operations and warfighting in general become viewed as a kind of sociological exercise, which may be interesting to sociologists and gratifying to those who are unconcerned with fighting, but military theorists are supposed to be concerned with answering the question "how are we going to *win*?" The adoption of a system of thought

further compounds the validity and significance problem in military decision making: analysis tends to become a massive exercise in handwaving in a specious technical vocabulary and struggles to gain useful inferences based on nothing more than opinions and common sense generalizations.

Another habit prevalent in current literature is to conceptualize by means of pictures, diagrams, and similar artwork. Since a conception is merely an object of thought, it offers no judgment and therefore affirms or denies nothing. Absent predication, being of no more grammatical significance than a noun, there is no logical truth content in these figures.

CONCLUSIONS

One does not *apply* art; an artist *possesses* his art and expresses it in works of art. The kind of truth that applies to art is ontological truth. Works of operational art exist in the military operations of forces commanded by the person said to be the operational artist. In the course of conducting his operations, the commander is engaged in artistic activity.

Theorizing on operational art takes place in an analytical picture that is different from the tactical-strategic analytical picture. Operations are activities; tactics and strategy are not. A distinguishing characteristic of the “operational” analytical picture is that the problem of fighting is neglected, and it makes no distinction between battle and campaign. That picture therefore is not a completely equivalent view as that of the tactical-strategic picture. Nevertheless, the operational picture seems to simplify analysis of the fundamental questions of military theory in certain situations. The operational picture is a useful way of organizing activities for the achievement of a specific purpose. An operation may, or may not, involve tactical activities (or tactical operations).

Theorizing in operational art proceeds without any objective description of what constitutes elegance in the art (its distinguishing characteristic). The very expression “operational art” seems to be a pretentious substitute for the name of an underlying discipline. The use of the word “art” to name the subject matter of theory creates unnecessary, distracting theoretical questions concerning elegance. Scientific questions are concerned with comparisons of adequacy and efficiency, not elegance. Questions of adequacy and efficiency are answerable with knowledge of logical truths. Questions of elegance are answerable with opinions that pertain to ontological truth and express a subjective judgment for one style over another. The abhorrence of “attrition” and worship of “manoeuvre” are the founding ontological commitments of operational art.

Because the subject matter of the theory is operational *art*, and the acme of operational art is the German invasion of France in 1940, then operational art theorists are compelled to observe the elegance in that invasion, since the question of elegance is the only one that distinguishes the art from science in literature. A scientific evaluation of that invasion, in addition to describing the method, would try to answer questions of adequacy and efficiency as compared with other methods of invasion and conquest.

Operational art theorists need to decide whether they view an army as *qua* army or as *qua* something else, such as a disciplined body of practising sociologists. An army *qua* army achieves its ends by means of battle and the threat of battle, and the ultimate end is victory. There is nothing necessary in the conception of “an operation” to waging war, as there is in tactics and strategy.

By employing world views and systems of thought posited prior to the problems it seeks to address, theory raises for itself the problem of having to judge the validity and significance of the system of thought prior to judging the validity and significance of the inferences of the theory. Operational art theorists seem oblivious to this problem. Ultimately, one must choose between wholesale acceptance or rejection of the world view or system of thought.

In the papers on operational art I have read, theorists seem unaware that what might be practically wise or expedient absolutely may not be practically wise or expedient relative to a particular political entity or relative to a particular conflict. The object of military theory is to help practical wisdom decide what

is the wise and expedient use of the forces at the disposal of the political entity relative to that entity and relative to a particular conflict. The content of a work of doctrine on warfighting should be viewed as a formulation of the current state of maturity of practical wisdom in the process of evolution and not as high science. ✱

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

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ENDNOTES

1. Vincent J. Curtis, "A Basis for a Military Science." *Canadian Army Journal*, Vol. 13.3 (2010): pp. 69-85
2. Mortimer J. Adler, *Art, the Arts, and the Great Ideas*. Toronto, Maxwell-MacMillan (1994): pp. 16-25.
3. In the ancient tradition, these corresponded to *servile* or *fine* arts on the one hand, and *liberal* arts on the other.
4. Not all works of literature are works of art, for works of history, philosophy, science, and mathematics are examples of works of literature that are not works of art per se.
5. Sir Ernest D. Swinton, *The Defense of Duffer's Drift* (1907; republished by Leo Cooper London 1990). James R. McDonough, *The Defense of Hill 781*. Presidio Press, USA (1988). Cf also Andrew Godefroy, "Fictional Writing and the Canadian Army in the Future." *Canadian Army Journal*, 8.1 (2005): pp. 93-97.
6. Adler, *Arts* pp. 16-25.
7. Vincent J. Curtis, "The Essential Questions of Military Theory." *Sitrep*, 69.1 (2009): pp. 9-14.
8. Such as an assertion of the existence of an OODA loop. An OODA loop is a conception; that an OODA loop exists is to state a judgment. That a state of "strategic paralysis" exists is likewise a judgment.
9. Mortimer J. Adler, *Intellect: Mind over Matter*. Toronto, Maxwell-MacMillan (1990): pp. 158-161.
10. Alfred von Schlieffen, *Cannae*. Command and General Staff School Press, Ft Leavenworth (1931).
11. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*. Howard-Peret trs. Toronto, Knopf (1993).
12. The Wehrmacht's operational field manual, written in 1933.
13. The difference between a common sense generalization and a scientific induction is that the former is derived from common experience while the latter is derived from carefully designed experiments that provide valid data. The significance of generalization is known in the latter but not in the former. A common sense generalization works until it doesn't.
14. Occam's razor is a statement of the ubiquitous KISS principle as applied to theorizing.
15. See Mortimer J. Adler, *Some Questions About Language*. La Salle, IL, Open Court (1976): pp. 8-10.
16. Questions of adequacy and efficiency are scientific questions because they are answerable with knowledge.
17. A. Elkus, "Complexity, Design, and Modern Operational Art: U.S. Evolution or False Start." *Canadian Army Journal*, 13.3 (2010): pp. 55-67.
18. Dan McCauley, "Design and Joint Operation Planning." *Canadian Military Journal*. 12.1 (2011): pp. 30-40.
19. Instead of OODA, consider PARD-E: Perception, Apprehension, Ratiocination, Decision – Execution. PARD is more accurate a statement of the actual processes in the human mind, and Execution is the process of carrying out the decision, with all the pitfalls that entails. The OODA-loop doctrine is founded upon the belief that a human organization is metaphorically like a human being.
20. Cf Pierre Pahlavi and Karine Ali, "Institutional Analysis and Irregular Warfare: Portugal's Involvement in Angola, Guinea Bissau, and Mozambique (1961–1974)." *Canadian Military Journal*, 12.2 (2012): pp. 44-52. The centres of gravity of these revolts plainly lay in reactions to centuries of Portuguese paternalism. A common sense analysis starting from that, and the recognition that there was no singular instantiation of the centre of gravity—only instantiations that bore resentment as an accidental property—also explains everything this paper covers without reference to "institutional analysis."



CORE ISSUES MOTIVATING AFGHAN INSURGENTS

Lieutenant-Colonel Philip J. Halton CD

This would be [a] new revolution in which each cruel person will suffer / Each criminal will be ashamed and taken to trial / This flood will clear out the dirt and will spread in every direction / The oppressed will become happy, and everywhere there will be freedom / Everyone will break their chains and every captive's hand will be freed / In order to gain independence for the nation; the countrymen will smile.

—Taliban poem, 2007¹

Since the events of 9/11 brought Afghanistan—and by extension, the Taliban—into the limelight, Western views of the Taliban have far too often fallen prey to simplistic jingoism, where complex sets of overlapping individuals, organisations, motivations and identities are simplified in ways that distort the overall issues. This distortion has led decision makers astray when attempting to address the relevant issues. As much as Western opinion, particularly post-9/11, sees the Taliban as medieval, misogynist, Luddite tribals, this perception does not change how others within Afghanistan (including a certain number of Afghans themselves) perceive the Taliban movement—as the just, moral and devout pan-tribal saviours of their nation.

Separating the geo-political aspects of the conflict from the personal ones driving individual insurgents, and understanding how the insurgency is viewed by those participating in it, are key to building a sufficiently nuanced understanding of the roots of conflict. In particular, the stark ideological terms of the “good vs evil” view that has dominated aspects of the Global War on Terror has prevented a clear view of insurgent motivations. Repeated statements that Mullah Omar and other individuals or sections within the insurgency are “irreconcilable” represent an intellectual failure that prevents the West from achieving its objectives in Afghanistan, and derails negotiations before they can even begin. The focus on finding reconcilable insurgents is a false one, which precludes finding issues on which to reconcile with the mainstream of the insurgency, and even the “hard core” of its leadership. In a sense, those adopting this approach have built a mental model of what the Taliban are and then refused to deal with them on the basis of that construct.

This article will demonstrate that the West has too often misunderstood what motivates the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. This has made the possibility of defeating the insurgency completely, by military or other means, increasingly remote as time goes on. Beginning with a definition of the structure of the insurgency, this article then examines common misconceptions of what drives it, and then defines and explores the actual issues underpinning the conflict in Afghanistan. By doing so, the author seeks to present a nuanced understanding of the roots of insurgency in Afghanistan, which could then form the basis of a comprehensive program to counter the insurgents and bring the conflict to a final end.

STRUCTURE OF THE INSURGENCY

The insurgency in Afghanistan is a complex, heterogenous network of sub-organisations and individuals, who share, to greater or lesser degrees, a unifying set of values, perceptions and goals that motivate them to conduct the insurgency. For the purpose of this essay the Afghan insurgency can be seen as composed of seven main groupings, only some of which would self-identify as *Taliban* (which translates literally as “students”).² The first four of these fall under the broad leadership of Mullah Omar: first, the Kandahari mainstream Taliban (also referred to as *Quetta Shura* Taliban); second, the network centred around the Haqqani family (sometimes referred to as *Peshawar Shura*, *Paktiawal* Taliban or most commonly as the Haqqani Network); third, the Mansur family network (also referred to as *Paktiawal* Taliban); and fourth, the Tora Bora Front (composed of the remnants of the *Hezb-i Islami* party led by Yunis Khalis or HIK). The fifth grouping is another factional division of *Hezb-i Islami*, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (and known in English by the acronym HIG), which, stemming from its roots as one of the historical “Peshawar Seven” mujahedeen groups, predates the Taliban as an organisation, but which officially cooperates with them.³ The sixth grouping are the small and strategically ineffective *salafist*

groups active in Eastern Afghanistan (some of which have been absorbed by the Haqqani Network). The seventh and final grouping is composed of small, independent insurgent groups, which may be “full-time” or “part-time” and which may or may not state any allegiance to any of the groups above. To add to the confusion, this final grouping may refer to themselves as Taliban, which in many ways is not an exclusive name, or may identify with the former allegiances of members, which could include essentially defunct mujahedeen parties.⁴ Even amongst Afghans, however, “Taliban” can be used as a catch-all phrase for armed anti-government or criminal actors when it suits their immediate purpose (such as when discussing with international militaries) or when further definition is not possible.

When considering the structure and motivating factors driving the insurgency, the focus of Western analysis can be on “organisational charts” of the various groupings, with a hierarchical structure imposed on them in order to create sense from the disjointed groupings, or with arbitrary divisions made where they do not clearly exist (an example of this would be the line drawn between the “Haqqani Network” and the Quetta Shura). The structure of the insurgency, however, defies these kinds of structural descriptions, as they cannot easily accommodate the contradictions, overlapping structures and dense networks that better reflect the reality of the insurgency.

The Taliban, who form a large part of the insurgency in Afghanistan, as an organisation are neither monolithic nor static. Although there are minimal mechanisms for central control that have been used effectively by the leadership, the organisation itself remains very much a conglomerate of sub-groupings which fits loosely under the major goals of the overall organisation. The Taliban have reacted fluidly to their changing situation, while maintaining a core moral and political message that creates the framework within which the sub-groupings fit. While these unifying ideals span the breadth of this conglomeration, the Taliban as an entire movement is not organisationally or ideologically homogenous. This seeming contradiction has confounded much analysis of the organisation. The simplicity of their message, as well as Western knowledge of contradictory behaviour by insurgent groups, has caused the power of this message (and therefore the insurgency) to be underestimated. The lack of a nuanced understanding of the insurgency—and particularly the motivations of those conducting it—has hampered Western efforts to counter it over the years.

The structure of the insurgency in Afghanistan is very complex, in part because it is not a single structure, but a structure of structures, each of which is in itself complex. Attempts to determine whether or not the insurgency (or even just the Taliban) are heterogeneous or homogeneous, or are unified or segmented, often fail because these organisations are all of these things simultaneously, although the balance between these dichotomies changes over time.⁵ The complexity (and strength) of the Taliban in particular depends on this multiplicity of structures.

As shown in figure 1, the vertical structure of the Taliban, linking individual insurgents with the upper leadership, is based on a unifying vision that is supra-tribal/ethnic and rooted in the primacy of Islam and its moral values. The horizontal structure, however, binds individuals within local groups, and relies heavily on ethnic, tribal and regional ties that do not necessarily reflect the vertical structure.⁶ This seeming contradiction is a key aspect to the organisational strength of the Taliban, whose loosely networked structures have proven incredibly resilient, in part because of the multiplicity of ties that bind members to the group.

A key aspect of both horizontal and vertical linkages is the Afghan concept of *andiwal*, which loosely translates (in both Dari and Pashtu) as a “buddy.” Individual insurgents all have *andiwal* (or personal) networks which link them to other insurgents and the organisation as a whole, but also with many others throughout society. The primary individual *andiwal* networks that are at play within the insurgency are religious ones (connections made while studying at *madrassas*), political ones (made while fighting together in former and current *tanzims*) and tribal ones (stemming from shared tribal links). The key leadership of the Taliban all share connections through *andiwal*, which makes for dense personal networks binding individuals and groups together in ways that are not necessarily easily discerned.⁷

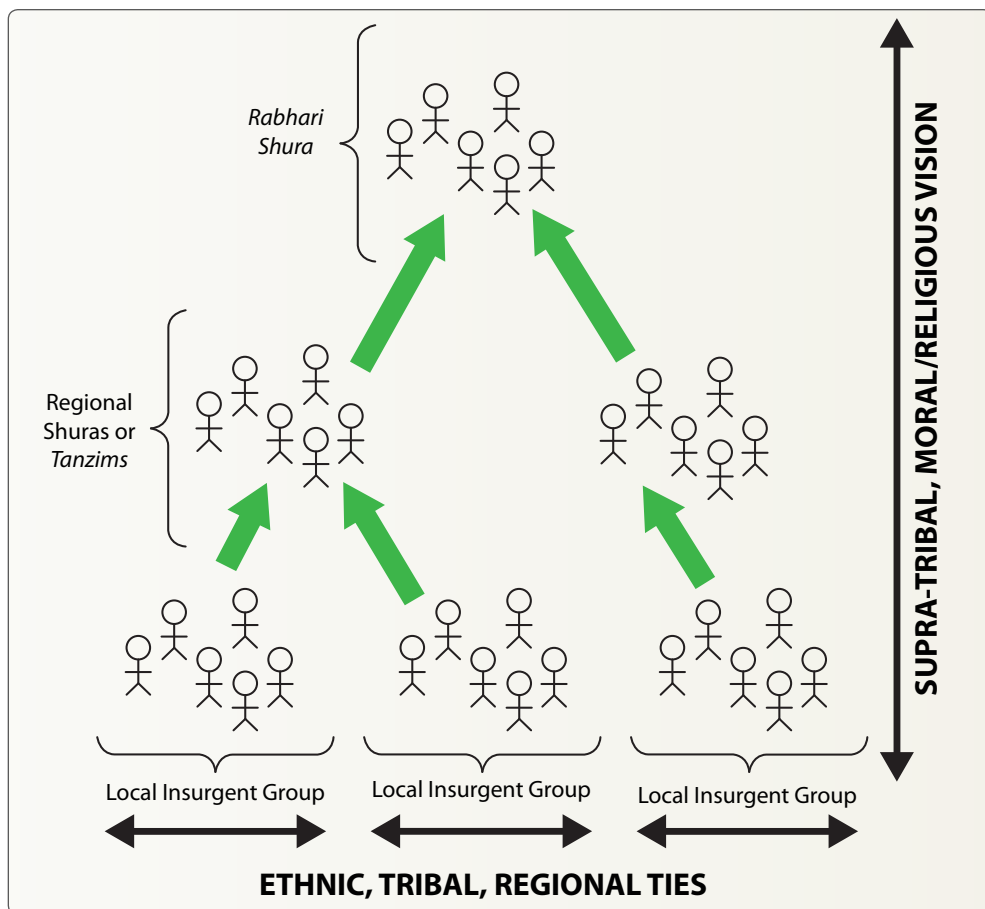


Figure 1: Vertical and Horizontal Organisational Structure of the Insurgency. Source: Author's own diagram, adapted from "How Tribal are the Taliban," Ruttig.

MISIDENTIFIED MOTIVATIONS FOR THE INSURGENCY

Afghan culture—complex, multi-layered, at times disjointed and contradictory—is one that is difficult for most outsiders to fathom. Western descriptions of it are often more of a caricature—a pastiche of ideas of the noble yet cunning savage living in pre-civilization. It is precisely this complexity and foreign-ness, along with simplified concepts that attempt to explain it, which have led to many misunderstandings regarding the roots of the insurgency.

A LONG HISTORY OF MILITANCY

One of these misunderstandings stems from the idea incorporated in the "famous" Afghan quotation—"Me against my brothers, me and my brothers against my cousins, me and my cousins against the world," which is often cited as "explaining" Afghan culture.^{8,9} A similar phrase also used is, "A Pashtun is never at peace, unless he is at war."¹⁰ Underlying the use of this saying to describe Afghans is the idea that there is a history and culture of conflict inherent in Afghanistan that explains why they are fighting. This idea, that the insurgents in Afghanistan fight simply because that is what Afghans do (and have done for centuries), is one that has surprising currency amongst what is otherwise good, nuanced analysis.¹¹ It is, however, essentially a

“cop out”—because with it, no other explanation is required, and the many problems illustrated below that motivate individuals to fight become unimportant. It ignores the loose yet effective state that had been rooted in Afghanistan for centuries and effectively kept order prior to the tumultuous politics of the 1970s.¹² Finally, it substitutes myth-making for the fact that the issues which motivate Afghan insurgents to fight are very much like those driving insurgents elsewhere in the world.

A PASHTUN TRIBAL CONFLICT

The second factor misidentified as a “primary motivator” of the insurgency is that of ethnicity or tribalism. The Taliban are described as a Pashtun or specifically Ghilzai (a Pashtun sub-tribe) phenomenon by many commentators on the conflict.¹³ This is again an oversimplification, as well as a failure to see the Taliban as they see themselves. While the *rahbari shura* is largely composed of Ghilzai Pashtuns (as well as some Kakar), and the Taliban emerged from the Pashtun dominated south and east and remains strongest there today, this does not make them a Pashtun movement *per se*.

The Taliban neither use tribal language nor refer to tribes in their own communications, and in fact see themselves as a *supra-tribal* organisation.¹⁴ While tribal andiwal connections clearly do bind sub-groups of the Taliban together, to see them as a monolithic Pashtun or Ghilzai movement misidentifies the source of their strength, which is in their vision of a post-tribal, Islamic society. This idea was clearly stated by Mullah Omar in 2008: “Our religion enjoins on us to avoid from indulging in any kind of activity involving prejudices based on ethnicity. The only bond, which binds us, is the bond of Islam.”¹⁵

The predominance of Pashtuns within the Taliban leadership is due more to the ethnic nature of the 1990s civil war, which saw the former mujahedeen groups align along ethnic lines, rather than a will to exclude other ethnicities. The Taliban have in fact worked to weaken traditional tribal structures, which they have supplanted with their own institutions, based on their interpretation of Islam.¹⁶ Tribal descriptions of the Taliban leadership ignore inconvenient facts—such as that the deputy of the movement, Mullah Beradar is, in fact, a Popolzai (as is President Karzai), or that the wider Taliban movement is in some ways more inclusive, at the local level, than the Popolzai-dominated Karzai administration.¹⁷

While our understanding of tribal structures is essentially superficial and static, it is a transient structure, which reflects an ideal as much as it does fact. Tribes and sub-tribes merge and divide over time for reasons of expediency, and therefore while individuals may know their lineage in terms of their ancestors’ identities, the relations and standing among tribes remains a matter very much in flux. These shifts are all the more common now that tribal structures have been weakened by years of targeting - by the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime, mujahedeen “social climbers,” narco-traffickers, and both sides of the current insurgency.¹⁸

Analysis of the Afghan conflict has also in some ways been affected by the nature of the post-invasion conflict in Iraq, which was in fact driven by tribal/sectarian violence as the situation there disintegrated into near civil war. Solutions to the conflict there, which did not have roots as deep as the one in Afghanistan, could rely on co-opting essentially intact tribal structures¹⁹. In the case of Afghanistan, however, it is as if the production and study of tribal organisation charts like the one at figure 2 only serves to obfuscate the true issues driving the insurgency. This chart, while seemingly an exhaustive resource, fails to capture the subtlety and dynamism of Afghan tribalism that eludes the ability of static structures to define. An example of this are the *Babozai* sub-tribe, whose identity is transient—in Zabul they identify as a sub-tribe of the *Hotak*, and are therefore *Ghilzai*, while in Uruzgan, they are considered a sub-tribe of the *Nurzai*, and so are *Durrani*.²⁰ This undercuts Western dogmatic descriptions of the *Durrani-Ghilzai* conflict, which has at times been cited as the “key” to explaining the entire conflict.

Focusing on the tribal composition of the Taliban as a major factor has also allowed military analysts to ignore the inroads being made by the Taliban in the largely non-Pashtun North. If the Taliban are truly a Pashtun movement, such a success would be impossible.²¹ Largely ignored since first noted in 2006, the Taliban have slowly built support across the north, as have HIG, focusing on links with Uzbeks, Turkmen, Aimaks and Tajiks, who have otherwise been characterized in the West as “natural enemies” of the Taliban

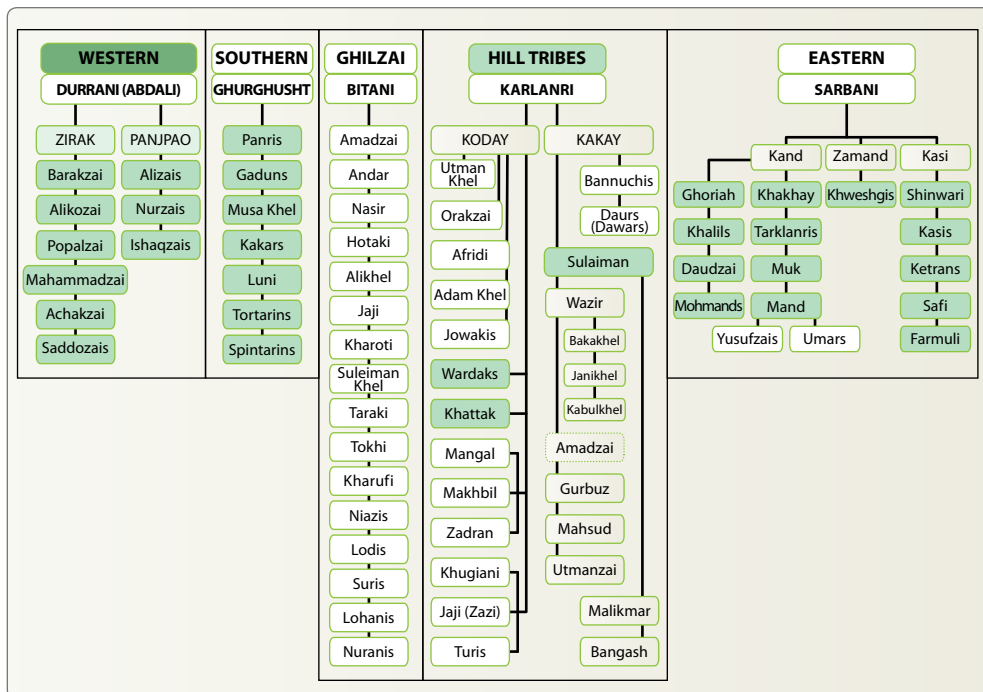


Figure 2: Pashtun Tribes and Sub-Tribes. Source: *The Taliban: An Organisational Analysis*.

movement and Pashtuns in general.²² Clear evidence of their success can be seen in recent high profile attacks against the UN compound in Mazar-e-Sharif on 1 April, 2011 that left seven UN staff dead, as well as the assassination of General Daud Daud, a legendary anti-Taliban fighter and *Jamiat-e-Islami* commander, as well as a staunch US ally. In addition, the number of low-level attacks has also increased greatly over recent years.²³

Although Taliban rule in Mazar-e-Sharif was harsh, in many rural areas their influence was light, and brought relative peace and stability. Recruiting in the north has been driven by Pakistan-educated mullahs, targeting former *jihadis* with old links to the current Taliban as well as former Pakistani madrassa students who share the Taliban vision of Islam. In both cases, these are examples of *andiwal* relationships and religion trumping ethnicity and tribalism in the formation of allegiance and identity.²⁴

A CONFLICT DRIVEN BY PAKISTAN?

While Pakistan undoubtedly has a role in supporting the insurgency in Afghanistan, and may have been behind the creation of the Taliban as an alternative party to HIG, their role in sustaining the insurgency can be over-stated; they are *an* influence on it, but are not *the* influence. Pakistan clearly seeks to guide the insurgency, and to benefit from it in geo-political terms, but to over estimate their influence in generating or maintaining the insurgency undercuts the key fact that the insurgency is driven by legitimate grievances.

The connection between Pakistani authorities and Afghan insurgents stretches back nearly forty years, beginning with their provision of shelter to guerrilla bands who staged a low level conflict with the Daoud regime from 1973 to 1978, and then expanding greatly during the period of Soviet intervention. This support was primarily through the Pakistan Security Agency (ISI), but also through elements of the paramilitary Frontier Corps. Links between the insurgent groups and Pakistani society have become extensive, rooted in inter-marriage, long-term residence, the shared experience of *jihad*, and political and military cooperation.²⁵



Source: Combat Camera

The initial impetus for Pakistan to seek to manipulate armed insurgencies in Afghanistan was to provide them with “strategic depth” in their simmering conflict with India, or more plainly to prevent Afghanistan from offering any degree of threat to their west. Although this theory holds less credence in Pakistani government circles than it did previously, ensuring a friendly regime in Afghanistan remains an issue of vital national interest to Pakistan. The potential of the Karzai regime to be such has been rejected out of hand because of its perceived strong ties to India.²⁶ Thus, they perceive that they have no choice but to continue to meddle in Afghan politics, although this does not necessarily translate into continued support for the Taliban specifically.²⁷

Pakistani use of insurgency to achieve their goals in Afghanistan has created some unintended effects, however, most notably the increased power of the ISI (to the point that civilian governments have great difficulty curbing their activities) as well the radicalization of elements of Pakistani society, as seen in the growth of Islamist groups with great antipathy towards the current Pakistani government. This radicalization has forced the Pakistani government to play a double game with the US on the issue of the Taliban—supporting some US efforts to defeat them on one hand, while continuing to support them so as not to anger influential radical elements in their own society and thereby jeopardize their own existence.²⁸

While Pakistani support, particularly in terms of sanctuaries for key leadership, does play a role in the success of the insurgency, Pakistan is not the key driver of the insurgency. In fact, the power relationship has in some ways shifted, where Islamist groups (including Afghan Taliban living there) and radicals in the Pakistani authorities wield greater power in some areas than the civilian administration. An example of this is that the rahbari shura brokered a series of peace deals from 2006-2008 between the military and Pakistani Taliban—which the civilian administration had failed to do successfully on their own.²⁹

To focus primarily on Pakistan’s support for the Taliban as one the key drivers of the Afghan insurgency acts to lessen the importance of the many internal factors and motivations that actually sustain it. Even with the fullest Pakistani support, the insurgency in Afghanistan would wither if it did not derive primarily from credible grievances amongst the Afghan population. Pakistani support for the Taliban is not a given – just as they shifted their support from HIG to the Taliban in 1994 in order to suit their own purposes, they might

do so again if it became advantageous. The key Pakistani goal in this matter is to ensure the creation of an Afghan government friendly to their interests, and to reduce the influence of domestic supporters of radical Islam to manageable levels. Neither of these goals is incompatible with Western interests in the region, and so the understanding of the potential role of Pakistan in a negotiated settlement needs to be more nuanced than it presently is.

There are many potential “spoilers” to a negotiated peace agreement—al-Qaeda, Afghan warlords within the United National Front, and either the Pakistani government or the ISI.³⁰ Of these, Pakistan—specifically its government and the semi-autonomous ISI—are perhaps the entities most able to act as such. In their current position, however, Pakistan can most simply meet their aims by supporting a negotiated end to the conflict in Afghanistan that allows the Taliban, or another controllable Pashtun/Islamist faction, to wield influence there. Conversely, should Pakistan be excluded from participating in any such deal, they would have strong incentives to prevent it.

The US has attempted to exclude Pakistan from talks with the Taliban leadership, and has also declined to share plans for future operations in Afghanistan—well aware of the likelihood that such plans would be passed on to the Taliban.³¹ In return, Pakistan has cleverly placed itself in the thick of the negotiation issue. They first did this by arresting Mullah Baradar (in 2010), the Taliban second in command, who was believed to have independent links to the Karzai government, and who was the most likely approach to negotiating with the Taliban other than through the ISI.³² More recently, it is believed that the assassination of Burhanuddin Rabbani (head of the High Peace Council) was committed by elements of the Haqqani family network (despite their denials), which deeply undermines Afghan efforts to unilaterally conduct high level negotiations with the insurgency.³³

AN INSURGENCY DRIVEN BY RADICAL FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The idea that the insurgency in Afghanistan enjoys a heavy involvement of radical foreign fighters is one with much currency. President Karzai has himself said that the conflict in Afghanistan was a “merciless campaign of destruction...[conducted by terrorist groups from]...outside of our border.”³⁴ Even given this high level of support for the idea, it is one which suffers from a problem of definition at the outset. In strict terms, Pakistanis (even Pashtun ones) are foreigners within Afghanistan, despite great linguistic, tribal and cultural links and similarities with Afghans. This definition is further muddled by the displacement of large segments of the Afghan population in the years since 1979. As far as reconciliation or demobilization programmes, particularly those based in community involvement and rewards, Pakistani Pashtuns are foreigners—they have no place within Afghan society into which they can be reintegrated. In terms of the perception of some Afghans, however, these same individuals may seem to be more “Afghan” than their actual countrymen from another part of the country, from another ethnic group, or from another religious group.

