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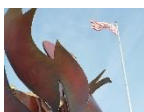
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Flag flying over the Strength and Wisdom statue, a gift from the class of 2014, capturing the mission, spirit, and history of Carlisle Barracks (photo by Laura A. Wackwitz, Ph.D.).

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The United States Army War College
Student Publications

The Army War College Review

Volume 1 ▪ Number 1 ▪ February 2015

Research

Insights

Learning Trust:
A Leadership Lesson

Stephen C. Rogers

The Army must learn the value of speaking truth to power as a means of achieving leadership goals. The ability to dialogue within, across, and outside the Force is essential to mission success. In the midst of significant transition, reflecting upon the experiences of the last twelve years of combat provides an opportunity to implement effective change in the strategic culture. By understanding the origins of mission command and approaching its implementation from a perspective of changing organizational culture, the Army stands to reap benefits well beyond empowering subordinate leaders. If successful, leaders will develop the ability speak truth to power when nothing less will do.

Keywords: *Mission Command, Strategic Culture, Organizational Change, Speaking Truth to Power*

> As we begin our transition following this time of twelve years of war, we must rededicate ourselves to the development of our leaders as our best edge against complexity and uncertainty.
>
> —General Raymond T. Odierno[1]

The Army is at a strategic inflection point. Operations in Iraq are now behind us, the war in Afghanistan has transitioned to support mode, and the U.S. military is reorienting toward the Asia-Pacific region. All of this is occurring during a time of fiscal austerity, dwindling resources, and a four-year plan to draw personnel strength down to 490,000 or below. In the midst of embarking on a significant posture change, the Army must reflect on its experiences over the last twelve years of combat, counterinsurgency (COIN), and stability operations, and seize the opportunity to improve its core capabilities: leading Soldiers, executing missions, and meeting obligations.

Much is to be learned from recent experiences and accumulated lessons spanning the full range of how the Army prepares and employs its personnel and equipment in accord with doctrine. Positive change in leadership strategy has great potential to strengthen the military force as well as to help

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[1] General Raymond T. Odierno, Remarks at the Army War College Graduation Ceremony, Carlisle Barracks, PA, June 8, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/105138/June_8__2013___CSA_s_remarks_at_the_Army_War_College_graduation_ceremony/

develop a competitive advantage that cannot be replaced by technology, weapon systems, or platforms.[2] Two related leadership challenges must be addressed: (1) Generating a means of empowering subordinates with disciplined initiative while concurrently underwriting the risk associated with that initiative. The full benefit of empowering subordinate leaders though the doctrinal concept of *mission command* has yet to be fully realized and remains largely misunderstood. The implementation of mission command provides an opportunity to positively change the Army's organizational culture in favor of a stronger, more empowered force. (2) Developing leader capacity to speak "truth to power" particularly when addressing senior leaders, civilians, and policymakers. Within senior ranks, the general lack of dissent in response to questionable applications of military forces tasked with securing strategic objectives threatens mission success. Army leaders must learn to dialogue within, across, and outside the Force undeterred by the trepidation associated with speaking truth to power when proffering dissenting views, alternative perspectives, and potentially unpopular options. Fortunately, both concerns can be addressed simultaneously as empowering subordinates and gaining voice are mutually reinforcing.

Speaking Truth to Power in Iraq

The war in Iraq revealed significant fractures in American civil-military relations. Many in the military at the time opined that the war was severely mismanaged by senior civilian officials. Secretary Rumsfeld's dominant personality, excessive control, and micromanagement of tactical details forged an environment that was not conducive to entertaining contrarian perspectives. Senior military officers, however, cannot be wholly absolved from all responsibility associated with the decisions leading up to the war, nor its outcomes. By standing pat with the statutory obligation to provide the best military advice to political decision makers, senior leaders shaded the profession's moral courage and demonstrated leadership's inability to provide candid and compelling military counsel when needed.[3]

This indictment came as a surprise to many military professionals at the time, particularly in light of the renewed emphasis on providing candid military advice inspired by H.R. McMaster's 1998 seminal work, *Dereliction of Duty*. The complicity of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to form and pursue misguided policies in Vietnam, as described by McMaster, served as a "cautionary tale" for the Army officer corps and for many leaders across the military writ large.[4] Senior leaders, both military and civilian, agreed publically that the type of behavior McMaster detailed was unacceptable in today's military. In May 2004, recalling how General Hugh Shelton had distributed copies of McMaster's book to all senior military leaders while the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, former commander of U.S. Central Command, General Anthony Zinni, USMC, (Ret.) stated:

> The message to us, after we heard this from Hugh Shelton, is that will never happen here. And the message to us from Secretary [William S.] Cohen at that time, too, is that the door is always open, and your obligation to the Congress, which is an obligation to the American people to tell them what you think, still stands strong.[5]

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Frank Hoffman, "E-Notes, Dereliction of Duty Redux?" Foreign Policy Research Institute, November 2007, http://www.fpri.org/enotes/200711.hoffman.derelictionofdutyredux.html#note7 (accessed February 27, 2014).

[4] Martin L. Cook, "Revolt of the Generals: A Case Study in Professional Ethics," *Parameters* 38, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 6.

[5] Gen. Anthony Zinni, USMC, (Ret.) Remarks at CDI Board of Directors Dinner, May 12, 2004," Center for Defense Information, 22 May 2004, quoted in Martin L. Cook, "Revolt of the Generals: A Case Study in Professional Ethics," *Parameters* 38, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 6.

Unfortunately, and possibly regrettably, both Cohen and Shelton retired from their positions in 2001, well before the Iraq invasion.

The failure of senior officers to question dubious analyses of intelligence reports and to provide subsequent sound military advice prior to the invasion of Iraq has been thoroughly documented. The issue surfaced most prominently in what has become known as the "Revolt of the Generals." In 2006, six retired flag officers spoke against military policies pursued in Iraq, criticizing the civilian leaders most responsible for them.[6] Not surprisingly, the "revolt" generated as much controversy as did claims of failed generalship. The most obvious criticism was that these officers waited until they were retired before voicing dissent, causing some to wonder where their voices were while on active duty.

In April 2006, retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold publically expressed regret that neither he nor others challenged the actions that led up to the invasion of Iraq more openly:

> Flaws in our civilians is one thing: the failure of the Pentagon's military leaders is quite another. Those are the men who know the hard consequences of war but, with few exceptions, acted timidly when their voices urgently needed to be heard. When they knew the plan was flawed, saw intelligence distorted to justify a rationale for war, or witnessed arrogant micromanagement that at times crippled the military's effectiveness; many leaders who wore the uniform chose inaction.[7]

That same month, General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, offered a parallel, yet somewhat theoretical criticism of his fellow generals, without intimating any wrong doing by senior civilian policymakers or Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. Pace stated, "We had then, and have now, every opportunity to speak our minds, and if we do not, shame on us because the opportunity is there."[8] If the opportunity to speak their minds persisted throughout the war, senior military officers continued to forgo that opportunity in the face of additional contentious decisions. In late 2006, the war in Iraq was on the verge of being lost; General Casey's strategy of transitioning security responsibility to the Iraqi military was failing; and any hope of achieving the U.S. strategic objective of "a democratic Iraq that upholds the rule of law, respects the rights of its people, provides them security, and is an ally in the war on terror" was rapidly slipping away.[9] The increasing problem of sectarian and intra-sectarian violence demonstrated that the Government of Iraq (GOI) could not effectively build a representative democracy in the absence of greater reconciliation. A new strategy was in order.

Early in 2007, one was adopted: "achieve sufficient security to provide the space and time for the Iraqi government to come to grips with the tough decisions its members must make to enable Iraq to move forward."[10] To meet this goal, the U.S. military deployed an additional five U.S. Army brigades (bringing its total to 20) and extended the tours of approximately 4000 Marines already deployed. The force in Iraq, numbering 168,000 by September 2007, employed counterinsurgency practices that sought to underscore the importance of living among the people, improving security

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[6] Don M. Snider, "Dissent and Strategic Leadership of the Military Professions," February 19, 2008, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=849 (accessed March 1, 2014).

[7] Gregory Newbold, "Why Iraq was a Mistake," *Time*, 167, April 17, 2006, 42-43.

[8] General Peter Pace, *DoD News Briefing with Secretary Rumsfeld and General Pace from the Pentagon* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 11, 2006).

[9] George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, January 23, 2007, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/stateoftheunion/2007/index.html

[10] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Hearing to Consider the Nomination of Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, USA, to be General and Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, 110th Cong., 1st sess., January 23, 2007. http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-110shrg42309/html/CHRG-110shrg42309.htm

by wresting sanctuaries from Al Qaeda's control, and disrupting the efforts of the Iranian-supported militia extremists.[11]

Unfortunately, a significant mismatch existed between the military strategy and the political objectives the strategy was designed to achieve. Most troubling about the military strategy and, more importantly, the strategic objectives aligned with the U.S. national goal, was that everything beyond the pressing strategic military objective relied *solely* on the will of the Iraqi Government to conform to governing standards that were absolutely foreign to its institutional history. The U.S. certainly had a role in helping the GOI develop the systems and framework to form their governmental institutions, but to pursue a truly democratic Iraq that shared power and revenues was, and continues to be, a decision *only* for those with the authority and power to govern Iraq. Testifying before Congress, then-Lieutenant General David Petraeus stated:

> Some of the members of this committee have observed that there is no military solution to the problems of Iraq. They are correct. Ultimate success in Iraq will be determined by actions in the Iraqi political and economic arenas on such central issues as governance, the amount of power devolved to the provinces and possibly regions, the distribution of oil revenues, national reconciliation and resolution of sectarian differences, and so on. Success will also depend on improvements in the capacity of Iraq's ministries, in the provision of basic services, in the establishment of the rule of law, and in economic development.[12]

Achieving drastic improvements, reconciliations, and setting conditions to establish democracy, would be phenomenal in the most passive environment. Attempting to achieve significant changes within the security context and political environment of Iraq in 2007 proved virtually impossible. Somewhere within the process of changing strategy and implementing the surge, senior military officials and the Bush administration apparently embraced the *assumption* that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki would deliver on his commitment to take reconciliation seriously and implement change in his national policies and political processes. Unfortunately, that would not be the case.

An alternative view is that no one in the USG administration or anyone among the senior military officials felt compelled to provide a dissenting opinion. Instead of considering alternative approaches, the U.S. "doubled-down" militarily in Iraq on this arguably false assumption. As a result, the U.S. military remained in Iraq for another five years, until late in 2011, having fully achieved *none* of its strategic goals or national security objectives.

Generally speaking, telling people things they do not want to hear is a difficult proposition, even in the most benign of situations. That difficulty compounds exponentially when the situation involves controversial information or contrarian recommendations delivered to powerful senior officials who hold sway over the messenger's career. Strategic leaders cannot be expected to possess the innate ability to *begin* speaking truth to power *after* they have arrived at the highest professional levels—those that require them to provide counsel and advice to their political masters. Senior military leaders must develop that skill much earlier in their careers, long before speaking truth to power becomes an essential component of their work, military action, and U.S. national security.

Learning to speak truth to power early in a career, however, cannot occur unless the environment welcomes candid professional exchange. Leaders at all levels must create a culture in which open, professional dialogue is accepted, expected, and desired. In senior subordinate relationships,

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[11] General David H. Petraeus, Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq, 10 September 2007. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/petraeus-testimony20070910.pdf.

[12] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Hearing to Consider the Nomination of Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, USA, to be General and Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq.

reasonably open communication requires a significant degree of trust both up and down the chain of command.

Because mission command is built on mutual trust, effective mission command can also serve as the foundation for improving professional dialogue and improving human interaction.[13] By understanding the origins of mission command and approaching its implementation from a perspective of changing organizational culture, the Army stands to improve its operational capabilities. In sowing the seeds of true professional dialogue, the Army may yet generate a lasting capacity to speak truth to power.

The Seeds of Mission Command

In 2006, Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Ollivant and First Lieutenant Eric Chewning argued that the combined arms maneuver battalion, partnering with indigenous security forces and living among the population, should be the primary tactical unit upon which COIN operations are organized and conducted.[14] The article was so convincing that it won first place in *Military Review's* 2006 annual writing competition and, more importantly, it captured the attention of General Petraeus.

On January 8, 2007, shortly after it became public that he would succeed General Casey as the commander of all Multinational Forces in Iraq (MNF-I), Petraeus sent an email to Ollivant, then serving as the Plans Chief (G5) for the First Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B), asking if he still believed his thesis and if it could be implemented in Baghdad. Ollivant told Petraeus that he did believe that the fundamental elements of the article formed the operational approach for MND-B's impending security plan *Fardh al-Qanoon* or "Enforcing the Law." This approach would move battalions and their subordinate companies off the Forward Operating Bases and into the communities. Senior commanders would empower company-grade and non-commissioned officers, now in extended daily contact with the population, with authority to secure the populace and improve their quality of life, using whatever innovative techniques these junior leaders deemed necessary and appropriate.[15]

According to Ollivant, "While we cannot transform our hierarchical Army into a fully networked organization overnight, powering down to the lowest practical level will enable the most adaptive commanders to implement a Galula-like solution."[16] The proposal to shift to networked operations was profound for an Army that historically concentrated decision making at the top.[17] Yet, it was not an altogether new concept among some senior Army leaders. General Stanley McChrystal, for example, noted that a similar networked approach had been instrumental in improving the effectiveness of special operations forces in Iraq and Afghanistan in late 2004.[18] Among conventional forces, however, successful application of this approach would require patience and determination at all levels of command.

Many have argued that this operational approach, coupled with the surge of additional combat forces into the Baghdad area of operations (AOR), resulted in a significant decline in violence due

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[13] Michelle Maiese, "Dialogue," *Beyond Intractability,* Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, September 2003, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/dialogue (accessed February 27, 2014).

[14] LTC Douglas A. Ollivant and 1LT Eric D. Chewning, "Producing Victory: Rethinking Conventional Forces in COIN Operations," *Military Review* 86, no. 4 (July-August, 2006): 50.

[15] LTC Douglas A. Ollivant, email from General David H. Petraeus, January 8, 2007, provided to author during telephonic interview, January 31, 2013.

[16] Ollivant, "Producing Victory," 59.

[17] Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), 122.

[18] Stanley A. McChrystal, *My Share of the Task* (New York: Penguin, 2013), 260, iBooks e-book.

largely to the incorporation of local fighters into the security apparatus. In what would grow to become the "Sons of Iraq" program, local men from multiple communities in Baghdad, familiar with their neighborhoods and the foreign AQI affiliates that had infiltrated them, organized into small groups that wrested control of their streets from AQI and continued to patrol and provide security in conjunction with U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Recognizing, supervising, nurturing, and weaving local groups into Baghdad's fragile security fabric was not a task that could be driven, managed or even directed from the upper echelons of command. Rather, it required the initiative of junior leaders operating at the tactical level who understood the unique dynamics of each individual community, as well as the personalities of its governing body, ISF commanders, and a host of other informal local leaders including sheiks, imams, and advisory council members.