Foreigners from outside of the region, primarily Arabs but also including small numbers of Chechens, Uyghurs, Filipinos, Westerners and others, have also been linked to the insurgency. Jalaluddin Haqqani was one of the first anti-Soviet mujahedeen to incorporate foreigners, primarily Arabs, directly into his organisation circa 1987. His primary efforts, however, were directed at grooming Saudi and UAE sources of funding, and accepting the presence of foreign jihadis was part of this effort.³⁵ His organisation remains one of the most ethnically diverse within the insurgency, currently including large numbers of Pakistanis and Uzbeks, and small numbers of Chechens and Arabs, although whether any of these groups other than Pakistanis are involved in his leadership shura is unclear.³⁶

Thus in general terms, the majority of links with foreign fighters across the insurgency as a whole (other than strictly personal ones) are at the highest levels of the Taliban rather than within tactical units, as they are a source of funding and technical advice, rather than a source of manpower. Their potential involvement at low levels within the insurgency is also restricted by the fact that there is a major divergence in goals between local insurgents, fighting primarily in response to local grievances, and foreigners whose motivations tend to be more ideological. This difference in motivations has led to friction and conflict between these two constituencies in the past.³⁷

This is particularly evident where foreign fighters are well organised or semi-independent, such as the remnants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in South Waziristan. As an example, there were violent clashes between the IMU and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in April, 2007, allegedly over land ownership and control of smuggling routes. The IMU are very well established in South Waziristan, through local marriage and long term residency, but still found themselves at odds with “true” local insurgents.³⁸

The idea that large numbers of foreign insurgents are involved in fighting in Afghanistan, or that they are, as one Western diplomat described them, primarily “Saudi kids on their Gap year” is false.³⁹ Such assumptions are likely based on experiences in the Iraq war where such a statement would have been more correct. Such foreigners, particularly in Afghanistan, make bad insurgents—they do not know the language, culture, or terrain, and have minimal military training or value. They would represent a burden on the insurgent group accepting them, as opposed to a boon. To borrow a term from Anne-Marie Slaughter, a heavy presence of foreigners amongst the insurgents would generate as many cultural “antibodies” as does the presence of NATO.⁴⁰ The failure of the most famous of 20th century guerrillas, Che Guevara, during his adventures attempting to lead or spark revolutions in the Congo and Bolivia, stand as testament to this idea.

It is perhaps convenient for Afghan authorities and locals, and even at times international militaries, to lay blame for the insurgency on “foreigners,” in order to dilute local responsibility for insurgent activity, or to inflate the threat posed by the insurgents in question. It is, in a sense, a convenient lie that allows all sides to “other” the insurgency, and therefore to avoid framing it in ways that do not suit their immediate purposes. While there is the involvement of foreign fighters from outside the immediate region within the insurgency in Afghanistan, they are not the drivers of it, nor do they have much radicalizing effect on Afghan insurgents themselves.

THE PRIMARY MOTIVATIONS DRIVING THE INSURGENCY

No single set of motivations can explain the drivers that cause all insurgents to continue to fight. There is a spectrum of motivations, however, which can be captured along a practical-to-ideological continuum, within which the underlying impetus of nearly all insurgents would fit. The diagram at figure 3 shows these six motivations, which are each explored individually below.

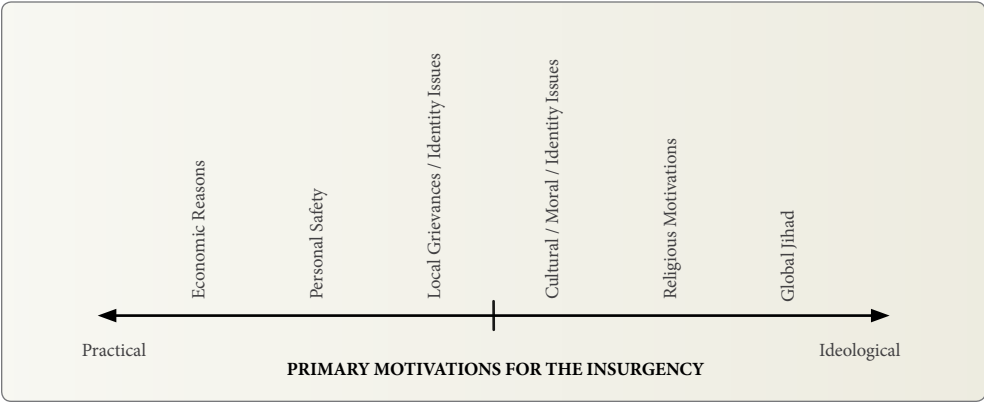


Figure 3: Primary Motivations of the Insurgency. Source: Author’s own diagram.

ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS

The primary motivators being used by Western powers to attempt to reconcile and reintegrate former insurgents, as well as to co-opt the wider population, are economic ones. This stems from a conceptual model within Western militaries which places great emphasis on economic development as a means to defeat insurgency. This approach is typified by the use of terms such as “golden surrender” (implying the employment of economic gain to motivate surrender) in USJMP 3-24 Counterinsurgency Operations.⁴¹ The Taliban themselves have not ignored the economic factors of the conflict, and have in fact manipulated these factors with some success. A particular source of support in the early days of the Taliban, especially in financial terms, were the unions of long distance truck drivers, who in better times had carried both licit and illicit cargoes from the port of Karachi as far as Iran or the former Soviet states, and who looked to the Taliban to clear these routes of illegal toll posts that had sprung up during the chaos of the civil war.⁴²

Both pro-government and insurgent forces have recognized the need to address the economic needs of the general population, through both development aid and direct payments, in order to gain and maintain their support. This has led to what has been termed a “bidding war” between them for the loyalty of the populace. The village of Jeleran, in the heavily contested Arghandab valley, was the focus in 2011 of heavy efforts by US forces to entice the displaced population of the village to return. This village (originally of 30 families) received a monthly assistance stipend of \$1 million USD for seven months—which still only enticed roughly a third of the original population to return. In an unusual statement of logic, a US military officer involved in the efforts in the village described the conflict in stark economic terms—while the local Taliban paid villagers \$11 USD to plant an IED, the US army was paying \$6 USD a day for labour, six days a week—suggesting that, therefore, the US Army had the more enticing overall political program.⁴³

This suggests an over-emphasis on the purely economic pressures that drive some to join the insurgency, as clearly the offer of a steady wage (while the US retains interest) does not address any of the other issues that drive the insurgency. Also, this sort of heavy direct investment by the military, besides being unsustainable, undercuts the very governmental and economic structures that the military is ostensibly there to support in the first place. In addition to this effect, as can be seen in Jeleran, it also does not seem to have the desired impact.

An offshoot of the economic motivations for the insurgency is the production of narcotics, specifically opium and marijuana and their process forms, heroin and hashish respectively. While this is essentially a political/ideological issue to Western states (for whom narcotics are a domestic political issue), for Afghans it is an imminently practical one hinging primarily on profits.

Mujahadeen links to the narcotics trade can be traced back to the mid-1980s, where all of the major groups became involved in this and other illicit ventures (notably gemstone mines and timber smuggling) as a means to develop sources of funding independent of the ISI and other sponsors.⁴⁴ After the Soviet withdrawal, the lengthy civil war required even more resources, and although some funding and assistance was supplied by the ISI, the US and Saudi funding enjoyed previously had largely been withdrawn. It is during this period that, like earlier mujahadeen commanders who desired an independent source of funding, the Taliban grew dependant on “taxing” narcotics production and protecting narcotics convoys for funding, particularly at the level of local commanders (and less so at higher levels, such as the rahbari shura).⁴⁵

Early failures by the international community to engage with the issue of narcotics (Rumsfeld famously quipped “We don’t do drugs” in answer to why the military in Afghanistan was ignoring the issue) as well as to focus on development funding created a dual vacuum which allowed narcotics to thrive.⁴⁶ Later efforts to eradicate illegal crops, particularly opium, made it an incredibly divisive issue that affects a wide swath of the population.⁴⁷ Given that the Taliban offer to protect opium production and transportation, and the government is publicly committed to stamping it out (despite the ties of many pro-Karzai political figures to the trade), eradication drives individual farmers into the insurgency purely to protect what is the most valuable cash crop they can produce. The degree to which this has been a stratifying issue can be seen by the

fact that by 2008, 98% of the opium harvest in Afghanistan was taking place in what were considered to be insurgent controlled areas.⁴⁸ This issue has been further exploited by local Taliban, who have encouraged or coerced farmers into growing opium, creating both economic opportunity in these communities but also opening them up to eradication and reprisals that create the grievances which further fuel support for the insurgency.⁴⁹ The involvement of high level members of the Karzai government (notably the President's late half-brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai), and their apparent ability to act with impunity, further undercuts the believability of the government message on narcotics, and therefore on many other issues as well.⁵⁰

PERSONAL SAFETY

Although seemingly contradictory, the need for personal safety has driven many into the insurgency, and is a motivator that stretches back into the period of the anti-Soviet conflict. In a country as marred by conflict as Afghanistan, it is undoubtedly difficult to exist without taking sides. For former members of the Taliban, particularly those who were well known within the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan administration, simply returning to "civilian" life has not been a viable option, as they have been subjected to a wide variety of threats—from western militaries seeking to incarcerate or kill them, from the depredations of rival tribes or other groups empowered within the new regime, or simply from local reprisals for old grievances. The same is true for members of the Taliban who have chosen to demobilize more recently—although to the list of threats above, they can also add the threat from the Taliban itself, who have consistently targeted those who reconcile with the government. These problems are exacerbated by the incredibly weak rule of law that has become the norm under the Karzai regime.⁵¹ Given these conditions, there is little incentive for an individual fighter to leave the insurgency once he has become embroiled within it.

While former insurgents are at threat from a wide variety of sources, the Taliban are also keen to portray themselves as the protectors of the disadvantaged, which has been a key part of their messaging since they began.⁵² This idea has played well amongst a wide section of the Afghan population. The patronage politics of the Karzai government have disenfranchised those Pashtun tribes that were seen as too closely involved with the insurgency or who otherwise impeded the political designs of new government appointees.⁵³ This has left the Ghilzai and Panjpai Pashtun sub-tribes open to predation and abuse, by officials themselves, police and even international military, who often rely on local officials to assist in identifying insurgents.⁵⁴

Another example of a demographic to whom the Taliban message of protection is attractive are those persons involved in the opium trade—either as farmers, itinerant labour, local traders or as criminals. Approximately 12% of the Afghan population is estimated to be involved in the opium trade, and beyond those directly involved are many more that are affected by it. Given that the opium trade makes up 30–50% of the country's actual GDP, this second circle of persons whose lives are affected by disruption of the trade must be large indeed.⁵⁵ As long as the Taliban are able to portray themselves as the protectors of those involved in this trade, there is a large segment of the population for whom supporting anyone but the insurgency is simply not an option.

LOCAL GRIEVANCES AND PERVERSIVE CORRUPTION

A key Taliban message has been, "Government courts are for the rich, Taliban justice is for the poor." This implies that the government courts, characterized by slow processes and the need to bribe officials in order to even have a case heard, favour the rich, while Taliban justice is swift and fair and favours those who have truly been aggrieved. This message resonates in many communities, and strengthens the perception that the current government is corrupt and predatory and spreads injustice.⁵⁶ Interviews with insurgents uncovered many specific reasons that caused them to join the insurgency, many of which speak directly to grievances suffered by the insurgent—opposition to an abusive power, opposition to the impunity of government-aligned actors, exclusion from power or resources, or the effects of social and economic deprivation.⁵⁷

Rather than dividing the Taliban into "fundamentalists" and "moderates," as Western pundits tend to attempt, Afghans themselves see them differently. They speak of *makhtabi* (literally "school") Taliban, who are those who are motivated ideologically, and of *majburi* (literally "forced") Taliban, who are those driven to revolt due to the personal grievances they have suffered.⁵⁸ This dichotomy is one which places the blame for fuelling the insurgency back on the Afghan government and western military forces, which is a much more useful model if the point is to identify and address the underlying issues.



Source: Combat Camera

The disenfranchisement of groups (be they tribes, clans, or villages) by the empowerment of others is a natural result of the patronage politics epitomized by the current Afghan administration, but also of counter-insurgency as practiced by Western militaries in Afghanistan. The identification and nearly unwavering support of local allies by Western ones has been a key tenet of the conflict since the Northern Alliance were supported in toppling the Taliban by primarily US Special Forces, and has carried on since.⁵⁹ Examples abound of local strongmen who, despite involvement in narcotics trades, maintenance of private militias, widespread human rights abuses, and other unsavoury practices, have held senior positions within the government and received many benefits by virtue of their support for the US and the Karzai administration. These notably include key Karzai supporters such as Gul Agha Sherzai, Muhamed Akhundzada, and the late half brother of the President, Ahmed Wali Karzai. In all cases these individuals blend the role of tribal leader, government official, warlord and narco-trafficker in a seamless exercise of power for personal gain.⁶⁰

It is little wonder that many Taliban became such by opposing these individuals and their actions, particularly as it is this style of the exercise of power which the Taliban mythology says they essentially rose to counter in the first place. This is only made more convincing by the fact that many of the predatory government officials put in place by the Karzai regime are ones who the Taliban had already fought during the civil war, and in some cases deposed. Prime examples of such officials are famous figures such as Ismail Khan (*Emir* of Herat deposed by the Taliban, reinstated after their fall, first as Governor of Herat and later Minister of Energy), Abdul Rashid Dostum (anti-Taliban leader of *Jumbesh-e-Melli* forced into exile through military defeats at the hands of the Taliban and now Chief of Staff of the Afghan National Army), or Gul Agha Sherzai (deposed as *de facto* Governor of Kandahar by the Taliban but reinstated after their fall, and now the Governor of Nangahar), but there are many more at lower levels who also generate local ire.⁶¹

This effect leads whole communities to choose to accept a Taliban presence amongst them, despite not necessarily swallowing the Taliban agenda whole, because of the perception that the Taliban provide a level of security, justice and fairness that they do not enjoy under the current regime.⁶² This is highly reminiscent

of the early success and spread of the Taliban, where they were able to fill a vacuum left by feuding warlords. Further grievances are also created by military operations, to the point that efforts to minimize collateral damage and civilian casualties and severely limit house searches had to be made the priority by General McChrystal while ISAF Commander. The previous, heavy-handed style of military operations had come to be seen as fuelling the insurgency rather than ending it.⁶³

CULTURAL/MORAL MOTIVATIONS AND ISSUES OF IDENTITY

While many of the evident objectives of the Taliban were tied to local issues, they have consistently espoused two over-arching goals—the removal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, and the imposition of sharia law. Inherent in this idea of sharia are also implicit (though undefined) legal, cultural, political and moral ideas of how society should be ordered.⁶⁴ This idea is also expressed by the Taliban when they speak of establishing a “truly Islamic” state, which represents a reductionist view of society in keeping with the salafist strain within Taliban religious thought. The moral values espoused by the Taliban are interesting in that they purport to be those of a rural, essentially Pashtun, village—which as an ideal likely does not exist in fact, and which many of the Taliban have never themselves lived in. This ideal village that the Taliban refer to is actually only an interpretation of a simple, earlier time—but seen through the lens of refugee camps and single gender madrassas, which are the only or primary experience of community for many young insurgents.⁶⁵

These two main points have an appeal outside of the Pashtun community, particularly as the emphasis hinges on the unifying aspect of Islam, and on an image of a “pure” state that was also eventually the unrealized goal of the various anti-Soviet mujahedeen groups as well. It is amongst this community, former jihadis, for whom the Taliban message resonates the most outside of the Pashtun heartland.⁶⁶

Much has been made of the *pashtunwali*, the cultural code of behaviour for Pashtuns, as a motivator for the insurgency. This is not strictly true, in part because of the damage done over time to the key tribal structures that support and perpetuate this kind of moral code. Western interpretation has incorrectly fixated on the *pashtunwali* as a static entity, when it is in fact more of a fluid set of ideals for behaviour rather than a single strict code. There are two major strands of thought within the *pashtunwali*, and many local variations (*nirikh*, lit. “[blood] price”) besides that, making it a difficult concept to grapple with in any definitive way.^{67 68}



Source: Combat Camera

The key concepts of *pashtunwali*, common to both types in greater or lesser degrees, are *nang*, *tora*, *melmastia*, *nanwatai*, and *badal*.⁶⁹ Knowledge of these concepts—which define what is acceptable behaviour—is embodied by the *spingiri* (literally, white beards, i.e., elders) who transmit it to new generations primarily by example. The key concepts of the *pashtunwali* serve to outline what issues it is acceptable to have conflict over (cynically listed as *zar*, *zan*, and *zamin*—literally, land, gold and women, but to which we might add *nang*, or honour), how that conflict is played out, and how it can finally be resolved. *Pashtunwali* dictates how Pashtun males must respond to perceived grievances in order to retain their *nang* and that of their family. Although encompassing means to solve conflict other than through violence (such as the paying of *nirakh* or the submission of one party to the other), the simplest route for an aggrieved party might simply be to seek *badal*—violent revenge. This provides the framework by which Pashtun males become *majburi* insurgents, and how the failure to do so undermines their identity and standing in their local community.⁷⁰

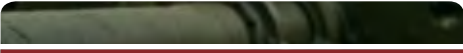
The greatest influence of *pashtunwali* on the insurgency is in providing this element of identity to insurgents within their local communities, as well as the resultant cohesion within their insurgent groups. Although less so in Eastern Afghanistan, in the South and South-East, local insurgent groups are firmly based in tribal or sub-tribal groups, with little mixing. Add to this the fact that 80–90% of Taliban fighters operate in or close to their home community, and the expectations created by *pashtunwali* can become powerful motivators. Counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan routinely include such things as house searches, crop eradication, and the provision of support to local leaders or authorities (who necessarily belong to a particular tribe or sub-tribe). Although these operations do not directly involve insurgents, they create effects in local communities that, in turn, can spark a spiraling series of minor grievances that build into a sense that there is no choice for local men but to take armed action. This phenomenon is exploited by the Taliban in their operations, and is clearly seen as a key to success by the overall leadership, as all versions of the *laheya* published to date have established restrictions to prevent insurgents from operating in the areas of other groups, or merging with other groups, essentially restricting many groups to their local communities.⁷¹

A widely held cultural narrative in Afghanistan is that their country is, and has long been, the venue for world powers to play out the “Great Game.” This idea draws a line of continuity from Alexander the Great through Genghis Khan, the three wars with the British, the Soviet occupation and the current conflict, casting doubt on the true motivations of any foreign presence. The depth to which this idea resonates is apparent when one considers polls like that conducted in Helmand and Kandahar in July 2010 in which only 12% of respondents felt that foreigners were present in the country to bring peace and security, while 47% felt that their intention was to occupy Afghanistan or advance their own national interests.⁷²

The Taliban exploit this commonly held narrative, invoking the underlying ideal and adding that violently confronting the foreigners is a *fard* (religious obligation). In a message published to mark Independence Day 2011, the Taliban Supreme Council stated that “The Afghan nation is still engage[d] in the resistance for independence across the country... waging Jihad against arrogant invading infidels is our religious obligation...”⁷³ Similar messages have been repeated on other major holidays, as well as in night letters, and inspirational videos and songs. Although questionable from a religious point of view, by reinterpreting and expanding on a cultural narrative with a long history in Afghanistan, the Taliban have created a powerful message that legitimizes participation in the insurgency.

RELIGIOUS MOTIVATIONS

Taliban theology is a mixture of different strains of Islamic thought, though the predominant influence on their religious thinking has been from the Deobandist movement, a literalist/salafist school of Islam founded in India in 1867 and prominent amongst Pakistani madrassas. The key philosophy of Deobandism is that it seeks to return society to the “perfect” state that existed during the time of the Prophet (PBUH), although the Taliban have taken this ideal to degrees that the founders of the sect would not recognize. Deobandists reject caste, nationalism, tribalism and any other form of loyalty or social structure besides adherence to Islam.⁷⁴



Deobandism also rejects alternate forms of Islam to the Sunni school, particularly the Shia, although they did not do so in the violent terms espoused by the Taliban.⁷⁵ This absolute rejection of Shi'ism is a major departure from the norm within Afghan history. Since 1925, Islamic scholars and judges (*qazi*) were trained in state run institutions that were conservative rather than radical, and were heavily influenced by Sufi doctrine. Because of this, many mullahs in 1979 did not join religious mujahedeen parties, but favoured traditionalist ones.⁷⁶ Up until 1992, Hindus, Sikhs and Jews remained a part of Afghan society, and were largely unmolested.

Just as the anti-Soviet mujahedeen came to break along ethnic lines, so did it break along religious ones, leaving no room within society for non-Muslims, and little for non-Sunnis. The period of the civil war saw a number of massacres which were driven by religious and ethnic differences—notably the massacre of Shia Hazaras by Hezbi-e-Islami forces in Kabul, 1995, the massacre of Sunni Taliban forces by Hazaras in Mazar-e-Sharif in 1997, and the massacre of Hazara by the Taliban in Mazar-e-Sharif in 1998, to name a few.⁷⁷

As the Taliban have acted in a deliberately anti-Shia manner in the past, the Sunni-Shia divide is often portrayed as one which the Taliban cannot bridge as they seek to co-opt or reconcile with different segments of Afghan society. This may not be the case, however, as Mullah Omar has deliberately softened his public rhetoric regarding the Shia, and there are indications that the Taliban have reached out to former jihadi commanders within the Hazara community in attempts to garner their support.⁷⁸ The Hazara militant community fractured during the civil war, and so this may be a case of local Hazara commanders using the Taliban as a means to gain advantage over other local Hazara factions—the idea that “my enemy’s enemy is my friend.” There has been, however, no public indication of any Shia commander or group actively supporting or becoming involved with the Taliban, other than perhaps covert state support from Iran.⁷⁹ Even this support appears to be for exceptionally mercenary reasons, as Iran has a history of conflict with the Taliban, having supported the Uzbek and Hazara militias fighting against them, and nearly coming into open military conflict with them due to the massacre of Iranian diplomats in Mazar-e-Sharif in 1998.⁸⁰





Although it is hard to envision broad, open cooperation between the Taliban and Shia organisations, it should not be considered impossible. The Taliban maintain a loose enough structure, with broad enough shared values, that many different groups could come to be accommodated within it depending on circumstances.

The Taliban frame all of their activities within a religious narrative, both in order to provide legitimacy to their actions (such as the targeting of Shi'ites above) and as a means of motivating their followers.⁸¹ Despite the fact that all of the Taliban leadership use the title of mullah, there is not a tremendous depth to Taliban religious thought, and no evidence of religious debate or discourse within the Taliban itself, other than some debate in 2007 on the use of suicide bombers. The Taliban's obsession with personal morality, and with visible signs of orthodoxy (beard length, clothing type, public prayer), all point to a simplistic grasp of Islam that differs from the highly nuanced, academic discussions that are present amongst other radical Islamist groups in Egypt, Palestine and elsewhere.⁸²

There is a long history in Afghanistan of conflict between the government and the *ulema* (translated as the body of religious scholars), and the Taliban fit themselves within the narrative through their activities and proclamations. King Amanullah, King Zahir Shah, and President Daoud all provoked Islamist uprisings by importing foreign, modern ideas into Afghan society, and all tried (as has President Karzai) to co-opt the *ulema* by giving them government salaries and formal positions. In all cases, substantial elements of the *ulema* remained in opposition to the government and to their modernizing efforts.⁸³ The idea of opposition to western influence resonates amongst segments of the Afghan population, particularly as some aid and development activities can come to be seen as tantamount to a "cultural invasion" by the local population.⁸⁴

In addition to this, there have been increasing signs of pan-Islamic feeling in Afghanistan, even amongst those who are opposed to the Taliban. Examples of this growing sentiment are the protests and riots in opposition to the alleged US treatment of the Koran in 2005, votes in the *Wolesi Jirga* condemning the Israeli occupation of Palestine in January and March of 2008, and again in January, 2009, and a similar vote to condemn the Danish cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammed (PBUH) in March, 2008. This represents a major shift in Afghan society, which has always been highly insular, and largely unconcerned with international affairs. Religion, besides providing a narrative for local opposition to the West and the Karzai government, seems also to be providing a bridge to wider grievances that had failed to resonate in the past.⁸⁵

While the original seven major *mujahedeen* groups represented a wide section of beliefs—from political Islam to monarchism to nationalism—the efforts of the ISI to fatally weaken all but the Islamist ones by carefully controlling the flow of aid and funding had the effect of narrowing the scope of anti-Soviet opposition discourse to largely religious grounds. No nationalist or monarchist group remained with sufficient power to challenge the others for control once the Soviets withdrew, and the two of the seven major parties who were the principal contestants in the ensuing civil war (Jamiat-i Islami and HIG) both had Islamist agendas, though HIG was the party who had received the lion share of the support channelled through the ISI.⁸⁶ The resultant framing of conflict against foreigners as part of a religious narrative, along with an awakening in the general population to pan-Islamic grievances, makes the Taliban claim to religious devotion and purity all the more attractive.

"JIHAD"

Jihad has become a politically charged word, both within Islam and in the West. Meaning literally "to struggle," this can be interpreted as either an internal struggle for moral self-improvement, or a violent struggle against non-believers.⁸⁷ In both cases, the definition of *jihad* is central to the Taliban identity, as they claim the moral high ground as Muslims and also primacy in the struggle against foreigners and non-believers. Although the Taliban do use the language of global *jihad* epitomized by al-Qaeda (i.e., demanding "resistance to the Christian crusaders," for example), their interests and goals overall remain almost entirely local.⁸⁸

It has become a common piece of analysis that the Taliban insurgency and al-Qaeda are “intertwined and inseparable,” although this is essentially false.⁸⁹ The relationship between the two groups was tense and complicated throughout the 1990s, as senior Taliban such as Mullah Mohammed Rabbani saw Osama bin Laden’s radical press statements as forming the major obstacle to the Taliban regime gaining formal recognition as a state. In addition, there was a basic difference between the groups in their interpretation of jihad, in that the Taliban’s concept was “almost apolitical.” This is epitomized by the fact that immediately after the Soviets withdrew, all of the mujahedeen who later became the senior Taliban leadership ceased fighting and returned to their religious studies.⁹⁰ Finally, the US reaction to the al-Qaeda attacks, which resulted in the toppling of the Taliban regime, further strained the relationship between the leadership of the two organizations.⁹¹

It is interesting to note, however, that as the Taliban began to re-establish itself in 2002–2003, the first four military commanders appointed were all individuals whose personal history linked them closely with al-Qaeda. This was evident through the presence of foreign, comparatively radical jihadis in their *andiwal* networks and their adoption, to varying degrees, of some of the language of global jihad. It is doubtful that these appointments were made at the time to intentionally strengthen organizational ties between al-Qaeda and the Taliban, given the friction noted above. Further suggestion that this was not intentional is that even though all four of these commanders have been made non-effective since 2003, their replacements did not necessarily have strong links to al-Qaeda.⁹² It is most likely that these four were selected as the most senior and competent persons available in the chaos after the collapse of the regime.

Of the four, Mullah Dadullah Lang had the most public relationship with al-Qaeda, and adopted more of their rhetoric and tactics. A keen employer of propaganda, he was responsible for the importation from Iraq of the practice of filming the beheading of prisoners, although this practice was eventually stopped after Mullah Omar publicly condemned it.⁹³ Mullah Dadullah Lang was also quick to state in the media that the Taliban and al-Qaeda “are one,” although this was at odds with statements from the Taliban’s central media organisation.⁹⁴

Mullah Dadullah Lang was an anomaly within the Taliban movement in terms of his public projection of a stance on the “correct” relationship between Al Qaeda and the Taliban that was completely at odds with that of the central leadership. He had sufficient personal power, stemming from his standing as a jihadi and his reputation for military effectiveness, to allow him to espouse what is essentially a fringe viewpoint within the Taliban. There are persistent rumours, however, that his death at the hands of US and UK special forces was facilitated by a tip-off from within the insurgency, suggesting perhaps that even he did not have the standing to remain so publicly at odds with the Taliban mainstream without drawing retribution.

Although Dadullah’s younger brother Mansoor Dadullah was appointed as his successor, his strident statements of support for al-Qaeda and apparent unwillingness to be brought to heel led to his public dismissal from his post. Unlike his older brother, Mansoor did not have the standing as a jihadi that made his removal politically difficult, nor his reputation for military effectiveness that would make removing him undesirable. In part to combat the statements made by the likes of the elder Dadullah, official Taliban spokespersons have stated repeatedly that the Taliban “are one thing, and al-Qaeda is another.”⁹⁵

Although the idea of global jihad has been a motivator for a fringe element within the Taliban (including, in particular, elements within the Haqqani Network), the idea of transforming words into action has not caught on with most members of the insurgency.⁹⁶ No Afghans have been found to have participated in attacks outside of Afghanistan or Pakistan, nor have plots been uncovered to suggest that they had planned to do so. Although adopting some of the rhetoric of global jihadists, the vast majority of the Afghan insurgency remains deeply mired in local grievances and issues.⁹⁷

CONCLUSIONS

Oversimplification of the root issues has been used as a tool to dismiss the roots of insurgency in Afghanistan as incomprehensible, when it is merely foreign and complex. This lack of accurate analysis has not served the overall efforts of the international community in Afghanistan well, and may have in fact set them up for failure. Our own cultural lenses blur our vision of insurgent motivations in Afghanistan, either over-emphasizing our own ideals (economic factors, human rights, gender equality) and fears (al-Qaeda, narcotics trafficking) or causing us to instead fall back on aspects of the “otherness” of the insurgents, who are, to Western eyes, from an essentially alien people with customs and a history deeply different than our own.⁹⁸ This leads us to make errors of judgement, and to create false narratives to describe the insurgency.

The continued focus on economic factors as the prime driver of the insurgency is clearly misplaced. Although it is undoubtedly a factor, it is unlikely that it is the critical one for many of those who take up arms. Perhaps it is the issue most focused upon because it is the one whose solution seems most clear. Similarly, the focus on narcotics trafficking as decisively linked to the insurgency ignores the role of officials in the Karzai administration, from police officers to the president’s own late half-brother, in the trade as well—narcotics are a commodity exploited by all sides in the conflict, and that likely encourages as many people to join the police as it does the insurgency, as both roles offer the chance to profit from narcotics. The issue of narcotics is one that, although exploited by the insurgency, in fact has a much more widely destabilizing effect. Appeals to insurgents to lay down their arms and join with the current government, no matter how well meaning, are deeply unappealing as long as the safety of those involved cannot be assured, and as long as the government they are asked to cooperate with is seen as corrupt and predatory.

While Pakistan is not a key driver of the insurgency, it is absolutely a potential spoiler in terms of finding a viable peace. Despite the public rhetoric around Pakistan’s deception of the West vis a vis their ongoing support of the Taliban, this has been an open secret for many years, and does not represent a true split between their interests and those of the West. Pakistan and the Western powers currently engaged in Afghanistan share motivations for being involved in the country, and also share a potential vision of what the end state would look like—a stable state which poses no threat to their neighbours, or to any other country



Source: Combat Camera

of the world. Paradoxically, despite Pakistani support for the Taliban over the past two decades, continued support is not necessarily a given should a more effective means to achieve this end state present itself—a lesson already learned by former Pakistan proxy Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

The Taliban vision of their desired end state is less clear than that of the international players, in that it is fragmented amongst the many sub-organisations that fall under their umbrella. The unifying ideas of an Islamic state free from foreign occupation, however, resonate across the breadth of the insurgency, and with some effort and imagination could be accommodated within the end states of the international actors. They have shown that there is scope to change aspects of their vision, such as the abandonment (in 2011) of their opposition to girl's education.⁹⁹ The loose vision of how the insurgency will end that is shared by the Taliban movement is not a stumbling block to negotiations, as it is sometimes described, but an opportunity to shape a viable, shared understanding of what reconciliation could be.