Initiative at this level and of this magnitude clearly entailed great risk, not only to the Soldiers who were operating alongside local fighters, many of whom were themselves former low-level insurgents, but also to overall mission success. Such initiative, therefore, had to operate within the bounds of a commander's intent and had to be underwritten by commanders willing to accept the associated risk. Fortunately, both were displayed and opportunities flourished in 2007.

One of the first examples in Iraq where a senior commander underwrote risk of this magnitude occurred in early June 2007. Approximately one week after the first group of local fighters rose up against AQI and began fighting alongside soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry in the Western Baghdad community of Ameriyah, Colonel Chip Daniels (then a Major and serving as the operations officer of 1-5 CAV) was summoned for a morning run with General Petraeus. Petraeus often used morning runs with junior officers to gain unfiltered feedback about areas of particular interest. After updating the commander on the week's progress, Daniels expressed his concern that several members of the unit were nervous about the kind of risk they were assuming. "Do not stop! Do not let our Army stop you; do not let the Iraqi government stop you," Petraeus replied emphatically. "You are doing the right thing and now is the time to take risks."[19]

Instances of empowering junior leaders were not confined solely to general officers enabling field grade officers, majors, and lieutenant colonels. A recent *New York Times* article recounted the story of a young Lieutenant empowered well beyond the responsibilities normally associated with junior rank. Then Lieutenant (now Captain) Brandon Archuleta described one experience when he was approached by his battery commander to help lead a team of representatives in a town council where he supervised the administration of public services, conducted reconciliation talks with tribal elders, and distributed payroll funds to the ISF.[20] "My battery commander and my battalion commander realized they had a big challenge with governance. They knew they couldn't be everywhere at once. It was quite empowering for them to delegate those authorities to me."[21]

The idea that this kind of empowerment, springing from the bold and unique operational approach developed in Iraq in 2007, produced resounding tactical success is assuredly important; yet tactical successes would not be the enduring legacy. This approach with conventional forces—mirroring the similar approach instituted by General McChrystal in counter-terrorism Task Force (TF) 714—clearly demonstrated that Army forces of all types and at all levels could empower subordinates with initiative, exploit their successes, and underwrite the risk associated with inevitable mistakes.

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[19] Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 238-239.
[20] Thomas Shanker, "After Years at War, the Army Adapts to Garrison Life," *New York Times,* January 18, 2014.
[21] Ibid.

Mission Command Takes Root

Some senior leaders took notice and began to take measures to institutionalize this initiative. During his 2010 Kermit Roosevelt Lecture at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), General Martin Dempsey presented his vision for how the Army should organize and operate as it approached the end of a decade of combat and adapted for the future and an increasingly uncertain global environment. His vision included the "need to redefine and rearticulate the command and control war-fighting function and reintroduce it to the force as mission command."[22] For more than three years now, spanning his tenure as the TRADOC Commander, through a short five-month stint as the Army Chief of Staff, to his present responsibilities as the 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey has been promoting mission command. He has emphasized the need to demand that subordinate leaders at all echelons exercise disciplined initiative while acting aggressively and independently to accomplish their missions—a tall order in today's Army.[23]

According to General Dempsey, mission command "implies that collaboration and trust are as important as command and control."[24] That might appear to many as something of an understatement, considering the words that followed: "Importantly, mission command is also about understanding, sharing and mitigating risk. As we decentralize capability, authority and responsibility to lower tactical echelons, we must not decentralize all the risk as well."[25] If the Army truly embraces the concept and philosophy of mission command, then collaboration and trust will become more than simply *important*. If commanders and leaders accept the risk associated with affording junior leaders the authority and responsibility to make decisions that impact mission outcome, then collaboration and trust will be absolutely *essential*.

The challenge will be to harness these experiences and lessons and then translate them back to "Garrison Life" as troop reduction and fiscal austerity reduces training opportunities. After returning from Afghanistan in 2010 and in command of his own company, Captain Archuleta complained that he missed the responsibilities that his superiors had given him in war; and stated that many of his peers who felt similarly simply left active duty for business schools and the private sector.[26]

Currently, despite improvements over the last ten years of combat, the Army is culturally misaligned to exercise the kind of collaboration and trust we need to prepare for the future. At its core, the Army remains a very hierarchical organization. Its historical high power distance is not always conducive to implementing the kind of change that encourages organizations to become more flexible and adaptive.[27] Senior Army leaders who create both the value and the direction of the Army as an organization have instilled an expectation of obedience to orders and adaptation to organizational norms that thwart initiative and effectively limit the acceptance of risk.

As the Army transitions from more than a decade at war, a time when junior leaders enjoyed a great deal of flexibility and initiative as the tactical situation dictated, a return to historical and conventional organizational norms will appear more prominent and will likely increase the divide

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[22] General Martin E. Dempsey, "A Campaign of Learning; Avoiding the Failure of Imagination," *Royal United Services Institute Journal*155, no. 3 (June, 2010): 6-9. http://www.hks.harvard.edu/cchrp/maro/news/2010/Journal_201006_Dempsey1.pdf (accessed September 5, 2013).

[23] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication 3-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 11, 2011), II-2.

[24] Dempsey, "A Campaign of Learning," 8-9.

[25] Ibid., 9.

[26] Shanker, "After Years at War, the Army Adapts to Garrison Life."

[27] Stephen J. Gerras, Leonard Wong, and Charles D. Allen, "Organizational Culture: Applying a Hybrid Model to the U.S. Army," November 2008, http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/dclm/Organizational%20Culture%20Applying%20a%20Hybrid%20Model%20to%20the%20U.S.%20Army%20Nov%2008.pdf (accessed September 5, 2013).

between junior and senior leaders. Unless the Army is able to adapt at the senior levels—loosening at least the appearance of tighter control—junior leaders who have experienced greater flexibility, exercised more initiative, and made tough decisions in combat, will likely not conform well to tighter controls in a garrison environment. Less conformity, of course, will spiral toward tighter controls from the top, and the divide will widen even further. Mutual trust, running both up and down the chain of command, will diminish and the concept of mission command will likely remain just that.

The Way Forward: Nurturing Mission Command to Fruition

If the Army is going to implement the Chairman's vision to become more adept at decentralizing capability and authority, then we must recognized that change, like building mutual trust, takes time. Fortunately, the Chairman has developed a foundation for implementing the types of changes required to adapt Army culture to achieve the desired outcome. General Dempsey's actions over the past three years when viewed through the lens of the Kotter model (Figure 1) indicate that he has: (1) established a sense of urgency, (2) created a guiding coalition through the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCOE), (3) developed a vision and strategy through his previously published White Paper, (4) communicated his vision, and (5) has begun to empower subordinates for broad-based action.

Figure 1: Kotter's Eight Step Process for Creating Major Change[28]

1. Establishing a sense of urgency
2. Creating the guiding coalition
3. Developing a vision and strategy
4. Communicating the change vision
5. Empowering broad-based action
6. Generating short-term wins
7. Consolidating gains and producing more change
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture

If the Army pursues Kotter's model and builds upon General Dempsey's accomplishments, only three steps in the change process remain: generate short term wins, consolidate gains, and anchor new approaches within the culture. Junior leaders have been accorded greater latitude and displayed exceptional initiative and leadership in the complex and ambiguous environments of Iraq and Afghanistan. In essence, the Army has already generated short-term wins and must now continue to recognize, reward, and encourage these junior leaders while opportunity for doing so still exists.

Cultural change takes considerable time and effort. Kotter's model suggests, however, that the Army may be reasonably close to establishing the conditions required for institutionalizing the Chairman's vision. To increase the likelihood of success, the Army should enact Kotter's final two steps by implementing three initiatives: (1) refine training requirements for echelons below division; (2) incorporate feedback from 360-degree assessments into the promotion and command selection processes; and (3) incorporate mission command into all levels of professional education. The first two recommended initiatives facilitate efforts to consolidate gains and produce more change, while the second and third work to anchor those changes within Army culture.

Simply attempting to induce change through Kotter's model, however, is not enough. Focus must be on implementing the *right* things when pursuing the model. All three recommendations align with

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[28] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 1996), 21.

what Schein calls embedding mechanisms. The first two align with "what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis." The final aligns with the "leader's use of teaching and coaching."[29] By implementing these types of changes, the Army can effectively introduce and inscribe new assumptions about how the organization operates. Understanding what this means requires clarity with regard to the best practices for implementing change.

Refining training requirements at the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) and below will further enhance trust establishing efforts between senior and subordinate leaders by empowering field grade officers to craft unit training plans based on their assessments of unit readiness. Currently, training is perceived as being overly burdened by cumbersome requirements generated from arbitrary checklists promulgated by multiple layers of bureaucracy from higher echelons of authority that never actually interact with the units in question. Trusting leaders who have been in the Army for ten to twenty years to develop training plans based on unit capabilities, while still retaining the rigor required to assure readiness, removes an unnecessary interdependency between small units and big Army. Moreover, providing mid-level leaders the opportunity to express their training priorities, specifically in terms of what their formations do not need to do, allows leaders latitude of judgment and increased responsibility. In short, this initiative provides emerging senior leaders with regulated opportunities to speak truth to power and take responsibility for doing so.

Consolidating gains and producing more change is a key tenet in Kotter's process. Organizations are better able to build trust if they eliminate policies and structures that do not align with one another or the transformation vision.[30] Brigade and battalion commanders who have the latitude to train their subordinate formations will be more likely to "power-down" that latitude over time as senior leaders display the willingness to accept the risk associated with freedom to execute professional responsibility. Junior-level leaders will be accountable and will have to bear the consequences of risk, but that will establish a heightened sense of accountability, increased diligence, and enhanced professionalism.

Incorporating 360-degree feedback into the promotion and command selection processes institutionalizes the concept of professional dialogue, encourages speaking truth to power, and should be accomplished through two specific methods. First, leaders at all levels must be required to discuss a synopsis of their 360-degree feedback with subordinates two levels down. Second, senior-raters must be required to review the results of their subordinate leaders' 360-degree feedback and consider that feedback when penning remarks on their officers' evaluation report (OER).

The first of these two initiatives should establish open communication between leaders and those that they lead, increasing the likelihood of achieving true dialogue on key topics involving direct and organizational leadership skills. By displaying the willingness to describe and discuss what junior leaders assess as their strengths and weaknesses, even if it is institutionally directed, senior leaders build a sense of trust and confidence at all levels up and down the chain of command. That then establishes the conditions for senior leaders to analyze a subordinate's 360-degrees assessment and incorporate that feedback when providing written comments on the OER. These initiatives promote the final two steps of Kotter's model. They help to consolidate gains by developing people who can implement that change vision and they anchor these new approaches within the culture by promoting better performance through subordinate-oriented behavior.[31] When leaders at all levels understand—from their subordinates' perspective—the implications of their actions and leadership

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[29] Stephen Gerras, "Organizational Culture".

[30] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 21, 141-142.

[31] Ibid., 21, 157.

methods, they are more likely to be receptive to feedback and to provide constructive feedback to others.

Finally, incorporating the tenets of mission command into the officer and non-commissioned officer professional education system is an enduring step that will ultimately anchor change into the military culture. A key component of this process is to develop effective ways to focus on leader-development and senior-leader succession.[32] Because the Army is an organization that promotes from within, and all members of the organization begin at the entry-level, this concept carries heightened importance. By incorporating the fundamental aspects of mission command into the educational system, the Army establishes the means to continue to communicate the change vision throughout the organization in a manner that is accessible at each echelon. Young leaders in their basic non-commissioned officers' courses, along with emerging senior leaders at a senior service college, will receive messages targeted at their specific role in the process. By utilizing this approach, the Army will ably target all significant stakeholders, from colonel to corporal while maximizing institutional acceptance of change.

Not represented in this change scenario, however, are the Army's most senior officers who must ensure that desired changes take root and become culturally embedded. To meet this goal, General Dempsey actively communicates his message to these leaders, utilizes his guiding coalition that includes fellow general officers at Fort Leavenworth (MCCOE) and TRADOC to help propagate the message, and supervises the revision of Joint doctrine to inform and guide supporting Army doctrine.

To be successful, these reinforcing mechanisms must be received and supported by the senior Army leaders. If executed correctly, comprehensively, and with appropriate senior leader involvement, the Army can build enduring trust among leaders at all levels, institutionalize the concept of mission command, help the Chairman achieve his vision for the future force, rejuvenate professional dialogue, and promote the artful skill of speaking truth to power. Ideally, achieving these objectives will reestablish a culture of professional forthrightness in the Army and, over time, prevent the kind of tacit complicity to misguided policies observed at senior levels in both Vietnam and Iraq.

Conclusion

Hindsight is reportedly 20/20. That is only partially true, however. While professionals can certainly *see* what happened by studying the past, *understanding why* it happened is frequently elusive without close investigation. Thoughtful, unbiased analysis is required. The true importance of hindsight lies in learning from past mistakes and then fulfilling professional obligations to implement changes that help ensure similar mistakes do not occur in the future. Pursuing cultural change in the Army, particularly through effective inculcation and implementation of mission command, can better equip Soldiers and leaders to adapt in the contemporary strategic environment. Building upon the lessons of the last twelve years, nurturing and fostering the level of initiative and professional trust that young leaders have grown accustomed to, will help carry the force into the next generation, increasing the capacity, combat capabilities, and flexibility of Soldiers in a complex and ambiguous world. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly of all, increased trust will promote more frequent and higher quality professional dialogue between leaders and those who are led. With time, honest and frank professional exchanges will build the kind of confidence necessary to voice dissent and speak truth to power both within and external to the military organization.

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[32] Ibid., 21.
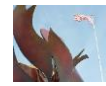
Conflict Prevention:
A Cautionary Analysis

Michael Robert Butterwick

In the wake of Afghanistan and Iraq, the United Kingdom (UK) is pursuing a preventative approach to conflict in order to avoid embroilment in protracted military operations. To be successful, the UK must fully understand what prevention entails. A purely structural analysis of conflict may not be sufficient. Both hard power and soft power are key to effective prevention. To be successful the UK must remain a credible military power willing to act globally. Generating political will is essential and decisive. UK political leaders must explain to an increasingly skeptical public why early intervention, possibly involving military force, is vital to the UK's national interests. Prevention is not simple. It requires significant moral courage backed by political and financial investment.

Keywords: *Conflict Prevention, Strategy, United Kingdom National Security Policy*

After bloody, costly and controversial conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United Kingdom's (UK) political leaders have sought fresh approaches to securing the UK's national interests without embroilment in protracted military operations. The UK's 2011 National Security Strategy (NSS), called for a "radical transformation in the way we think about national security and [how we] organize ourselves to protect it."[1] This transformation emphasizes conflict prevention and the ability to "identify crises emerging overseas early, to respond rapidly to prevent them . . . and to tackle the causes of instability, fragility and conflict upstream."[2]

Conflict prevention is not new. In 2001, Kofi Annan urged world leaders to move from a "culture of reaction to a culture of prevention."[3] He spoke in the wake of the international community's failure to prevent genocide in Rwanda, stop bitter ethnic war in Bosnia, and arrest Somalia's descent into

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[1] Her Majesty's Government, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2010), 3.

[2] Her Majesty's Government, *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2011), 18.

[3] Alex Bellamy, "Conflict Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect," *Global Governance,* No.2 (April-June 2008): 137.

state failure.[4] Indeed the concept is enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter which sets out to "maintain international peace and security and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace."[5] Since 2001, the concept has been increasingly institutionalized through the creation of new positions (e.g., The UN established Office of the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide), institutions (e.g., the EU created Early Warning and Fusion Centre), and practices (e.g., African Union's Panel of the Wise intervention in a series of post-2007 African crises).[6] As Ban Ki Moon put it, conflict prevention "is without doubt one of the smartest investments we can make."[7]

Yet civil war rages in Syria; Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia all teeter on the edge of instability; South Sudan is divided by bitter conflict; and violence has erupted in Ukraine. Clearly, conflict prevention is not a simple strategy. It requires financial, political and moral investment. As the UK's failure to intervene in Syria indicates, generating the will for early intervention may be more problematic than the NSS suggests. Is the UK guilty of seeking to avoid protracted warfare on the cheap?

This article explores the national implications of adopting a preventative approach to conflict. If the UK is to be prepare conceptually, physically, and morally for this transformation, more work must be done in terms of (a) defining conflict prevention and it is parameters (what do we mean by "conflict prevention," are we clear about which conflicts we are trying to prevent and why?), (b) exploring implications for its implementation (In what "ways" will prevention be conducted? When will we need to act and for how long? How will we generate the will to act in advance of a crisis? Do we have the strategic patience that may be required? What "means" will impact success? What instruments of national power will require investment? How must the instruments, particularly the military instrument, be organized?), and (c) embracing complexity. Doing nothing may often be the easy political option but it is not necessarily the right one. Exploring implications helps ensure that "preventing conflicts upstream" represents much more than empty words.

Conflict Prevention

"Conflict prevention" is generally regarded as an interventionist approach based on the assumption that problematic structural dynamics cause outbreaks of violence within fragile societies. Change the dynamics to prevent the conflict. Build institutions through which disagreements can be channeled without recourse to violence. Seek to develop the rule of law, more representative forms of governance, and a more equitable distribution of wealth. Under this strategic umbrella, the military role serves, in part, to professionalize the security sector while ensuring that security forces act in ways that reduce the risk of violence rather than fuel it.[8]

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[4] See for example, Boutros Boutros Ghali, "The timely application of preventative diplomacy is the most desirable and efficient means of erasing tensions before they result in conflict" or Dag Hammarskjold who coined the term "preventative diplomacy" in 1960. Both quoted in A. Williams, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: From Rhetoric to Reality* (Canberra: Australian Civil-Military Centre, 2012), 1.

[5] Christoph Mikulaschek and Paul Romita, "Conflict Prevention: Toward More Effective Multilateral Strategies." *Rapporteurs*, (December 2011), 2.

[6] Robert Muggah and Natasha White, *Is there a preventive action renaissance? The policy and practice of preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention*. (NOREF, Norwegian Peace building Resource Centre, Report, February 2013), 7.

[7] Williams, *Conflict Prevention in Practice*, 2.

[8] Numerous articles exist concerning the different concepts of "conflict prevention." For further analysis, see Alice Ackerman, "The Idea and Practice of Conflict Prevention," *Journal of Peace Research,* no.40 (May 2003), 339-347 or Williams, *Conflict Prevention in Practice*, 2.

"Structural prevention" underpins the UK's approach. The UK's cornerstone document, Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS) defines both "stability" and "conflict" but not specifically conflict "prevention." Stability—the desired end state—is characterized as a set of "political systems which are representative and legitimate, capable of managing conflict and change peacefully, and societies in which human rights and the rule of law are respected, basic needs are met, security established and opportunities for development are open to all." The challenge is for the UK to address "violent conflict" that emerges when individuals and groups have "incompatible needs, interests and beliefs."[9] This approach to conflict prevention targets the root cause(s) of instability, not merely symptoms.

The BSOS attempts to establish the attractiveness of pursing conflict prevention. Warfare, it states, is "development in reverse" and "conflict deprives millions of their basic rights to life and security." As violence spreads to more stable areas through refugee flows, terrorist activity, and organized crime, the UK's security is negatively impacted. Conflict costs the world economy up to 12.6 billion dollars a year, undermining trade and commerce. Restoration of stability through deployment of UK armed forces entails significant financial and political costs associated with stability restoration.[10] Minimizing costs chimes well with the NSS' declaration that "our most urgent task is to return our nation's finances to a sustainable footing."[11] Prevention rather than reaction makes moral, political and financial sense.

The BSOS analysis is insufficient, however. Neither "radical" nor "transformative," it fails to tackle the hard questions: Under this program, will the UK really be less likely to need to intervene militarily in the future? If the UK focuses on the structural causes of conflict, what other drivers of conflict must be addressed? Is violent conflict simply a result of an inability to manage "incompatible needs, interests and beliefs," or are there other elements in play? If some conflict can be usefully explained via this lens (e.g., the 'Arab Spring' or violence in South Sudan), what about conflicts with incompatible parameters (e.g., the motivation of Saddam Hussein in 1990, the tension on the Korean Peninsula, or Indian and Pakistani disagreements over Kashmir)? Is a preventative approach grounded in structural interventions inevitably going to fall short?

Likewise, the BSOS falls short of addressing the relationship between intra-state and inter-state conflict and change. Clausewitz comments that, "War is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means."[12] A one-dimensional view of conflict can be disastrous, even to the point of instigating war. As Thucydides noted, "the growth of the power of Athens and the alarm which this inspired in Sparta made war inevitable."[13] For Spartan leaders "fear, honor and interest" were pre-eminent in their calculations. Athens' decision to conduct a calamitous expedition to Sicily resulted from passionate debates about Athenian honor inspired by the oratory of men such as Alcibiades and Demosthenes.[14] Today, tackling instability between states is as central to the UK's interests as is tackling instability within states.

Personality, leadership, and cold calculations of interests all play a role in causing violent conflict. Bosnia may have stemmed from an inability to resolve ethnic tensions but it took the rhetoric of Milosevic and Karadzic to turn festering discontent into bloody civil war. If the UK is to help "shape

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[9] Her Majesty's Government, *Building Stability,* 5.

[10] Ibid., 8.

[11] Her Majesty's Government, *A Strong Britain,* 14.

[12] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 87.

[13] Robert B, Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*. (New York: The Free Press,1996), 80, 1,140.

[14] Ibid., 6,18.

a stable world," then the preventative approach must address each element in light of its position in and effect on the larger geopolitical environment.[15] Doing so requires a wholly different toolkit. Diplomacy backed by effective deterrence must be part of that kit.

The role of deterrence and diplomacy in preventing conflict is hardly new, yet the UK faces new fiscal and political constraints with austerity threatening credibility. By 2020 the British Army's strength will be at its lowest level since 1850.[16] The Royal Navy lacks an aircraft carrier until 2018 at the earliest. And, significantly, defense is not immune from future cuts.[17] In short, the jam is already spread very thin. Credibility is also a function of political will. When the UK joined the invasion of Iraq, traditional allies questioned the UK's wisdom but respected the military muscle on display.[18] Conversely, the UK's unwillingness to intervene in Syria caused consternation among Gulf allies. The Prime Minister's insistence that there would be "no boots on the ground" in either Libya or Syria was important for the domestic audience, but raised questions for allies and adversaries alike.[19] When the UAE recently cancelled an order to buy UK Typhoons it may have concluded that the UK was no longer a reliable security partner.[20] The narrative of the UK's military decline and its unwillingness to act must change if the UK is to be serious about prevention.

Credible deterrence and effective diplomacy are essential components of any conflict prevention strategy, but they cannot stand alone. The character of conflict is changing. What relevance has a credible military deterrence to preventing international terrorism? Great statesmen and conventional military forces are impotent weapons in the face of cyber attack or organized crime networks such as the narcotics cartels in Mexico. Transnational factors such as poverty and climate change also have the potential to cause violence both now and in the future.[21] If conflict is changing then prevention strategies must adapt and adjust.[22]

If the UK is seeking to avoid costly embroilment in inconclusive military campaigns, then the UK must be able to prevent violent conflict in all manifestations. If the causes of conflict are complex then our preventative approach must be complex too. A focus solely on upstream structural prevention will not achieve the results the UK anticipates or desires. Rather the UK must be able to intervene to prevent conflict across a broad spectrum ranging from structural indicators of impending intra-state violence to diplomatic signs of inter-state war. To do this the UK must ensure

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[15] The UK's core objectives are a "secure and resilient UK" that is "shaping a stable world." Her Majesty's Government, *A Strong Britain*, 10.

[16] Louisa Brook-Holland and Tom Rutherford, *Army 2020, (London:* House of Commons Library 2012), http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/SN06396/army-2020 (accessed March 20, 2014).

[17] See the UK's First Sea Lord's comments at, "Navy needs to be credible says Admiral Sir George Zambellas," BBC website, February 10, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-26115095 (accessed February 27, 2014).

[18] Drawn from a conversation with officials at the British Embassy in Riyadh in 2010.

[19] See for example: "David Cameron: There is 'no question' of an international invasion of Libya." *The Telegraph* website, April 17, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8457019/David-Cameron-There-is-no-question-of-an-international-invasion-of-Libya.html (accessed January 10, 2014).

[20] See for example: "Blow for Britain and BAE Systems as UAE rules out Eurofighter deal." *The Telegraph* website, December 20, 2013, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/epic/badot/10528636/Blow-for-Britain-and-BAE-Systems-as-UAE-rules-out-Eurofighter-deal.html (accessed January 10, 2013). See also Saudi reactions to lack of US and UK action in Syria, "Saudi Arabia officially rejects Security Council seat," *New York Times* website, November 14, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/world/saudi-arabia-officially-rejects-security-council-seat.html?_r=0. (accessed January 10, 2014).

[21] B. Rubin and B. Jones, "Prevention of Violent Conflict: Tasks and Challenges for the United Nations." *Global Governance,* 13, (2007), 401. Consider, for example, the potential for conflict due to melting polar ice caps which exposes new maritime routes, fishing areas and other resource opportunities in the Arctic Ocean. See, "Russia to establish Arctic military command." *The Diplomat* website, February 2014, http://thediplomat.com/2014/02/russia-to-establish-arctic-military-command/ (accessed March 01, 2014).

[22] Muggah and White, *Is there a preventive action renaissance?* 2.

that its instruments of soft power are matched by the instruments of hard power. The development "carrot" must be backed by the military "stick."

Of course the UK cannot prevent conflicts everywhere.[23] Instead, the UK must develop a robust mechanism to identify where future conflicts might take place and why they matter. After all, if the UK is going to prevent conflict its first action must be to understand it. A start has been made in this area. The NSS specified that the UK will generate an early warning mechanism derived from "all sources" that looks out 5 to 20 years.[24] This risk-based approach is proving to be effective in ensuring that countries at risk of instability are identified, cross government strategies are developed, and the National Security Council (NSC) receives due warning. The UK is not alone in identifying this requirement.[25] The EU's Early Warning and Fusion Centre is a sophisticated initiative to identify trends in global conflict. ECOWAS, the AU and the OSCE have all invested in similar mechanisms.

Early warning, however, does not equate with early action. [26] Commentators predicted the catastrophes of Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur but despite this, little effective action was taken in time.[27] Generating political will is decisive. Political will unlocks resources. In the current context, however, generating political will is deeply problematic. The scars from Afghanistan and Iraq run deep. How deep is hard to quantify. The UK acted boldly in Libya, albeit only after violence had erupted and the Gadaffi regime had begun to attack civilians. Yet the language of the Syrian debate, the need for the Government to emphasize "no boots on the ground," and a growing debate across Whitehall as to the utility of military force and land power in particular, all point to a dramatically changing political landscape.[28] Within Whitehall the fear of being dragged in to new conflicts limits ambition.[29] Yet prevention requires ambition if it is to work. Targeted development activity, defense engagement, and quiet diplomacy are all vital prevention tools though they may not have the desired effect.[30]

Doing more requires public engagement. Early intervention will require political leaders to gain the trust of a skeptical public. Arguments should not be based on graphic media imagery of suffering.[31] Rather, early intervention should be based on predictions by intelligence services as to

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[23] SDSR states, "We will be more selective in our use of the Armed Forces, deploying them decisively at the right time but only where key UK national interests are at stake; where we have a clear strategic aim; where the likely political, economic and human costs are in proportion to the likely benefits, where we have a viable exit strategy." Her Majesty's Government, S*ecuring Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review*. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 2010), 17.

[24] Her Majesty's Government, *A Strong Britain,* 34.

[25] See USIPs work in this area at the USIP website, http://www.usip.org/events/second-annual-conference-preventing-violent-conflict. (accessed January 06, 2014). In addition see the conclusions of The Genocide Prevention Task Force at Madeline Albright and William Cohen, *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for US Policy Makers*, (Washington DC: US Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008) 111-115.

[26] The Genocide Prevention Task Force recommended that "warnings of potential genocide or mass atrocities must be made an automatic trigger for a policy review." This would prove useful but it still misses the point. The Genocide Prevention Task Force at Albright and Cohen, *Preventing Genocide,* 111-115.

[27] Bellamy, "Conflict Prevention," 137.

[28] See the language of the Syria debate at "Syria and the Use of Chemical Weapons" Parliament website, August 29, 2013, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130829/debtext/130829-0001.htm. (accessed March 06, 2014).

[29] Personal observations whilst working in MOD 2009-11.

[30] See for example, "UK fund to prevent global conflict fails to make major impact," *The Guardian* website, July 13, 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2012/jul/13/uk-fund-prevent-conflict-impact, (accessed February 20, 2014). The report highlights the findings of an independent report into the Conflict Pool at http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Evaluation-of-the-Inter-Departmental-Conflict-Pool-ICAI-Report1.pdf. (accessed February 20, 2014).

[31] S. Stedman, "Alchemy for a New World Order: Overselling Preventative Diplomacy." *Foreign Affairs,* 74, no. 3, (1995) 14-20.

the likely trends within a country or region. The problem for the UK is that trust has been broken by the Iraq war. The Chilcott Inquiry has yet to report, but the public narrative of Iraq and WMD is one of lies and intelligence manipulation.[32] Reestablishing trust is an essential pre-requisite for prevention.