Together, the complex and interlocking sets of motivators behind the insurgency form a powerful narrative that gives organisations such as the Taliban an undeniable appeal amongst growing segments of the Afghan population, including non-Pashtuns. Recognition of these motivations, and the fact that many of them stem from credible grievances, is a necessary first step to find viable negotiated solutions that could be acceptable to all parties, and therefore a conclusion to the conflict. ❧

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He is a graduate of both the Canadian Forces College, as well as the Joint Services Command and Staff College in Shrivenham, UK. He also holds a Masters of Defence Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada.

In his civilian career, he has worked around the globe as a security advisor, including long term projects in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, the D.R. Congo, Colombia, the Gaza Strip and elsewhere.

ENDNOTES

1. Poem published in *Al Emarah*, a Taliban magazine, on 1 January, 2007, and quoted in: International Crisis Group, "Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words," Asia Report no. 158 (24 July, 2008), available from http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/158_taliban_propaganda___winning_the_war_of_words.ashx; Internet; accessed 30 April, 2011, 16.
2. Thomas Ruttig, *The Other Side: Dimensions of the Afghan Insurgency: Causes, Actors and Approaches to "Talks,"* (Kabul: Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2009), <http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/200907%20AAN%20Report%20Ruttig%20-%20The%20Other%20Side.PDF>; Internet; accessed 21 July, 2011, 1.
3. The "Peshawar Seven" are the major mujahedeen groups recognized and supported by Pakistan during the anti-Soviet conflict.
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At first light soldiers from Alpha Company (A Coy) conduct operations in the Panjwahi District of Kandahar Province as part of Operation MEDUSA. A Coy is from 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2PPCLI) based out of CFB Shilo, MB, and is part of the Task Force 3-06 Battle Group (TF 3-06 BG), which is centred around 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment based out of CFB Petawawa, ON.



Black smoke covers areas of Saigon during the Tet offensive. The communists were able to assault because of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year. Fireworks going off covered the sound of gunfire.

KNIVES IN THE NIGHT OR A VOICE OF HOPE?

The Combined Action Program in Contemporary Scholarship

Second Lieutenant B.R. Simpson

A Vietnam War veteran's fictionalized autobiographical account of his war service titled *Knives in the Night* describes "a small elite unit fighting alongside Vietnamese Popular Forces in the sandy foothills of South Vietnam" which "specializes in magic—turning live Vietcong into dead men."¹ Another veteran, in his account titled *A Voice of Hope*, recalls the instructions given to him by his commander upon arrival at a new unit:

This time, we're going into these villages to stay. We're going to help them in their communities. We'll help them to build new schools, bridges, roads, and new housing. We're going to help them with their sewage disposal and sanitation. We're going to learn to speak their language and learn their customs and way of life.²

Both accounts describe platoons of the Combined Action Program (CAP), which operated as part of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) counterinsurgency effort in South Vietnam from 1965 to 1971. CAP integrated a Marine rifle squad with a Vietnamese Popular Force militia platoon within a village for the purposes of providing security, training and civic action to the Vietnamese.³ Clearly, the two veterans' accounts present radically different perceptions of the same program. One characterizes CAP as a highly specialized unit orientated towards close combat with the enemy; the other emphasizes a less menacing civic action role. This disparity in the way two veterans remember their service in what was ostensibly the same unit raises important questions about the very nature of CAP and its place in the historical recollection of the Vietnam War.

The post-Cold War years have seen Western militaries devote considerable effort to developing counterinsurgency techniques, tactics and strategies to be employed in the asymmetrical conflicts they found themselves engaged in. The Vietnam War has attracted specific attention, particularly within the United States, with military thinkers drawing historical and practical lessons from the perceived successes and failures of that notably prolonged and disastrous engagement. CAP has been regularly identified by some current military thinkers as a resounding success and even as a war-winning strategy for counterinsurgency.⁴ A "Combined Action Program" based on the Vietnam-era program was directly employed in Iraq, beginning in 2004–2005 with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.⁵ More recently, the new American strategy in Afghanistan, announced in April 2012, is reminiscent of the CAP concept. It involves some 4,000 American Special Forces troops being deployed to "Afghanistan's rural towns and villages to advise inexperienced Afghan forces." The strategy has been dubbed the "Village Stability Operations Program," in which the American SF operators "help what is essentially an Afghan government-backed armed neighbourhood watch to keep the peace" just as Vietnam-era CAP Marines assisted the lightly equipped Vietnamese Popular Force in maintaining the security of individual villages.⁶ However, despite such praise for CAP by current military thinkers and the adoption of some of the program's structures and techniques in current operations, critical historical analysis of CAP has thus far been rare, and much of the program's organizational history remains poorly understood.

To understand the Combined Action Program within the context of the larger Marine strategy and American policy in South Vietnam, it is important to determine how CAP was critically examined in both internally and externally produced scholarship. Specifically, the strategy-changing years of 1967–1970, which encompass the Tet Offensive and the period of change in U.S. policy that followed, deserve careful attention. The 1968 Tet Offensive radically altered both civilian and military perceptions of the war and the analyses and histories of CAP that were produced in its aftermath. An examination of the literature surrounding CAP during the Tet and post-Tet periods reveals the complex civil-military relationship within the program, the degree to which observers deemed it to be a success, and the extent to which they argued that CAP could or should be expanded more widely. This paper will address some of the fundamental questions about CAP's

nature raised in the two accounts quoted at the beginning of this introduction, establishing whether the program's members were a security-centric force of *Knives in the Night* or a *Voice of Hope* in an unsuccessful war that effectively blended the "stick" and "carrot" of counterinsurgency with a prominent focus on civic action.

Formed in I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ) in the northern provinces of South Vietnam, each CAP platoon consisted of one Marine squad leader, the assistant leader/grenadier, a United States Navy (USN) corpsman, three four-man Marine fire teams, and thirty-five Vietnamese Popular Force militiamen.⁷ This basic structure would remain a constant throughout the entire existence of the combined action concept, despite several organizational changes during its nearly seven-year existence. CAP drew heavily upon the institutional memory of the USMC's prior counterinsurgency operations in the first half of the twentieth century, both officially through the proliferation of the famous *Small Wars Manual* and unofficially through the passing on of practical knowledge within the officer corps.⁸ At its peak, the program had 114 CAP villages and six formally stated objectives which would remain constant throughout its existence. The first five objectives were to enhance village security, consolidate village intelligence activities, improve the standard of living in the village, strengthen local institutions, and promote identification with and support of the national government.⁹ Lastly, platoons were supposed to "work [themselves] out of a job"—in other words, accomplish the five other missions so completely that it would be possible to relocate the Marines to another village in order to repeat the process.¹⁰

Even at the height of the program's fame following the Tet offensive, CAP was never a major priority of the USMC counterinsurgency effort, let alone the overall American military effort. Still, the program managed to garner a measure of critical attention from military thinkers and scholars alike. The following examination of the assorted texts surrounding CAP has been divided into two groups: those written before or during Tet (1967–1968) and those produced after the offensive until the draw-down of USMC units from Vietnam (1969–1972). This division forms the basis of a comparison which will demonstrate the changes in thinking about CAP and pacification in general during the period. The division also helps reveal how CAP was characterized by its most engaged and critical observers.

Recent commentators have seized upon the concept of CAP, characterizing it as an underutilized but highly successful model for pacification and counterinsurgency. Professional military officers such as Jim Seaton argued that CAP's mission was one of "politico-military *fusionism*" in which civic action and other roles not traditionally assigned to military forces played a role equal to that of the program's more conventional security missions.¹¹ However, that characterization seems to be contradicted by much of the early literature produced in 1967 and 1968, before or during the initial stages of Tet. A detailed examination of both the internal and external scholarship surrounding CAP in this period reveals that even the program's most vocal proponents shared the vision of CAP as primarily an extension of USMC security operations rather than as an instrument of civic action or a self-contained war-winning strategy.

USMC Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) William R. Corson's *The Betrayal* was published in mid-1968, shortly after its author's departure from Vietnam and the USMC in 1967. Most of it was written before the Tet offensive, though the author did manage to add several references to the events of January–February before publication. Corson was the former commander of CAP, and his insights into and opinions about the daily operations and conduct of the program are invaluable. It must be noted, however, that Corson's book is highly political, aiming to demonstrate the general futility of American efforts in Vietnam barring a fundamental strategic refocus.¹² Along with his political message, Corson reveals a great deal about how he viewed CAP as an instrument of counterinsurgency. Interestingly, while he argues vehemently for a greater commitment to the "other war" in order to stave off defeat, his conceptualization of pacification is decidedly "security" or "stick-heavy."¹³ He argues that before pacification by means of civic action projects could even begin, his Marines first had to acquire credibility with the populace through their ability to "defeat the Vietcong militarily."¹⁴ Whether there is any practical truth to this argument or not, it clearly demonstrates that Corson's model of pacification was one of security first, civic action second.

Corson's concept of pacification as having its foundation in security operations developed during his time as the commander of the 3rd Tank Battalion, and he transferred it to CAP when he took command. In *The Betrayal*, Corson identifies what he sees as the six priorities of his former unit: destroying Vietcong infrastructure, protecting public security and maintaining law and order, protecting friendly infrastructure, protecting bases and communications, organizing intelligence activities, and participating in civic action and propaganda.¹⁵ Of these, the first five are almost exclusively security tasks; Corson characterizes the sixth as the lowest priority on the list. Under his command, Corson mandated that "the CAP specifically avoids initiating civic-action projects until the credibility of their military-security efforts has been clearly demonstrated to the people."¹⁶ Moreover, he argues that, once civic action projects were initiated, they were conducted "on the cheap" and generally remained small in scale and scope.¹⁷ The priorities laid out in *The Betrayal* clearly reflect Corson's opinion that CAP was and should remain a program primarily for the provision of militarily traditional security tasks, with small civic action projects representing a positive side-effect. Notably, the LTC never argues that CAP was a stand-alone war-winning concept, and his ideal strategy to effect a positive outcome in Vietnam is based primarily on the redeployment of conventional American manoeuvre battalions to the countryside with an expanded CAP (consisting of 60,000 American troops) tasked only with providing security in the most threatened villages.¹⁸

Support for Corson's security-centric vision came shortly after *The Betrayal's* publication in the form of letters published in the USMC's professional journal, the *Marine Corps Gazette*, where at least two officers argued strongly that the USMC and CAP should remain focused on the provision of security in Vietnam. Shortly after Corson's book was published, an officer with CAP headquarters, Captain W.C. Blaha, wrote to the journal that security was wholly "essential" to "ultimate victory" and that "here is CAP's mission."¹⁹ In the same edition, Captain H.L. Preston argued even more vehemently that "The Marine Corps' basic mission is combat. CAP has been of substantial help in the accomplishment of that mission." He added that "energies and resources [devoted to civic action] can be much more effectively used elsewhere."²⁰ It must be noted that Corson himself was not opposed to civic action *per se*, and in fact devoted part of his book to recommendations for reforming the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) organization.²¹ Still, as far as CAP went, he remained convinced that it was and should remain an extension of conventional security efforts by the Marines.

The idea that CAP was primarily a program dedicated to the provision of security was shared by Captain Russell H. Stolfi in his lengthy pamphlet *U.S. Marine Corps Civic Action Efforts in Vietnam, March 1965–March 1966*, which was produced for the USMC's Historical Division and published in early 1968. Stolfi's pamphlet is a history of all USMC civic action programs operated for the period stated in the title, but CAP (then CAC) is featured prominently. After opening his account with a voyeuristic retelling of a CAC platoon's killing of a VC functionary, Stolfi makes an interesting observation in his introduction. He refers to the "other war" as the "struggle against the clandestine apparatus of the Viet Cong" rather than the "struggle to promote economic and political self-sufficiency" in Vietnam identified by Corson.²² Stolfi's definition prefaces his discussion of the "other war" with the assumption that it is waged as an extension of traditional military security tasks.

While Stolfi's characterization of the Marines' civic action efforts through the rest of the pamphlet does not entirely fit his own definition, his description of CAC and its operations certainly emphasize a focus on the provision of security. Stolfi confirms that the combined action concept was pioneered in response to the perceived "importance" of local security efforts and emphasizes the role of the Marines in improving the tactical capabilities of the PF.²³ His later outlining of the measures of success for all Marine Corps civic action projects includes six metrics: medical aid distributed, food distributed, clothes distributed, small operations conducted, large operations conducted and of course the infamous "body count" of enemy killed.²⁴ Moreover, Stolfi's descriptions of civic action efforts conducted by CAC units centre primarily on small projects of questionable utility. Occasionally these projects bordered on the ridiculous, with a Marine's purchase of a pony with which to provide free rides to children cited as an example of a positive civic action effort.²⁵ Another example involved an amphibious armoured personnel carrier painted white and decorated with large cut-outs of reindeer arriving at a CAC village only accessible by water, followed by distribution



Source: Public Domain

A UH-1D helicopter climbs skyward after discharging a load of infantrymen on a search and destroy mission.

of presents by a Marine dressed as Santa.²⁶ One can only imagine the thoughts of the predominantly Buddhist villagers of Khue Trung as a 30-tonne white armoured vehicle with cardboard reindeer on its roof rolled into their village before revealing a red-suited Yankee St. Nick with gifts that, curiously, included basketballs.²⁷ Evidently, Stolfi views civic action efforts conducted by Marines as limited to the kinds of small, one-time projects mentioned above, with their true role being the provision of security. He even goes so far as to call their more humorous civic action efforts “misplaced zeal.”²⁸ The emphasis placed on security-based measurements of progress (operations conducted and body counts) by 1968’s official historian of Marine civic action efforts demonstrates the prevailing conceptualization of counterinsurgent warfare within the USMC as being primarily centred on traditional security tasks.

A report titled *Analysis of the Marine Pacification System* by Robert D. Campbell, produced for the Office of Naval Research, provides perhaps the most surprising perspective on CAP and USMC civic action of all the documents produced up to the end of 1968. Campbell’s report was based on field research conducted through late 1967 in I CTZ, and was expected to develop ways to improve Marine training for pacification tasks. While the security-centric attitude of the aforementioned Marine officers can almost be dismissed as conforming to the dominant views of their profession at the time, Campbell, as a civilian academic, would be expected to adopt a more balanced perspective. Indeed, Campbell does demonstrate an awareness that the “other war” and the conventional military efforts should be brought into sync rather than working at cross-purposes.²⁹ He also criticizes the weakness of the USMC in areas of “cultural interaction,” citing many examples of poor relations between Marines and Vietnamese civilians.³⁰ Like the professional officers, however, Campbell does not view CAP as being responsible for civic action tasks and even questions whether the program constituted “pacification” or not.³¹ Campbell argues that the number one priority of CAP units is to “seek and destroy Vietcong,” later adding that only in the “relatively secure” villages could CAP Marines make time for any civic action projects at all.³² His view that CAP served primarily as a security program was apparently shared by most of the program’s personnel whom he interviewed. Most of them

could not articulate why “positive cultural interaction” would have a positive impact on counterinsurgency, while almost all could explain how conventional military operations could “win the war.”³³ Despite an awareness of the need for a united civil–military effort in Vietnam, Campbell’s report does not classify CAP as part of the “civil” effort and instead joins with the professional Marines in characterizing it as almost entirely as a program for the provision of traditional security tasks.

The literature on CAP and American civic action efforts in Vietnam before and during the Tet offensive presents a radically different picture of the program from the characterization of many present-day military theorists and historians. Indeed, even the most strident supporters of the program, such as William R. Corson, did not choose to define CAP as a civic action organization and instead defined its role as primarily security-based. It is clear that, before the end of the Tet offensive, most observers thought of CAP as providing traditional military security, with its unconventional nature arising from the combined operation of American and Vietnamese military members for a prolonged period of time in a single geographic location.

The surprise and scale of the Tet offensive led to a shift in American political and military thinking. Pacification became the byword of American efforts in South Vietnam, and the amorphous goal of “winning hearts and minds” came to the forefront of policy. Richard A. Hunt points out that the refocusing of effort on pacification was remarkable given that many in the press and the military community saw the Tet offensive as proof that pacification programs prior to 1968 had produced no results and that the unconventional approach to the conflict was “virtually hopeless.”³⁴ Campbell’s report for the Office of Naval Research, which was published before the offensive ended, shares this sentiment, noting that Tet was a “major setback” for proponents of pacification.³⁵ Whether pacification had actually failed in some way—and many historians would argue that it had not—Hunt asserts that the decision to refocus on pacification efforts was largely political. The big-unit “search and destroy” missions had become a political liability because of both their perceived wastefulness and the requirement for significant numbers of personnel.³⁶ The result was a dual focus on Vietnamization and increased pacification efforts for the remainder of the American involvement in the war. The literature produced surrounding CAP during that period reflects this change in strategic thinking.

In what proved essentially a sequel to Captain Stolfi’s 1968 *U.S. Marine Corps Civic Action Efforts in Vietnam, March 1965–March 1966*, Captain William D. Parker’s *U.S. Marine Corps Civil Affairs in I Corps, April 1966–April 1967* was published in 1970.³⁷ Parker’s pamphlet reflects the renewed interest in pacification efforts, and his characterization of CAP is part of the shift. He prefaces his work by stating that civil affairs are “every bit as important as the combat actions” and quotes the officially superseded USMC *Small Wars Manual* several pages later to support his argument that pacification projects could affect the eventual outcome of the war.³⁸ Contrary to Campbell’s questioning of whether CAP constituted a pacification program at all, Parker argues that CAP was being underutilized, adding that that was because the South Vietnamese government hindered its expansion by withholding the required Popular Force personnel from USMC control.³⁹ Still, Parker notes that CAP in 1967 was primarily focused on security and that it remained so at the time of his writing in 1969.⁴⁰ In short, while recognizing the centrality of pacification in post-Tet American strategy, Parker argues that CAP had remained simply an effective instrument of security since it was first formed in 1965.

Civilian academic Bruce C. Allnutt’s 1969 *Marine Combined Action Capabilities: The Vietnam Experience* is in many ways analogous to Campbell’s 1968 report, and like Campbell’s, was produced for the Office of Naval Research. As Campbell had done in his earlier report, Allnutt identifies ways to improve CAP in general and determine whether other Marine units could garner transferable knowledge from the program.⁴¹ Here the similarities largely end. Allnutt has a great deal of praise for the capabilities and potential of the program, acknowledging that some might go as far as to say that CAP was “the solution to this complex struggle.”⁴² However, he also levels significant criticism at the program’s alleged objectives, noting that “by far the largest proportion of time” was spent on “purely military operations” and adding that after Tet, USMC commanders had ordered that all CAPs double the number of day and night patrols they conducted.⁴³ From Allnutt’s field observations of almost every CAP in operation in mid-1969, it is clear that even after Tet, CAP remained a predominantly security-focused program and even increased its focus on this after the 1968 offensive.

Given the current conceptualization of CAP as a civic action program in much of the historiography, one might expect Allnutt to argue for a reduction of CAP's military duties in order to allow more time to be devoted to its other objectives. On the contrary, he argues that CAP should divest itself of all non-security tasks and devote itself entirely to conducting patrols, defending villages and training the PF.⁴⁴ He also argues that the small-scale, Marine-initiated civic action projects had the potential to do more harm than good, highlighting the damage to credibility that occurred when CAPs wasted resources building schools without teachers or, in one case, starting an unpopular Boy Scout troop.⁴⁵ While Allnutt readily acknowledges the good intentions of the CAP Marines in starting small-scale civic action projects, he notes that the Marines are not experts in anything but combat and calls the expectation that a Marine junior non-commissioned officer in his late teens or early twenties would become a pacification guru overnight "unrealistic."⁴⁶ Allnutt's major conclusion is that CAP should be seen as an "umbrella of security" under which better-qualified and -equipped civic action personnel could conduct their mission, which Allnutt deems to be of the utmost importance.⁴⁷ *Marine Combined Action Capabilities* reproduces the characterization articulated in the pre-Tet literature of CAP as an organization that spent most of its time on security tasks. Although he has a more developed view of pacification as a joint civil-military endeavour, Allnutt concludes that CAP personnel decidedly belonged to the military side of that relationship.

The final major analysis of CAP was produced in 1970 by Francis T. McNamara, the American Consulate's Political Advisor to the Commanding General of XXIV Corps, which controlled all American forces in the five provinces of I CTZ, including the Marine forces under III MAF. McNamara observed CAP at its peak level of 114 platoons, and his letter to Lieutenant General Melvin Zais (Commander XXIV Corps), argues strongly for CAP to remain in operation and even to be expanded in the final months of the American involvement.⁴⁸ Although McNamara suggests that the program should be integrated into the CORDS command and control structure, he does not argue that it was an effective civic action program. Rather, he identifies its contributions to security and the "improvement of the Popular Forces."⁴⁹ The *Fact Sheet*, which statistically documents CAP's accomplishments, focuses entirely on enemy versus friendly casualty figures and comparisons of kill ratios between PF platoons with attached CAP Marines and independent PF platoons.⁵⁰ McNamara's description of CAP is perhaps the most enthusiastic and optimistic of the post-Tet era, encouraging expansion even in the waning days of American involvement in Vietnam. However, like the rest of the post-Tet CAP literature, McNamara's analysis of CAP highlights its capabilities as a security organization while at the same time emphasizing its importance to the defence of the increasingly high-profile civic action projects.

How is it possible to explain the post-Tet literature's classification of CAP as a program dominantly directed towards the provision of security? Given the current historiography of CAP, which tends to highlight alleged civic action accomplishments, conventional wisdom would dictate that in the pacification-conscious post-Tet era most observers would be advocating an increased civic action role for CAP. As we have seen, it is clear that all three of the studies examined demonstrate a keen awareness of the refocused American strategy following the Tet offensive, and their support of civic action projects is more articulate and clearly defined than that of their predecessors. Still, CAP remains strongly defined as a security program, and both Allnutt and McNamara argue that it should be limited to those roles.

Through the Combined Action Program's short existence, it managed to garner a significant degree of attention from military professionals and civilian observers alike. CAP's 1990s rediscovery from the dark corner of Vietnam War history brought the program back into the limelight of military thought. However, in many cases, renewed interest did not engender critical historical analysis of the literature on CAP that was produced during its period of operations, and that lack of analysis led to a characterization of CAP as an agent of American civic action efforts which went unrecognized. Some authors go further, arguing that if CAP had been expanded to all parts of Vietnam, the course of the war might have been changed and that this model of pacification is applicable to other unconventional conflicts.

The above examination of Vietnam-era literature on CAP reveals a great deal about what observers of the program thought about its mission, merits and limitations. Until the end of the Tet offensive, authors tended to characterize the program as predominantly for the provision of security in the villages of Vietnam with a small civic action component playing a supporting, almost diversionary role. Where some, like Corson and McNamara, argued that CAP should be expanded, the general consensus seems to have been that CAP was an organization which excelled at killing the enemy and improving the ability of the Popular Forces to follow suit. With the concentration of American efforts into pacification post-Tet, observers began to include defences of the utility of such programs in their analyses of CAP. However, none of the authors examined seems to have believed that CAP was or should be an effective instrument of implementing America's new civic action doctrine. On the contrary, the argument was made that CAP should give up even its nominal commitment to civic action and focus entirely on the provision of security. This was not a regression by the authors to the pre-Tet large-unit sweep-and-clear strategy but rather an argument that the combat-experienced Marines within CAP could be better utilized as an "umbrella of security" under which the professional civic action programs of CORDS could operate.

Perhaps most significantly, no author of the period argued that CAP was itself a war-winning strategy of counterinsurgency—not even its most vocal supporter, LTC Corson. The success of CAP is a debatable point, though many of the observers seemed to believe that the program was generating significant results in the realm of military security. However, the current historiography's uncritical discussion of CAP as a potentially war-winning strategy with applicability in other conflicts should be approached with caution. As this examination argues, CAP's utility as anything but a militarily traditional security program is highly debatable. Contrary to much of the current historiography and the hopeful description of CAP by one of its veterans as a *Voice of Hope* in America's most costly strategic quagmire, the evidence clearly points to CAP as being a highly successful security apparatus rather than an effective provider of civic action in itself. CAP Marines were decidedly closer to being *Knives in the Night* than they were to the political warriors of the current telling. This is not to say that CAP was useless to efforts in South Vietnam; in fact, many observers highlighted its role of providing security within the pacification strategy. The demonstrable faults in much of the historiography of CAP should be seen as a warning against cursory scans of the history of counterinsurgency for one-size-fits-all solutions to contemporary asymmetric conflicts. 🌸

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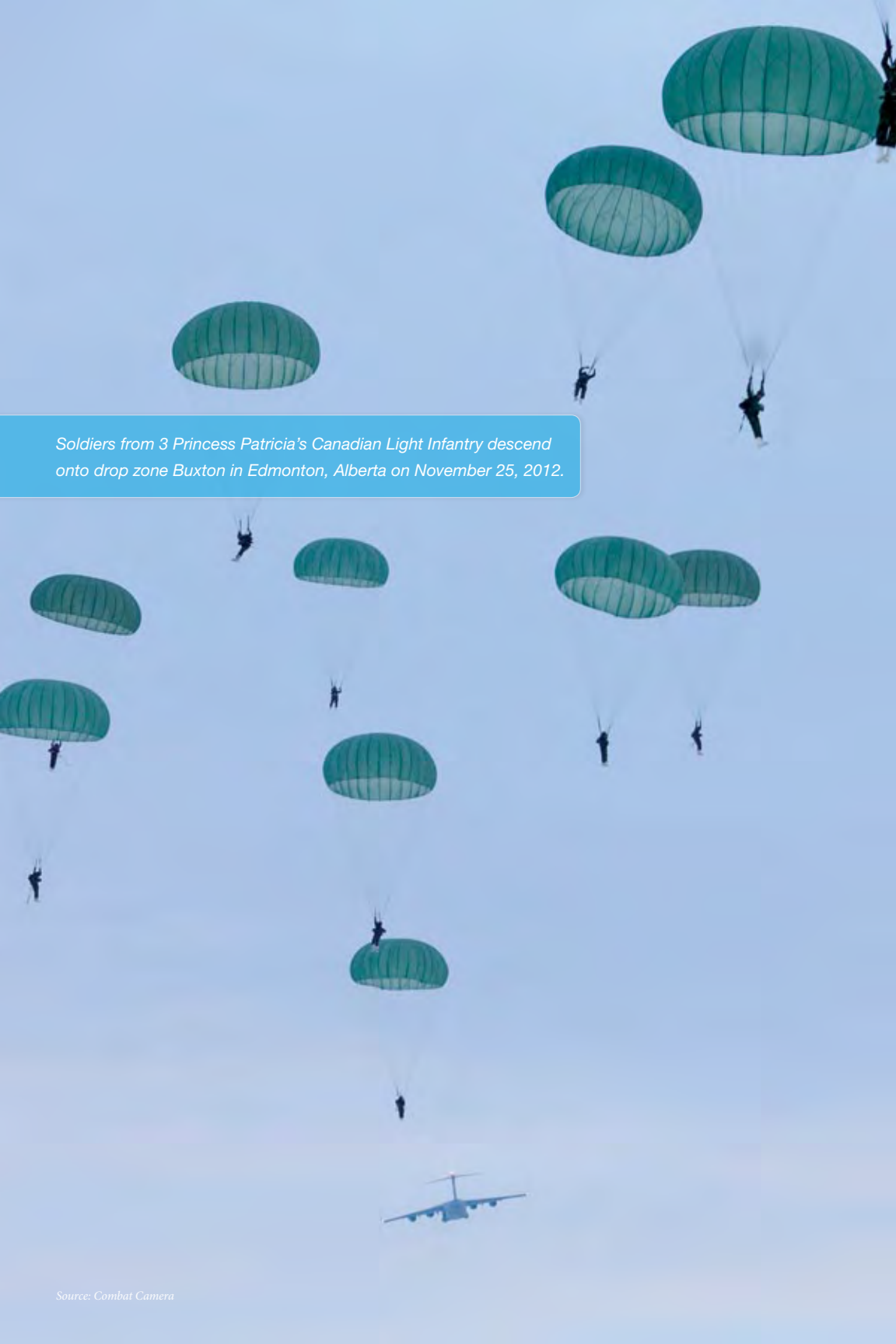
ENDNOTES

1. David Sherman, *Knives in the Night* (Toronto, Canada: Random House, 1987), back cover.
2. Thomas Flynn, *A Voice of Hope* (Baltimore, Maryland: American Literary Press, Inc., 1994), 38.
3. Keith F. Kopets, "The Combined Action Program: Vietnam," *Military Review* 82.4 (2004): 79.
4. Selection of recent articles written in praise of the Vietnam-era CAP: Brooks R. Brewington, "Combined Action Platoons: A Strategy for Peace Enforcement," *Air War College* 1996, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/brewington.pdf> (accessed 15 January 2012); Fraser Fowler, "The USMC's Combined Action Platoons: A Counterinsurgency Success in Vietnam and Why it Failed to Deraile US Military Strategy," *Canadian Army Journal* 12.1 (2009): 89–102; Keith F. Kopets, "The Combined Action Program: Vietnam," *Military Review* 82.4 (2004): 78–81; Jim Seaton, "A Political-Warrior Model: The Combined Action Program," *Armed Forces and Society* 20.4 (1994): 549–563; Curtis L. Williamson, "The U.S. Marine Corps Combined Action Program (CAP): A Proposed Alternative Strategy for the Vietnam War," *Air War College* 2002, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/>

- awgate/usmc/williamson.pdf (accessed 28 October 2011); Kenneth Eugene Wynn, "Did the Marines better understand the nature of the Vietnam conflict and was the Combined Action Program more suitable than Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) in dealing with insurgents?" *Marine Corps War College* 2000, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a529494.pdf> (accessed 15 February 2012).
5. See Phillip C. Skuta, "Introduction to 2/7 CAP Platoon Actions in Iraq," *Marine Corps Gazette*, 2005.
 6. See "U.S. Afghan Plan Outlines New Counter-Insurgency Strategy," The Associated Press, *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation News* (12 April 2012), <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2012/04/12/afghan-draft-plan-withdrawal.html> (accessed 30 April 2012).
 7. The USMC does not train its own medical personnel. Medics, who are called corpsmen, are trained and provided to Marine field units by the Navy. In August 1965, Lieutenant Colonel William W. Taylor's 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment (3/4 Marines) was tasked with defending the air base at Phu Bai but, like many Marine units at the time, faced regular harassing attacks from VC insurgents. The 3/4 Marines' Civil Affairs Officer, Captain (CPT) John J. Mullen, was aware of the existence of the Vietnamese Popular Force (PF) militia, whose members were charged with the defence of the villages in which they also lived. CPT Mullen argued that, with USMC support, they could become an effective security force to hold the populated areas around Phu Bai. At CPT Mullen's suggestion, LTC Taylor ordered that the Joint Action Company (JAC) be formed from the integration of Marine rifle squads and PF platoons. Later this would be rebranded as the Combined Action Company (CAC). CAC's name was eventually changed to Combined Action Program (CAP). The change from CAC to CAP was prompted by an unfortunate cultural gaffe: CAC, when pronounced with a long "a," sounds identical to both the English and the Vietnamese slang terms for "penis." CAC's motto, *suc manh*, which meant "strength" in Vietnamese, added to the unintentional humour, as all CAC documents and signage seemed to indicate that the Marines belonged to the "strong penis" team. See Michael E. Peterson, *The Combined Action Platoons: The U.S. Marines' in Vietnam*. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1989), 23–26. The PF were "the humblest—read despised—of the South Vietnamese military establishment," receiving the lowest pay, third-rate equipment, virtually no training and little access to combat or logistical support above the platoon level. PF members, however, acted as a militia within the village, where they were likely born and raised, and could avoid other military service by joining the PF. See Peterson, 24.
 8. The 20th century saw the USMC being regularly deployed in small Latin American countries, where it found itself engaged in counterinsurgency and constabulary operations for long periods of time. The 1915–1935 Banana Wars in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua, and several other Latin American countries were a significant source of experience in this type of warfare, particularly the 1925–1935 Nicaraguan campaign. Most relevant to any examination of CAP were the activities of the semi-legendary Captain Louis B. "Chesty" Puller, who led an integrated unit of Nicaraguan National Guardsmen and Marine infantry in an organization known as Company M. Puller went on to instruct new Marine officers, and one of his first students was Lewis Walt, who would later command III MAF in South Vietnam and be instrumental in the fostering of a nascent Combined Action concept. See Peterson, 16.
 9. Kopets, 79.
CAP platoons at various stages of the war: June 1966, 38 platoons; January 1968, 79 platoons; January 1970, 114 platoons; May 1971, final platoons disbanded.
 10. Allnutt, 20.
 11. Jim Seaton, "A Political-Warrior Model: The Combined Action Program," *Armed Forces and Society* 20.4 (1994): 551.
 12. Peterson, 3.
 13. William R. Corson, *The Betrayal* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1968), 26.
 14. *Ibid.*, 171.
 15. *Ibid.*, 184.
 16. *Ibid.*, 188.
LTC Corson was not the first former Marine to write a highly critical account of American military and government leadership, joining the prestigious ranks of two-time Medal of Honour recipient Major General Smedley Butler, who in 1935 published his highly critical exposé *war is a racket*.
 17. Corson, 189.
 18. *Ibid.*, 275–276.
 19. W.C. Blaha, "Letters: The People and CAP," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1968.
 20. H.L. Preston, "Letters: CAP, Yes; Civil Affairs, No," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1968.
 21. Corson, 275.
Corson consistently, and incorrectly, referred to CORDS as an "Army" organizational structure despite the fact that the organization included units from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces as well as a large non-military component. Indeed, the head of CORDS was, by mandate, an American civilian. See Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1995).
 22. Stolfi, 1, Corson, 13.
 23. Stolfi, 38–39.