The problem goes deeper, however. While routine engagement is likely to go unnoticed, more sizeable activity which risks soldiers' lives may not. By intervening militarily in advance of a crisis the UK will be lowering the threshold for military force.[33] Political leaders will not be able to use the narrative that military intervention stems from the failure of diplomacy and is a matter of last resort. Military intervention could even be the instrument of first choice.[34] Former U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, emphasized this, commenting that "the military may be the best and sometimes the first tool" for policy makers in a crisis.[35] Political leaders will need to change the public's perception about the purpose of military force. This debate has not yet occurred with the British public. If and when it does, political leaders will be unlikely to get an easy ride.[36]

Military intervention is not the only instigator of controversy. The development focus of the BSOS requires the UK to continue to be a global leader in international aid. Currently the UK spends about $13.6Bn per year on aid and is the world's second biggest donor in absolute terms. By percentage of GDP the UK stands at number 6.[37] This is impressive. It is also contentious. When the Coalition committed to preserving the overseas aid budget in 2010 despite sweeping cuts to the rest of government spending, heated debate ensued. As soldiers have been made redundant, the UK has been ravaged by flooding, and investigative reporters have exposed wasteful aid projects, the tabloid press debate has become embittered.[38] Certainty of funding is critical to effective development initiatives. If the narrative of the UK's commitment to overseas aid changes then once again the UK's credibility will be at stake.

Clearly, conflict prevention is a factor of will. Much of what the UK will do may occur without notice by the NSC. However, when the UK needs to be decisive and act early—especially if military force is involved—questions will be raised and they will require an appropriate response from political leaders. A strategic document that declares that the UK will "prevent conflicts upstream" means nothing to a public tired of war, suspicious of intelligence, and concerned by wasteful aid

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[32] See for example, "Iraq war the greatest intelligence failure in living memory," *The Telegraph* website, March 18, 2013, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/9937516/Iraq-war-the-greatest-intelligence-failure-in-living-memory.html. (accessed February 20, 2014).

[33] Goro Matsumura, "Conflict Prevention in the Information Age: The Role of Military in Crisis." (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2001) 16.

[34] See the argument for early use of military force by Michael Lund, "Conflict Prevention: Theory in Pursuit of Policy and Practice," in J. Bercovitch, V. Kremenyuk and I.W. Zartman eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, (London: SAGE, 2009) 306.

[35] See Mullens' speech on Military Strategy to Kansas State University, March 2010 at http://www.cfr.org/defense-strategy/admiral-mullens-speech-military-strategy-kansas-state-university-march-2010/p21590. (accessed March 03, 2014).

[36] Indeed SDSR acknowledges this when it comments on the limits guiding the use of UK Armed Forces. This limitation drives the desire for prevention while restricting utility. See Her Majesty's Government, *Securing Britain,* 17.

[37] Figures derived from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/aidtopoorcountriesslipsfurtherasgovernmentstightenbudgets.htm. (accessed February 26, 2014).

[38] See for example the following articles: "How can a nation ring fence foreign aid but slash defence? We reveal how your money is misspent...and even makes poverty worse." *Mail online* September 17, 2010, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1313139/How-nation-ring-fence-foreign-aid-slash-defence-In-week-exposed-aid-officials-living-high-hog-shocking-investigation-reveals-money-misspent--makes-poverty-worse.html. (accessed February 28, 2014) or "Stop wasting aid budget on wealthy countries ministers told," *The Telegraph* February 16, 2014, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10642649/Stop-wasting-aid-budget-on-wealthy-countries-ministers-told.html. (accessed February 28, 2014).

spending. This moral issue requires a much more detailed explanation as to why the UK is pursuing the preventative approach and what a preventative approach actually entails.[39]

Implications for Implementation

The UK is unlikely to be able to compel adversaries or have sufficient resources to change societies unilaterally.[40] We cannot act alone. Prevention must be multi-lateral. Unfortunately, as the failure to prevent civil war in Syria has dramatically shown, international consensus is often elusive.

International actors must agree on the issues at hand. Differing perspectives will yield differing responses; national interests will guide actions. Russian responses to the violence in Syria have angered western politicians but their genesis lies in a rational calculation of Russian interests in the region. Is the UK any different? Consider, for example, the UK response to the Arab Spring. Whilst welcoming democratic change, the UK trod a careful path with its Gulf allies to ensure that its rhetoric did not affect commercial interests, military basing, or the oil supply. Yet in Libya the UK acted decisively. Was this a reaction to Gadaffi's barbaric actions or pragmatism to ensure that post-Gadaffi the UK could benefit from the investments it had made in Libya since 2004?

Prevention also challenges sovereignty. This operates at two levels: national and international. First political leaders within fragile countries often wish to avoid internationalizing their internal disputes. Resolving conflicts may require bestowing legitimacy upon opposition groups.[41] Leaders may be in denial as to the risks they face.[42] Intervention may undermine the patronage networks upon which political leaders rely.[43] All these dynamics were at play in Yemen prior to President Saleh's removal in 2012. The UK sought to arrest Yemen's decline by developing more accountable governance, promoting the rule of law, and economic diversification. For Saleh the objective was simply personal survival. His priority was defeating secessionist claims in the south and Al-Huthi rebellions in the north. AQ-AP's presence was irritating but drew western aid and thus his activity to remove them was limited.[44] Economic restructuring and governance reform required a level of political risk he was not prepared to take. The result was stagnation and ultimately revolt which descended into violence in 2011. Second, the international community remains divided on the principle of intervention in internal affairs. The "Responsibility to Protect" was agreed at the UN World Summit in 2005.[45] Yet its implementation remains controversial. China and Russia continue to prevaricate and emerging powers such as Brazil, Argentina and India remain wary of policies that challenge the principles of sovereignty. This concern provided the narrative for Chinese and Russian inaction over Syria. [46]

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[39] For an in depth discussion of the limitations of political will see: Richard H Solomon and Lawrence Woocher, "Confronting the Challenge of Political Will." United States Institute of Peace, March 18, 2010, http://www.usip.org/publications/confronting-the-challenge-political-will, (accessed March 01, 2014).

[40] See, for example, the conclusions of an independent report on UK conflict prevention spending: http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Evaluation-of-the-Inter-Departmental-Conflict-Pool-ICAI-Report1.pdf (accessed February 20, 2014). Even UK actions in Sierra Leone occurred within the framework of a long standing UN mission. See for example, "Sierra Leone: one place where Tony Blair remains an unquestioned hero," *The Guardian,* online article, April 17, 2010, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/apr/18/sierra-leone-international-aid-blair (accessed February 20, 2014).

[41] B. Rubin and B. Jones, "Prevention of Violent Conflict: Tasks and Challenges for the United Nations." *Global Governance,* 13, (2007), 400.

[42] Mikulaschek and Romita, "Conflict Prevention," 9.

[43] Williams, "Conflict Prevention," 3.

[44] See, for example, leaders "hedging" to ensure continued aid in Mikulaschek and Romita, "Conflict Prevention," 17.

[45] Ibid., 3

[46] Williams, "Conflict Prevention" 5.

Does this mean that multi-lateral prevention is inherently flawed? Not necessarily. In Macedonia, the UN and OSCE acted decisively and in concert to ensure that ethnic violence did not spill over from neighboring Bosnia.[47] The OSCE's work in Estonia following the collapse of the Soviet Union prevented simmering ethnic tensions from becoming violent.[48] Regional organizations, in particular the AU, have opted for conflict prevention. The creation of the African Standby Force is a testament of intent.[49] The EU is similarly investing in conflict prevention. International norms are shifting.[50] The UK must seize this opportunity. The "Responsibility to Protect" may be beyond the institutional capacity of the UN at the moment, but its adoption has signaled a direction for the future. If the UK is committed to a preventative approach then it must continue exerting influence to shape international norms. The UK must champion the "Responsibility to Protect." It must also encourage regional bodies such as the AU to develop their preventative capabilities further.[51] Achieving international consensus may be problematic, but that should not justify inaction.

Coherence internationally is important but coherence domestically is a necessity. Whole of government approaches rather than departmental stovepipes are essential in generating effective strategies.[52] The UK has learned hard lessons from Afghanistan and Iraq, but the culture of working across Government appears to have become ingrained into the British governmental psyche. The creation of the NSC in 2011, the establishment of the Stabilisation Unit in 2007, and also the presence of a myriad of other cross-Whitehall teams, stand as evidence that the UK understands the value of the comprehensive approach.[53] My own experience of working on Yemen 2009-2011, highlighted that the comprehensive approach was not just based upon formal processes but rather was embedded in daily informal discussions between desk officers. This led to deeper understanding, a greater willingness to compromise, and the generation of trust at the strategic level.[54] As always, more can be done but the UK is pursuing the right path in this regard. Two areas remain problematic, however.

First, resources must be aligned with strategic ends. The UK has created the tri-departmental Conflict Pool to fund prevention work. This pool ensures that country based preventative projects are underpinned by specific resources.[55] At the local level the fund is important, but its overall impact

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[47] Alice Ackerman, "Managing Conflicts Non-Violently Through Preventative Action: The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." *Journal of Conflict Studies,* 19, no. 1, (1999). This operation stands as a much quoted example of how conflict prevention can work. Ackerman suggests that a combination of UN, OSCE and other NGO actions were combined with the will of the Government and people of Macedonia to avoid ethnic conflict. Moderate behavior by ethnic leaders and institutional reform all helped to prevent rhetoric fuelling tension.

[48] Williams, "Conflict Prevention," 4.

[49] In addition ECOWAS was instrumental in preventing escalating violence in Guinea in 2009. See Muggah and White, *Is there a preventive action renaissance? 7.*

[50] Ibid., 1.

[51] Ibid., 8.

[52] Lund, "Conflict Prevention," 296.

[53] See, for example, cross government organizations such as the Cross Whitehall Afghanistan Group which seeks to pull together policy on Afghanistan with experts from the MOD, FCO and DfID embedded. Also see how the Cabinet Office draws personnel on secondment from the three main departments and the Treasury to ensure expertise pooling on key issues. See the Stabilisation Unit's website for further details on its work at http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/. (accessed March 01, 2014).

[54] The physical of geography of Whitehall helps. With the MOD facing the Cabinet Office which stands next to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office which itself stands next door to HM Treasury with the Department for International Development a short 20 minute walk away ensures that informal contact is easy. During the Yemen strategy creation process informal discussion at desk level enabled issues to be resolved, wording to be amended and decision making at more senior levels to be enhanced.

[55] See the online guidance for the Conflict Pool at, "Conflict Pool, Strategic Guidance," https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200169/Conflict_Pool_Strategic_Guidance_FINAL.pdf. (accessed February 20, 2014).

has often been limited.[56] Conflict prevention is not simply a result of a series of well-meaning aid projects, it relies as much on hard power as on soft. Departmental turf wars over budgets are the stuff of government and it is wholly unrealistic to expect this to change. If prevention is to be the *approach* of the UK, however, political leaders must understand that prevention is actually funded by more than prevention specific funds. Reductions to the diplomatic footprint, cuts to the fighting capability of the UK's armed forces, and damage to the UK's international standing, will all impact preventative capability. Political leaders must fund the approach not just the activity if prevention is to succeed.

Second, a failure to work in a comprehensive fashion at the tactical level could undermine strategic effect. For the military, this will require new thinking. To be relevant, the Joint Force must contain a balance of hard *and* soft capabilities. Army 2020 is a bold starting point for the type of organizational change that is required. The creation of a Reactive Force (RF) focused on warfighting and an Adaptive Force (AF) focused on engagement and stabilization could make a significant contribution to prevention.[57] The RF must be capable and credible and the AF must be useful. The AF must be culturally aware, regionally aligned, and knowledgeable professional forces who can partner with indigenous forces effectively. Clumsy actions can entail strategic implications.[58] Given the decentralized nature of likely missions, the UK needs sustained investment in specialist training, often overseas, personnel procedures aligned to create continuity, and low level leadership of the highest order. The Army must now place institutional value on the tools of soft power. Future cuts to defense spending cannot be ruled out. The easy option will be to target the AF. To do so could have a significant effect on its moral component, however. If the perception is that the AF is undervalued, the net effect on the utility of the AF will be devastating.

If the military is to change then so too must their civilian colleagues. The effective work of the PRTs in Afghanistan and the International Stabilisation Response Team in Libya has provided the UK with a blueprint for cross government approaches to stabilization.[59] The key now is not to regress to type. Cross government teams working at the tactical level under a unified leadership must be the norm. The model of stabilization response must be applied to upstream conflict prevention as well. This requires the same attitude to risk pre-conflict as it typifies post-conflict. If the UK cannot conduct cross-government prevention work in dangerous places, then the desired effect is unlikely.[60] Prevention will not be risk free.

The timing of prevention is key. The UK uses the language of preventing conflicts "upstream," but fails to specify how early in a conflict cycle "upstream" occurs, and whether "upstream" is always the right time to act. Early action is designed to address the structural grievances that can lead to

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[56] See for example, "UK fund to prevent global conflict fails to make major impact," *The Guardian* online article, July 13, 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2012/jul/13/uk-fund-prevent-conflict-impact. (accessed February 20, 2014). The report highlights the findings of an independent report into the Conflict Pool at http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Evaluation-of-the-Inter-Departmental-Conflict-Pool-ICAI-Report1.pdf. (accessed February 20, 2014).

[57] The British Army, *Transforming the British Army; Modernising to Face an Unpredictable Future*. (Andover: CGS Design Studio, 2012) 3.

[58] The emphasis on pre-deployment training for Afghanistan on cultural awareness and preventing "green on blue" incidents was profound. From my own observations as CO 2RRF, 2011-2013.

[59] See the post deployment report of the Libya International Stabilisation Team at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67470/libya-isrt-June2011.pdf. (accessed February 22, 2014).

[60] UK activity in Yemen for example is limited on account of the difficult situation on the ground. See for example the notes at para entitled, "what will we be stop doing?" in the DfID Yemen Operation Plan 2012-2015, (London: DfID, August 2012), 2 at, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67341/yemen-2012.pdf. (accessed March 01, 2014). It is important to question whether this is acceptable if the UK is pursuing a preventative approach? If so what does it mean for the UK's risk appetite?

conflict. Intervening late in the conflict cycle is much harder. By that point, positions have become embittered, emotions are running high, and options are more limited. Conflict may still be averted, but the causes may linger indefinitely.[61] Early intervention theory is compelling and has enjoyed some success. Following violence during the disputed 2008 elections in Kenya, for example, the UN and AU proactively sought to avoid a repeat for the 2012 elections through a coordinated series of interventions drawn from the lessons of 2008. The elections passed peacefully. The key was political will, a desire by Kenyans to avoid violence, and an identifiable activity around which to plan: the elections.[62]

Early intervention in the abstract—without an identifiable 'moment'—however, is more problematic. The earlier the intervention the more difficult the generation of favorable political will. Conflict analysis is also more likely to be disputed. Will the fragile state simply muddle along? Will the grievances actually lead to conflict? [63] The outcome is often piecemeal preventive activity which fails to deliver the required impact.[64] On the other hand intervening late when violence is occurring is difficult. When UK politicians voted against intervention in Syria, the debate centered on what the UK could actually do to solve the conflict. The time for peaceful resolution had passed. These examples suggest there may be a "sweet moment" for intervention, perhaps when enough evidence exists of "danger ahead" to mobilize political will, yet well before widespread violence has erupted. Identifying that moment requires careful analysis, intuition, and bold leadership. Missing the moment in the face of the impetus to "do nothing" could be overwhelming.

Another consideration is ensuring that interventions are well targeted. The principle of 'first do no harm' applies. Inappropriate, ill-timed intervention holds the power to fuel potential conflict rather than halt it.[65] In Kosovo in 1999, for example, NATO air activity provided a catalyst for ethnic violence. Chadian peacekeepers operating in the Central African Republic have been accused of bias at best and war crimes at worst.[66] As the crisis in Ukraine has unfolded we question the extent to which the EU's economic package actually helped to create the political dynamics which ultimately led to the current perilous situation.[67]

Security co-operation activity adds to the complexity. Reforming the security sector is important to prevention, yet proceeds with mixed effect. During 2011-2012, for example, protestors across the Middle East and North Africa clashed with security forces that were trained and equipped by the

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[61] Mikulaschek and Romita, "Conflict Prevention." 3.

[62] Sebastien Babaud and James Ndungu, *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention by the EU: Learning Lessons from the 2008 post-elections violence in Kenya,* Initiatives for Peacebuilding (Brussels, March 2012). Also the successful Macedonian intervention by the UN in 1994 had similar characteristics. Violence in neighboring Bosnia provided the focus, political leadership within Macedonia ensured UN action was welcomed and a desire amongst Macedonians to avoid violence ensured success. See Alice Ackerman, "Managing Conflicts Non-Violently,"

[63] Stedman, "Alchemy for a New World Order," 14-20. See also Ackerman, "The Idea and Practice," 342.

[64] Personal observations suggest that this bedeviled UK policy towards Yemen in the period 2009-11 where a desire to avoid entanglement prevented the UK from allocating the resources that were necessary to make a difference to the structural dynamics within the country.

[65] Lund, "Conflict Prevention" 298. Consider also how opposition groups may step up violence in order to be taken seriously and gain a seat at the negotiating table, see B. Rubin and B. Jones, "Prevention of Violent Conflict."400. See also the arguments of Edward Luttwak with regard to how war can result in a lasting peace whilst intervention to stop conflicts can cause lasting embitterment in, Edward Luttwak, "Give war a chance." *Foreign Affairs,* July-August 1999, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/55210/edward-n-luttwak/give-war-a-chance. (accessed March 21, 2014).

[66] See for example "HRW: Chadian peacekeepers help rebels flee" *The Washington Times* online article, February 6, 2014, http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/feb/6/hrw-chadian-peacekeepers-help-car-rebels-flee/ (accessed March 21, 2014).

[67] In addition, UK policies towards Yemen 2009-11 were designed to promote economic and political reform. Yet reform would have threatened the fortunes of key tribal leaders and violence would have been more likely rather than less. It was hardly surprising that Saleh sidestepped and evaded.

UK—a situation not lost on those protesting. The UK sometimes condemned security force action yet remained quiet at others.[68] The UK's continuing need for military basing, oil, cooperation on counter-terrorism and trade—particularly defense sales—muddied the waters of prevention in the Region. If the UK wishes to look through a preventive lens then it must consider how to square this particular circle. National priorities will drive action. A deep understanding of the situation in all its complexity, however, will ensure that those responsible for setting priorities are well informed.

Embracing Complexity

Strategic decision making is driven by deadlines, schedules, an insatiable media appetite, and competing priorities. Leaders simply do not have the time to go deep so simplifying an issue is the goal of any strategic adviser. Simplicity briefs well. Yet simplicity is the enemy of effective prevention. How, then, is this "un-squarable" circle to be completed? To start, realistic strategic objectives must be developed. "Tackling the root causes of instability rather than just its symptoms" is a useful mindset but one that can generate false expectations. [69] Political leaders must recognize that conflicts act like systems where interventions against one aspect of the conflict may have consequences, often unforeseen, in other areas. Interventions designed to "prevent" conflict may be better seen as "transforming" an aspect of a conflict on the path towards prevention. Thus, rather than simplifying a conflict, a better approach may be to simplify the objective sought.[70]

How long will conflict prevention take? For the UK merely averting violence is not enough. As Robert Muggah notes, the "causes of conflict may be different to the causes of peace."[71] The UK must, therefore, not only prevent conflict but also its reoccurrence. Approximately 50% of countries experiencing civil war return to conflict within 10 years.[72] The danger lies with merely freezing a conflict rather than solving it. Changing structural dynamics, however, will require sustained engagement. When France intervened in Mali it envisaged a short deployment. Yet a developing insurgency and the need to re-stabilize Mali have extended the mission.[73] At the inter-state level prevention may require long term deterrence. For example post-1982 the UK has maintained a credible garrison on the Falkland Islands backed by regular maritime activity. Evidently, conflict prevention is rarely a quick fix.[74] The UK will need to develop strategic patience.

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[68] See for example, "Bahrain's deadly crackdown condemned by West," *The Telegraph* online article, February 17, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/bahrain/8331875/Bahrains-deadly-crack-down-condemned-by-West.html (accessed February 23, 2014). See also Inge Friekland, "Rethinking Stability" in *Small Wars Journal,* February 19, 2014, http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/rethinking-stability (accessed March 21, 2014). Friekland argues that the pursuit of stability has reinforced the position of authoritarian regimes which has had long term consequences for the U.S. She highlights, for example, that U.S. military aid to the Mubarak regime was at least $1.3Bn per year whilst the literacy rate for women stood at 60%.

[69] Her Majesty's Government, *A Strong Britain,* 25.

[70] Consider the changing objectives for the UK in Yemen. In 2009 the UK sought to "prevent state failure." With the resources available this was an unrealistic objective. By 2012 the DfID objective was "a more stable, secure and prosperous Yemen." A recognition perhaps that the UK could not achieve the objective of preventing state failure but also that interventions yield dynamics of their own. See Department for International Development, "Yemen Operational Plan 2012-2015" at, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67341/yemen-2012.pdf. (accessed March 21, 2014).

[71] Robert Muggah, *Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy: What works and What Doesn't?* (New York: International Peace Institute, 2012)*,* 2.

[72] Mikulaschek and Romita, "Conflict Prevention"13.

[73] See for example, "French Lawmakers extend Mali intervention," Voice of America website, online article, April 22, 2103, http://www.voanews.com/content/french-lawmakers-extend-mali-intervention/1646825.html. (accessed March 03, 2014).

[74] Muggah and White, *Is there a preventive action renaissance?* 5. Also see Megan Grace Kennedy-Chouane, "Improving Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Assistance through Evaluation." *OECD Journal*, 1, no. 8, (2010) 99.

Conflict prevention must have an end point as UK commitment cannot be indefinite. To determine when to end UK commitment requires understanding the effect that preventive activity has had. Yet measuring prevention is problematic. As Bill Flavin has commented, "It is difficult to prove that prevention works, because if it does, nothing happens."[75] While the failure of prevention in Rwanda, Georgia, and Bosnia is tangible, is the absence of conflict between say China and Japan a result of economic ties, the upholding of international norms, or the deterrent power of the U.S. Navy? In austere times, measures of effect are essential for justification of continued funding. There is no easy answer here. No internationally recognized system for measuring prevention exists. Political leaders must recognize this difficulty. Measurement is more art than science. Artificial timelines are dangerous as are inflated expectations and a need to demonstrate success. The UK must develop an intuitive feel for how it needs to act, for how long, and with what level of effort. Developing that sensibility will require understanding well beyond the work of secret intelligence. Highly knowledgeable and trustworthy soldiers, diplomats and development workers will be critical in providing the understanding necessary to analyze problems, identify interventions, and assess their impact.

Perhaps most critically of all, political leaders must recognize that preventing conflict is less of an end state where mission success can be declared, than it is a process. The level of UK involvement in that process must be guided by a clear understanding of the *value* of the interests at stake. As Clausewitz noted, if "the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must be renounced."[76] Thus, in determining the end point for the UK, political leaders will need to understand how UK action is affecting conflict dynamics as well as the moment at which involvement is no longer in the UK's interests. Identifying that moment will not be simple.

Conclusion

With a public skeptical as to the value of overseas aid and military interventions, a deficit that continues to require more austerity, and an international environment that prevaricates on issues of sovereignty, questioning whether the UK has backed the wrong horse is apposite. Prevention is a noble aspiration, but is it realistic or even advisable?[77] These are tough issues. Yet if the UK adopts a purely reactive posture we must be prepared for the next Rwanda. We must accept that the Syrian civil war will continue to rage potentially resulting in the spread of violence and regional instability. Embracing conflict prevention strategies may be the United Kingdom's best hope for protecting its national sovereignty while affecting positive change in the world. Thus, the case for prevention remains compelling. On occasion it has worked. In 1991 the Kurds were protected by swift intervention, in Macedonia conflict was contained, in Kenya electoral violence was averted. Lund captured the issue neatly, commenting that "prevention is not simply a high ideal but a prudent option that sometimes works."[78]

Political leaders must understand the limits and difficulties that a preventative approach entails. They must understand prevention does not come cheap. The UK will need to maintain credible and capable military forces that continue to deter adversaries, be able to project power globally and display the will to do so, and take the lead in ensuring that international norms enable preventative activity. The UK must champion the "Right to Protect." Political leaders must explain their positions

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[75] William Flavin, "The Dogs that do not bark: Prevention as the Path to Strategic Stability." *Small Wars Journal*, August 2, 2013.

[76] Clausewitz, *On War,* 92.

[77] For a critical analysis of Conflict Prevention as an approach see, S. Stedman, "Alchemy for a New World Order," 14-20.

[78] Lund, "Conflict Prevention," 288.

and actions more coherently to skeptical publics. The impact of inactivity on the economy and wellbeing will require public debate. The utility of military force, not as a tool of last resort, but as an early option for defusing a developing crisis will require explanation. Prevention strategies must be realistic, guided by a clear articulation of national interests, and accommodate a long term perspective. If political leaders are not prepared for the long haul then the UK is likely to waste resources in the short term. Finally, prevention will require sustained investment in the people who will actually deliver the strategy on the ground.

In 2002 Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of Defense at that time, published a check list detailing what U.S. leaders must consider before they intervened abroad.[79] A similar list for the UK's political leaders embarking on a preventative approach might read as follows:

- Conflict prevention requires fully understanding each conflict in all its complexity.
- Doing nothing entails consequences.
- Prevention strategies without political will are wasted.
- Prevention is a process not an end state.
- Prevention is art, not science.
- Set realistic goals.
- Prepare for a long haul.
- Prevention is not risk free as it may carry unforeseen consequences.
- Prevention requires coordination of all instruments of national power.
- The military option may be the best first option. If so, this must be explained to the public.

This cautionary list is designed to help ensure that an approach to conflict prevention is pragmatic and has substance. The UK must move beyond mere policy to invest financially, politically, and morally in the concept. If conflict prevention is, indeed, consistent with UK national interests, and is a worthy investment leading to a more stable and secure world, then we must do considerably more than we are doing at present.

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[79] "In Rumsfeld's Words: Guidelines for Committing Forces," *New York Times, International,* Monday, October 14, 2002, A9. The newspaper cites excerpts from a memorandum by Donald Rumsfeld which was made public by DOD.
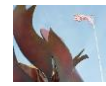
On Theory:
War and Warfare
Reconsidered

Mark E. Blomme

Theory examining the purpose and motivations of war weds itself to human nature and obtains a degree of immutability. Theory regarding the conduct of war, namely warfare, more easily conflicts with the changes brought by science and technology. Clausewitz provided a prophetic and lasting theory describing the tendencies and motivations that lead to war and limit its political aims, but his theory for the conduct of war has proven less enduring. His Napoleonic-era prescriptions maintained a powerful hold on the theory of warfare for nearly a century. Disruptive technologies, such as the gift of flight, eventually forced a reevaluation of theory and led to a rediscovery of sixth-century B.C. theory attributed to Sun Tzu. Modern theorists like Julian Corbett, John Boyd, John Warden, and Shimon Naveh extended Sun Tzu's concepts, perhaps unwittingly, such that Sun Tzu's theory continues to resonate within the twenty-first-century American theory of warfare. These theorists demonstrated that Sun Tzu remains relevant to the perpetually changing realm of warfare, while Clausewitz's theory on war remains quintessential to the analysis and understanding of the purpose and motivations of war.

Keywords: *Boyd, Clausewitz, Corbett, Design, Naveh, Strategy, Sun Tzu, Systems, Warden*

One purpose of theory is to expose logical explanations of observed patterns to constructive discourse which allows theory to evolve over time.[1] To the extent that theorists examine the purpose and motivations of *war*, their theories are wed to human nature and obtain a corresponding degree of immutability. Theories that address *warfare*, i.e., the conduct of war, more easily conflict with realities associated with technological advances. The implication is that while theories on warfare are useful, they are not as enduring as theories on war, and, consequently, should evolve and be

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[1] Kenneth N. Waltz offers the following: "A theory, though related to the world about which explanations are wanted, always remains distinct from that world. 'Reality' will be congruent neither with a theory nor with a model that may represent it." See *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2010), 6.

questioned. In short, changes in warfare are the bane of military theorists who aim to provide principles guiding the practice of war. Theorists who focus on the generalities and motivations of war achieve far greater longevity. Of the latter, the nineteenth-century work of Carl von Clausewitz holds distinct prominence in American military teachings, yet the sixth-century B.C. theory of Sun Tzu is more prescient, especially with respect to incorporating lasting prescriptions for warfare.[2]

Clausewitz's gift to military studies was a theory on war that resulted from his exploration of the motivations influencing and limiting war's political aims. However, he occasionally ventured into the realm of prescriptive advice for the conduct of war, and the weight of his influence contributed to a century of relatively unquestioning abidance to Napoleonic-style warfare. Clausewitz's theory on warfare revolved around massed armies in rigid formations pursuing decisive battle. Adherence to that mentality increasingly led to bloody wars of attrition as technology wrought increasingly efficient mechanisms for killing. It took future gifts of science, most notably flight, to force a renaissance of theory, disrupt mechanistic Clausewitzian views, and restore Sun Tzu-like warfare wherein surprise, initiative, and flexibility are valued.