24. *Ibid.*, 52.
25. *Ibid.*, 30.
26. *Ibid.*, 62.
27. *Ibid.*, 62.
28. *Ibid.*, 78.
29. Robert D. Campbell, *Analysis of the Marine Pacification System*, Office of Naval Research, 1968, at Defence Technical Information Centre, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=AD0833033> (accessed 24 October 2011), 14–15.
30. *Ibid.*, 37.
31. *Ibid.*, 39.
32. *Ibid.*, 13, 39.
33. *Ibid.*, 37.
34. Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1995), 141.
35. Campbell, 35.
36. Hunt, 143.
37. Historical pamphlets covering the period from May 1967 to USMC withdrawal were apparently not produced by the Historical Division. It may have lost interest after the end of American involvement in Vietnam.
38. William D. Parker, *U.S. Marine Corps Civil Affairs in I Corps, April 1966–April 1967* (Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters USMC, 1970), iii, 1.
39. *Ibid.*, 85–86.
40. *Ibid.*, 34.
41. Allnutt, 3.
42. *Ibid.*, 3.
43. *Ibid.*, 31.
44. *Ibid.*, 49.
45. *Ibid.*, 45–46.
46. *Ibid.*, 35–36.
47. *Ibid.*, 49.
48. Francis T. McNamara, *Fact Sheet on the Combined Action Force: III Marine Amphibious Force, 31 March 1970 and Attached Memorandum* (at the Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University), Memorandum 1.
49. McNamara, Memorandum 3.
50. McNamara, *Fact Sheet*, 11–19.





Soldiers from 3 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry descend onto drop zone Buxton in Edmonton, Alberta on November 25, 2012.



LIGHT FORCES FOR RAPID DEPLOYMENT AND THEATRE ENTRY

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul A. Lockhart CD

Since the creation of the three light infantry battalions (LIBs) of the Regular Force in 1996, there has been an enduring lack of a holistic Force Employment Concept for the battle groups (BGs) that are formed upon them. The Canadian Army trend is that LIBs re-role to become mechanized units and backfill into mature theatres. That goes against the natural role of light forces, which is rapid deployment or terrain that inhibits the manoeuvre of mechanized forces and their integral transport. There remains a role for light forces, including parachute forces in the Canadian Army (CA), in order to do what the government and people of Canada expect of their army. The LIBs can form the base of light BGs, which will hold Line of Operation (LOO) 4 and Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO) for the CA, within horizon one—indeed, if resources are properly synchronized, within one year.

Central to a state's independence of foreign policy is its ability to act unilaterally or as lead in a multinational context. While perceiving itself to be a potential lead nation, Canada does not currently possess unilateral theatre entry capability. Canada does have the major contributing components of this capability by means of air movement, and it aspires to a sea-based land force capability. However, Canada does not currently synchronize into capability the training, resourcing or doctrine of the air-delivered theatre entry capacity it currently has.

Department of National Defence, Canadian Joint Task List. Task 4.2.3 is to “Conduct Forcible Entry: Airborne, Amphibious & Air Assault. To conduct operations to seize and hold a military lodgement in the face of armed opposition, to strike directly at enemy operational or strategic centre(s) of gravity, or to gain access into a theatre of operations / JOA or for introducing decisive forces into the region. A joint force may be tasked to do this by airborne, amphibious, and/or air assault in conjunction with other maritime, air, and special operations forces comprising the joint force”.¹

JTL task 4.2.3 outlines the requirement for the Canadian Forces to unilaterally enter a JOA without outside support. Indeed, tasks T4.1.5–T4.3.1 are all fixed-wing air or amphibious platform depending when conducted from a mounting range of greater than 150 NMs.² While the detailed deductions of degree of resistance implicit within the term “forced entry” could be argued to be beyond the CF's resources, the level of ambition expressed by the former CDS can be best characterized as “unassisted” theatre entry.³ Essentially, that means being able to be the first force into a failed or failing state, whether that state is suffering internal violence or natural disaster, or some combination of the two. A forced entry into a state with functioning air defence or a large cohesive military force that will actively resist is well beyond this aspiration.

CF EXPEDITIONARY THEATRE ENTRY

For a period of time, the suggestion has been that this capability would be best met through an amphibious methodology, hinging on the purchase of a multi-purpose oiler, supply and amphibious platform, referred to as the Joint Support Ship (JSS). This project attempts to blend the RCN's requirement for new resupply platforms with a roll-on, roll-off ship to move land forces. Whatever the technical challenges of blending these ship types, this conversation need not be limited to whether or not the JSS is the way ahead for the Canadian theatre entry capability. The requirement for JTL task 4.2.3 needs to be looked at from first principles.

There are two ways to unilaterally enter a theatre of operations—by air or by sea. To enter by land would indicate a previous strategic movement supported by an adjacent supportive nation and executed in an operational or even tactical level operation. Thus, true unilateral theatre entry rests with forces moved either by fixed-wing aircraft or by ship. It is unrealistic for theatre entry to be conducted by rotary-wing forces in most cases. The average operational range of airmobile forces is on the order of 150 NMs, dependent on

exact platform.⁴ Thus rotary-wing movement is akin to the operational level ground movement noted above, requiring either a safe haven or theatre entry force to support its deployment, or as a subset of the amphibious option above.

Canada does not currently own sufficient sealift to put a unit-level land task force into a foreign land in anything other than an administrative manner. Within the scale of the CA, one must accept the risk of the entire land force component embarking on a single platform. The logical mitigation of this risk is substantial close protection of that platform and either keeping it well out to sea, or having a very substantial maritime screening force for even very small surface threats. Once the JSS or another amphibious platform is acquired, and the RCN is increased to be able to take on the large new platform and its screening ships at the same time, a nation with a coastline could be entered in a low-threat setting. However, as not all nations have a coast, this purpose-built capability would only partially meet the requirement of task 4.2.3. Indeed, only 60 per cent of the world's population lives within 200 NMs of a coast,⁵ and even less within helicopter range from the sea.

With 17 CC130Js and four CC177s, from a pure lift perspective, Canada owns and is operating the aircraft necessary to put a unit-level task force into a foreign land unassisted. Assuming minimal heavy drop of vehicles and large-calibre artillery in the first lift, a portion of Canada's tactical airlift would be required to move a Light Infantry Battle Group(-). In moderate threat, this could be done in a parachute insertion, with the remainder in a follow-on air-landed package. Or if sufficient security at the airhead could be assured by means other than paratroops, the complete force could be air landed. Our experience in Libya would indicate that Canada is capable of commanding and owns the appropriate jet fighter aircraft, refuelling aircraft and technical wherewithal to conduct close air support to that task force until follow-on indirect fire support arrives. Indeed, the air threat environment of Libya, where suppression of enemy air defence was required and where there was a cohesive opposing conventional force, outstrips the level of ambition expressed by our former CDS for theatre entry.

Our experience in Kabul and then Kandahar clearly indicates that Canada can operate a large force in a landlocked country in medium intensity combat for a prolonged period, supplied



Members of 3 PPCLI are seated and ready for take-off inside a CC177 Globemaster prior to departure for an airborne exercise called PEGASUS SPEAR.



principally by air. Of course, the requirement in this scenario would be a functioning airstrip. Detractors of the parachute capability will argue that the airfields seize and hold concept is too predictable. However, this is substantially mitigated by the CC130J's superb ability to land on small, austere airfields. An austere airfield does not limit a force's options to the one airport marked on the tourist map. A straight roadway of at least 18.3 m in width and 762 m in length (or potentially shorter) can be used.⁶ Indeed, in arid regions from Africa to the Arctic, austere airfields can be created in short order on featureless terrain with relatively few pieces of heavy equipment, and sometimes none at all.

CF DOMESTIC THEATRE ENTRY

In the Canadian domestic context, theatre entry is linked to other defence tasks, which drive a need for a theatre entry force within the broad expanses of sparsely inhabited reaches of our nation. The Major Air Disaster (MAJAID) task is currently constructed around a force of two to four parachute-inserted SARTECHs, supported by parachute delivered loads of survival supplies and 12 Army parachutists who act as the general duties support to the SARTECHs on scene. Para 3 of the CONPLAN indicates that the plan is written to support the crash landing of 320 persons on a passenger aircraft transiting the pole.⁷ While this extreme version of the plan is highly unlikely, the math behind the success of the plan as currently resourced is a challenge to support. CORA research shows that it will take up to three days for follow-on rotary-wing support to reach parts of the Canadian North without pre-deployments to northern hubs.⁸ It is therefore not plausible that 16 persons, even with literally tons of supplies, would be able to keep all 320 injured alive. In an earlier version, the MAJAID plan was based upon a parachute sub-unit. Here the 320 number is more plausible, as even an under strength sub-unit of 60 to 80 soldiers would be an adequate number to feed and keep warm 320 people neither trained nor supplied to exist in our North.⁹ Jump sub-unit generation is beyond the reasonable capacity of CF Land Advanced Warfare Centre, the current force generator of the AB Sup Gp. Is it then acceptable to have MAJAID existing on the shelf as a supportable CONPLAN when its logic is clearly flawed, as it stops with an insufficient parachute follow-on force?



A Royal Canadian Air Force CC130J Hercules completes a heavy equipment drop at the Sicily drop zone as part of the Joint Operational Access Exercise 13 (JOAX 13) being held at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

STRUCTURE OF CA THEATRE ENTRY CAPABILITY

Much has been written about how the previous iterations of parachute forces in Canada were unstable, as they did not effectively integrate into the CF's force generation methodology. Indeed, it is likely that much of the instability in parachute forces' generation has been because of frequent ill-discipline within the defence institution in articulating their mission tasks, both in the issue and the receipt. While early Cold War parachute units were focused on the defence of Canada task at various scales, General Allard is clear in his memoirs that the Canadian Airborne Regiment was brought into being as a theatre entry tool, or "fill the bill" between government decision and the arrival of deliberately scaled task forces.¹⁰ Both Allard and Jayne indicate that the subsequent desire to deploy the unit internationally to mimic a mechanized line battalion can reasonably be linked to subsequent training and performance irregularities of that organization.¹¹ While this confusing track record has been disappointing, as outlined above, there remain two lines of theatre entry tasks: expeditionary and domestic. These are tasks for which conventional mechanized battalions and battle groups are not optimally designed, and which optimized CA light infantry battalions with strong para capabilities are needed to fulfill. Each of the expeditionary and domestic theatre entry tasks contains sub-tasks, which will be explored below.

The current force generation model and dispersal of parachute forces between all three CMBGs is, at the current time, sub-optimal if viewed from the perspective of massed parachute forces. However, a review of the Army's managed readiness program along with the force employments highlighted above would suggest very little need change to achieve a valid employment model with a stable force generation framework. With a view to a balanced, sustainable and employable model, we will approach domestic and expeditionary sequentially.

In the domestic context, each Land Force Area has the requirement to maintain an Immediate Response Unit, for which the first manoeuvre element is the vanguard company at 12 hours Notice to Move (NTM). These units are force generated by the Army for employment by Canada COM in the domestic response role. It is the intention of the CA that at least one sub-unit at high readiness be Arctic capable, although that statement is unclear if that role can be filled by one of the vanguard sub-units.¹² It is clear that if there is always at least one vanguard company which was a parachute sub-unit, that sub-unit could then also provide the currently un-resourced MAJAID third tier response (after SAR and AB Sup Gp) and fulfill the requirement for Canada COM to put a CF ground element wherever required in Canada at short notice.¹³ Ignoring for a moment that there is only one parachute infantry company in each LIB, if a parachute company of an LIB at high readiness were always the vanguard company of one of the four IRUs nationally, it would provide the reach into any point of the Arctic which Canada COM requires in both the CF Arctic Concept and MAJAID.¹⁴

In summary, there is much utility to larger parachute forces, potentially within the current LIB structures in the Army. None of the capabilities outlined thus far require the creation of new units or structures, nor do those for the expeditionary operations which follow.

In the expeditionary context, there are two roles which leverage theatre entry skill. The first is a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) and the second is a theatre activation team (TAT).

An NEO organization is one which must have some capacity to enter an unstable environment with little to no assistance from the host nation. Indeed, it is that nation's inability to provide a sufficiently safe environment for commercial shipping or air traffic that has triggered a military supported evacuation. It is then reasonable to link this requirement to a theatre entry capability as outlined above. In this case, a parachute force could para insert or be air landed to provide the access to an airstrip, beach or jetty in support of the CF's NEO contingency plan.

Depending on the maturity of the mission, a TAT force may need to execute an unassisted theatre entry. Regardless of the insertion, a unit dedicated to a reduced NTM will permit the early activation of a theatre's infrastructure and static force protection measures, allowing a conventional BG-sized task force the more methodical arrival at high readiness and theatre- and mission-specific training. In a mature theatre secured by allies, this role is I Coy 2 RCR's deployment at the TAT for the construction of Camp JULIEN in KABUL, as other nations' forces secured Kabul Airport. This TAT force permitted a methodical deployment of the 3 RCR Bn Gp, focused on their task and AOR, rather than shipping, convoys and construction. Furthermore, a TAT force of up to Light Infantry Battle Group size, with a healthy mounted capability, would allow Canada to deploy rapidly and first among allies, should Canada aspire to mission lead status on a new mission.

The information above does not preclude the use of these troops in a more mature theatre. The capacity to surge for an adjustment of the force disposition on static missions would provide flexibility to the commander in theatre. In more challenging theatres, seasonal spikes in opposing force activity and movement within theatres could be met by surge troop use, a role light forces can fulfill.

THE ROLE OF CANSOF

While similar skill sets to the above reside within CANSOF, it is unreasonable to assume that they will take on the land component role of theatre entry and theatre activation on behalf of the CA. Indeed, the task of NEO was designated to CANSOF in 2006, only to return to the CA in the same year due to tempo and capacity reasons within the FE concept of that command.

Clearly, the roles of strategic reconnaissance, mission advisory and direct action which reside in CANSOF will be inextricably linked to the expeditionary role outlined above. However, it is well beyond the role and scope foreseen for CANSOF to be Canada's theatre entry and theatre activation land component.

SUGGESTED SUSTAINABLE LIGHT FORCE STRUCTURE FOR LOO 4 AND NEO

Based on the above task listing in both the domestic and expeditionary context, an initial assessment pending closer analysis through gaming and capability development would place the structure of each of the three LIBs with attachments to be:

- a. **A parachute infantry company with attachments would be the minimum.** In the expeditionary context this permits the ability to hold a standard sized 1000 m austere airfield. In the domestic context, two sub-units permit the rotation of the 12-hr NTM for Arctic vanguard to be rotated during the eight-month high-readiness window, as the three LIBs rotate.
- b. **A second and third company of light or mounted infantry.** In the expeditionary context, this force would be designated for air landing along with the TAPV to provide an enhanced reserve/countermove force. It would also be proficient in air mobility, should rotary-wing support be ferried into the theatre. This force could be used in a mounted role for convoy escort in the context of a theatre activation team (TAT). Indeed, the parachute company, which should also be TAPV qualified, could take on the convoy work as perimeter security duties simplify and as barrier plans develop.¹⁵ In the domestic context, this force could be used as relief for the tasked parachute company as the operation progressed.
- c. **Fires.** A parachute-capable FSCC and other elements are required. In the expeditionary context, it would control the airspace and approaches to the airhead, including the coordination of terminal fires. OP parties with skill sets for the three manoeuvre sub-units would be required. A parachute-capable mortar platoon would be required for insertion with the initial force, with the consideration of field artillery insertion in the follow-on force with the third manoeuvre sub-unit in an air-landed role. In the domestic context, the FSCC element would function as the aerospace control node over the objective area until follow-on specialized elements could be provided by 1 CAD.
- d. **Mobility/Counter-Mobility and Force Protection.** In the expeditionary context, a parachute-capable field troop could provide a minimal functionality to the initial force. However, if the aspiration were for the ability to construct austere airfields, this would require a Sqn(-) and a heavy-drop capability for the inclusion of some combination of dozer, front-end loader, dump truck and grader. It should be noted that this requirement for heavy drop is the only one foreseen in this paper.
- e. **Combat Service Support.** In the expeditionary context, the initial mission essential kit would deploy from the emplaning point of the manoeuvre unit. This would rotate in accordance with the Army managed readiness framework. Subsequent to initial deployment, the movement of consumables and replacement materials would be executed from 8 Wing Trenton, under the control of CEFCOM and CANOSCOM. In the domestic context, the MAJAID follow-on loads would depart Trenton with the initial movement of the AB Sup Gp, in appropriate numbers for the size of the aircraft in distress. The subsequent movement of the follow-on Arctic vanguard company would be through their local emplaning location, with later consumables being moved 8 Wing Trenton under the control of Canada COM and CANOSCOM.
- f. **Comd and Signals.** In both the expeditionary and domestic context, this force would need the equivalent of a light detachment from the Signals Regiment. Therefore there must be at least two parachute deployable light detachments in the Signals Regiment to alternate the NTM challenges. The detachment would be able to move to 8 Wing Trenton's location for loading on the initial chalks of the force movement in either the expeditionary or domestic setting. A second-order effect of this would be the requirement of continual high-readiness training for those detachments with the LIBs in high readiness

If the whole of the parachute infantry, reconnaissance platoon, mortar troop and engineers are viewed as an all-arms pool for the domestic context, it would be possible to internally rotate the 12-hr NTM for domestic vanguard. Indeed, between the two pools of personnel it would easily be possible to generate the 60-person secondary MAJAID force without a second para company.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

The plan outlined above requires no establishment increases. It would require that the number of positions designated hard parachutist be increased and that some trials be conducted in parallel with the CC130J and CC177 fleets coming on line.

A reinvigoration of the JPADS capability may be required if there is a desire to execute a theatre entry capability which is not immediately linked to a serviceable airstrip seizure in the initial wave.

It would require direction on the level of ambition of the engineer basic mobility/counter-mobility and airfield maintenance, or actual austere airfield construction. This would not require a change in PYs, as a composite field squadron could handle the task of four pieces of heavy equipment. However, the reinvestment in heavy drop with the CC130J/CC177 would drive a trials cycle and perhaps the purchase of a small and potentially unique heavy equipment engineering fleet to ensure a heavy drop, austere airfield construction capability exists in each CMBG.

Currently, the Army has 124 hard parachutist positions in each LIB. This plan would require a growth to approximately 275 in each CMBG.¹⁶ 1 and 2 CMBG have each provided briefing notes to their Area Commanders which request 245¹⁷ and 199¹⁸ hard para positions respectively. Current capacity for CFLAWC BPara production in the hybrid decentralized plan briefed at Army Council Nov 11, once Cadet and P Res serials are discounted, is 480 BPara per year. MFP and SLSQ capacity to cater to recce troops is above that number and no longer requires BPara as a prerequisite. Therefore, there is sufficient capacity within the training system to achieve the numbers required in each LIB based parachute BG, as each moves into its high-readiness cycle over its natural flow of 3 x 8 months, or two years.



Source: Combat Camera

Members of 3 PPCLI inside a CC177 Globemaster wait for the green light to jump during Exercise PEGASUS SPEAR.

THE BARRIER TO IMPLEMENTATION

The majority of what has been written on the future of a Canadian parachute capability by Smith, Jayne and Ewing in the last few years has centred on the value of precision parachuting.¹⁹ It is all sound where they outline precision parachuting. Smith goes further to outline the importance of each nation having theatre entry forces which are tailored to their own needs, comparing American and European states, which have substantial parachute forces, to Australia, which is committed to an amphibious only route. CANSOF's parachute FEC is more intellectually stable than parachuting in the Army at the current time and uses precision and mass. Within the CA, as noted above, the role of both precision and mass parachute forces in Canada is clearly justified in tasks from GOC and by order of magnitude analysis, supportable within current resources and structures. The days of parachute capability will fade when vertical takeoff aircraft have an endurance which is comparable to the CC130J, and the CF has acquired them. However, until then, the parachute option remains a viable and, in the Canadian context, a necessary option.

On the whole, there is little structurally which will block Canada from having a theatre entry capability on par with the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK within the next year. The true barrier is the lack of current doctrine and tactics, techniques and procedures which will need to be experimented upon and codified if this is to succeed.

CONCLUSION

Canada has a valid requirement for a joint theatre entry capability, both domestic and expeditionary. We as the CF are presently accepting risks which range from under-resourcing our MAJAID capabilities to accepting some R2HR and NTM shortcuts when deploying TATs. The CA-generated NEO capability does not currently have an NTM which is consistent with the speed at which a situation is likely to occur, as demonstrated in Haiti in 2003 when CANSOF, which does not have the NEO task, was forced to take it on.

The LIBs and their affiliated elements require the correct resourcing of parachute components and the appropriate doctrine to employ them in these roles as part of the Managed Readiness Plan. This is within the capacity of the CA and the CF, in synchronization with the MRP over the next two years. As in every other major Army in the developed world, there is a necessary role for both light and mechanized forces. Frequently the role of light / air landed / parachute forces is theatre entry. Due to Canada's domestic geography and aspirations of independent foreign policy, our requirement for unassisted theatre entry is clear and the capability is overdue. While an impressive tool, the amphibious embarked battle group plan will not deliver a capability in horizon one, or perhaps even horizon two. By contrast, the parachute option outlined above is achievable, well inside horizon one. 🍁

ABOUT THE AUTHOR. . .

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Lockhart graduated from the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean in 1995. He served in both 2nd and 3rd Battalions of The Royal Canadian Regiment. He completed two tours as a Platoon Commander in the former Yugoslavia and later served in Kabul, Afghanistan, as the Battle Group Assistant Operations Officer, and in Kandahar, Afghanistan, as Director Stability for Task Force Kabul. His background in parachuting and airdrop spans from Platoon, to Company Command of M (Para) Coy in 3 RCR, to Command of the Canadian Forces Land Advanced Warfare Centre. LCol Lockhart has a BA (Honours) in Military and Strategic Studies from CMR, and a Masters in Defence Studies from RMCC.

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8. Modeling and analysis of Canadian Forces RSOM hub for Northern Operations. DRDC CORA TM 2010-170, August 2010. Table 2: optimal RSOM hub locations using airfields suitable for CC177.
9. This calculation is based upon at least one soldier awake per 10-person tent for three days. Minimum force size for the largest scenario is therefore 64, more directly equivalent to an under strength sub-unit.
10. J.V. Allard, *The Memoirs of General Jean V. Allard*, UBC, Vancouver 1998, 237–238.
11. Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew R. Jayne, “The Future of Canadian Airborne Forces—Part 2,” *Canadian Army Journal* Vol. 11.2 (Summer 2008), 28.
12. Land Force Arctic Concept 2021, dated 10 January 2011. Para 22.
13. Canadian Forces Employment and Support Concept for the North, dated 23 March 2011. Para 23b.
14. While not currently tasked to the CCG as primary responder, the MAJMAR role in remote locations is another valid employment a MAJAID-like airdropped package, where a vessel may run aground a substantial distance from habitation, or indeed an airstrip. It is important to note that steaming time from Halifax to Cornwallis Island is longer than those projected for the air-based response.
15. The critical issue for success with TAPV in the IT and CT context is that the vehicle must have only a very light IT requirement. If the IT bill is comparable to LAV III, it will become a challenge to proficiency with light skills.
16. A breakdown of the 400 would be:
LIB Para Coys of 124 x + (Recce Pl) = 154
FSCC + OPs x 2 + Mortar Pl = 50
Eng Tp = 35 or Comp Sqn (-) = 75
17. Briefing on 1 CMBG Company Parachute Group (sic), Col Lavoie, 29 August 2011.
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18. Briefing Note for Commander LFCA, 2 CMBG Parachute Company Group, Col Eyre, 6 May 2011.
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Source: Combat Camera

Second Lieutenant Brad Barager, platoon commander for M Company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, packs his parachute after landing at the Luzon Drop Zone, Camp Mackall, N.C., February 24, 2013.



*A soldier from 8 Platoon (8 Pl) Charlie Company (C Coy)
1 Battalion, The Royal 22e Regiment (1 R 22e R) stands in front
of a Leopard C2 tank at the entrance to Forward Operating Base
Ma'Sum Ghar (FOB MSG).*

COIN OR CONVENTIONAL? RESOLVING THE SMALL ARMY CONUNDRUM

Major Mark N. Popov CD, MBA, MDS

Since September 11, 2001, counter-insurgency and conventional warfare advocates have used professional journals, newspapers, blogs, websites, public appearances and lectures to offer differing opinions on the future of warfare, particularly land warfare and the future of armies.¹ The crux of the debate and most emotive issue for those at each end of the spectrum of opinion is whether military forces should be configured, equipped and trained to fight and win “this” war, modeling future conflicts to closely resemble counter-insurgencies being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, or “a war,” meaning any potential conventional conflict. As the United States has been the primary actor in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the majority of commentators are American, and they often hold widely varying views on how US forces should be organized for the future in light of recent experience. However, given the nature of current and future threats, the question surrounding future military configuration is not a singularly American problem. Smaller, less globally involved countries, even those seeking to disengage from operations in Iraq or Afghanistan, cannot retract into isolationism and safely ignore this debate. It touches any country that pursues global trade, contributes to coalition military operations, seeks to maintain the present system of international relations, is bound by collective security arrangements or undertakes United Nations commitments. Any country that has an interested domestic population that may demand foreign intervention, be it to bolster security, stabilize a failing state, defeat a threat or alleviate humanitarian disaster, must also consider its military’s force structure, organization, training and culture when planning for the future, lest it be caught unaware and unprepared for its citizens’ demands. Despite ongoing debate to determine whether counter-insurgency or conventional warfare should be central to military practice, the ability to fight and win conventional wars must remain the purview of Western state military forces as a matter of international credibility and national survival.² Flexible conventional capability prepared, in the worst case, for high-intensity mechanized conflict, must, and will continue to be,

the enduring central tenet of military focus for the foreseeable future; a failure to maintain this focus will ultimately signal defeat.

Broadly described, conventional forces are designed, trained, equipped and organized for combat between similarly equipped, hierarchically organized forces acting on behalf of a recognized state, regional security or non-state organization. They are designed to fight and win force-on-force wars and ideally are equipped with tanks, mechanized infantry, combat engineering capability, artillery, attack aviation, air and naval support. They are tailored to defeat existential threats in a worst-case scenario and are typically the force of last resort to overcome “the most serious threats to their political entity or government.”³ While nearly every nation publicly claims that its military is oriented towards self-defence, the cold hard reality is that competent conventional forces can significantly deter would-be aggressors and, if necessary, can be used offensively to impose national will when political or diplomatic solutions have failed.

One end of the spectrum of the future military debate posits that the bulk of future military thought and development should focus on counter-insurgency; indigenous force capacity building; counter-terrorist, humanitarian and stability operations; and fighting non-state actors. That thinking is loosely based around the idea that modern states’ organized military forces are so overwhelmingly powerful that the possibility of state-on-state conflict is low, while the necessity to fight non-state actors, terrorists and insurgent groups will become warfare’s new norm. Current Canadian doctrine defines insurgency as “a competition involving at least one non-state movement using means that include violence against an established authority to achieve political change,” while counter-insurgency (COIN) is “those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat an insurgency.”⁴ Some of COIN’s proponents have gone so far as to state that the days of state-on-state conventional conflict are over and that all future wars will be COIN-focused “wars amongst the people.”⁵ This line of thought is commonly referred to as “preparing to fight ‘this’ war”; some examples are operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, including ongoing Security Force Capacity Building (SFCB) efforts such as mentoring and training indigenous forces. The argument is that “we have to fight the war we are in,”⁶ which requires military forces, particularly armies, to be optimized in terms of organization, training and equipment to conduct counter-insurgencies in failed and failing states, not conventional combat against organized forces. COIN-optimized forces are characterized by a focus on protecting an indigenous population and persuading them to reject the insurgency, rather than destroying the enemy. In a COIN campaign, “gaining the support of the people is paramount”—in short, the people are the objective, the prize and the force’s focus.⁷

In the construct posited by those who see COIN as the future of land warfare, COIN-optimized forces must be composed almost entirely of skilled, lightly armed dismounted infantry, “substantially free of modern logistics paraphernalia . . . twinned with the ‘long-range assassins’ of precision fires.”⁸ COIN forces must train, advise and mentor indigenous security forces, necessitating the creation of specialized advisor elements.⁹ While still a military force able to fight in self-defence or limited offensive roles to protect the population, the COIN force focuses primarily on persuasion, connection, using cultural knowledge and building relationships. The extreme end of “COIN-centric”¹⁰ thinking sees military forces completely focused on connecting with populations and conducting influence, protection or stability operations, not combat. They fight when necessary, emphasizing victory through population security and human connections, not firepower and manoeuvre.