Julian Corbett was one of the first to break from Napoleonic-era principles of warfare. His maritime theory revealed that presumptions for land warfare were not universal to all domains. As airpower evolved, it also challenged the legacy of Clausewitz's prescriptions on warfare. Airmen like John Boyd and John Warden played a significant role in shifting emphasis from firepower and attrition to maneuver and deception. In doing so, they resurrected principles that harkened back to Sun Tzu. Boyd also emphasized the importance of a "mind-time-space schema" as an instrument to communicate a synthesized understanding of reality.[3] He viewed these schemas as a way to facilitate initiative of distributed forces while achieving synchronization of effort in the context of a cognitive orientation to the relative world. Those thoughts reverberate today in the design-type thinking stemming from the work of Shimon Naveh. Both Naveh and Boyd espouse the necessity for discourse, challenging of assumptions, and exposure of the logic that underpins strategy—three keys to unleashing initiative, disrupting enemy decision-making, and keeping an adversary off-balance. In aiming to defeat an enemy's strategy, modern theorists focus on the acme of Sun Tzu-like skill and place emphasis on maneuver, thinking, and asymmetric warfare rather than mass, brute force, and bloody pursuit of decisive battle. Indeed, theory on warfare is evolving, but it has returned to Sun Tzu roots. Meanwhile Clausewitz's theory on war remains as valid as it did nearly two centuries ago.

Clausewitz – On War, not on Warfare

In the Western world, the study of military theory is nearly impossible without analysis of Clausewitz's work. His insights on war remain relevant for two simple reasons. First, Clausewitz's explicit purpose in writing *On War* was to develop an enduring theory.[4] Therefore, he generally avoided discussion of tactics that might have limited the longevity of his work.[5] Second, unlike

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[2] In the forward to a translation of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, B.H. Liddell Hart comments that "amongst all the military thinkers of the past, only Clausewitz is comparable, and even he is more 'dated' than Sun Tzu." Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), v.

[3] John Boyd, "Patterns of Conflict*," Air Power Australia,* http://www.ausairpower.net/JRB/poc.pdf (accessed February 24, 2014), 74. Boyd describes a "mind-time-space schema" as "a common outlook possessed by 'a body of officers' [that] represents a unifying theme that can be used to simultaneously encourage subordinate initiative yet realize superior intent."

[4] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 63.

[5] Ibid., 134. Clausewitz said an "irreconcilable conflict" exists between theory "to equip the conduct of war with principle" and the actual practice of war. Ibid., 134.

theorists who merely accepted war as a natural part of human existence, Clausewitz explored the essence of war and factors that limit its aims.[6]

On War is a dialectic that drags a reader through a lengthy exploration of the essence of war. A close reading of the work generates a sense that one is being forced to accompany Clausewitz on a tedious cognitive journey in which he struggles with the logic of war in his own mind.[7] While this provides fascinating insight into the process of human reasoning, it may dissuade a reader's own critical thinking. To be fair, Clausewitz's death preceded completion of *On War*,[8] and historians note that Clausewitz's wife, and others, edited manuscripts prior to publication.[9] Hence, the source of *On War*'s inconsistencies remains unclear;[10] however, the distinct dialectical style of *On War* is a barrier to understanding of Clausewitz's own making.[11] Regardless, Clausewitz's thesis is most prophetic—war is the result of a "paradoxical trinity"[12] of tendencies composed of the "blind natural force"[13] of enmity, the rationale of political aims, and probabilistic calculus[14]—passion, reasoned policy, and probability.[15]

Unfortunately, various translations of *On War* result in differing conclusions regarding Clausewitz's intent. Howard and Paret's widely studied English translation of Clausewitz's trinity lends itself to the use of physical analogy: "Our task therefore is to develop a theory that maintains a balance between these three tendencies, like an object suspended between three magnets."[16] David

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[6] Whereas Clausewitz saw war as an instrument of policy, a fourth-century B.C. Indian philosopher known variously as Kautilya, Chanakya, or Vishnu Gupta, tended to see policy as an instrument of war. If Kautilya had lived in the nineteenth century, he might have argued with Prussian general, historian, and theorist Carl von Clausewitz's conclusion about the futility of contemplating "absolute war," but from a perspective of not wanting to limit the methods of war – namely warfare. Nevertheless, given Kautilya's background in economics, he would likely have found solace in Clausewitz's analysis of the nature of war and his theory about human nature's proclivity to engage in probabilistic calculus when making decisions regarding the aims of war. See Glenn K. Cunningham, "Eastern Strategic Traditions: Un-American Ways of War," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., Vol. 1. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2012), 133-143; Kautilya, *Artashastra*, trans. R. Shamasastry (Bangalore, India: Government Press, 1915).

[7] Clausewitz walks his readers through the *creation* and *destruction* of his own ideas. Without sufficient warning, this linguistic style can be confusing, but it is essentially the scientific method in prose – hypothesis, analysis, and synthesis. Emphasis was placed on the words creation and destruction as an allusion to later references to John Boyd's paper entitled "Destruction and Creation."

[8] Clausewitz, *On War*, 65.

[9] Christopher Bassford, "Clausewitz and His Works*,"* March 18, 2013, http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Bassford/Cworks/Works.htm (accessed March 12, 2014).

[10] Multiple sources discuss contradictions and inconsistencies in *On War*. Joseph Strange and Richard Iron address inconsistencies regarding Clausewitz's center of gravity analogy in Joseph Strange and Richard Iron, "Understanding Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities*,"* http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/cog2.pdf (accessed March 13, 2014). See also Eugenio Diniz and Domício Proença, "A Criterion for Settling Inconsistencies in Clausewitz's *on War*," *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2012).

[11] Clausewitz's dialectical style is a slow, brooding approach that would just as likely infuriate someone today, as did the dialectical approach practiced by ancient Athenian philosophers such as Socrates and Plato – a style known as the Socratic Method.

[12] Clausewitz, *On War*, 89. Various scholars prefer translations such as "miraculous," "remarkable," "fascinating," and "paradoxical." Those favoring "miraculous" note Clausewitz used the same German phrase that describes Christianity's Holy Trinity, while those who favor "remarkable" or "fascinating," over "paradoxical," may fail to see as a lack of any paradox. However, the weighing of passion and reason seems indeed a paradox of choice between human motivations of the heart and mind, yet the most fascinating or remarkable idea is in contemplating a notion of stability for the Clausewitzian trinity. Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 44, 72-79; National War College, "Clausewitz I & II - Instructors Guide*,"* http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/NWC/ClausewitzNotesAY2008.htm (accessed February 25, 2014).

[13] Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* provides remarkable accounts of how fear, honor, and interest, are motivations both of, and in, war. Clausewitz more clearly extracts these motivations to compose a theory on the influences of war. The works of the two authors are complementary with respect to the study of war.

[16] Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

Gillie disputes Howard and Paret's translation, offering a more literal interpretation: "The task for theory, then, is to float (wander/isolate) freely in suspension between these three tendencies as between three points of attraction."[17] Grammatically, the former makes the task the reader's responsibility (presumably guided by Clausewitz), while the later places responsibility on theory itself.[18] The Howard and Paret translation also implies a concept of balance between the trinity of tendencies that ignores Clausewitz's warning about trying to fix an arbitrary relationship between the three.[19] According to Clausewitz, theory must consider all three, yet they are "variable in their relationship to one another,"[20] and any theory seeking "to fix an arbitrary relationship between them would conflict with reality."[21] Scholars preferring the Howard and Paret translation sometimes use the analogy of a pendulum suspended between three magnets to extend Clausewitz's thoughts in a manner consistent with the notion of war as deterministic chaos.[22] Meanwhile, scholars preferring more literal translations remain unburdened by inconsistencies and analogies that Clausewitz may not have even intended. Instead, they take a purist perspective, holding only that Clausewitz insisted that a theory of war must include consideration of each tendency. Raymond Aron and Janeen Klinger fall in the latter camp and consider war's various forms a reflection of the limitless arrangement and relative strength of the Clausewitzian trinity's elements.[23]

Regardless of the debate emanating from various translations, an enduring takeaway from *On War* is the subjugation of warfare to political objectives.[24] Equally important is Clausewitz's discussion of the inevitable "fog" and "friction" of war, where fog is the result of inevitable uncertainty,[25] and friction is the outcome of natural stresses that render otherwise easy tasks difficult.[26] As is typical in *On War*, Clausewitz's discussion of fog and friction tends to be descriptive, while other theorists emphasize the value of accentuating these inevitable features. The inclination to be descriptive is appropriate for a book titled *On War*, versus one titled *On Warfare*, but occasionally Clausewitz ventures toward prescriptive advice.[27] Most significantly, he espouses that a commander-in-chief must function simultaneously as both a statesman and general.[28] In functioning as a statesman, a commander-in-chief must keep political objectives in mind, when functioning as a

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[17] David R. Gillie, "Interpreting Clausewitz's Miraculous Trinity - Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis: A Study of the Essential Intellectual Content and Didactic Purpose of the Trinitarian Model*," National War College*, December 9, 2009, http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Gillie-ThesisAntithesisSynthesis.htm (accessed February 25, 2014).

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid. Clausewitz's warning about trying to fix an arbitrary relationship between the elements of the trinity is contained in the sentence immediately preceding his comments that have generated debate.

[20] Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Bassford, "Clausewitz and His Works*."* In this analogy, the apparent complexity is dependent on the magnitude of the disturbance, as well as the strength and position of the magnets in relation to the pendulum. For additional information, see Christopher Bassford, "Teaching the Clausewitzian Trinity*,"* 2007, http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Bassford/Trinity/TrinityTeachingNote.htm (accessed December 22, 2013).

[23] Janeen Klinger, "The Social Science of Carl von Clausewitz*," Parameters,* http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?&verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA486428 (accessed February 23, 2014).

[24] Clausewitz, *On War*, 88.

[25] Ibid., 101.

[26] Ibid., 121.

[27] The idea of Clausewitz writing a descriptive, instead of prescriptive, theory is found in many sources. Whether that is a positive or negative does not seem to be debated. Hew Strachan tends to comment on this nature as a positive feature, and it is probably what has helped with the longevity of Clausewitz's theory on war. Strachan and Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*, 80.

[28] Clausewitz, *On War*, 112. Eliot Cohen's book, *Supreme Command*, provides an interesting examination of civil-military relations required when the statesman and general are not the same person. Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: The Free Press, 2003).

general, the commander-in-chief must remain realistic about possibilities achievable given the available resources.[29]

In terms of modern strategy, political objectives drive the "ends" that actions are intended to achieve, whereas available resources are the "means" which the general must consider when conceiving "ways" to achieve the ends. This Ends-Ways-Means construct is a typical framework for discussing strategy, and Clausewitz's insight regarding the duality required of a commander-in-chief provides a useful perspective for settling a classic philosophical debate about the best approach for developing strategy. Many planners take an ends-centric perspective to developing strategy, arguing that the purpose is to identify the ways and means necessary to achieve desired ends. Alternatively, others hold a means-centric perspective and believe resources necessarily limit the ends which action can seek. Clausewitz clearly espouses the importance of a duality in perspective that is required at high command. Thus, debating the primacy of an ends-centric versus a means-centric perspective is pointless because the underlying question is but a logical fallacy—a false dichotomy. While some may feel compelled to continue the debate, Clausewitz would likely suggest the debate is as pointless as arguing about whether war is more art or science.[30]

Unlike Clausewitz's theory on war, the limits of nineteenth-century knowledge abridged the longevity of his theory on warfare. Criticizing Clausewitz for failing to account for the uniqueness of operations in air, space, and cyberspace, therefore, may be unfair. It is fair, however, to criticize his failure to address the uniqueness of the maritime domain. In fact, considering a perspective beyond the land domain may have helped Clausewitz take a strategic view on warfare, not just war, and could have helped future militaries avoid undue fixation on decisive battle, seizure of territory, and an imperfect center of gravity analogy.[31] The analogy has utility,[32] but it loses relevancy in the highly fluid, decentralized, and distributed operations typical of contemporary American warfare.[33]

As with any model or analogy, the center of gravity construct is an incomplete representation of reality.[34] Too literal an interpretation extends the physical analogy beyond usefulness if it insists on the impossibility of more than a single source of strength[35] or place to focus effort.[36] After Operation

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[29] Clausewitz, *On War*, 112.

[30] Ibid., 149. Clausewitz states "war does not belong in the realm of arts and sciences; rather it is part of mans' social existence."

[31] Rudolph Janiczek offers a perspective on the confusion and disagreement over interpretations of the center of gravity analogy. Rudolph M. Janiczek, "A Concept at the Crossroads: Rethinking the Center of Gravity*," Strategic Studies Institute,* http://www.clausewitz.com/bibl/Janiczek-ConceptAtTheCrossroads.pdf (accessed March 13, 2014).

[32] The utility of the center of gravity analogy is that it provides a warning about maintaining a degree of coordination to ensure unity of effort / purpose.

[33] Antulio Echevarria seems to concur with this view regarding the applicability of the center of gravity analogy in distributed warfare, as indicated in an article he published a decade prior. Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Clausewitz's Center of Gravity: It's Not What We Thought," *Naval War College Review* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 115.

[34] Interpreted too literally, the center of gravity analogy implies a degree of mechanistic determinism that is inconsistent with a world dominated by humanistic indeterminism. Mechanistic Determinism – Events are completely determined and caused by previous events. Mechanistic Indeterminism – Events are not completely determined or caused by previous events and regardless of the amount of information obtained, it is still not possible to predict or explain any causality. Humanistic Indeterminism should imply a degree of indeterminism even greater than Wesley Salmon implies with the term "mechanistic determinism." Wesley C. Salmon, *Causality and Explanation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 37.

[35] Bassford, "Clausewitz and His Works*." Bassford tends to reference the center of gravity as the source of an enemy's strength.

[36] Echevarria II, 117. Echevarria prefers to think of the center of gravity as the point at which efforts should be focused to defeat an enemy. He believes Clausewitz intended more of an "effects-based" approach, instead of a capabilities-based approach, in thinking about centers of gravity. An effects-based approach makes Echevarria consistent with maneuver and parallel warfare discussed later in this article; however, Echevarria seems concerned that John Warden's parallel warfare can result in "so many COGs as to reduce the concept to an absurdity." In essence, that may be the problem with the center

Desert Storm, for example, Lieutenant Colonel Purvis expressed frustration that "the CENTCOM staff became more focused on what [the center of gravity] was as opposed to what do we do with it."[37] Remarkably, Antulio Echevarria notes that while some strategists and planners argue there can be only one enemy center of gravity, they simultaneously claim it can change or vary depending on a somewhat arbitrary notion of levels in war—strategic, operational, or tactical.[38] Clausewitz's inconsistent use of the center of gravity analogy is likely the source of much of the confusion, but concurrently hints at the imperfections of the analogy itself. Thus, the analogy can facilitate spirited academic debate, but an insistence on reducing the complexity of war to a "single" center of gravity tends to stifle options and encourage head-on, brute-force, clashes in search of decisive battle.

If Clausewitz's center of gravity analogy had existed when France began its foray into Russia in 1812, Napoleon might have described Russia's army as the center of gravity—basing strategy on the belief that he could force the Russian Army into decisive battle.[39] When decisive battle eluded him, Napoleon might have claimed Moscow was the center of gravity and thus justified his occupation of the Russian capital. Given the benefit of hindsight, military historians can now argue that Russia's center of gravity was the resolve of its people. A Russian force that was able to lose in battle, yet win the war, confounded Napoleon.[40] Russians were willing to endure sacrifice while luring the French deep into the Russian heartland, even burning Moscow to keep the French from exploiting its refuge.[41] In the end, the only thing decisive about Napoleon's campaign into Russia was that it helped lead to the demise of the French Empire.[42]

Fixation on a single center of gravity can lead to fixation on decisive battle, and there are clues that doctrine is taking new generations down the primrose path of Clausewitz's dated prescription on warfare. Whereas U.S. Army doctrine previously defined *Full Spectrum Operations* as "simultaneous offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations,"[43] the latest version replaces *Full Spectrum Operations* with the term *Decisive Action:*[44] "continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authorities tasks."[45] Hence, either U.S. Army doctrine now portends that any continuous synchronized action will be decisive, or more confusingly, that *Decisive Action* may not always be decisive. Furthermore, the

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of gravity analogy, and in expressing concern Echevarria appears to fall into the ground-centric tendency of desiring only a few key (ideally one) centers of gravity to accommodate the massing of forces. Ibid., 108-109.

[37] Collin A. Agee, *Peeling the Onion: The Iraqi Center of Gravity in Desert Storm,* SAMS Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, July 4, 1992), 26-27.

[38] Echevarria II, 116-117.

[39] Richard K. Riehn, *1812: Napoleon's Russian Campaign* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990), 226.

[40] Harry Summer recounts a similar situation with the American experience in Vietnam. Although the literal validity of the facts may be in question, the following conversation is still prescient: "'You know you never defeated us on the battlefield,' said the American colonel. The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark a moment. 'That may be so,' he replied, 'but it is also irrelevant." Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), 1.

[41] Riehn, *1812: Napoleon's Russian Campaign*, 285.

[42] Adam Zamoyski, *Moscow 1812: Napoleon's Fatal March* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 544. Napoleon's failed analysis of Russian determination played a significant role in the failure of his Russian campaign, the disintegration of his army, an inability to confront a crippling guerila war in the Montaña of Spain, and the eventual collapse of the French Empire. The consequences of Napoleon's insistence on trying to obtain a decisive battle against the Russian Army should be a warning to those who insist on trying to identify a single center of gravity and to those who think they can predict what will be decisive in a complex, adaptive, human-based system.

[43] U.S. Department of the Army, *Operations*, FM 3-0 (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 2008), viii.

[44] U.S. Department of the Army, *Unified Land Operations*, ADRP 3-0 (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 2012), v.

[45] Ibid., 2-2.

doctrine claims that "effective decisive action relies on lethality," [46] apparently discounting lessons of the past decade and ignoring the potential decisiveness of cyber, electronic, or *Unrestricted Warfare*[47]—a concept emanating from Chinese military theorists.

The point is not to argue that Clausewitz's thoughts on warfare should be completely discarded—they should not—but rather to argue that they require increased skepticism in light of modern technology and the inseparable, overlapping, interdependent, and even intangible domains of modern warfare. The true power of his work is the descriptive theory he offers for analyzing war. If military leaders naively use Clausewitz as a guide to warfare they may unnecessarily constrain opportunity by insisting on massing forces in pursuit of a decisive battle, against an assumed single center of gravity. Clausewitz wrote *On War*, not *On Warfare*.

Sun Tzu – On War, and on Warfare

Amazingly, Chinese general Sun Tzu professed a set of enlightening and pithy aphorisms on war and warfare two thousand years before Clausewitz.[48] Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is far more concise than Clausewitz's *On War*, yet the insights it provides in short, easy to remember verse, are extraordinary.[49] His elegant, yet vague, pearls of wisdom tend to linger in the mind, and contribute to inquisitive reflection that a student of Clausewitz may be discouraged from practicing. While Clausewitz's literary style clearly suggests that he valued his own critical thinking. Sun Tzu's succinct adages more effectively encourage his students to practice critical thinking of their own.

Sun Tzu offers a broad and intellectually engaging perspective on strategy. Whereas Clausewitz's strategy is about military campaigning,[50] Sun Tzu's approach more closely reflects what is today understood as grand strategy. Sun Tzu and Clausewitz each recognized the connection between war and policy, but Clausewitz's experience as a European continental soldier, the period's indelible Napoleonic influence, and the relatively constrained geography of Western Europe prejudiced his perspective.[51] Clausewitz saw battle between armies as the primary tool of war. Sun Tzu viewed attacking armies as preferable only to attacking cities.[52]

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[46] Ibid., 2-13. Historian Hans Delbruck famously postulated the existence of two fundamental strategies for war – annihilation and attrition strategies. After more than a decade of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is difficult to comprehend the U.S. Army's apparent preoccupation with annihilation strategy thinking (Decisive Action). A few examples of militaries going to war with a false expectation of a short decisive campaign include: Napoleon's campaigns in Spain, Calabria, and Russia; Germany's Operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union, America's Vietnam War, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

[47] Liang Qiao and Xiangsui Wang, *Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America*, trans. CIA Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Panama City, Panama: Pan American Publishing, 2000). *Unrestricted Warfare*, a book written by two Chinese Colonels and translated by the CIA's Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), espouses a theory termed "beyond-limits combined war." The central theme is that non-military means are the best way to attack the United States and suggests targeting information hubs within multiple echelons of the American system. The authors do not suggest that there are "no limits" in warfare. Instead, they advocate going "beyond" normal boundaries to conduct a systemic attack on multiple components of an enemy's system.

[48] There is some debate about whether Sun Tzu ever existed, or whether the works attributed to him are the result of a collaboration of thoughts in the Warring States period of Chinese history (453 – 421 B.C.). Reference the introduction by translator Samuel Griffith in Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 1.

[49] Short, easy to remember verse was probably more important for communicating ideas in sixth-century B.C. Asia than it was in nineteenth-century Europe.

[50] Clausewitz, *On War*, 128.

[51] One is tempted to wonder whether the great expanse of ancient China contributed to theories that more closely resemble maritime theory than the emphasis on decisive battle found in the writings of Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini.

[52] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 78.

While there is no clear evidence that Clausewitz was aware of the Chinese master's work,[53] it is doubtful Clausewitz would have found it at fault. Nor should one expect that Sun Tzu would have differed with Clausewitz's conclusions about the forces that lead to and sustain war. Sun Tzu, however, probably would have criticized Clausewitz's *On War* for its failure to provide practical insight with respect to guiding warfare. Both theorists saw war as a natural extension of state policy, inherently driven by estimates of the probability of success, and requiring populous support. However, their approach to warfare varies substantially, in the same way that classical Western philosophy differs from Eastern philosophy with regard to a general approach to life.

Whereas a low-lying Western city might build massive levies and pumping systems to prevent flooding, an Eastern approach would be more likely to accept the natural way of things. Instead of trying to keep the water out of its cities, for example, an Eastern approach might result in cities built on stilts.[54] Similarly, Clausewitzian warfare presumes that with sufficient effort and proper leadership, one can defeat any opponent through brute force and will. The Clausewitzian approach focuses on symmetric, army-versus-army warfare, with maneuver to concentrate forces at the decided place and time to achieve victory through mass and firepower in decisive battle.[55] Sun Tzu's preferred style of warfare advocates an asymmetric, harassing approach, designed to inflict maximum damage at minimum cost—a concept Clausewitz implies is purely fallacious.[56] Students of Sun Tzu disdain impatient cries for battle, convinced that victory achieved through the defeat of an enemy's calculus or strategy is preferable to battle. Clausewitz cautions that most intelligence reports are contradictory, false, or unclear.[57] Sun Tzu, however, takes a strategic view, seeking intelligence to understand the enemy while recognizing that deception can amplify the natural fog of war.[58]

Unwavering confidence in superior "military genius" and the ability to hold forces in reserve are typical Western approaches for coping with the fog and friction of war.[59] Instead of merely trying to

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[53] As Clausewitz's opens *On War*, he provides a comment on the maximum use of force, which may be a faint allusion to an axiom of Sun Tzu, but it would be a stretch to deduce that this implies Clausewitz was aware of Sun Tzu's writing based on this one comment. Clausewitz states, "Kind-hearted people might of course think there was some ingenious way to disarm or defeat an enemy without too much bloodshed, and might imagine this is the true goal of the art of war. Pleasant as it sounds, it is a fallacy that must be exposed: war is such a dangerous business that the mistakes which come from kindness are the very worst." Clausewitz, *On War*, 75. Sun Tzu argues, "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy; next best is to disrupt his alliances; the next best is to attack his army. The worst policy is to attack cities. Attack cities only when there is no alternative." Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 77-78.

[54] Conclusion based on reading François Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004). Many people in both Eastern and Western cities remain in low-lying areas and vulnerable to flooding, but this seems to be more a function of geography and resources than what their philosophical approach might be for dealing with flooding.

[55] Defensively, the Clausewitzian approach might seek to blunt, block, or absorb an enemy's attack, while a student of Sun Tzu would be more likely to pursue avenues for deflecting or dodging an opponent's offensive efforts in order to preserve strength for a more advantageous opportunity.

[56] Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.

[57] Ibid., 117.

[58] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 9.

[59] Clausewitz, *On War*, 100-101, 119. Careful reflection allows a military officer to develop the qualities of Clausewitz's "military genius" or Gary Klein's "experts" which he describes in *Sources of Power*. Experience allows these elites to skillfully recognize familiar aspects of complex situations and quickly develop "high-quality" courses of action. "Experts can perceive things that are invisible to novices." Klein's research found that the first course of action reasonably considered by an expert is usually as good, or nearly as good, as the ones they choose when time is not a factor. Klein calls this skillful application of experience Recognition-Primed Decision-making (RPD). Gary A. Klein, *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 16, 175. Similarly, Clausewitz notes that the military genius should "in all doubtful cases stick to one's first opinion and refuse to change unless forced to do so by a clear conviction." Clausewitz, *On War*, 108. Martin Van Creveld simply refers to these decisions as emanating from intuitive judgment, but it is clear that they each recognize the value of experience, training, and practice. Martin L. Van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985),

compensate for fog and friction, Sun Tzu seeks to accentuate these natural phenomena through deception, cunning, speed, and stealth.[60] Sun Tzu would also encourage the use of misdirection to bolster one's image in the mind of the enemy, align one's strengths against the enemy's weakness, acknowledge natural propensities, and await the opportunity for advantage.[61] The Eastern approach favors patience and its practitioners find it acceptable, even preferable, to let an enemy exhaust itself,[62] whereas the Western approach seems based upon a culturally developed psychological need to link their own actions to victory. The differences hint at respective cultural inclinations toward passive or active aggression.[63]

East Meets West – Twentieth-Century's Disruptions to Warfare

History is replete with evidence of the West's penchant for Clausewitzian-style warfare. However, the twentieth century's introduction of Sun Tzu's treatise into Western military studies, has helped frame the experience of the century's wars and influenced military theorists. The speed of communication, impact of radar, flexibility of airpower, awe of the atom, high-ground of space, power of computers, and resilience of networks have dramatically changed warfare. While Clausewitz's trinity continues to serve as a powerful explanation for war, technology has enabled Western warfare to retain its impatient roots while simultaneously increasing congruency with Sun Tzu's approach to warfare.

Today, Western warfare has shifted its focus from the psychological effect created by armies massing for decisive battle toward the psychological effect posed by the unknown, the unseen, and the unheard. In the early twentieth century, Julian Corbett enunciated the nuance of maritime theory. Later in the twentieth century, theorists like John Boyd and Shimon Naveh tackled cognitive processes to cope with emergent qualities of complex adaptive systems,[64] while John Warden gave theory physical form.[65]

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267. The author drew the preceding information in this footnote from thoughts expressed in a previous paper. Reference: Mark E. Blomme, *Decentralizing Centralized Control: Reorienting a Fundamental Tenet for Resilient Air Operations*. SAMS Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 20 March 2008), 33.

[60] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 9, 98.

[61] Ibid., 83.

[62] Ibid., 85. Sun Tzu said "Invincibility depends on one's self; the enemy's vulnerability on him."

[63] The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been successful in forming an ASEAN identity that trumps many elements of nationalism and coalesces around a unified, multilateral, and consensus based passive-aggressive balance of power mechanism to thwart aggressive assertiveness. The so-called "ASEAN Way" has generally proven effective at preventing armed interstate conflict in Southeast Asia and has indirectly enlisted the power of U.S. military deterrence against a rising China while also allowing the U.S. to avoid taking sides with any particular ASEAN member. For more information regarding the "ASEAN Way," see Gillian Goh, "The 'ASEAN Way': Non-Intervention and ASEAN's Role in Conflict Management," *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2003).

[64] John Boyd and Shimon Naveh are two modern military theorists who seem to address the need for improved cognitive frameworks of warfare to provide "Decision Advantage" in what many people see as an increasingly complex environment. John Boyd's theory is best known in military and business circuits by his famous OODA Loop (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act). Shimon Naveh's theory of Systemic Operational Design was the genesis of the U.S. Army's exploration of concepts that have led to "Design." Naveh's theory shows strong signs of being influenced by Systems Theory and his conceptual processes are very similar to Boyd's OODA loop, even if more specific in purpose. Like Boyd, Naveh has been a controversial figure because of his intellectually demeaning character. He published a book in 1997 that provides some insights into his views on Operational Theory. For more information, see John Boyd, "Destruction and Creation," http://www.goalsys.com/books/documents/DESTRUCTION_AND_CREATION.pdf (accessed December 19, 2013); Shimon Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory*, The Cummings Center Series (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

[65] David S. Fadok, *John Boyd and John Warden: Air Power's Quest for Strategic Paralysis,* SAASS Thesis (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University, 1995), 3. Fadok's thesis on John Boyd and John Warden is the source of the idea that Warden gave "form" to Boyd's "process" focused theory.