One of the furthest edges of the argument for focus on conventional force primacy is the concept of the “Revolution in Military Affairs” (RMA), which seeks victory “quickly, efficiently, at low cost by small forces.”¹¹ It emphasizes “full-spectrum dominance”¹² and posits that future forces will gain and maintain perfect situational awareness through advanced sensors to “see first, understand first, act first and finish decisively.”¹³ The “RMA force” will use networked systems of systems to find, shape and engage threats with “long-range precision assets,”¹⁴ then conduct rapid decisive operations against enemy centres of gravity, to defeat them quickly in one decisive blow.¹⁵ Several Western military forces pursued “RMA-style” force structures in the immediate post-Cold War period, seeking cost efficiencies by reducing or completely abandoning cornerstone combat capabilities such as main battle tanks, self-propelled artillery and armoured combat engineering. In 2004, Canada’s then-Chief of the Land Staff described Canada’s main battle tanks as



Source: Combat Camera

Private Tyler Loewen makes new friend as he walks along a street in Qandahar City, Afghanistan. He is a member of The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Patrol Company.

“a millstone which has hamstrung our thinking for years” when describing a future force using networked wheeled gun and missile systems rather than main battle tanks to defeat future enemies.¹⁶ Smaller countries seeking the “peace dividend” brought about by the collapse of the Warsaw Pact saw RMA as a way to avoid risking lives while minimizing the financial costs of future wars but still maintaining a credible and capable military force. Those ideas were also predicated on fighting in coalitions and relying on America’s overwhelming technological, air and precision-fire superiority to support small, networked ground forces.¹⁷

Unfortunately, perfect battlespace awareness does not and is unlikely to ever exist. “Politically attractive but illusory”¹⁸ technological innovations, aimed at guaranteeing the situational awareness dominance promised by RMA theorists, cannot completely alleviate the fog of war, find enemies, prevent surprise or ensure quick victory with minimal fighting. Recent wars have proven that point time and again. Early on April 3, 2003, a US 3rd Infantry Division tank battalion conducted a river crossing only to be surprised by an Iraqi formation, comprising between 25 and 30 tanks, 70 to 80 armoured personnel carriers, and between 5,000 and 10,000 soldiers, approaching it on three axes.¹⁹ Despite overwhelming technological superiority in satellite overwatch, manned aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle observation, communications intercept, secure communications and friendly vehicle tracking, the US force did not detect a large mechanized formation threatening it during a vulnerable period while executing a difficult tactical manoeuvre. Sensors alone can never completely lift the fog of war; even forces with exceptional situational awareness and information gathering capabilities must be prepared, trained, manned and equipped to overcome surprise and fight.²⁰

An emphasis (which many would say is over-emphasis) on minimal force structure, limited heavy combat capability, battlespace awareness and influence over action make the RMA and COIN-optimization arguments very closely related. Rather than being opposite ends of the spectrum, they are much more closely aligned than an initial examination would reveal. Military operations worldwide throughout the past 10 years have proven that both the COIN-optimized and RMA concept’s precepts are untenable, making perhaps the greatest similarity the two arguments share is that neither offers a viable solution for military forces in an uncertain world.

While the most strident COIN supporters accuse conventional force advocates of wishing for a return to the RMA, the fact remains that neither a technologically focused RMA force or COIN-optimization are the solution to future threats. Rather, a more realistic view sees conventional forces that look very much like the forces that most nations currently maintain, with a primary focus on fighting and defeating conventional threats through firepower and manoeuvre, not population security through influence and connection. This view absolutely does not advocate:

... a return to the 1980s and preparing to fight a reincarnated Soviet Union. Rather, [conventional warfare] means organizing around the principle of fighting rather than building an international constabulary force premised on light infantry to do nation-building and policing the world's troubled spots.²¹

The modern conventional force, even a small force, however, must be equipped, organized and trained to master the basics of high-tempo combined arms warfare against a skilled and similarly equipped enemy. The bedrock of this capability is the mental will and organizational culture that spurs this force on to fight and to win. Understanding that no force can ever be the optimal force for all possible tasks, it must concurrently maintain the mental and organizational agility to conduct a wide range of operations, from peace support, through COIN to conventional high-tempo warfighting.²²

Defining the current and future threat can be overwhelming; current theories are replete with overlapping definitions and terminology, defining future wars or threats as “small,” “new,” “fourth generation,”²³ “wars amongst the people,”²⁴ “irregular,”²⁵ “asymmetric”²⁶ or a series of “interactively complex or ‘wicked’ problems.”²⁷ Terminology aside, the majority of these definitions are essentially variations on the theme that the majority of future opponents will always seek to attack a force’s weaknesses using whatever means possible. The broadest and most applicable thought about future threats considers them “hybrid,” characterized by adversaries simultaneously and adaptively employing “a fused mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and criminal behavior [sic] in the battlespace . . . combinations of different modes of warfare.”²⁸



Soldiers of Charles Company, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, navigate their way through the busy downtown streets of Kabul in Light Armoured Vehicles (LAV III).

Future opponents may be non-state actors attacking from or within failed or failing states, or states in the throes of revolution, political instability, or globalization-caused economic havoc. They will exploit a globally dispersed battlespace, concentrate force or use swarming tactics to overwhelm vulnerable points, and capitalize on information technology and the Internet to synchronize attacks, demonstrate their prowess to citizens and political leaders, and instill fear and uncertainty into their opponents.²⁹ Future conflicts may also see a confluence of interconnected activities between military forces, terrorists, insurgents and criminals. In short, the future security environment will be a dangerous, ambiguous world where nothing is simple or linear—every problem will be complex, every solution non-linear and multi-dimensional. Recent wars in Chechnya, South Lebanon, Jammu and Kashmir, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria's ongoing internal conflict reflect the trend towards global urbanization; in each of those conflicts, combatants sought refuge, camouflage, tactical and media-supported information operations advantage by fighting in towns and cities.³⁰ In those environments, air, aviation and mechanized ground forces lose much of the advantage of standoff electronic sensor detection coupled with precision attack by air-delivered munitions that open country provides.

Hybrid threats, unorthodox attacks and asymmetry are not new concepts. T.E. Lawrence's campaign in the desert throughout World War I, enlisting indigenous Arab tribes to harry Turkish lines of communications, is held up as an example of battlefield ingenuity and strategic innovation. Throughout World War II, state-sponsored partisan activities in German rear areas were part and parcel of Soviet operations.³¹ Partisans sapped German combat power by forcing combat forces to secure lines of communication, effectively fixing them and preventing their movement to support front-line battles, an unorthodox, hybrid method of gaining advantage. During the Cold War, NATO offset the Warsaw Pact's numerical superiority by developing technologically advanced equipment, giving NATO an asymmetric technological advantage. NATO's Leopard, Challenger and M1 Abrams tanks, while fewer in number, had more advanced and effective fire control systems, better battlefield survivability and more advanced, reliable and easily maintained automotive systems than their more numerous Warsaw Pact opponents such as T-64 and T-72.³² In future, both state-sponsored forces and non-state actors will continue to seek advantage by attacking across the spectrum of potential conflict, by surprise whenever possible. Ideologically motivated, non-state terror groups, in particular, will seek any means, no matter how vicious, to gain an edge over their opponent.

The Lebanon-based, Iranian-sponsored Islamic resistance group Hezbollah epitomizes this modern hybrid threat; it has attacked Israel across the spectrum of conflict from the 1980s to the present.³³ During its 2006 war against Israel, it used a variety of tactical and operational methods to draw in, attack and inflict heavy casualties on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in order to erode Israeli political will. In some cases, Hezbollah held ground from prepared positions using obstacle belts, while at others it attacked Israeli forces conventionally using antitank missiles at long range from prepared positions.³⁴ It struck an Israeli corvette with an anti-ship missile;³⁵ conducted hit-and-run guerrilla attacks; deployed dispersed, lightly equipped gunmen in built-up areas; and concurrently maintained a near-continuous rocket barrage against northern Israeli towns to oppress and demoralize the civilian population.³⁶ Hezbollah attacked on every plane, in every aspect.

COIN advocates posit that the IDF failed by not attempting to fight the war like a counter-insurgency. This identification of IDF methodology is completely accurate, but the assessment is false. One of COIN's basic precepts is building trust between the population and the COIN force, separating the insurgent from his sources of support amongst the conflict zone's residents. Given the history of conflict and occupation between Israel and South Lebanon, how much persuasive influence could the IDF ever have in South Lebanon, particularly in poor Shia villages?³⁷ How would it be able to build trust amongst the South Lebanese population? Fighting Hezbollah by trying to win Lebanese "hearts and minds" would have been even more of a losing proposition than engaging it in combat, killing its fighters and eliminating its ability to threaten the Israeli population by rocket attack. A more logical and believable assessment is that Hezbollah skilfully combined orthodox and unorthodox attacks to gain asymmetric advantage against the IDF.³⁸ The IDF, having conducted extensive irregular warfare and constabulary-type security operations in Gaza and the Palestinian territories, had, by 2006, lost its edge in conventional warfighting, particularly "when confronted with a foe that fought them in a sophisticated way."³⁹

Solid conventional fighting skills, where forces maintain the ability to defeat attacks that may come at any time and place across the spectrum of conflict, coupled with the ability to seize opportunities to counterattack in turn, are the best counter to hybrid threats. This capability is dependent on leadership, training, command climate and equipment that are flexible and capable across the spectrum, not singularly focused on a narrow spectrum of threats in COIN environments. COIN theorists posit that conventional “big army” forces lack the cultural intelligence, balanced approach and finesse to deal with complex situations. According to many, conventional force structures and heavy weapons offer no value in a COIN context. However, conventional forces, properly led, have proven that despite being trained, equipped and organized for mechanized warfare, they can have the agility to shift their focus and conduct COIN. Consider the case of the US 1st Armored Division’s 1st Brigade Combat Team, led by Colonel Sean MacFarland in Iraq in 2005–2006. MacFarland conducted an amazingly successful COIN campaign that brought a reduction of violence and a measure of stability to the contentious, insurgent-infested city of Ramadi. He focused on COIN principles, protecting the population and maintaining relentless pressure on insurgents through patrolling and connection with local leaders. Throughout this campaign, MacFarland’s organic artillery unit “probably fired more high-explosive projectiles against the enemy than any artillery battery in the Army,” and he praised extremely quick and effective counter-battery fire’s role in suppressing enemy rocket and mortar firing positions and killing the insurgents manning them.⁴⁰ This performance indicates that conventional forces are often critical to executing a successful COIN campaign by providing credible demonstrations of resolve and the capability to kill or neutralize those insurgents who threaten the population or government forces, using overwhelming, decisive and timely force.

If Colonel MacFarland had not had such effective collective conventional fighting skills—counter-battery capability, the overt deterrence, firepower and protection afforded his forces by their tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles—would he have been able to successfully set up and man a series of small outposts throughout the city and establish the persistent security presence that contributed so strongly to his success? Securing the population often required firepower to defeat the persistent, ideologically driven insurgent forces that threatened the city’s residents. It is unlikely that a light-infantry based, lightly equipped force, no matter how well trained to connect with the population, initiate reconstruction and conduct psychological and influence operations, would have been able to demonstrate the requisite capability to defeat threats, protect and secure the population, indigenous security forces and its own personnel. Rather than being a hindrance, well-led conventional forces retain the flexibility to overcome deteriorating security situations that COIN-specific forces may lack.

But what of equipment? It is true that unconventional combatants in several theatres have destroyed some of the world’s best main battle tanks, including the US M1 Abrams and German-built Leopard 2, using improvised explosive devices (IEDs).⁴¹ However, this has proven the exception, not the norm. One must remember that with enough explosives, any vehicle or even a fixed installation can be destroyed.⁴² It is also true that hand-held, easy-to-use, reliable and lethal anti-armour weapons continue to proliferate, while ammunition developments give small calibre cannon, capable of being mounted on light armoured vehicles or “technical” pickup trucks the capability to penetrate heavier and heavier armour. That these developments have made tanks obsolete is an enduring myth that is often repeated. During UN peacekeeping operations in Ethiopia and Eritrea, reporters trumpeted the effectiveness of Canada’s LAV III infantry fighting vehicles, crowing that “Canadian LAVs can defeat the combatants’ tanks, if need be.”⁴³ However, nothing can defeat a tank as effectively as another tank, while very few vehicles that are not tanks can survive being struck by tank cannon.

While small-calibre cannon or hand-held anti-armour weapons may be able to damage or even destroy a tank given sufficient time and ammunition, a tank, even an ancient, poorly maintained T-55 operated by barely trained militiamen, only needs to hit a light armoured vehicle once in order to destroy it and kill the soldiers it carries. Even obsolete main battle tanks can easily destroy modern infantry fighting vehicles or fix, manoeuvre against and then destroy dismounted infantry soldiers conducting COIN or humanitarian operations amongst the population. The current generation of mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles designed and fielded for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan offer superb protection against IED bottom blasts but cannot protect their crews against large-calibre direct-fire projectiles designed to shred tank



Source: Combat Camera

Canadian Leopard 2 tanks from C Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (LdSH(RC)), patrol a road near an advanced operations base in the Panjwayi district of Afghanistan.

armour. This factor is sobering when one considers that thousands of tanks remain in service worldwide,⁴⁴ while analysts forecast that global defence industries will have produced 7,800 new tanks and upgraded many existing tanks between 2006 and 2015.⁴⁵ Tank-equipped enemies manoeuvring in the battlespace, or those defending in depth, will pose a conventional challenge that lightly armed forces, even supported by air-delivered precision weapons, will be unable to defeat without taking significant casualties. While massed tank formations can certainly, as two wars in Iraq have shown, be obliterated from the air, destroying tanks manoeuvring in built-up areas occupied by non-combatants with air strikes and cluster munitions raises the spectre of significant collateral damage, which may have significant second- and third-order effects on the world stage.

Some critics posit that the armed forces of less technologically advanced countries such as China, while large, lack the quality and capabilities to pose any significant threat, obviating the need for the West to maintain strong conventional forces.⁴⁶ However, prudence requires that the unknown threat be considered seriously. Unfortunately, while pundits can easily dismiss potential threats as negligible, national and military leaders have a duty to defend their nations and protect their populations from any and all threats they may face. As conventional threats and equipment evolve around the world, countries must maintain conventional capabilities able to meet and defeat them. Forces overly focused on COIN cannot defeat or deter a determined force equipped with heavy weapons, armour, modern aircraft and tanks, which are and will remain part and parcel of both today and tomorrow's threat picture.

A number of COIN advocates argue that countries need to be more selective in committing to foreign operations, avoid entanglements in long-term, bloody and unwinnable military quagmires, a description being increasingly applied to NATO's efforts in Afghanistan. Journalist Michael A. Cohen posits that "counterinsurgencies are as violent and inconclusive as any other conflicts, and that the United States should avoid such wars at all costs."⁴⁷ Unfortunately, smaller or regional powers may not have that choice; not every country is as fortunate as Canada in sharing terrain closely with a superpower like the United States, where geography, collective security mechanisms and the umbrella of American military strength keep it reasonably safe from conventional attack. Consider that at any given time in the 20-year span between 1990 and 2010, there were between 14 and 39 concurrent and ongoing significant conflicts, many with



Source: Combat Camera

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment Fort Carson, Colorado, pass behind an ever-vigilant armoured vehicle of “C” Squadron, Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadians) as they advance toward the compound of an Afghani family.

potential to expand into regional confrontations or develop into humanitarian disasters.⁴⁸ Any of these current or potential conflicts could potentially spur Western-nation force deployments for peace enforcement or stability operations. There will be future circumstances when a force, or a coalition of forces from contributor nations, must fight conventionally, or threaten, credibly and capably, to fight conventionally. Very few current or potential insurgencies could pose an existential threat to most modern, industrialized nations.⁴⁹ However, Western countries or coalitions may need to decisively defeat an opponent, demonstrate global resolve, enforce a United Nations resolution, or stop a conflict and bring belligerent or rogue states to the negotiating table. Foreign interventions, even for humanitarian purposes in failed and failing states, may require conventional fighting to destroy combatant forces opposing the intervention, to “break in” to a theatre and force an end to hostilities prior to any stability or COIN operations. Any coalition member participating in such an intervention that has insufficient conventional warfighting skills opens the invitation for belligerents to attack it or other coalition members. Similarly, failing to defeat conventional opponents in such a situation will shatter a country’s national military credibility, sapping world, host nation and coalition partner trust, which will have concomitant political, diplomatic and potential trade repercussions.

Countries choosing to participate in world affairs and deploy their forces outside their own borders must be militarily capable in order to demonstrate their own resolve and overcome a spectrum of military threats to their deployed forces. No nation can afford to lose the credibility to deter or, if required in a worst-case situation, defeat, a similarly equipped foe who seeks to do it or its people harm. Military analyst Elias Hanna pointed out that in the wake of its failures in the 2006 war against Hezbollah, Arab nations now fear Israel less—its army is no longer the deterrent it once was, and it has lost its domestic population’s trust.⁵⁰ By not defeating Hezbollah, Israel’s credibility and ability to deter hostile neighbours is cast into doubt. A Western country that focuses on COIN to the detriment of conventional warfighting and fails to maintain a fighting-focused military culture will erode its deterrent effect and create a precarious national security position.⁵¹ National survival dictates that unless a nation is willing to abdicate its ability to influence world events or defend its own people and delegate this responsibility to another nation, it must maintain credible, war-focused conventional forces.

The United States has no conventional “peer competitor” capable of seriously challenging it: current Western conventional superiority, even that resident in non-nuclear armed states, coupled with collective security

partnerships, acts as a significant deterrent to potential foes. While “nuclear weapons have dramatically reduced the odds of major conventional wars between world powers,”⁵² neither conventional overmatch capabilities nor nuclear weapons negate the potential for limited conventional conflicts, which will require effective conventional warfighting skills to defeat. Nuclear-armed states cannot resolve every threat to its forces or those of its allies by threatening nuclear action. For example, Britain’s nuclear weapons did not deter Argentina sufficiently to prevent the 1982 Falklands War. In order to maintain a credible conventional deterrent effect, even smaller countries must maintain capable and credible conventional forces. High-tempo, tightly synchronized, combined arms conventional fighting is a unique skillset that atrophies quickly.⁵³ Forces must maintain their fighting skills through practice, training and professional development.

A force focused primarily on COIN lacks the properly equipped conventional force’s flexibility, skillsets, capabilities and ability to deter rogue states and defeat enemies. Most modern police are trained to conduct high-risk arrests, defeat armed attackers and conduct forced entries in the pursuit of criminals. While a great many police rarely use those skills, deterring criminality and maintaining the perception of security in taxpayers’ minds demands that they be part and parcel of all police training. What city would accept its police trained only to conduct routine traffic stops and conduct community outreach patrols, not protect citizens in the worst-case situations? Why, then, should a country accept a military force that cannot deal with a worst-case situation and focuses only on influencing faraway populations and conducting constabulary duties?

Some countries may decide that strong conventional capability is not worth the investment it requires to build and maintain, opting instead to maintain niche forces focused solely on COIN, constabulary duties or providing limited, lightly equipped forces to United Nations missions. While this option is certainly cheap to maintain, it severely hampers a country’s ability to extend its influence and limits its credibility, particularly if unable to participate in coalition military operations outside its own borders. Niche and specialty forces, when deployed, remain reliant on the whims of their more powerful coalition partners for protection. Niche, specialty soldiers (and their parent countries) thus undertake all the risks, threat and hazard of deployed operations, with limited ability to defend themselves or credibly contribute outside a very narrow spectrum of capability. Furthermore, they can only be deployed within their competence. A COIN-optimized force will only be able to conduct COIN or lower-intensity operations. Should the situation deteriorate and become too hazardous for lightly armed forces to operate without heavier support, as in the case of Somalia in October 1993,⁵⁴ a COIN-focused force, unable to transition to harder conventional warfighting and lacking integral armoured vehicles, may become at best irrelevant, and at worst, a burden on its coalition partners. Imagine the credibility damage and attendant ramifications should a country’s military contingent, incapable of successfully resolving a high-threat situation, have to be evacuated, like a host of itinerant tourists trapped unwittingly in a sudden conflict zone, by a more powerful ally!

Some nations will, in future, willingly choose to deploy military forces to maintain their international credibility, demonstrate resolve, take action to protect the helpless, support UN resolutions, safeguard international stability and mitigate humanitarian disaster. Others will have no choice but to deploy forces to protect their sovereignty, fulfil collective security obligations or defeat an overt threat. All states, unless willing to accept the inability to provide for their own security, have a vested interest in, and a responsibility to, protect their own domestic populations. The world remains a threatening place where a great many states, with varying degrees of stability, field significant conventional capability. In future conflicts, states and non-state actors will seek battlefield advantages in every possible way. Using terrain, built-up areas, their own populations, international media, terrorism, asymmetric, unconventional and overt conventional weapons and tactics, they will pose a hybrid threat across the spectrum of conflict to more capable opponents. Military forces, even those of small countries, will need to defeat some threats by conventional warfighting, while a great many others will require a more nuanced, counter-insurgency approach, focusing on separating helpless populations from, and protecting against, rogue elements through influence, security and stability. In order to survive and thrive in this uncertain, complex environment, Western military forces must retain the essential facts of their regularity. Fighting and winning conventional wars must be the cornerstone of capability that underpins the mental and organizational agility to master a wide spectrum of operations in an increasingly uncertain environment. 🌸

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

Major Mark Popov, a Royal Canadian Dragoon since 1995, has been a Leopard 1 tank, tracked and Coyote reconnaissance troop leader and is an Advanced Armour Gunner. He deployed to Bosnia in 1998 as a Recce Squadron Liaison Officer, served as a UN Military Observer on the Syrian Golan Heights and was deputy commander of an UNMO team in South Lebanon in 2001–2002. He deployed as a Coyote Recce Squadron 21C to Kabul in 2005. He earned an MBA from Norwich University in 2008, graduating as his class valedictorian, concurrent with a posting to NDHQ as EA to the Chief of Military Personnel. Major Popov deployed to Kandahar in 2009 as commander of B Squadron, The Royal Canadian Dragoons, a combat team based on a Coyote Recce Squadron. He completed the Joint Command and Staff Programme in 2011 and is currently the G3 of 2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group in Petawawa.

ENDNOTES

1. Sebastian L.V. Gorka, "The Age of Irregular Warfare: So What?" *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Third Quarter, no. 58 (July 2010): 33.
2. While some theorists, notably Thomas Barnett, as outlined in 2005's *Thomas Barnett Draws a New Map for Peace* – TED 2005 Video Lecture (Monterey, California: Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED.com), 2007), http://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_barnett_draws_a_new_map_for_peace.html, argue that ideally, countries would have two military forces, one the "Leviathan" force designed to aggressively fight and win wars against any opponent, the other the "System Administrator (SysAdmin)" force designed to "wage the peace," the financial and human investment required to maintain just one military force is beyond the means of most states, notably those such as Australia and Canada that maintain relatively small standing armies yet pursue global commitments. For that reason, this article is predicated on the thinking that states are only capable of fielding a single military force.
3. Canada, Department of National Defence, B-GL-300-001/FP-001 *Land Operations*, Kingston: Directorate of Army Doctrine, (LFDTS), Canadian Army Publishing, 2008:, 2-9.
4. Canada, Department of National Defence, B-GL-323-004/FP-003 *Counter-Insurgency Operations*, Kingston: Directorate of Army Doctrine, (LFDTS), Canadian Army Publishing, 2008: 1-2, 1-3.
5. William B. Caldwell IV and Steven M. Leonard, "Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations: Upshifting the Engine of Change," *Military Review*, Vol. 88 (July/August 2008).
6. Major Chris Rogers, "More Soup, Please – COIN Manual Provides Guidance for Modern-Day Tactical Commanders," *Armed Forces Journal*, Vol. 145, no. 6 (January 2008), John A. Nagl, "Let's Win the Wars We're In," *Joint Forces Quarterly* First Quarter, no. 52 (January 2009): 20–26.
7. Canada, Department of National Defence, B-GL-323-004/FP-003 *Counter-Insurgency Operations*: 1-2.
8. David Betz, "Redesigning Land Forces for Wars Amongst the People," *Contemporary Security Policy* Vol. 28, no. 2 (August 2007): 223, 226, <http://www.contemporarysecuritypolicy.org/assets/CSP-28-2-Betz.pdf>.
9. Nagl, "Let's Win the Wars We're In," 25.
10. This term was developed by the author and refers to thought and study predicated on the primacy of counter-insurgency over other methods of action.
11. H.R. McMaster, "On War: Lessons to be Learned," *Survival* Vol. 50, no. 1 (February–March 2008): 20–21, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=tsh&AN=28829494&site=ehost-live>.
12. H.R. McMaster, "Learning from Contemporary Conflicts to Prepare for Future War," *Orbis*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 565.
13. *Ibid.*, 565.
14. Canada, Department of National Defence, *Army Force Employment Concept*, 2004: 10.
15. Lieutenant Colonel David R. Hogg, "Rapid Decisive Operations: The Search for the Holy Grail of Joint Warfighting," in *Transformation Concepts for National Security in the 21st Century*, ed. Williamson Murray (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2002): 400, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=252>; Kalev I. Sepp, "Part 1. The Long War and the Comparing and Modelling of Insurgency Counterinsurgency and Collapsing States: From 'Shock and Awe' to 'Hearts and Minds': The Fall and Rise of US Counterinsurgency Capability in Iraq," from *The Long War: Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Collapsing States* in eds. Mark T. Berger and Douglas Borer (New York: Routledge, 2008): 29.
16. *The Ottawa Citizen*, "The Return of the Leopard," Canwest Newsmedia Publications via Canada.com, <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/observer/story.html?id=95b4c9e5-de13-4425-bc87-218c1031583c>.
17. As the recently completed Libyan air campaign has shown, the United States may no longer be willing to shoulder the burden of providing air support, precision missile fires and enablers to future coalition efforts, but will expect allies to do some "heavy lifting" by contributing expensive, high-technology forces, unrestricted by national caveats, of their own.

18. Richard D. Hooker, Jr., H.R. McMaster and Dave Gray, "Getting Transformation Right," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Third Trimester no. 38 (July 1, 2005): 27, <http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/pdf/jfq-38/JFQ-38.pdf>.
19. Maj Daniel L. Davis, "Heavy and Agile – Nine Steps to a More Effective Force," *Armed Forces Journal*, (January 2008), <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2008/01/3208280> (accessed December 9, 2010); and McMaster, "On War: Lessons to be Learned," 22.
20. The author has personally experienced operations in Afghanistan where climatic or terrain conditions have negated the ability of both manned and unmanned flying platforms to observe or support actions on the ground. Further, any air platform can be grounded by maintenance problems or potentially downed by enemy fire; relying solely on air sensors and air-delivered fires saps flexibility and jeopardizes ground forces in the event that conditions suddenly preclude flying platforms from operating effectively.
21. Colonel Gian P. Gentile, "The Imperative for an American General Purpose Army that Can Fight," *Orbis* 53, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 458.
22. Colonel Gian P. Gentile in Octavian Manea, "Thinking Critically about COIN and Creatively about Strategy and War: An Interview with Colonel Gian Gentile," *Small Wars Journal* (December 14, 2010): 6, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/625-manea.pdf>; David Kilcullen, "Bombers and Tanks: Understanding the Myths," *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 107, http://www.army.gov.au/lwsc/docs/AAJ_Summer06.pdf; Gian P. Gentile, "Let's Build an Army to Win All Wars," *Joint Forces Quarterly* First Quarter, no. 52 (January 2009): 31; T.X. Hammes, "How Will We Fight?" *Orbis* Vol. 53, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 377. All identify variations on the same theme for future force structure, from Hammes' "flexible force that can organize to fight nation-states as well as non-state actors," to Gentile's force "that can deal with the security challenges of the new millennium . . . focused on fighting as its core competency," to Kilcullen's "combined arms joint team that includes both air power and capable armoured forces."
23. Barry Cooper, *Democracies and Small Wars* (Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2009): 4–11 defines and provides further detail for these three terms.
24. David Betz, "Redesigning Land Forces for Wars Amongst the People," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 28, no. 2 (August 2007): 226–227, <http://www.contemporarysecuritypolicy.org/assets/CSP-28-2-Betz.pdf>.
25. Colin S. Gray, "Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* Vol. 1, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 35–57 (accessed December 2, 2010); Sebastian L.V. Gorka, "The Age of Irregular Warfare: So What?" *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Third Quarter, no. 58 (July 2010): 32–38.
26. Group Captain Ian MacFarling, "Asymmetric Warfare: Myth or Reality?" in *Future Armies, Future Challenges: Land Warfare in the Information Age*, eds. Michael Evans, Russell Parkin and Alan Ryan (Crow's Nest, New South Wales, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2004): 139–143.
27. T.C. Greenwood and T.X. Hammes, "War Planning for Wicked Problems," *Armed Forces Journal*, Vol. 147, no. 5 (December 2009): 18–37.
28. F.G. Hoffman, "Hybrid Threats: Neither Omnipotent nor Unbeatable," *Orbis* (Summer 2010): 441–455.
29. One example of this type of attack is the publication of prisoner beheading and IED attack videos posted online by various terrorist groups in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya and other conflict zones.
30. Mark Kramer, "The Perils of Counterinsurgency: Russia's War in Chechnya," *International Security* 29, no. 3 (Winter 2004/05): 5–9; Andrew Exum, *Hizballah at War – A Military Assessment*, 63rd ed. (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006): 3; Lt Col Daniel L. Davis, "The Spark, Oxygen and Fuel," *Armed Forces Journal* (September 6, 2010): 22; Carl Forsberg, *Counterinsurgency in Kandahar: Evaluating the 2010 Hamkari Campaign – Afghanistan Report 7* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of War, December 2010): 20, <http://www.understandingwar.org/report/counterinsurgency-kandahar-evaluating-2010-hamkari-campaign>; Sandeep Unnithan, "Guns and Roses: Small-Team Operations, Drones, Dogs and Hi-Tech Equipment, but with a Humane Touch. Why the Indian Army's New Doctrine to Counter Terror Is All About Winning Hearts and Minds," *India Today* January 22, 2007: 42.
31. Marshal G.K. Zhukov, *Memoirs of Marshal G. Zhukov* [Vospominaniia i razmyshleniia], 1st American ed. (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), 703+VIII discusses state-sponsored partisan activity and its effects throughout his memoirs of command and leadership during the Great Patriotic War and identifies its effects on supporting Soviet force generation and battlefield preparation prior to 1943's battle at the Kursk salient. Also, in "How Will We Fight?" (373), Hammes states that "Hybrid War is not a new phenomenon," having been used in a number of conflicts over the past two centuries.
32. The author, an Armour officer in Canada's Army since 1991, has trained on and served with Canadian Leopard 1 and Leopard 2, US Army and Marine M1 Abrams, UK Army Challenger 1, Afghan National Army T-62 and Finnish Army T-72 tanks, both domestically and while deployed on operations. In general, although robust and well protected, Cold War-era Warsaw Pact tanks typically lag behind their NATO counterparts in the technological sophistication of their communications and automotive systems, main gun range and accuracy and fire control system sensitivity and responsiveness.

33. *An Open Letter – the Hizballah Program* [Nass al-Risala al-Maftuha allati wajahaha Hizballah ila-l-Mustad'afin fi Lubnan wa-l-Alam] (Beirut, Lebanon: Hizballah, 1985): 1–6 identifies Hezbollah's political program and goals. The author was a United Nations Military Observer in South Lebanon from May to November 2002 and witnessed Hezbollah conduct operations across this spectrum during his tenure there.
34. Exum, *Hizballah at War – A Military Assessment*, 11.
35. *Ibid.*, 446.
36. Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey A. Friedman, *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2008): 31, 42, 51–53, 73.
37. The author served for six months as a UN Military Observer in South Lebanon in 2002 and was based at Observation Post Khiam, a position that was subsequently destroyed by an IDF aircraft in the June 2006 Israeli–Hezbollah war, killing four unarmed UN observers, including Canadian Major Paeta Hess-von Kruedener. OP Khiam was located very close to the infamous El-Khiam prison where many Lebanese were allegedly imprisoned and tortured by agents of the IDF's proxy South Lebanese Army during the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon from 1982 to 2000. During his tenure in South Lebanon, most of which was spent conducting patrols and investigations in and around the contested Chebaa Farms area and the disputed water sources in and around the village of Ghajjar, the author observed first-hand the deeply ingrained, long-standing animosity that many Lebanese, particularly Shia, had towards Israel in general and the IDF in particular.
38. Robert M. Cassidy, "Counterinsurgency and Military Culture: State Regulars Versus Non-State Irregulars," *Baltic Security & Defence Review*, Vol. 10 (2008): 78–79.
39. Manea, "Thinking Critically about COIN and Creatively about Strategy and War: An Interview with Colonel Gian Gentile," 5.
40. Jim Michaels, "An Army Colonel's Gamble Pays Off in Iraq," *USA Today*, sec. World, May 1, 2007, http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-04-30-ramadi-colonel_n.htm (accessed January 10, 2011); and Lisa Burgess, "Commander: 1st BCT Doing 'Amazing' Work in Ramadi," *Stars and Stripes*, sec. News, July 16, 2006, <http://www.stripes.com/news/commander-1st-bct-doing-amazing-work-in-ramadi-1.51647>.
41. Both US Army M1-series and Canadian Army Leopard 2A6 main battle tanks have been damaged beyond repair by improvised explosive devices during combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan respectively.
42. For a sobering reminder of this fact, one has only to visit and tour Canada's Vimy Memorial near Arras, France, where massive craters still show the evidence of the determined tunneling and underground mining, using massive explosive charges, conducted by both sides during battles to break trenchline stalemates during the First World War.
43. Joseph Frey, "The Prefab Way to Peace," *National Post*, March 21, 2001, available at <http://forums.army.ca/forums/index.php?topic=115.0>, makes a great deal of the LAV III's stabilized 25-mm cannon and ability to fire while moving, stressing that Ethiopian and Eritrean T55s must stop to fire their main guns. However, firing while stationary is always more accurate than firing while moving, particularly when one must achieve multiple hits on a target in order to defeat it, as a light cannon-equipped vehicle would have to when fighting against a tank.
44. "List of Main Battle Tanks by Country," MilitaryPower.com, <http://militarypower.wikidot.com/list-of-main-battle-tanks-by-country>.
45. "Main Battle Tank Rolls on as a Dominant Battlefield and Market Force" (Forecast International, 2006).
46. Robert Haddick, "Is China's military a paper tiger or a real tiger?" *Small Wars Journal*, December 29, 2010, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2010/12/print/is-chinas-military-a-paper-tig/>.
47. Michael A. Cohen, "Tossing the Afghan COIN," *The Nation*, December 16, 2010: 4, <http://www.thenation.com/print/article/157154/tossing-afghan-coin>.
48. Daniel M. Smith, "The World at War," *Defense Monitor*, Vol. 39, no. 1 (January 2010): 5, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mth&AN=49115757&site=ehost-live>.
49. Davis, "Heavy and Agile – Nine Steps to a More Effective Force," 14.
50. Brigadier General (retired) Elias Hanna, "Lessons Learned from the Recent War in Lebanon," *Military Review* 87, no. 5 (September/October 2007): 86–89.
51. David Wood, "Busy with Afghanistan, the U.S. Military Has No Time to Train for Big Wars," *Politics Daily*, December 27, 2010, <http://www.politicsdaily.com/2010/12/27/busy-with-afghanistan-the-u-s-military-has-no-time-to-train-fo/> identifies several shortfalls in US training, capabilities and equipment as a result of long-term, ongoing commitments to Iraq and Afghanistan and criticizes the current Secretary of Defense for focusing "too greatly on the short term threats and not enough on big-war challenges."

52. Hammes, "How Will We Fight?" 372.
53. Colonel Gian P. Gentile, "The Death of the Armor Corps," *Small Wars Journal* (2010), <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/416-gentile.pdf>; and Sean McFarland, Michael Shields and Jeffrey Snow, *The King and I: The Impending Crisis in Field Artillery's Ability to Provide Fire Support to Manoeuvre Commanders*, 2008: 6, both identify a dangerous atrophy in conventional US Army armour, cavalry scout and artillery skills, due to lack of exercise and the use of artillery soldiers, in particular, in non-artillery roles to the detriment of their artillery-specific skillsets. Gentile also notes that the focus for young officer development has shifted from inculcating a mentality driven to master basic skillsets and primary combat functions to fight and win, to one focused on building "trusting relationships" with local populations (one of the tenets of COIN).
54. Richard W. Stewart, "The United States Army in Somalia, 1992–1994," Washington, district de Columbia, Us Army Center of Military History, <http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/Somalia/Somalia.htm>. Of note, the Delta Force operators, Task Force Ranger and 10th Mountain Division elements in Somalia in October 1993 were trained, equipped, mentally prepared and organized for warfighting. They were well supported by transport, armed reconnaissance and attack helicopters yet, when mobs of guerrilla fighters attacked with volley-fired RPGs and massed small arms, became fixed in the city. They had to rely on their Pakistani and Malaysian coalition partners' tanks and APCs to regain mobility and evacuate soldiers trapped in the city. Shortly after the events of October 3–4, the United States committed M1 tanks, Bradley fighting vehicle-equipped mechanized infantry and additional Marines to Somalia.



Source: Combat Camera

A Leopard 2A6M from 12e Régiment blindé du Canada (12eRBC) conducts a road move on Route HYENA (Panjwayi Road) in the Horn of Panjwayi.



Traffic Technicians from Roto 10 Theatre Support Element guide a fuel truck being loaded onto a CC177 Globemaster III strategic airlift in preparation for the closure of Camp MIRAGE. The closure of the camp involves relocation of equipment, personnel and some air assets to the Kandahar airfield and to Canada.

ENABLING CANADIAN FORCES TRANSITION OPERATION ATHENA MISSION CLOSURE

Major David Yurczyszyn, CD

Editor's Note: This article was originally submitted to the Canadian Army Journal in 2011, but circumstances beyond our control forced the delay of its publication until now. As such, while the events it describes in a present tense have now gone past, the journal felt it important still to publish Major Yurczyszyn's excellent description of the army's redeployment from a theatre of war back to Canada.

From its inception in November 2010, the task of the Mission Closure Unit (MCU) has been to conduct the logistics closure of Operation ATHENA and enable the Canadian Forces' (CF) transition to subsequent operations. As a newly formed unit to Operation ATHENA, the MCU was specifically task tailored to meet the challenges of the largest closure operation the CF has undertaken since the Korean and World Wars. Within its mission, one of the main goals of the MCU was to ensure all production line vehicles and materiel redeploy from Afghanistan in a condition that facilitates reception and necessary work by end-users in Canada; with this goal in mind, the MCU motto of "Bring Away with Effort and Honour" was born.

A 350 plus size battalion, the MCU is comprised of a headquarters, three functional companies (Supply, Maintenance and Movements) and a robust Contract Management Cell. Due to the complexity and skill sets required to form the MCU, force generation for the unit has come from across all areas, elements and branches within Canada, resulting in over 20 different trades ranging from combat arms to the majority of all combat service support trades being represented. In addition to its military composition, the MCU was assisted by Canadian Contractor Augmentation Program (CANCAP), which has approximately 400 personnel supporting all elements of the mission.

Lessons Learned from previous mission closures had demonstrated that in order to position the CF's equipment for immediate follow-on operations and training, the majority of the work required to inspect, repair, clean and account for all vehicles and materiel in theatre must be conducted by the Closure Task Force. To that end, the MCU made accountability and serviceability of all theatre equipment its top priority to relieve as much of the burden as possible from the eventual end-users of this equipment in Canada; the MCU has relied upon the expertise within its sub-units to produce mission success.


Maintenance Company of the MCU had the task of inspecting and repairing over 1,000 vehicles and countless pieces of equipment. The vehicles will be rendered to various states of repair prior to return shipment to Canada. The combat vehicles or "A vehicles" are the main priority, as the vast majority are scheduled to arrive in Canada in Sep/Oct. As an example, the Light Armoured Vehicle III (LAV III) fleet will undergo an extensive overhaul upon return to Canada; therefore, it was critical that sufficient quantities of LAV III vehicles were priority shipped to satisfy Repair and Overhaul (R&O) contract timelines. Maintenance Company ensured all necessary repairs and inspections were conducted in an expedient but thorough manner to meet specific R&O deadlines.

In addition to the LAV III fleet, many of the other fleets will be fully repaired and brought to serviceable condition. It is important that these vehicles leave theatre in an operative state so that units in Canada can immediately employ them for follow-on operations and training. The synchronization of repair levels with planned vehicle states will ensure that every fleet arrives in Canada ready for the next step, whether that is an R&O program, quarantine for operational stock, or to a field unit to support ongoing training. To ensure an all-informed network within the maintenance communities throughout Canada on the serviceability state and condition of all equipment coming from Afghanistan, MCU Maintenance Company has instituted and employed the Maintenance Module of the DRMIS system. This system allows CF equipment end-users advanced view of vehicle condition, maintenance history and outstanding work prior to delivery. The task of MCU Maintenance Company is challenging, as it involves intricate detail and labour-intensive repairs to ensure that these fleets are leaving theatre in the correct state of serviceability. It is rewarding to know that these vehicles, weapons systems and equipment are returning to Canada in a condition that will enable force generation requirements for future missions.





Members of the Mission Transition Task Force (MTTF) Mission Closure Unit (MCU) are loading a seacan into the Canadian Cargo 17 (CC17) Globemaster. The Mission Transition Task Force is responsible to conduct mission closure of Operation ATHENA in order to enable the Canadian Forces to transition to subsequent operations as directed by the Government of Canada.



Supply Company of the MCU was principally tasked to account, package, dispose and expeditiously return all materiel from Operation ATHENA to Canada. With the CF transitioning to Operation ATTENTION in Kabul, Afghanistan, the continued missions across the globe and our requirement to be ready for new domestic and expeditionary commitments, it is important to realign our inventory of materiel in Kandahar.

The work conducted by Supply Company was driven by months of preparation at the strategic and operational levels to determine the desired end state for all processed materiel; the product of that preparation is the Materiel & Infrastructure Distribution Directive (MIDD). There is a direct correlation between CF Reconstitution and this document. The MIDD prescribes the reconstitution of materiel processed through Supply Company lines. Tactical and operational initiatives have been developed to automate and streamline where possible. To affect this process, Supply Company is divided into four functional platoons (Materiel, Vehicles, Disposal and Ammo) and a Headquarters (HQ) including a Control Office. The platoons are responsible for the day-to-day physical processing of materiel within their functional scope. The Control Office conducts quality assurance and verifies materiel accountability and transfer to appropriate end-destinations. Furthermore, the Control Office ensures that Operation ATHENA supply accounts are closed. Supply Company has been enabled by critical tools such as the Canadian Forces Supply System (CFSS), the Batch Upload System (BUS) including Bar Code Reader (BCR) technology and Materiel Handling Equipment (MHE), and motivated by the drive and determination of realizing that they are the main enablers behind the reconstitution of the CF. Supply Company has gathered members from across the country including Supply Technicians (Sup Techs), various combat arms trades, Vehicle Technicians (Veh Techs), and a Medical Technician (Med Tech).

As the culminating effort of all vehicles and materiel produced from the unique production lines, Movements Company is tasked with a multitude of key responsibilities in facilitating the timely, organized and coordinated return of all types of freight to Canada and other worldwide destinations. Movements Company ensures that policies of the Canadian Border Services Agency, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* and DND shipping are not contravened. The efforts of Traffic and Transport personnel are promoting the in-transit visibility and timely dispatch of materiel and vehicles to their final destinations. Their direct efforts and attention to detail mitigate delays in customs clearances during entry into Canada and distribution to user units.

Movements Company assumes responsibility for physically segregating materiel and vehicles for onward movement via separate Lines of Communication (LOC), consistent with governance provided in the MIDD. Balancing freight priority, equipment sensitivity, cost effectiveness, and ground, air and sea modes of transport ensures the timely reception of materiel in Canada and satisfies the intent of urgent delivery while mitigating expenses associated with the scale of Mission Transition.

The Contracts Management Cell is integral to mission closure by providing contractual sustainment to the Mission Transition Task Force (MTTF) while concurrently conducting contract closure and review of all Operation ATHENA contract files. The Contracts Management Cell is a highly capable, broadly scoped organization, comprised of four sections. The Contracts Section manages direct with trade contracting, interaction with the NATO Maintenance and Support Agency (NAMSA) and is the primary interface with Public Works and Government Services Canada – Europe office. The File Management Section is responsible for conducting a 100% administrative review of all retained, in-theatre closed contract files, and preparing those files for return to Canada. The Disposal Section is responsible for the contractual elements pertaining to the sale, donation and gratuitous transfer of surplus materiel. Members of this section contact potential buyers, conduct sales and generate related agreement documentation. The final component of the Contracts Management Cell is CANCAP Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Section. This section is accountable for the monitoring and maintenance of the CANCAP support contract and oversees its performance evaluation.



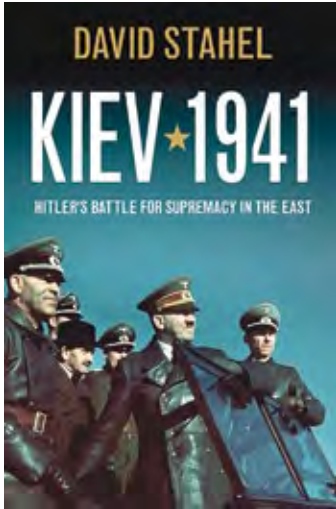
Corporal Ryan Asbury (left), from Canadian Forces Base (CFB) / Area Support Unit (ASU) Wainwright and Corporal Ben Hill (right), from CFB Petawawa, both ammunition technicians with the Mission Closure Unit (MCU) sort ammunition coming from different Forward Operation Bases (FOBs).

The Contracts Management Cell has contributed to CF reconstitution and force generation in key ways. In pre-deployment training, the Contracts Management Cell generated a new exercise training package that has fundamentally changed how future Contracts Management Cells will train and prepare for deployments. A greater emphasis has been placed on hands-on, scenario based training, drawn from real-life examples. This better prepared the Roto 11 Contracts Management Cell for the challenges faced in deployed contracting. The 100% administrative review of all in-theatre contract files has an important role in maintaining public confidence in the CF's ability to responsibly utilize taxpayer resources. Enhancing this perception protects Canada's proud legacy in Afghanistan and maintains the support we currently enjoy from the Canadian public. A comprehensive, 100% administrative verification had not been achieved by previous rotations. Such a verification benchmarks the time, resources and advantages associated with this level of scrutiny and oversight. The Disposal Section contributes to reconstitution by ensuring that Canada recovers the highest value possible for surplus materiel and is an effective shipment/disposal-cost avoidance solution. This strategy returns money to the Government of Canada for future requirements. CANCAP has proven to be a valuable force multiplier, greatly aiding in logistical support for the deployed elements. The use of CANCAP personnel unfetters soldiers for employment in other capacities. The lessons learned and innovations implemented by the CANCAP QA/QC Section will provide dividends in future operations where CANCAP support is deemed an appropriate solution.

The Mission Closure Unit is a highly skilled, driven and determined organization motivated to succeed by the strategic impact of their tactical efforts in closing Operation ATHENA. The endeavours of the Mission Closure Unit in conjunction with the other mission elements of the MTTF have strategically set the stage to position the CF for immediate follow-on operations, as directed by the Government of Canada. 🍁

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

Major David Yurczyszyn, CD served as the Deputy Commanding Officer, Mission Closure Unit Mission Transition Task Force, Operation ATHENA Roto 11.



KIEV 1941:

Hitler's Battle for Supremacy in the East

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

STAHEL, David, Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2012, hardcover, 468 pages, \$35.00, ISBN 978-1-107-01459-6

Reviewed by Major Thomas E.K. Fitzgerald, MA, LL.B

On June 22, 1941, more than three and a half million German and Axis soldiers in 166 infantry and armoured divisions surged across the Soviet border. Operation BARBAROSSA had commenced. The *Ostheer* (Eastern Army) in three Army Groups supported by three *Luftwaffe* Air Fleets attacked along a three-million-mile front. The Germans, almost effortlessly, moved through the frontier territories

towards their objectives. In a series of great encirclements, first at Belostok-Minsk, then at Smolensk and Uman, Army Group Centre (AGC) laid waste to the Red Army, wrecking four field armies and capturing some 600,000 Soviet prisoners. It is in these early victories and later at Kiev, historian and noted expert on the Eastern Front War¹ David Stahel argues in his book, *Kiev 1941: Hitler's Battle for Supremacy in the East*, that the seeds for ultimate defeat were planted.

By the late summer of 1941, AGC, the largest of the three AGs and the one with the bulk of the armoured (panzer) divisions, had outstripped its flanking AGs. It was poised to take Moscow in another *coup de main*. The Soviet capital was the strategic objective of many of the German generals at *Oberkommando des Heeres* (OKH) including: the German Army's Chief of Staff, General Fritz Halder; the General Officer commanding AGC, Field Marshal Von Bock; and the Army Group South (AGS) Commander, Field Marshal Von Rundstedt. Hitler, as supreme leader, had a different plan. He saw great economic opportunities to the south where the rich wheat fields of the Ukraine and the critically important oil fields of southern Russia lay. In what is traditionally characterized as his greatest strategic decision, Hitler, in late August 1941, ordered AGC to stop its eastward advance and directed its Panzer Group 2 under the command of Colonel General Guderian to swing southward and link up with the slow-to-develop northward thrust of Colonel General von Kleist's Panzer Group 1 of AGS. The result was the cauldron called Kiev, a 20th-century Battle of Cannae but a pyrrhic victory of the highest order.

In his well-written, well-researched and thoroughly riveting account, Stahel argues that the German Army and the German war effort were ill-suited for a long, drawn-out positional war of attrition. BARBAROSSA was not the quick, decisive campaign that the previous campaigns in Poland and Western Europe were. The author brings to light a multitude of unexplored primary records in the form of unexamined Corps and Division battle diaries which persuasively establish that BARBAROSSA was reckless, short-sighted and grandiose in its goals. The *Ostheer* was wearing itself out faster than it could be replenished. It could not capitalize on its summer victories. When the Germans were not able to crush the Red Army by the summer/fall of 1941, Stahel asserts the turning point in the East had occurred. These early victories had the perhaps understandable but no less disastrous effect of prompting Hitler and the OKH to risk more and advance farther, thereby stretching their already limited resources even further.



Source: Public Domain

A column of Red Army POWs captured near Minsk is marched west.

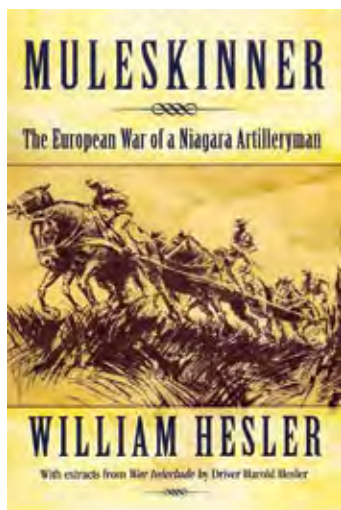
To be sure, as other writers on the Eastern Front Campaign argue, the German defeat cannot be assigned a single cause. These authors, however, date the defeat of Germany to its defeat at the gates of Moscow (Operation TYPHOON), or at Stalingrad (*Case Blue*) or, even later, at Kursk (*Zidabelle*). They also attribute the Soviet victory to a number of factors both internal and external to the *Wermacht* itself: Russian geography—“General Winter”; the resilience of the Soviet soldier and civilian; war materiel supplied by America and the United Kingdom; divisive personalities and infighting between the German generals and Hitler, and the complexity of German technology; and therefore, its inability to be repaired and mass-produced quickly when compared to Allied materiel—to name but a few. The value of *Kiev 1941* to the literature situates “the beginning of the end” of Germany in the East well before these other events and places the reasons for it squarely at the feet of the German General Staff. If nothing else, *Kiev 1941* masterfully demonstrates the intrinsic connection between war fighting and logistics.

Kiev 1941 weaves a number of sub-themes into its narrative, which makes it a must-read for anyone wanting to know about this theatre of war. Stahl writes poignantly about: the plight of Soviet prisoners of war who were caught in such great numbers that the Germans were ill-prepared to manage them—and who, like the Soviet peasant became victims of the German “war of annihilation”; the criminal obduracy of Stalin in ordering and the criminal behaviour of the Soviet generals of *Stavka* (Red Army High Command) in permitting the armies of the South West Front to stand in place—thereby permitting them to be destroyed in detail; the “demodernization” of the *Ostheer* as it was reduced to draught horses to move its artillery and supplies in light of the crisis in its *Grosstransportraum*—which had to replenish the German war machine over ever-increasing distances with a steadily decreasing number of vehicles; the hubris of the German high command—who by autumn 1941 had only ordered sufficient winter uniforms to dress a mere 25 per cent of its soldiers in Russia; the waxing and waning of German public opinion and soldiers’ morale as they confronted ever-increasing casualty lists, and the fear that the “War in the East” would never end notwithstanding Joseph Goebbels’ *Sondermeldungen* (special bulletins) to the contrary.

Kiev 1941 will remain the authoritative history about this part of the German–Soviet campaign for years to come. Experts in this area will find much to be intrigued by when reading this volume, and Stahl’s writing style will also make it a pleasure for non-experts. This is a story worth telling and worth telling well. David Stahl succeeds like no other. 🍀

ENDNOTES

1. David Stahl, *Operation Barbarossa and Germany’s Defeat in the East*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2009.



MULESKINNER: The European War of a Niagara Artilleryman

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

HESLER, William. Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010, softcover, 136 pages, \$27.00, ISBN 978-1-4502-7157-8

Reviewed by Colonel Peter J. Williams

I found this book at the RCA Kitshop (www.artillery.net/beta/rca-kitshop-and-catalogue/) and am very glad I did. Having long been a fan of memoirs of the First World War, I've found that first-hand accounts of artillerymen from that period, and by Canadian gunners in particular, are somewhat rare. The "Muleskinner" in question is Driver Harold Hesler of Port Colborne, Ontario, who

served in No. 3 Section, 3rd Divisional Ammunition Column of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). Though he spent the bulk of his war on horseback, he reserved his special admiration for the mules, which were the true "workhorses" of his unit. It is thanks to his son William, who combined his father's accounts with some research of his own, that we have the story of this amazing character.



Stretcher bearers and German prisoners bringing in wounded soldiers at Vimy Ridge, during the Battle of Vimy Ridge.



Canadian soldiers returning from Vimy Ridge.

Born in 1893, Harold was not a career soldier, and indeed his wartime service was the only part of his working life where he was not in the employ of the Royal Bank of Canada, an institution he loyally served from 1910–1951. He enlisted in January 1916 and arrived in France in mid-July of the same year. After making his way to the front, he soon joined the Ammunition Column and began his life as a muleskinner, responsible for transporting ammunition from railhead supply dumps to the final gun positions. He eventually participated in all the major Canadian campaigns of the latter war period, including Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele, operations for which he was surprisingly well informed, despite being a relatively junior soldier.

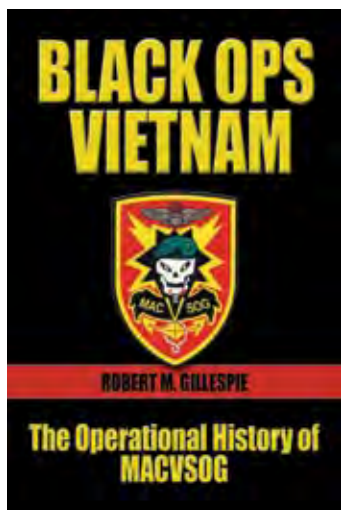
His accounts of life in his unit make for fascinating reading. At one point, while on sentry duty, he claims to have been waved at by the infamous Red Baron, who overflowed his position, and later describes the difficulties involved in attaching a gas mask to his horse's face after first donning his own. Like many of his compatriots, Driver Hesler, who ended the war as a Sergeant, became somewhat inured to hardship over time, and his description of his quarters during Christmas 1917 reveal how his perception of what constituted comfort had been greatly shaped by his wartime experiences. Likewise, when told of the cessation of hostilities on 11 November 1918, he admits that amongst him and his colleagues, "...it created no emotional effect..."¹

The book is written very much for the layperson, and Driver Hesler's accounts of life to and from the front are interspersed with commentary by the author to set these events in a wider historical context. To that end, son William consulted a variety of sources, and the bibliography and accompanying notes run to nine and eight pages respectively. The book contains many illustrations and photographs, including some of Hesler's beloved mules, to give the reader an idea of what it would have been like to carry out such duties under extremely arduous conditions. The book concludes with a chapter entitled "Afterthoughts" in which William Hesler pays tribute to his father and those of his generation, who were motivated to do their duty by, *inter alia*, "...Loyalty to their won side, discipline...the moral and spiritual propaganda handed out...pride of manhood, fear of cowardice..."

Now that we are into the "teen" years of this century, the centenary of the events in which Driver Hesler and his comrades took part will soon be upon us and will no doubt be the subject of national and international remembrance ceremonies. This book and others like it will serve as a useful tool for the education of Canada's youth in particular as we commit to "Remembering Them." Highly recommended. 🌸

ENDNOTES

1. William Hesler, *Muleskinner: The European War of a Niagara Artilleryman*, (Bloomington, iUniverse, 2010), p. 98



BLACK OPS VIETNAM: The Operational History of MACV-SOG

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

GILLESPIE, Robert M. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011, hardcover, pp. vi-304, \$33.70, ISBN 978-1-59114-321-5

Reviewed by J.R. McKay, PhD

The title of the book and its size suggest that this was a rather ambitious work. Readers looking for a personal view of the experiences of American special operations forces in the shadowy world of the Vietnam War may be disappointed. The book's tone is more academic as the author seeks to explain the plethora of forces and tasks that ran from the early days of American support to South Vietnam in the mid-50s

until the signing of the ceasefire with North Vietnam in early 1973. While he does so, the constant evolution of force structure, command and control arrangements and tasks makes it difficult to examine any specific mission beyond illustrative anecdotes.

The author is a lifelong student of military history with a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts from Clemson University. Despite the academic tone, one gets the sense that this was a labour of love for him. The majority of the sources cited were government documents, published and unpublished, as opposed to secondary sources such as books and articles. This demonstrates that the author expended the time and effort to examine the original documents instead of merely accepting the work of others.

The book's timespan includes the organizations and entities conducting special operations in Vietnam prior to 1964 and describes the evolution of such organizations until 1973. Examples include the Saigon Military Mission that provided advice to the South Vietnamese government and conducted psychological operations in the North and the South as well as CIA activities! It should be noted, however, that the book's focus coincides with the period more commonly known as the Vietnam War, i.e. from the "birth" of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Special Operations Group (MACVSOG) in January 1964 to the ceasefire at the end of January 1973.

Gillespie took a chronological approach to the topic, and his chapters provide snapshots of each specific era. The first chapter outlines the roles played in and relationships with other forces present during the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. The framework used in the first chapter, with sections relating to specific continental staff system functions, e.g. personnel, intelligence and operations, was replicated in subsequent chapters. This reinforces the argument that the book is less of an operational history than an organizational history. Subsequent chapters describe both the expansion of the organization as well as its tasks. For example, as the Communists' observance of the neutrality of both Laos and Cambodia became increasingly suspect, MACVSOG began to oversee reconnaissance efforts within those countries, and the organization began to grow in size as a result.

It would be erroneous, however, to describe the evolution of MACVSOG as one of pure growth. One of the book's strengths is that it highlights the tensions between the conventional and special operations communities of the American military at the time. The latter felt that they were under constant pressure to demonstrate their utility, as the former saw them as a product of political interference from the Kennedy Administration. Gillespie provided the insight that the forerunner of today's Special Operations Command, the office of the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities (SACSA), was created to satisfy the White House's demand that the military embrace concepts outside the prevailing standard of conventional warfare. Its real function was to act as a check on the special operations community; however, as the utility of special operations came to be realized, the officers appointed to serve as Special Assistants began to act as advocates as opposed to "watchdogs."² Another of the book's strengths is Gillespie's observation that the conventional military, which included MACVSOG's three higher headquarters (MACV, Commander-in-Chief Pacific and the Joint Chiefs of Staff) perceived MACVSOG as a sideshow relative to the main effort.³ This allows readers to look at the situation with greater clarity and a better understanding of the prevailing organizational cultures.

The title, however, leads one to expect more detail on the conduct of special operations tasks by the forces subordinate to MACVSOG. There is little beyond some short descriptions of those activities, and those descriptions can come across as anecdotal unless one reflects on what was attempted with constrained resources, elevated expectations and limited support. Gillespie does an excellent job of illustrating that a number of schemes that were attempted in training and operations were failures. His treatments of such efforts were fair and hint at the notion that they engaged in a form of "lessons learned."

This book has a great deal of utility in providing the context for and evolution of MACVSOG. Readers looking for details of the bold and audacious actions of American soldiers, marines, sailors and aircrew may be disappointed, but those looking for a deeper understanding of how MACVSOG came into existence and changed over time will find it worth their time. 🍁

ENDNOTES

1. Robert M. Gillespie, *Black Ops Vietnam: The Operational History of MACVSOG*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 2–3.
2. *Ibid.*, 6–7, and 89–90.
3. *Ibid.*, 90.





HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATIONS REVEALED:

The MSF Experience

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

MAGONE, Claire, NEUMAN, Michaël, and WEISSMAN, Fabrice, editors.
New York: Columbia University Press/MSF, 2011,
soft cover, 287 pages, \$18.62,
ISBN 978-00-231-70315-4

Reviewed by Mr. Roy Thomas, MSC, CD, MA (RMC)

When do you “shake hands with the devil”?
Some might say in situations in which
there are only “victims and villains”!

This book offers a smorgasbord of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) negotiation case studies for determining the “when” in the absence of personal experience. Stories in this collection deal with Sri Lanka, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, the Gaza Strip, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Nigeria, India, South Africa and, surprisingly, France.

Canadians will be particularly interested in the case of the MSF in Afghanistan, where the MSF left in 2004 after 24 years only to return in 2008. The two authors of that contribution were the head of the MSF mission in Afghanistan, 2002–2003, and the head of the MSF mission, 2009–2011.

The case of neighbouring Pakistan, where the MSF has so far been denied access to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) but is engaged in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPK), will also intrigue those concerned about this nuclear armed country said to be “on the brink” by Pakistani author Ahmed Rashid in his latest book. On the other hand, the earthquake and subsequent immediate relief efforts brought about a short-lived change in relationships between the MSF and Pakistan’s military, as discussed in the separate chapter dealing with natural disasters.

Canadian plans to open a diplomatic post in Myanmar should make the various MSF stories about that unhappy country required reading. Three different MSF country sections negotiated and worked under different conditions in Myanmar. For example, MSF-Holland used their Dutch name, Arten Zonder Grenzen (AZG), to distance their teams from MSF activities in Thailand and Bangladesh.

The principles underlying MSF negotiating are that everything is open to negotiation, that the MSF judges when to keep silent, that MSF knows its place in each scenario, and that there will be “antagonisms.”

The book’s epilogue emphasizes that there is continual tension between taking medical action and speaking out. In an afterword, David Rieff, author of *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis*, adds that “all effective humanitarian action is based on negotiating compromises.”

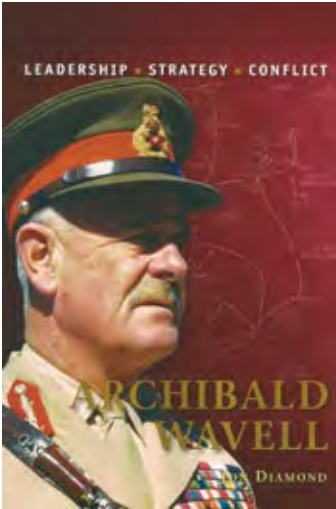
Many of the authors, after their field time, are now based in the MSF Foundation’s Centre de réflexions sur l’action et les savoirs humanitaires [Centre for Reflection on Humanitarian Action and Knowledge], so most pieces in the book are translated from French.

These stories illustrate that there is no cookie-cutter response to the “when.” Indeed, military interaction with the MSF itself will vary almost as much as that of the MSF with victims and villains. This book is recommended reading for anyone who must work with the MSF on deployment. 🌸



Source: Cate Turton/UK Department of International Development (DFID)

An MSF health worker examines a malnourished child.



ARCHIBALD WAVELL

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

DIAMOND, Jon. Osprey Command Series No. 28. Botley: Osprey Publishing Group, 2012, softcover, 64 pages, \$14.05, ISBN: 978-1-84908-737-7

Reviewed by Major Jeff Forgrave

Winston Churchill apparently once quipped about Archibald Wavell, “I do not understand his intellect. It may be my own fault, but I always feel as if I am in the presence of the chairman of the golf club.”¹

Jon Diamond recounts this anecdote in his new 64-page biography of Wavell, No. 28 in the Osprey Command series. Nicely illustrated with original art by Peter Dennis and liberally sprinkled with Imperial War Museum photographs, this booklet is designed to introduce the military history enthusiast to an important yet overshadowed British general.

When we think of the great army leaders of the Second World War, the usual suspects are the larger-than-life commanders such as Montgomery, Rommel and Patton. We often overlook the importance of the more introspective commanders such as Wavell. Given the constraints of the format, Diamond has opted to focus on a few key aspects of Wavell’s nature—his introspection, his penchant for secrecy, his use of deception, his innovative spirit and how these traits impacted his relationship with Churchill.

Diamond opens with a short introduction to Wavell’s background (son of the Regiment), then moves quickly through his Boer War and India service (with the Black Watch), his First World War trench experience (he was seriously wounded at Second Ypres in 1915), his service in the Palestine Campaign for Allenby (who taught him much about secrecy and deception) and his interwar rise through the ranks (including command of 6th Infantry Brigade, which was given the moniker “Experimental” due to Wavell’s innovative tactics).

Diamond pays considerable attention to Wavell’s Second World War campaigns in the Middle East and India and highlights Wavell’s penchant for surrounding himself with unorthodox thinkers. “The names of Wingate [Commander of Gideonforce, which harassed the Italians], O’Connor, Clarke [creator of A Force, responsible for deception], Bagnold [creator of the Long Range Desert Group], Dorman-Smith and Simonds, along with their military



Archibald Wavell (right) meets Lt. General Quinan, Commander of British and Indian Army forces in Iraq in April 1941.

innovations, are for ever associated with Wavell's tutelage."² As Commander-in-Chief India, Wavell summoned Wingate and personally authorized Operation Longcloth, the first Chindit expedition into Burma.³ As Diamond notes, "[W]hich officer within the inner circle of either Rommel or Montgomery acquired the necessary support and then the limelight to exhibit their military talent?"⁴

Diamond also regularly discusses Wavell's uneasy relationship with Churchill. Wavell's "unwillingness to engage with those who did not interest him, instead remaining silent... did not bode well for the success of his future relationship with Winston Churchill."⁵ As a result, Churchill had less confidence in Wavell than he did in some of his other, more gregarious, commanders, and dismissed him twice. Yet Churchill also recognized his abilities, and after each dismissal Wavell was rewarded with another command or higher appointment, ultimately concluding the war as Viceroy of India.

I do have a quibble with the booklet: many of the quotes are not clearly attributed, especially those of Wavell himself, which makes follow-on studies a challenge. However, this is a concise, informative and easy-to-read snapshot of an important, innovative commander. I recommend it to anyone unfamiliar with Archibald Wavell, the man whose "exploits were not the characteristic output of 'the chairman of the golf club,'"⁶ but were those of a commander who recognized innovation by his subordinates and nurtured it—a valuable lesson for the Canadian Army to this day. 🍀

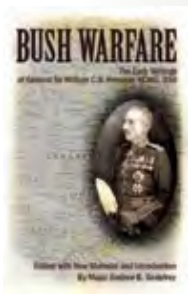


Source: Public Domain

Archibald Wavell (right) with Air Chief Marshal Sir Henry Robert Moore Brooke-Popham in WW II.

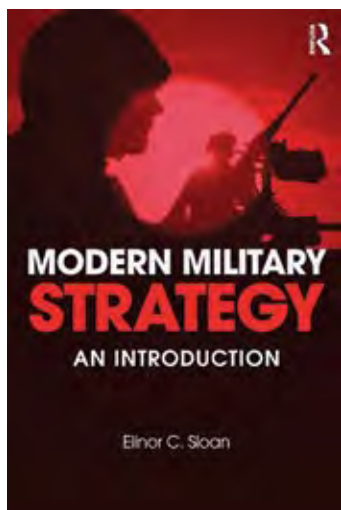
ENDNOTES

1. Diamond, p. 62. Diamond does not confirm the source for this quote. It may be Winston Churchill, *The Second World War: The Grand Alliance*, Vol 3 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1951), which is listed in the bibliography.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 62.



BUSH WARFARE

In the Victorian Era, many young talented Canadians graduating from the Royal Military college of Canada went on to serve in the British Army. William Charles Gifford Heneker, from Sherbrooke, Quebec, was one of them. Between 1896 and 1906 Heneker served in more than a dozen African campaigns ranging from peacetime military engagements to major combat operations. As a tactical commander, Henniker demonstrated considerable talent and skill, and in 1907, he preserved his strategic and tactical ideas on fighting small wars and counterinsurgency (Bush Wars) in this book for future commanders to consider.



MODERN MILITARY STRATEGY: An Introduction

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

SLOAN, Elinor C. London and New York: Routledge, 2012, 151 pages, \$42.95, softcover, ISBN 9780415777711

Reviewed by Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Richard L. Bowes, CD, MA, MBA

The study of military strategic thought—and, indeed, the debate as to how relevant strategic thinking is today—is a familiar topic to any recent graduate of command and staff college, and to any civilian academic or senior military practitioner, especially those with first-hand experience of the past twenty years of upheaval and change in the nature of the international system and how those changes have

manifested themselves in the conduct of war. Yet if one were to attempt to point to a body of writing or scholarship that accurately and succinctly summarizes the current state of military strategic thinking, one would be hard pressed to find such a body of work—until now.

In this superb analysis of the current state of military strategic thought, Professor Elinor Sloan sets out to answer some key questions. Sparked by a graduate student's curiosity—and, I would imagine, frustration on the student's part at understanding the relevance of the study of Clausewitz, Jomini or Mahan to the contemporary era—Sloan seeks to not only determine whether there are strategic thinkers today, but also whether strategic thought still matters.

To answer these questions, Sloan organizes the book along functional lines. In eight chapters, she walks us through a discussion of strategic thought as it has developed through history to the present era, and across each of the relevant domains or dimensions. The more traditional sea, land and air dimensions of strategic thought are covered first in the chapters titled “Seapower,” “Landpower” and “Airpower.” The remaining five chapters then discuss what one could argue to be the emerging domains of strategic thought in the 21st century: “Joint Theory and Military Transformation”; “Irregular War: Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and New War”; “Cyberwar”; “Nuclear Power and Deterrence”, and “Spacepower.” Each chapter concludes with a summary of the key tenets of strategic thinking and associated thinkers of note. Admittedly, while one could argue that nuclear deterrence theory has been with us for almost seven decades, Sloan includes a lengthy discussion on the current state of strategic thinking concerning nuclear proliferation in a post-Cold War period in which the logic of mutually assured destruction no longer applies.

Of particular interest to a Canadian Army readership are her chapters on landpower and irregular war. In the “Landpower” chapter, Sun Tzu, Liddell-Hart, Clausewitz and Jomini are appropriately given their due, but Sloan devotes the balance of the chapter to a discussion and analysis of strategic thinking on the use of conventional landpower from the Cold War to the present post-9/11 period. Of real interest here is the tension she describes between those early disciples of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) such as Andrew Krepinevich, for whom faith in the combat-multiplying effects of networked, distributed forces obviates the need for mass, and those counter-revolutionaries such as Robert Scales, who, while recognizing the value of networked combat forces, nonetheless remind us of the immutable fact that the nature of land warfare means that “boots on the ground” are still required.



Source: Combat Camera

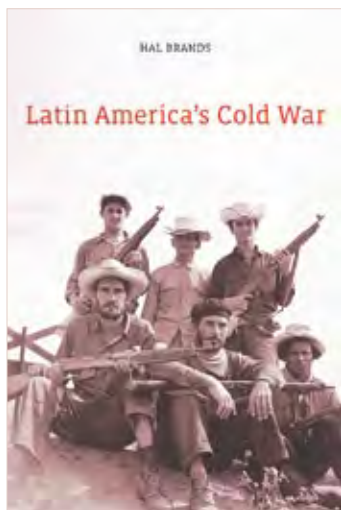
Members of Alpha troop from X Battery at forward operating base Sperwan Ghar conduct a fire for effect mission.

Similarly, in the “Irregular War” chapter, Sloan introduces us to the thinking of Mao Tse Tung, T.E. Lawrence, C.E. Caldwell and Robert Thompson, among others, but soon focuses on the main strands of strategic thought that have emerged primarily as a result of post-9/11 conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. As Sloan adeptly points out, considerable thinking has occurred over a very short period, particularly focused on the theories underpinning the planning and conduct of counterinsurgency operations. Martin van Creveld, William Lind, Thomas Hammes and David Kilcullen are among the recognized cognoscenti in this field; they have developed theories such as 4th-generation warfare (4GW) and non-Trinitarian war. Sloan also provides a very useful synopsis of the U.S. counterinsurgency field manual, FM 3-24, released in 2006. Sloan concludes this chapter with the observation that the challenge for any nation in the conduct of counterinsurgency “lies in finding the patience and political will to sustain in practice, over time, the enduring elements of counterinsurgency theory.”

In this compact volume, Sloan has very much achieved her main aim of producing a contemporary body of work that not only determines whether there are strategic thinkers today, but whether strategic thought still matters in our post-9/11 world. Particular strengths of the work are its balance and focus. Sloan attains balance through her ability to thoroughly research each of the domains of strategic thought, yet retain a very admirable degree of scholarly objectivity in the way she describes the tenets and principles of each of the theories and thinkers she introduces. Moreover, while it is understandable that most strategic thinking today comes from U.S. sources, it is very obvious that Sloan has made a concerted effort to uncover and bring to the fore relevant sources of strategic thinking that are non-U.S. in origin. In this regard, one can sense that Sloan is very Canadian in her perspective.

With the plethora of material and scholarship at her disposal, Sloan is able to home in on the very heart of the matter within each of the domains of strategic thinking. Her focus is what gives the book its value as an indispensable resource for use by senior military practitioners and students of military and strategic studies. While each chapter provides a concise, objective synopsis of the topic, her endnotes and bibliography are a very handy comprehensive reference for further serious reading and discussion of the field of study.

Sloan concludes by asserting that the principles and statements she has delineated in her work “mark the initial signposts in a twenty-first century understanding of the role of military forces in a nation’s security policy, that is, in modern strategy.” Sloan thus recognizes the very dynamic and prescient nature of modern military strategy. She whets our appetite for more. Follow-on editions of *Modern Military Strategy* would be a welcome addition to scholarship in the field in years to come. 🌸



LATIN AMERICA'S COLD WAR

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

BRANDS, Hal, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2010, hardcover, 385 pages, \$32.25, ISBN 978-0-674-05528-5

Reviewed by Major Ronald W. Bachynsky

The Cold War played a major role in shaping the current political landscape of the planet, nowhere more so than in Latin America. As the Canadian government takes a greater interest in Latin America, it becomes prudent to understand its recent history and the competing social, economic and political forces that continue to influence the region.

Hal Brands' ambitious effort to explain and rationalize the various domestic and international forces

competing for prominence during the decades of the Cold War accomplishes that surprisingly well in a concise 385 pages.

From the early 1950s until the early 1990s, Central and South America experienced constant turmoil involving military coups, revolution, repression and violent insurgencies. Set in the background of the Cold War, it is easy to generalize and explain everything as a result of Communist conspiracy or American imperialism. Fortunately, with the release of pertinent U.S. and Soviet archives, as well as with the availability of numerous primary sources from within the region, it is now possible to form a more balanced view of this phase in history.

Brands breaks the Cold War down into four major phases as it pertained to Latin America, and he provides more in-depth analysis of the major points of crises, such as Cuban-American relations and the Nicaraguan revolution. He effectively weighs the various domestic political forces and pressures at work in each country to provide context and an objective analysis of the impact of American and Soviet intervention. In this way, several currently established myths of U.S. omnipotence in the region are effectively challenged. The infamous National Security Doctrine of the 1970s is convincingly explained as a local reaction within the Southern Cone (Argentina and Chile) to domestic insurgencies that later became a dominant regional ideology that was universally viewed as a U.S.-inspired policy. In addition, he provides fresh insight into the failure of the many *foquista*-style insurgencies and how often their tactics proved counterproductive to gaining support among the rural underclass.



A U.S. Navy P-2H Neptune of VP-18 flying over a Soviet cargo ship with crated Il-28s on deck during the Cuban Crisis.



CIA reference photograph of Soviet R-12 intermediate-range nuclear ballistic missile (NATO designation SS-4) in Red Square, Moscow.

The narrative describes the inconsistencies and sudden changes in both U.S. and Soviet policy towards the area. The gradual abandonment of Castro's revolutionary interventionist policies by Brezhnev and the contradicting issue of human rights versus security assistance that shaped U.S. policy towards El Salvador in the 1980s are two prominent examples. As well, the influences of Argentina, Chile and Cuba during the 1970s and 1980s are often overlooked in more contemporary works that deal exclusively with the intervention of the superpowers and ignore the role of regional leaders. The limits of those interventions are also exposed. The author attempts to answer why the revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua were successful while others failed, why democracy flourished in some nations but was extinguished elsewhere and why military rule was perpetuated for so long in some places. In examining these questions, the social, economic and security aspects of each nation are analyzed. The succession of various, often disastrous, economic policies adopted by nations is explained, as is the very gradual pace of social and representational reform that universally failed to keep pace with the rapid urbanization and advances in literacy in the populations.

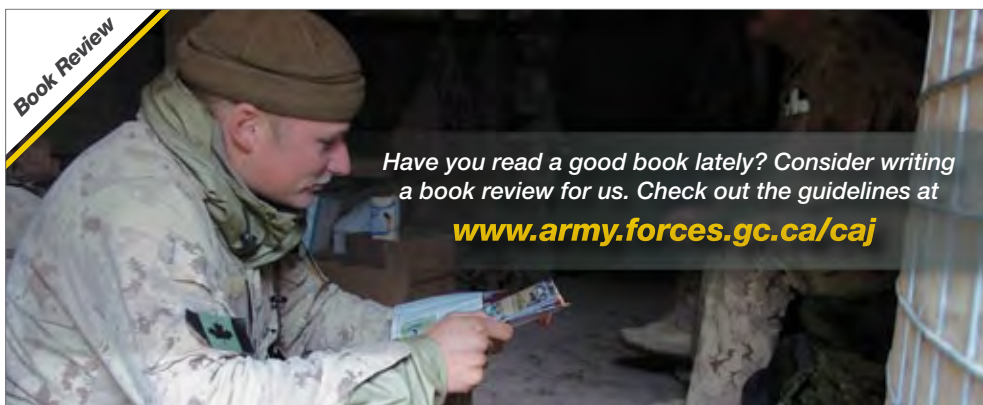
Readers without a background in Latin American history may find the omission of details in some of the more profound events, such as the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile and the 1965 U.S. military intervention in the Dominican Republic, somewhat troubling. That being said, the book provides a very good overall study of trends and shifts that place individual historical events in perspective. It remains a well-researched, objective and readable work covering a huge span of time and political geography. This book is perfect for those attempting to better understand Latin America today and how it came to be. 🍁



Source: Public Domain

President Kennedy signs the Proclamation for Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba at the Oval Office on October 23, 1962.

Book Review



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www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj



FOR KING AND KANATA:

Canadian Indians and the First World War

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

WINEGARD, Timothy C. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012, 224 pages, \$24.95, ISBN 978-0887554186

Reviewed by Major Thomas E.K. Fitzgerald, MA, LL.B

The military history of the British Crown during its early campaigns in North America is intrinsically tied to its Aboriginal allies. Even before the Seven Years' War (1754–1763), the British army actively sought the assistance of Aboriginal tribes in its wars, first against the French and later against the Americans.¹ Canadian history is replete with examples of Aboriginal leaders siding with the Crown;

Joseph Brant, John Deserontyon and Tecumseh are but a few examples of Native Canadians who fought and died on the side of the Crown. It should come as no surprise then that Canadian Aboriginals actively sought enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) upon its mobilization in 1914. What is surprising, however, is the dearth of information on this interesting part of Canadian military history.

Timothy Winegard's superbly written and equally well-researched *For King and Kanata: Canadian Indians and the First World War* is the definitive book on Indian (the author's term) soldiers in the First World War. A former armour officer and now an academic and noted author,² Winegard uses archival and secondary sources in *For King and Kanata* and traces the initially exclusionist and assimilationist policies of the federal government and their impact on the recruitment of Aboriginals into the CEF. The federal government's position, the author theorizes, was based on several concerns: because Canadian Aboriginals were not white, they would not be protected by European "privileges of civilized warfare"; treaties signed between the British Crown and Aboriginal communities (the Numbered Treaties) precluded the enlistment of Native men to fight in so-called foreign wars; the unofficial policy of the then-Minister of Defence and the Militia, Sir Sam Hughes, to keep Aboriginal soldiers in Canada for home defence; and, finally, the government's concern (not ill-founded) that recruiting Native soldiers could enhance the claims of many of their communities for greater sovereignty. It was only with the wastage occasioned by Ypres, Givenchy and Festubert and the correspondingly increasing demands for manpower that the federal government slowly reversed its position and actively sought Aboriginal soldiers for the CEF. This trickle soon became a flood when, in 1915, the British government made a formal request to Ottawa to recruit Native soldiers. Such soldiers were not only recruited in "ones and twos" and formed into Aboriginal-only companies and platoons, but they were also formed into larger combat formations, including the 114th (Brock's Rangers) and the 107th (Timber Wolf) Battalions and into several forestry and railway battalions. Aboriginal soldiers served in Mesopotamia (Iraq), in the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force at Vladivostok (1918–1919) and even on the Balkan front. Aboriginal soldiers enjoyed a fierce reputation among the enemy.

The support of the Canadian Native communities was not restricted to the enlistment of its young men. Many communities contributed money to the various patriotic funds; the women of these communities knitted items of clothing and sold traditional crafts to raise money. Aboriginal lands were used for training purposes. While the overwhelming majority of the contributions were for the support of the war effort, as the author notes, some Aboriginal communities saw that contributing money was easier than contributing their able-bodied men.

It is estimated that four thousand Native (including American Indian) soldiers enlisted in the CEF and that approximately twelve hundred were killed or wounded. Many Aboriginal soldiers acquitted themselves extremely well at the front. While it has become the stuff of legend (perhaps because of the ideal of the “noble savage”) that many Aboriginal soldiers were intentionally recruited to be scouts and snipers, Winegard rejects that notion. He uses official sources to recount the bravery of Corporal Francis Pegahmagabow (Parry Sound Ojibwa) of the 1st Battalion and Lance Corporal Henry “Ducky” Norwest (Edmonton Cree) of the 50th Battalion—the two most successful snipers in the CEF with 378 (unofficial) and 115 (official) “kills” respectively, both multiple winners of the coveted Military Medal—to demonstrate that regardless of the reason for their employment, it cannot be gainsaid that, either by necessity or tradition, Aboriginal soldiers possessed a greater degree of field craft than the average Canadian soldier, and they put that knowledge and talent to deadly use.



Source: Public Archives 3192219

Elders and Indian soldiers in the uniform of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Winegard ends his book with a chapter (“Peace and Prejudice”) on the situation confronting many Aboriginal veterans on their return to Canada. It was thought that their service would accord them many of the rights and entitlements held out to their non-Aboriginal comrades, but such was not the case. The franchise was still decades away, the *Soldiers’ Settlement Act* (1919), which accorded financial and land grants to returning soldiers, was inconsistently applied to Aboriginal soldiers or not applied at all, and Native soldiers were not given equitable consideration for pensions, disability and veterans’ allowances. The post-war period, however, witnessed the creation of many Aboriginal lobbying groups peopled by Aboriginal veterans who sought redress for those grievances. It also saw an increase in Aboriginal veterans assuming leadership roles in their respective communities.

For King and Kanata should be considered a must-read for anyone interested in Canadian military history or the history of federal–Aboriginal relations. It brings to light a forgotten part of the Canadian military’s history. And it brings into focus the contribution that Aboriginal communities have made and continue to make to this country. 🍁

ENDNOTES

1. For a complete history of Aboriginal assistance to the British, see Eliot A. Cohen’s *Conquered into Liberty: Two Centuries of Battle along the Great Warpath that Made the American Way of War*, New York: Free Press (2012).
2. *Oka: A Convergence of Cultures and the Canadian Forces*, Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press (2008), reviewed in *Canadian Army Journal* Volume 13.2 (Summer 2010); *Indigenous Peoples of the British Dominions and The First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2011).



BEHAVIOURAL CONFLICT: Why Understanding People and Their Motivations Will Prove Decisive to Future Conflict

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

MACKAY, Major General (ret'd) Andrew, Commander Steve Tatham, CO, 15 UK PSYOPS Group: Military Studies Press, 2011, paperback, 220 pages, \$29.95, ISBN 13-978-1-73039-468-8

Reviewed by Lieutenant-Colonel Rita LePage

The Canadian Forces lag behind many (if not all) our closest allies in the development of a capability that, in conflicts such as Afghanistan, seeks to bring influence to the forefront of campaign planning and execution. While nations such as the UK, the U.S., Germany, Denmark, France and others,

including NATO, have invested considerable resources into the development and implementation of Influence and Strategic Communication (StratCom)—think of it as “operations in the information environment”—the CF has done little forces-wide to study, adapt and adopt the concept. There are pockets of activity. The Influence Activities Task Force (IATF) at Land Force Doctrine and Training System Headquarters (LFDTs HQ) in Kingston, Ontario, stands out as a leading initiative in this emerging area of operations, but throughout the CF, the concept is little known and even less studied. That said, this reviewer believes that every army member should get interested, and quickly, and to this end, I highly recommend the book *Behavioural Conflict: Why Understanding People and Their Motivations Will Prove Decisive in Future Conflict*.

Behavioural Conflict is written by two seasoned British military officers—Army Major General Andrew Mackay, who commanded 52 Brigade in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, and Navy Commander Steve Tatham, PhD, CO of 15 PSYOPS Group—and is based on their work in preparing 52 Brigade to deploy to Helmand Province. While the authors discuss previous conflicts, from the Balkans in the 1990s, Sierra Leone, Lebanon, and Gaza, to the Iraq War, 52 Brigade's ISAF deployment is the case study around which the book revolves.

Mackay and Tatham collaborated to do extensive Target Audience Analysis (TAA) of the local population with which their soldiers would interact. The goal was to understand the population as a group—not simply to understand attitudes, but to understand motivation, ultimately seeking to design a campaign with a goal to change behaviour. And the behaviour they were seeking to change? Anything negatively impacting the mission. At the same time, they wished to prompt behaviour positively impacting the mission. And an important part of the campaign design was to delegate to the lowest level, i.e., the soldier, the ability to apply influence based on the events, activities, sentiment and circumstances at play at the time.



Source: Combat Camera

Master Corporal Niall Anthony, from the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (3 PPCLI), shakes hands with a shopkeeper after recording answers presented from a questionnaire in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The results suggest significant success. Using TAA as the basis for understanding societal motivation towards behavioural change, 52 Brigade, during its deployment, suffered 13 killed in action—0.16% deaths in relation to the size of its deployment. Compare that to the percentage of deaths in UK deployments in the same area of responsibility before and after 52 Brigade, when rates were 0.73%, 0.25%, 0.43%, 0.30%, and 0.38%. 52 Brigade suffered half the deaths of some deployments, and up to four times fewer deaths than others.

The fundamental premise of the book is as follows: the extant practice of influence activities in particular and StratCom more generally being a second thought, an add-on, to kinetic operations may be getting the whole thing wrong. Mackay and Tatham make a credible argument for influence-led operations, of which kinetic operations are a part. And the Canadian Forces should take notice. 🍁



THE CANADIAN ARMY READING LIST

In September 2001, the Canadian Army produced its first *Canadian Army Reading List*. In the time since its publication many new books and articles of interest to the Canadian Army have appeared, prompting the need to revisit the list, and review and expand it. This new and revised *Canadian Army Reading List* retains most of the original publication, while adding a considerable amount of new material for soldiers to consider. The aim of the *Canadian Army Reading List* is to provide an instructive guide to soldiers to explore suitable literature on a wide range of subjects.



KOEVOET:

Experiencing South Africa's Deadly Bush War

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

HOOPER, Jim. Solihull, UK: Helion and Co./GG Books, 2012, softcover, 269 pages, \$34.95, ISBN: 9780957058705

Reviewed by Major Chris Buckham, BA, MA

The book *Koevoet* (read Koo-foot) is a reissue of a 1988 publication relating the experiences of its author, independent journalist Jim Hooper, during the South African Bush War. Hooper spent a year embedded with the South West African Police Counterinsurgency (SWAPOLCOIN) Unit, the official name of Koevoet, from 1986 to 1987. Hooper's book retraces the path that led him, as a journalist, first to Africa and the

Chadian insurrections and then ultimately to South Africa. He outlines in detail the challenges he faced getting the opportunity to join Koevoet on patrol and the even greater gulf he had to overcome to be accepted and trusted by unit members. His book sheds light on aspects of the South African Bush War that were rarely seen and even more poorly understood by those not involved (including the people of South Africa themselves): the level of mutual trust and respect between members of the unit (which was a mix of black and white), the level of violence and the capability of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) forces they were fighting. Hooper details the development of the unit, the tactics it developed to address bush fighting requirements, its success and failures, the nature of the war itself and the differences between what the world saw (and assumed) and the realities of fighting on the ground. He does not glorify what these men were doing nor does he gloss over the less palatable aspects of the war (including his own naiveté and preconceived ideas). Rather, he paints a picture that is raw, honest and enlightening. The small unit structure of Koevoet operations means that Hooper gets to know the soldiers themselves and is able to convey their frustrations, prejudices, loyalties and underlying motivations. That is critical to adding a human face to the conflict.

While viewers today may be accustomed to seeing journalists placing themselves in the "operational" world as much as possible, that was not the case in the 1980s. That was especially true in the counterinsurgency war within South West Africa (modern-day Namibia) where South African and Namibian regular and irregular forces (such as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)) were engaged in a long-running war with Soviet- and Cuban-backed SWAPO, which was seeking the establishment of a communist regime in Namibia. Hooper's writing style is very accessible for the casual tactician. He specifically avoids long technical descriptions of equipment and operating doctrine, providing enough information to inform the reader without detracting from the overall picture.

Instead, his narrative is focused on the human dimension of the conflict: the soldiers with whom he worked and came in contact, their frustrations, fears and successes. He paints a very deliberate picture of the conflict itself, blending into the storyline explanations of the external stressors placed on the unit through conflict with the international media, the regular army, the political climate and the great divide between the population “at home” in South Africa and the soldiers doing the fighting at the front.

Readers will certainly appreciate and understand the difficulties faced by the author as he endeavours to understand and be accepted by the men he is stationed with. Given the lack of international support for South Africa and its operations on the international stage throughout the 1980s, it is very understandable that Hooper would have been met with a less-than-rousing welcome as an American journalist when he first arrived. His explanation of his efforts to obtain permission from the authorities to report on the conflict, his disappointment at seemingly being relegated to a unit he had never heard of and his gradual transition from green reporter to seasoned bush veteran make for a remarkable and engaging narrative.

While Hooper obviously respects and admires the soldiers he is working with, he does maintain an impartiality that balances his storyline and draws attention to some of the less palatable aspects of the bush war. That includes the hypocrisy of the so-called freedom fighters of the SWAPO organization and its blatant manipulation of the international media and organizations like the UN. Through interviews with SWAPO representatives in London and elsewhere, he exposes a number of contradictions between what the world viewed and the realities on the ground. He also focuses upon the tragedy of the people of South West Africa caught up in the fighting between the opposing forces.

The production value of this book is high; it includes a myriad of maps, colour and black-and-white photographs, and an acronym section that is of great value. The reprint of this book with an update by the author should be very well received by the reading public. It is an engrossing “amateur’s” insider view of operations during the Bush War and an outstanding glimpse into a region of conflict that remains virtually unknown to the general population. 🇳🇦



Source: en:User:Smikect

SADF-Operations.



ALLIES AGAINST THE RISING SUN: THE UNITED STATES, THE BRITISH NATIONS, AND THE DEFEAT OF IMPERIAL JAPAN

Bibliographical Information:

SARANTAKES, Evan Nicholas. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2009, 458 pages. \$39.95, ISBN: 978-0700616695

Reviewed by Mr. Richard Palimaka

A common perception of the Pacific War is that its prosecution was largely an American affair. Historians have examined early Commonwealth disasters in Singapore and Hong Kong and the campaign in Burma, but less has been written about their role in the closing chapters in the Pacific. By 1945 Britain and the Commonwealth were heavily engaged in

N.W. Europe and the Mediterranean and were wrestling with manpower issues, yet they pressed to take part in the final defeat of Japan. *Allies Against the Rising Sun* examines why and how these nations came to their respective decisions. Perhaps more interesting is why the United States, likely capable of defeating Japan alone, chose to include them in the final operations and the planning for the invasion of Japan. The result is a fresh and balanced history which details the challenges and capabilities, motives and personalities of the participants, and skilfully tells a complex and multi-layered tale of coalition warfare.

Sarantakes is an associate professor at the U.S. Naval War College and is the author of two books dealing with the Okinawa campaign as well as several articles on the British Pacific Fleet. His background is reflected in the amount of space devoted to Okinawa and the performance of the Royal Navy while attached to the U.S. 3rd Fleet. That is not a criticism; in fact the story of the British Pacific Fleet alone is worth the price of the book, as it serves as a case study for the challenges, strains and successes of the Allied effort. Sarantakes makes extensive use of primary source material in each of the countries involved, and he has included memoirs, diaries and correspondence, and a well-selected list of secondary source histories. What emerges is not only a very competent treatment of the manoeuvring involved in the formation of a strategy and coalition, but also the strong influence of the character and personalities of the players at the highest levels. Churchill's insistence on a strategy that would regain lost colonial influence and territory rather than help the Americans end the war almost caused his COS to resign. Admiral Ernest King, Chief of Naval Operations for the U.S. Navy, continually attempted to put barriers in the way of Commonwealth participation.

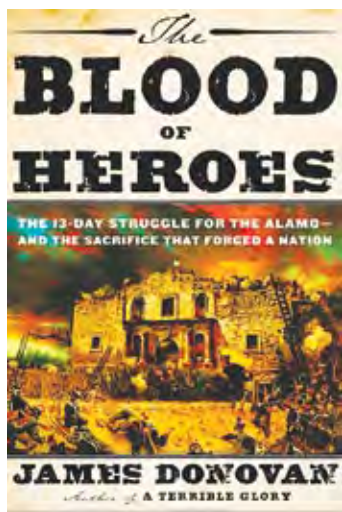
Much attention is devoted to the unique interests and concerns of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Sarantakes describes Mackenzie King's difficulties in accepting the need for Canadian participation in the Pacific and his mistrust of his Service Chiefs, especially the Navy. Each of the Services had a vested interest in how their particular contribution would impact the influence they would carry post-war, and how that shaped what they would bring to an invasion of Japan. That ran the gamut from a mature Army plan which would see an infantry division under Bert Hoffmeister serve with the Americans (and not the British) to substantial RCAF participation in a 22-squadron Commonwealth Tiger Force which the Americans had no capacity to base. Decisions were made about equipment, logistics, training, how and where our troops would be used, and whether that fit into the plans of the coalition—it brings recent events to mind.

This is a well-researched and highly readable introduction to Commonwealth participation in a campaign where Canada's last Victoria Cross was earned. Canada, Australia and New Zealand were willing to support Britain but were not interested in helping her regain an empire. It is fascinating to compare their respective efforts to assert their own hard-won influence and independence while improving relations with the new superpower, the United States. 🍁



Source: Public Archives - 4233594

Canadian Army Pacific Force Patch.



BLOOD OF HEROES THE 13-DAY STRUGGLE FOR THE ALAMO AND THE SACRIFICE THAT FORGED A NATION

Bibliographical information:

DONOVAN, James. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2012, hardcover, 512 pages, \$32.95. ISBN 978-0316053747

Reviewed by Major Thomas E.K. Fitzgerald, MA, LL.B

The thirteen-day battle for the Alamo (February 23–March 6, 1836) has spawned a small library of books,¹ three movies² and the 1950's Walt Disney miniseries, *Davy Crockett*. It is the stuff of legend and of myth. One hundred and eighty-two men holed up in a small, crumbling

adobe fort, and held off the battalions of a ruthless dictator until, massacred to a man, they were overwhelmed during a pre-dawn attack accompanied by the sight of rockets overarching the walls and the spine tingling sounds of the *El Deguello* (“slit throat,” i.e., no quarter) ringing in their ears. The final assault lasted a mere hour. No other “last stand” battle so resonates with the American public as that of the Alamo, so well and comprehensively recounted by western historian and author James Donovan³ in his recent book, *Blood of Heroes: The 13-Day Struggle for the Alamo and the Sacrifice that Forged a Nation*.

It is the autumn of 1836. The Mexican President General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, the self-proclaimed “Napoleon of the West,” has set aside the federalist constitution of 1824. His armies have defeated those provincial “pirates” who oppose his centralist politics. When the Texians of San Antonio de Bexar (now San Antonio) refuse to return a Mexican cannon to its rightful owner and use it to defeat a small Mexican contingent ensconced in the Alamo, Santa Anna and his Army of Operations march to Texas to “chastise” the rebels. Rather than taking the slower but less treacherous sea coast, Santa Anna force marches his army of several thousand soldados (convicts, conscripts and recruits) and soldaderos (camp followers) across open desert, where they die by the hundreds from heat, thirst and incessant Comanche attacks. He invades Texas by February 1835 and invests the Alamo, originally a Spanish mission, earlier than anticipated by the defenders. There, he confronts a ragtag collection of Texian regulars and volunteers commanded by Colonels William Travis and Jim Bowie. Recently defeated Congressman David Crockett and a small group of volunteers arrive later and increase the garrison’s number to approximately two hundred. The Mexican army was estimated at two thousand, four hundred.

The garrison held out for thirteen days until it was overwhelmed by the Mexican army which, in a coordinated attack, swarmed the walls. No quarter was given to the defenders; only non-combatants were spared. The dead were later burned in a mass pyre. The defeat at the Alamo and the atrocities perpetrated by Santa Anna before, during and after the battle⁴ galvanized the Texian and American populations. On April 21, 1836, the Texian army under the command of Sam Houston attacked the Mexican army and, in the Battle of San Jacinto, defeated it in eighteen minutes. Their rallying cry: *Remember the Alamo*.

Blood of Heroes focuses on the actual siege but provides essential context to the battle. Donovan, through a comprehensive review of primary and secondary sources, dispels many of the myths surrounding this battle. Did William Travis actually draw a line in the sand? Did anyone survive the final assault only to be executed later on the orders of Santa Anna? Did all the defenders die within the walls of the mission? Other than the women and Bowie's slave, Joe, did any defender escape from the Alamo? Could the reinforcement of the garrison have changed the result? The author also recounts the history of those connected to the Alamo who never seem to be heard of again. What ever happened to Susanna Dickinson and her fifteen-month-old child? And what of the enigmatic Moses Rose? Donovan's account will comfort some and confound others. His firm grasp of the literature and his masterful narrative style weaves an exciting, thoroughly readable account of this important battle. The completeness of his footnotes demonstrates an almost forensic approach to the battle. *Blood of Heroes* will remain the definitive history of the Alamo and its place in the American cultural psyche for years to come. *Blood of Heroes* demonstrates how the sacrifice of a few determined individuals can change the course of history. 🍷

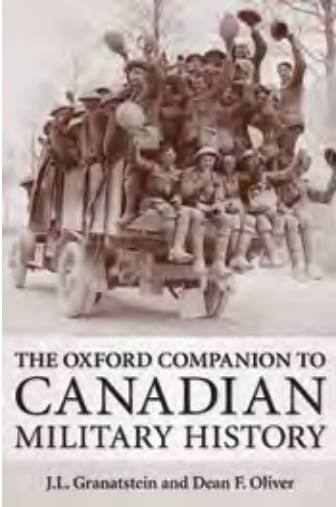
ENDNOTES

1. Walter Lord, *A Time to Stand*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press (1961); William C. Davis, *Three Roads to the Alamo*, New York: HarperCollins (1998); Lon Tinkle, *Thirteen Days to Glory: The Siege of the Alamo*, College Station: Texas A&M University Press (1985).
2. *The Immortal Alamo* (1911), dir: William F. Haddock, feat: Francis Ford, Edith Stoey, Wm. A. Carroll; *The Alamo* (1960), dir: John Wayne, feat: John Wayne, Richard Widmark, Laurence Harvey, Frankie Avalon; *The Alamo* (2004) dir: John Lee Hancock, feat: Dennis Quaid, Billy Bob Thornton, Emilio Echevarria.
3. *Custer and the Little BigHorn*, New York: Voyager Press (2002), *A Terrible Glory: Custer and the Little BigHorn*.
4. Following the battle at the Alamo, a relief column under the command of Col James Fannin was ambushed and 250 members of the column captured. Santa Anna directed their execution. On March 27, 250 able bodies and wounded were shot. Colonel Fannin was the last to die.



Source: Public Domain

The Fall of the Alamo (1903) by Robert Jenkins Onderdonk, depicts Davy Crockett wielding his rifle as a club against Mexican troops who have breached the walls of the mission.



THE OXFORD COMPANION TO CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

GRANATSTEIN J.L. and OLIVER Dean F. Don Mills, On: Oxford University Press, and the Canadian War Museum, 2010, hardcover, 528 pages, \$70.00, ISBN: 978-0-19543-088-2

Reviewed by Major Andrew B. Godefroy, CD, PhD

The seemingly ubiquitous accessibility of information through the Internet has done much to diminish the traditional necessity for hardcopy desk and library references. Old-school encyclopedias, for example, are being rapidly displaced by online tools such as Wikipedia and other specialized reference websites.

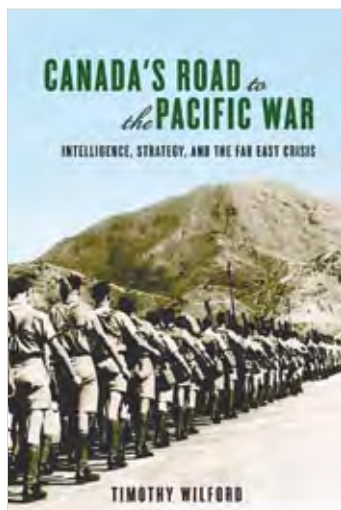
Thus, it is understandable that some might ask

whether such a work is necessary in this day and age. The answer to that question lies in understanding exactly what *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Military History* is and what it is not. Readers will soon discover that this book is not just a reference, but truly a companion reflective of the era in which it was written, just as the title suggests.

The creators of this book, Canadian military historians Jack Granatstein and Dean Oliver, need little introduction. Both are considered superstars in the modernization of the Canadian public's access to its own rich and complex military history, and this book has been designed to continue that dialogue in many new and interesting ways. Drawing upon the best available human and physical resources at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa and elsewhere, the authors have constructed a literary mosaic that tells the national story of Canada's legacy of waging war and keeping the peace through the most poignant "issues, events, ideas, and individuals that have populated Canada's military past." As such, the book is not simply a grocery list that could be easily replaced by digital media, but rather a deliberately designed companion worthy of any bookshelf or desktop.

Physically, the book is both impressive and attractive. The hefty tome is just over 500 pages in length and organized alphabetically, contains essential timelines and appendices, and is lavishly illustrated in full colour throughout. For far too long, Canada's military historical publications have reused the same old photos and artwork over and over, ignoring the vast wealth of imagery preserved and available to us. This reviewer was very pleased to see that Drs Granatstein and Oliver did not disappoint: they have incorporated many new and less well-known or less publicized photos and artwork into this book. The result is a rewarding product that will offer something new to every reader, even to those whose libraries on the subject are already very well developed. As a source of information, this companion also offers something new. While remaining true to the essential facts of each entry, the authors have endeavoured to provide insightful contextual understanding—no small task when one considers just how much the field of Canadian military history has evolved over the last two decades—as well as highlight the most modern new references for further reading on any particular subject. In fact, any one of these entries might serve as a basis for further study, discussion, and debate.

When such books come onto the market these days, one typically expects to find a tired formula: a collection of data that is easily available elsewhere. That was not the case here. Overall, *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Military History* is surprisingly refreshing in its delivery of new material and analysis, and it is highly recommended as a solid reference companion for academics and practitioners alike. 🍁



CANADA'S ROAD TO THE PACIFIC WAR: Intelligence, Strategy, and the Far East Crisis

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

WILFORD, Timothy. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011, softcover, 288 pages, \$37.95, ISBN: 9780774821223

Reviewed by Major Andrew B. Godefroy, CD, PhD

The history of Canada's Second World War experience is heavily focused on its actions in the Mediterranean and Northwest Europe. With the majority of fighting, especially on the ground, occurring in places such as Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and Holland, it is little wonder that the country's involvement in other theatres of war is far less well known. Only Canada's forlorn attempt to defend Hong Kong against Japanese invasion in

the early days of the war has received any significant attention; other than tales of fatal heroism and high-ranking blunders, the story seldom goes any further.

Timothy Wilford's *Canada's Road to the Pacific War: Intelligence, Strategy, and the Far East Crisis* is an ambitious yet superbly executed study on the country's role in the preliminary events that eventually led to open conflict in the Far East between the Allied powers and the Empire of Japan. Seeking to answer a very straightforward question—essentially, how did Canada become involved in the Pacific War?—Wilford had to delve into fields of strategy, diplomacy, alliances, defence policy, and intelligence networks. His conclusion not only answers the question very well, it also reveals that Ottawa was far better prepared for the Pacific War than previously thought.

Wilford's analysis begins in 1922, but the majority of the book is focused on the wide range of activities that took place in intelligence operations and strategic planning from December 1940 to December 1941. Seventy years later, however, Wilford concedes that the historical analysis of intelligence activities prior to and during the war itself remains a difficult task for historians. Not all archival papers have been released for public scrutiny even after all this time, and others still remain heavily censored. Wilford posits that the reason for this may have less to do with the content of the documents and more to do with the means by which adversary communications intelligence was collected and deciphered, but the end state remains challenging all the same. Nevertheless, where government documents are lacking, Wilford has sought to fill gaps with testimony from veterans and other main actors in the period. This reviewer would argue that the result has met with success.

The eight chapters of the book “emphasize different elements of the Canadian experience during the Far East crisis” (p.9). As such, the reader is invited to explore a wide range of topics in both a methodological and chronological sense. Throughout the book, Wilford has done a good job of demonstrating the relationship between intelligence work and strategic decision making by revealing as best as possible the causal link between warning and decision. Overall, this well-formatted and very enjoyable book makes a valuable contribution to Second World War scholarship and is highly recommended to those interested in Canadian strategy, intelligence studies, and Canada's political and military roles in the Pacific War. 🍁



Private Sheldon Forrest pulls a cleaning swab through the barrel of his C7A2 rifle, while serving in Afghanistan.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND:

A Different View on Boots for the Land Combat Environment


CWO Rob Unger, CD, writes...

As the Regimental Sergeant-Major of a combat arms unit, I am responsible for enforcing dress policies and standards. A recurring issue in this area of interest is the wearing of non-issue boots. I am frequently reminded in countless e-mails and conversations by my higher-formation sergeant-major that my soldiers must only wear issue combat boots. Those reminders are supported by policies from the supply system,¹ letters from Canadian Forces (CF) medical professionals² and CANLANDGENs³ from the chain of command. Despite the best efforts of disciplinarians at every level, soldiers still find a way to sneak in other-than-issue combat boots during training activities. This is further complicated by the fact that the chain of command seemed to turn a blind eye for our troops who deployed to Afghanistan, where soldiers were allowed to wear boots of their own choosing during both the pre-deployment training and the actual deployment. When soldiers returned from deployment, they preferred to continue wearing their chosen boots rather than revert to standard-issue boots. Despite our attempts to standardize dress, the reality is that there are currently three different types of boots in circulation worn by Army soldiers: the all-leather Mark III combat boot, the wet-weather boot and the temperate weather boot. Add to the mix steel-toed boots worn by certain tradesmen, the variety of boots worn by Navy and Air Force personnel, not to mention the freedom of choice of boots given to special operations soldiers, and it becomes clear that there is very little standardization in footwear.

Of course, when soldiers are asked why they prefer to wear other-than-issue boots, the majority state personal comfort as the main reason. One can reasonably deduct from this that our standard-issue boots do not necessarily fit every pair of feet—all feet are simply not created equal. For years the CF made exceptions for members who complained of chronic joint or foot pain which they believed resulted from wearing ill-fitting boots or boots whose soles did not provide enough shock absorption. During this time many soldiers were allowed to purchase boots of their own choosing and claim back the amount spent. The guidelines were that the chosen boot had to be a black high-top type boot. This practice has now been suspended in favour of providing members with customized orthotics to be fitted in standard-issue boots.

The boot situation can be compared to a similar experiment the CF chose to undertake: that of the infamous Brassiere Temperate Underwear, better known as the combat bra. At the time it was felt that this very personal item was worthy of being integrated into the Clothe the Soldier program,⁴ and so an unwitting staff officer was assigned the project. There were two opposing views on this initiative at the time. The staff who supported standard support for our female service members stated that a properly designed bra would reduce friction and thus prevent uncomfortable skin irritation. The skeptics stated that a standard-issue bra would not take into account individual preferences and fit requirements. In the end, the project was abandoned after a formal survey revealed that female CF members felt that a standard-issue item of this nature was not a high enough priority.⁵ Instead, the CF decided to continue the practice of compensating female members for the purchase of up to four brassieres of their choice per year, eight if the member was deployed on international operations.⁶

What the combat bra experiment showed is that not all items of personal clothing for land force personnel can or should be standardized. However, the CF is currently studying a new standard-issue boot design for the land combat environment.⁷ I suppose that a great deal of staff effort—and vast amounts of research and development (R&D) money—will be spent on determining the requirements and specifications for a boot that will suit soldiers who must endure the rigours of combat while ensuring maximum combat effectiveness. The proposed initial specifications for the new boot are that it must be brown or tan in colour and must be lighter in weight than current in-service boots. It is expected to have a maximum duration of 180 days of consistent wear.⁸ But the same problem will persist: the standard-issue boot will not suit every soldier's feet.



Some militaries have solved the dilemma of the best fit for feet by allowing soldiers to purchase optional footwear. In the U.S. Army, soldiers are given specific parameters for selecting commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) boots. The material, both upper and sole, and the height of the boot are detailed, and a number of examples of acceptable COTS combat boots are listed.⁹ U.S. Army soldiers must be in possession of at least one pair of government-issue boots but may wear optional boots that meet the specified parameters. The advantages of such a system would include the following: (1) the costs of R&D are borne by someone else, (2) soldiers have a selection of footwear to choose from, (3) soldiers would have a fallback pair of standard-issue boots if the COTS boots wear out before the next purchase entitlement period, and (4) there would be little impact on the supply system—in fact, there is the potential to reduce inventory of current combat boots and there would be less traffic at base supply units for exchanges. The only potential disadvantage is that bases/units would be required to process more individual claims; however, this would mean only an increase in volume, not the creation of a new procedure, since the process already exists for the purchase of brassieres for female members.

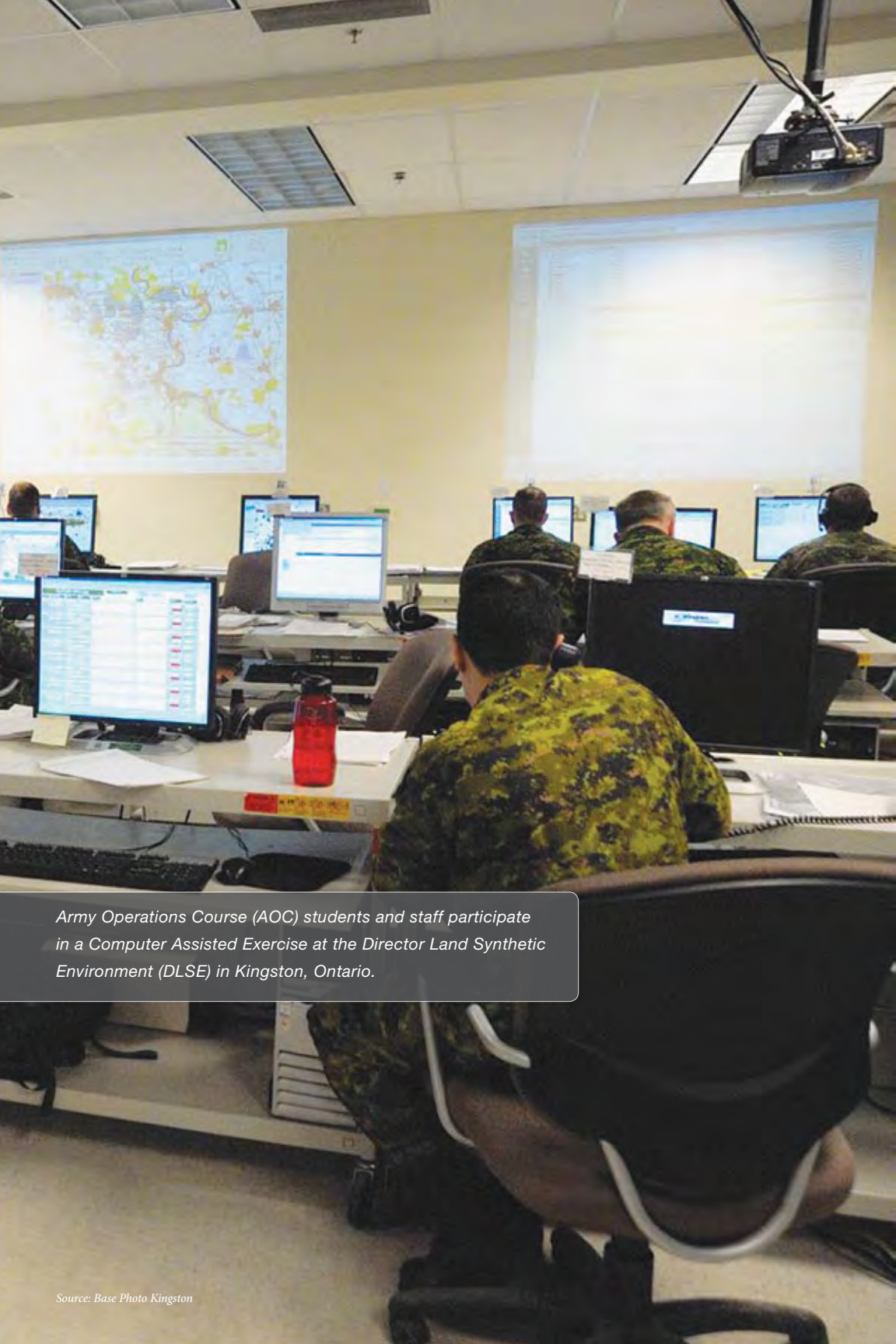
Perhaps the way ahead for the CF is to redirect the staff effort dedicated to combat boot R&D towards determining what specifications are required in footwear worn by Army soldiers and drawing up a list of suitable COTS combat boots that fit those requirements. This would allow every soldier to have boots that best fit his/her feet. Soldiers could be authorized to purchase a specific number of pairs of boots per year up to a maximum dollar amount and be reimbursed annually. In this manner, soldiers would be equipped with optimal close-fitting articles of clothing. And RSMs like me could focus our efforts on the primary outcome of mission success, with member well-being assured by allowing soldiers the freedom to choose the most comfortable boot. 🍁

ENDNOTES

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3. CANLANDGEN 022/10, dated 7 June 2010.
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7. Clothe the Soldier website, www.forces.gc.ca/aete/clothethesoldierdirects-habillezlesoldathis-eng.asp, as viewed on 13 November 2011.
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Members of Joint Task Force Afghanistan's close protection unit and members of Oscar Company, The Royal Canadian Regiment, take part in a foot patrol in the Panjwayi District of Afghanistan.



Army Operations Course (AOC) students and staff participate in a Computer Assisted Exercise at the Director Land Synthetic Environment (DLSE) in Kingston, Ontario.

REINFORCING SUCCESS:

The Canadian Army's Estimate Process

Major Jason C. Guiney, RCR, writes...

In his recent article “The Eighth Question: A Better Estimate Process?” LCol Banks proposes that the UK’s Seven Questions process offers a more intuitive, battle-proven and flexible model to our current doctrinal template. However, as an experienced practitioner in this field from war fighting to humanitarian operations in multinational environments, I argue that there is nothing wrong with the Canadian Army’s estimate process and see no reason to change how we teach it. Is the UK’s Seven Questions estimate model an effective military analytical process? Yes. Is it a better one? Not necessarily. Having used our doctrinal estimate process at the tactical, operational and strategic levels across the full spectrum of operations, I can vouch that it works. And it works well.

What I like about the Canadian Army model is its simplicity and flexibility (both which are principles of war, may I add). In its simplest form, our estimate process consists of four components: mission analysis, evaluation of factors, courses of action and commander’s decision (this was formerly known as aim, factors, courses open, and plan). This was taught to me prior to my first small party task at BOTC in Chilliwack in 1995 and continues to be relevant as a planner in the Strategic Joint Staff. The only difference in its application is the level of fidelity in the detail, mainly in the “evaluation of factors.” The four components of our estimate process are nested in several other CF planning frameworks such as Battle Procedure, OPP and the Force Employment Planning Process. So instead of what would appear to be a simple shift from one model to another, one would also have to take into account broader doctrinal implications. How would we incorporate the Seven Questions into these processes?

Another strength of the Canadian model is that it places the aim (derived from mission analysis) at the forefront of the estimate. Selection and maintenance of the aim is the first and most important principle of war. The UK model does not—rather, it places the enemy as the first consideration which, in my mind, implies a reactive mindset where our planning is focused on the enemy rather than the commander’s intent. In the case of certain domestic and humanitarian relief operations, enemy may not even be a factor. Therefore, a weakness of the UK model is that the very nature of the Seven Questions may have to be modified depending on the type of operation. For example, how is the Seven Questions model applied to a capacity-building problem? How could we use this model in a domestic environmental disaster scenario? I am not suggesting that it cannot be done, but rather assert that the Canadian model is a better fit.

LCol Banks also suggests that the UK model is inherently more flexible, but I disagree. I argue the opposite and that the Seven Questions model is very rigid and tactically focused. The Seven Questions model would not be applicable at the operational and strategic levels where policy, legal and political considerations become equally, if not more important than other factors such as time, space and forces available, not to mention enemy. The Canadian model is in fact inherently more flexible because it is a tool that can be used at all levels of warfare. “Evaluation of factors” can be adjusted accordingly to the type of operation both across the spectrum of conflict (warfighting to humanitarian ops) and at the various levels of conflict (tactical, operational, strategic). The model is taught to Officer Cadets on DP1 to conduct simple small unit tasks and is gradually built upon throughout their career at CACSC, Combat Team Commander’s Course, the Joint Command and Staff Program and the National Security Program nested in various higher-level planning processes. Therefore, the Canadian model offers a continuous and progressive framework. It is equally relevant to a platoon commander conducting a hasty attack as it is to a strategic staff officer involved in planning an emerging joint, multinational expeditionary operation.

LCol Banks states that “the Seven Questions combat estimate process offers the Canadian Army a battle-proven, flexible, intuitive and far more user-friendly tactical decision making process,” but I counter that our own does too. To say that our current system is “awkward and non-intuitive” is somewhat a moot point in military training. Pretty much everything we do, from folding shirts into 11” x 11” squares

in basic training to turning to face the ambush to jumping out of perfectly safe aircraft, is awkward and non-intuitive. We overcome this awkwardness through training and repetition so that the unknown becomes second nature. Aim, Factors, Courses Open, Plan has become intuitive to Canadian Army planners and operators, much like the Seven Questions has for our British colleagues.

Ultimately, my question is, why do we need to change our doctrine? Having served alongside a UK Royal Marine Commando in warfighting operations in Afghanistan on numerous occasions, I can attest that our estimate process is no less effective than theirs. Having similar experiences with US Army battalions in war, USMC Battalions in humanitarian operations, and Royal Dutch Marines on peacekeeping operations, we still measure up, if not rise above. Therefore, from personal experience on operations with four different entities that have four different estimate processes, I have not seen any reason to believe that our estimate process is in dire need of change. It works. It works not because of the begrudging acceptance of its practitioners but rather because it is a simple, flexible and logical process.

The bottom line is that in war, and other operations across the spectrum of conflict, results matter. Any estimate is a logical and rational thought process that leads to a plan. The vessel or format by which it is done is less important than the results it produces. What is important is that staff and commanders apply a logical and rational thought process to a problem and consider relevant factors through a military analytical framework. Seven Questions, MDMP, OPP and SOD are all *frameworks* for decision making—they are tools. They represent means and ways, not ends. In my experience, neither company commanders nor the Chief of the Defence Staff care *which* decision-making tool is used but rather that the results of said decision making are grounded in well-thought-out military logic.

In conclusion, I would not suggest that LCol Banks' argument is without merit. Quite the opposite. For military doctrine to progress, and to ensure relevancy, we need to constantly revisit and challenge our existing doctrine by scanning the horizon. New ideas and frameworks need to be tested and waged



Source : Base Photo Kingston

HQ staff review the current operational situation on a computer monitor.



Source : Combat Camera

A soldier prepares the operations map for a staff briefing.

against our own to see how our doctrine stacks up in a constantly changing environment. LCol Banks has done exactly that by highlighting some of our Allied doctrine. Perhaps a unique experiment would be to have syndicates at CACSC use different estimate models and compare the results in simulation. If there is a consistent trend that the Seven Questions (or another model) is producing better quality plans compared to our current model, then perhaps we need to rethink what we are teaching. But right now, from a practitioner's point of view, I am not seeing the data that justifies change.

The CF defines doctrine as the “fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.” It is perhaps the second sentence that is more important than the first: “judgement in application.” As CACSC teaches its students, knowledge + training + experience = intuitive judgement. We need a doctrinal template to build the foundation of the military thought process for our junior officers. However, with experience, we would be remiss not to expose our officers and NCMs to other models and frameworks and let the experienced practitioner decide upon the tool they wish to use based on their intuitive judgement.

Let's not sell ourselves short on our expertise and experience in operational planning and our doctrine. We have built a flexible, intuitive, command-oriented estimate process that has proven effective across the spectrum of conflict. We have done a great job of teaching our leadership and staff in this regard and need to reinforce that message with them, not doubt it. We should not feel that our military planning and analytical processes are inferior to those of our Allies because they certainly are not.

Sometimes it's better to reinforce success than lead change. 🍁



Source : Combat Camera

A soldier prepares the operations map for a staff briefing.

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