Julian Corbett – Relative Control of Vast Commons

Corbett's maritime theory espoused a concept of relative or temporary "command of the sea" and illuminated the infeasibility of continuously controlling the maritime environment.[66] His theory embraced the seas' ability to facilitate the avoidance of unfavorable battle, while discouraging massed navies.[67] In many ways, his theory is contrary to traditional Clausewitzian warfare, and specifically contrary to Antoine-Henri Jomini's belief regarding superiority of internal lines of operation.[68] While internal lines of operation provide advantage from a traditional land-centric perspective, Corbett saw distinct advantage offered by exterior lines of operation in the maritime domain. He may have recognized a conceptual similarity between the vast maritime environment and the secluded accommodation offered by mountains, forests, and jungles, for his maritime theory is similar to guerilla warfare.[69]

The global commons of air, sea, space, and cyberspace each possess a quality of vastness that limits control in the sense that one controls terrain, and at least one student of theory proffers Corbett's work as a basis for space-power theory.[70] While topography defines the maritime domain's convergence with land, convergence with land is less constraining for air, space, or cyber theory. Of the three, airpower theory is most mature; it espouses the exploitation of speed, maneuverability, misdirection, and stealth to bypass territorial defenses and strike strategic vulnerabilities directly.[71] Moreover, space and cyber theorists are likely to think in similar terms.[72] As Robert Kaplan eloquently argues, geography and topography remain important, but air, space, and cyber capabilities have diminished their importance.[73]

Early Airpower Theory – Struggles with Disruptive Opportunity

Although first used as a reconnaissance platform, theorists soon realized that airplanes could help direct land and maritime forces, provide protection from enemy aircraft, and attack enemy

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[66] Julian Stafford Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1988), 103-105.

[67] Ibid., 129-134.

[68] Interior and Exterior lines of operation are concepts most often associated with Antoine-Henri Jomini. While Jomini contended that interior lines were stronger than exterior lines, there seems to be a strong case that his contention only applies to traditional land warfare. For more on Jomini's theory, see Antoine-Henri Jomini and Horace E. Cocroft, *The Art of War*, trans. G. H. Mendell and W. P. Craighill (Rockville, MD: Arc Manor, 2007).

[69] Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, ed. Marc Becker (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 25.; John Lawrence Tone, *The Fatal Knot: The Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

[70] John J. Klein, "Corbett in Orbit: A Maritime Model for Strategic Space Theory*," Naval War College,* http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA421953 (accessed October 21, 2013). The physics of orbital mechanics do not facilitate the ease of maneuverability accommodated by forces of buoyancy in the maritime domain. In the maritime domain, the low compressibility of water aids in countering Earth's gravitational influence, while orbital mechanics depends on sustained momentum to perpetuate a balance between falling back to Earth and being propelled into space. The energy required to change orbits in space is enormous, especially considering the lack of available resources to sustain propulsion in space.

[71] Airpower theory aligns better with Sun Tzu's theory of warfare than with the Clausewitzian approach and that alignment has increased over time.

[72] Space theory is limited in practice by international prohibitions on the weaponization of space; however, demonstrated Chinese anti-satellite capability hints that space theory needs to be thinking about the implications of future weaponization. As the newest domain, Cyber theory is still in its infancy. It is very likely that space and cyber theory will develop outside of public view.

[73] Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle against Fate* (New York: Random House, 2012).

forces directly.[74] More significantly, theory began espousing that aircraft could function in more than just a support role, as the third dimension highlighted a potential to break from Napoleonic-style warfare and bypass fielded forces to strike directly at the heart of an enemy. By the early 1920's, Italian airpower theorist Giulio Douhet was espousing a belief that only a single type of aircraft "should make up the operating mass of an Independent Air Force,"[75] and he called it a "battleplane."[76] Similarly, the U.S. Army's Air Corps Tactics School (ACTS) envisioned something akin to flying battleships conducting unescorted bombing missions.[77] There was a general belief that "the bomber will always get through,"[78] and a presumption about bombing accuracy that failed to recognize atmospheric complexities.[79] Moreover, notions of rigid massed formations, decisive battle, and an enemy's center of gravity held early airpower theory hostage, stifling innovative application of a significant disruptive technology.[80]

As Clayton Christensen notes, disruptive technologies do not tend to flourish in well-established businesses because disruption requires organizations to discard long-held concepts and measures of value—something that is harder to do than most people realize.[81] Similarly, Andrew Hill argues that this dilemma also exits in the military. Hill notes that in "the United States military . . . innovation is not a scientific or technical problem; it is an organizational challenge."[82] The bureaucracy of large organizations can result in an inertia that is difficult to overcome and frequently prevents an innovation's potential from being recognized. Unplanned circumstances, however, may enable disruptive technologies to find a niche and eventually dislocate previously dominant technologies, methods, processes, and concepts.[83] Hence, there is ironic familiarity in noting that post-World War I restrictions on Germany's military programs drove them to develop theory that would reveal the

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[74] Charles Griffith, *The Quest: Haywood Hansell and American Strategic Bombing in World War II* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1999), 6.

[75] Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, ed. Joseph Patrick Harahan and Richard H. Kohn, trans. Dino Ferrari (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009), 119. Giulio Douhet was one of the first airpower theorists, and his book, *The Command of the Air,* may have derived its title from Julian Corbett's concept of "command of the sea."

[76] Ibid., 117-119. Douhet conceded to two variants only if an amphibian version proved impractical because he foresaw the need to project airpower from both land and sea. Although the battleplane was not the only type of aircraft Douhet envisioned, he seemed to distinguish it from other aircraft, which he apparently viewed as "non-operational." These "non-operational" types of aircraft included reconnaissance aircraft and armed air cruisers.

[77] Griffith, *The Quest*, 77. Griffith's book also highlights that engineers advised members of the ACTS that it was impossible to design a fighter with the range to escort long-range bombers. However, aeronautical science and innovation eventually allowed the design of the P-51 Mustang with drop-tanks that could escort bombers into Germany.

[78] Keith Middlemas and John Barnes, *Baldwin; a Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 735. British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin is the source of the well-known phrase: "the bomber will always get through." The statement was part of an address to the British Parliament in 1932 entitled "A Fear for the Future."

[79] Griffith, *The Quest*, 77, 163-164. Griffith noted that "the winds often reached 200 knots over the targets, causing the bombers to drift 45 degrees, but the bomb sights could correct for only 35 degrees. To further complicate matters, winds at lower altitudes often changed in direction and velocity, forcing the bombardier to make any number of corrections."

[80] Early theory attempted to fit airpower into existing doctrinal concepts instead of recognizing that disruptive technologies generally fail to meet their potential while captive to pre-existing value models.

[81] Clayton M. Christensen, *The Innovator's Dilemma: The Revolutionary Book That Will Change the Way You Do Business* (New York: Collins Business Essentials, 2005), 259.

[82] Andrew A. Hill, "The Shock of the New: Innovation in Military Organizations," (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2013), 3.

[83] The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is well known for developing technologies that commercial research may otherwise have considered too risky to pursue. DARPA is willing to take high risks because they recognize the exceptional strategic payoff that these investments can create for the nation's national security. In addition, the "Motley Fool Rule Breakers" newsletter is an investment tool that attempts to identify companies with tremendous growth potential due to disruptive technologies.

disruptive nature of airpower.[84] Meanwhile, the Allies continued to think in terms of a battleplane, even as the era of the battleship was beginning to wane.

The battleship proved to be no match against the flexibility, speed, and maneuverability demonstrated by non-rigid swarms of lightly armored fighter-bombers. The 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor made this point painfully clear and vindicated the oft-accosted predictions of previously court-martialed airpower theorist Billy Mitchell.[85] Centralized command utilizing decentralized control of airpower, through mission-type orders, enabled distributed operations to achieve strategic effects and presaged John Boyd's future conclusion that unshackling initiative enables rapid decision-making and maneuverability that can paralyze an enemy.

John Boyd – Maneuver Warfare

Described by military biographer Robert Coram as the greatest military theorist since Sun Tzu,[86] John Boyd's brash, foul-mouth personality gave him a well-deserved reputation as a maverick.[87] That reputation and a penchant for slide presentations are probably why most students of warfare do not study his contribution to theory in much detail.[88] Interestingly, discussions about Strategic Landpower, the Human Domain, and adding "Influence"[89] as a possible seventh U.S. Army warfighting function seem to arrive at the same conclusion as Boyd's successors:[90] tactical action means little if it does not have a strategic effect on human behavior.[91] This concept is not new. The fact that it continues to arise as if it were a novel discovery suggests that the concept is easily overshadowed by fixation on battle per se rather than on the purpose of battle.

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[84] The submarine is another classic disruptive technology that was developed out of necessity by the Germans between World War I and World War II.

[85] James J. Cooke, *Billy Mitchell* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 278.

[86] Robert Coram, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2002), 445.

[87] Franklin C. Spinney, "Genghis John: An Architect of Victory in Desert Storm Is Remembered," *Proceedings - United States Naval Institute* 123, no. 7 (1997): 42-47. Within the U.S. Air Force, Boyd had earned nicknames such as Genghis John, The Mad Major, and The Ghetto Colonel.

[88] Coram, *Boyd*, 445. Familiarity with Boyd's work was not helped by the fact that he was an Airman discarding Clausewitz's theory of warfare at a time when the Army was in the middle of reinvigorating professional military education that embraced *On War* in the years following the Vietnam War. The Marine Corps, however, fully embraced his theory.

[89] Grant M. Martin, "The Sublime: The Paradox of the 7th Warfighting Function*," Small Wars Journal*, November 25, 2013, http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-sublime-the-paradox-of-the-7th-warfighting-function (accessed February 3, 2014).

[90] The U.S. Army's Warfighting Functions are similar to, and no doubt the origin of, the Joint Functions listed in Joint Doctrine. The Army's Warfighting Functions are currently: Mission Command, Movement and Maneuver, Intelligence, Fires, Sustainment, and Protection. The only variance with the Joint Functions is that the Army has recently decided to change one of their functions from "Command and Control" to "Mission Command," which just seems to express their preference to promote a command philosophy that emphasizes decentralized control. The Army proposal to make "Influence" the seventh warfighting function confuses an important point. Influence is not a function of warfighting; it is the purpose of warfighting. There are certainly other ways to influence people, but it is difficult to imagine what other reason humanity would have for waging war. For more information on the Army's warfighting functions, see U.S. Department of the Army, *Unified Land Operations*, 3-2.

[91] This is the fundamental premise behind a concept known as Effects Based Operations (EBO). As Edward Smith notes in *Effects Based Operations: Applying Network Centric Warfare in Peace, Crisis, and War*: "The broad utility of effects-based operations grows from the fact that they are focused on actions and their link to behavior, on stimulus and response, rather than on targets and damage infliction. They are applicable not only to traditional warfare, but also to military operations short of combat. Effects-based operations are not new. Good generals and statesmen have always focused on outcomes and on the human dimension of war (e.g. will and shock). Indeed, we can trace how the principles of effects-based operations have functioned in hundreds of crises and conflicts to distill a straightforward definition: Effects-based operations are coordinated sets of actions directed at shaping behavior of friends, foes, and neutrals in peace, crisis, and war." Edward Allen Smith, *Effects Based Operations: Applying Network Centric Warfare to Peace, Crisis, and War* (Washington DC: Command and Control Research Program, 2002), xiv.

Fighter pilots may know John Boyd as the father of the Energy-Maneuverability (EM) Diagram, but they probably do not know that Boyd went back to undergraduate school to study engineering.[92] Already regarded as one of best fighter pilots in the Air Force, he was seeking scientific theory to explain what experience had taught him about aerial combat maneuvering. The Air Force initially denied his request, but eventually acquiesced under Boyd's infamous persistence. The result was an undergraduate Captain inventing a method to compare the maneuverability of aircraft based on laws of thermodynamics.[93] Boyd would forever see the analysis and synthesis of diverse concepts as a powerful force for shaping understanding and guiding action.

In the years that followed, Boyd and his theory disrupted the status quo of fighter aircraft design by challenging underlying value models.[94] He also challenged broader notions of existing warfare theory, and his willingness to question unstated assumptions is largely what made him an unsung legacy in the annals of modern warfare. John Boyd became the key intellectual powerhouse behind doctrine for maneuver warfare and the development of AirLand Battle as an operational concept.[95] That concept turned post World War II manning, equipping, and training concepts on their head by replacing the U.S. military's "emphasis on firepower and attrition with a more fluid doctrine based on maneuver and deception."[96]

In retirement, a slide presentation entitled "Patterns of Conflict," became Boyd's preferred forum for communicating conclusions about the art of war and his "time-based theory of conflict."[97] The presentation demonstrated a profuse fondness for Sun Tzu's teachings while highlighting the fallacy of overly prescriptive and constraining, top-down, attrition-based warfare that emanated from the study of Napoleon, Clausewitz, and Jomini.[98] While he believed Napoleon demonstrated a remarkable degree of adaptability and flexibility at his level, he noted that Napoleon's tactics depended on rigorous drill-like discipline that failed to allow initiative once the battle had begun.[99] Unfortunately, nineteenth-century militaries wed themselves to the idea of massed armies, becoming dependent on large-scale logistics that telegraphed movement while simultaneously "suppress[ing] ambiguity, deception, and mobility."[100]

By 1990, maneuver warfare doctrine espoused many of Boyd's concepts, but few military officers outside of the Marine Corps were aware of the tremendous role Boyd had played in preparing the

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[92] Coram, *Boyd*, 103.

[93] Ibid., 123-134. Boyd's EM Diagrams revolutionized the understanding of aerial combat and allowed the still rambunctious Major Boyd to convince the Pentagon that it needed to scrap its replacement plans for the F-111 and F-4. Boyd then played a significant role in the development of the A-10. Many people refer to Boyd as the father of the F-15 and F-16. Ibid., 5-8.

[94] Previously, aircraft designs centered around speed and power. Boyd's revelation was that energy was the key factor in aerial combat. Ibid., 132.

[95] Grant Tedrick Hammond, *The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 151-154.

[96] Ibid., 154. Americans won World War II because of their ability to produce sufficient numbers of soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and equipment to overwhelm the Axis powers, and it ended with the U.S. as the only atomic power. That preeminence did not last long, however, and soon the world found itself in the midst of a Cold War. Boyd was one of a few strategic thinkers recognizing that the Cold War demanded a completely different mindset, and he became a key figure in urging a shift from attrition-based warfare to maneuver warfare. Boyd played a significant role in developing a well-trained and integrated high-tech Western military that emphasized flexibility, innovation, and adaptability as a balance against numerically superior Soviet military forces, and his influence lasted well after his retirement in 1975.

[97] Coram, *Boyd*, 328.

[98] Boyd, "Patterns of Conflict.*"*

[99] Ibid., 38.

[100] Ibid., 48.

military for Operation Desert Storm.[101] His unconventional thinking and "Patterns of Conflict" presentation gained many followers in the business world, but also within powerful political circles.[102] Richard Cheney, Secretary of Defense at the time, credits John Boyd as a major influence in the decision to shift the ground campaign from a classic Clausewitzian frontal-attack, to the Sun Tzu-like plan known as "the left hook."[103] Similarly, Commandant of the Marine Corps General Charles Krulak credited Boyd's influence for the success of the campaign saying, "John Boyd was an architect of that victory as surely as if he'd commanded a fighter wing or a maneuver division in the desert."[104] That is quite a tribute from a Marine about an Airman who had retired fifteen years before Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Boyd had a fundamental belief in the importance of thinking in terms of "mind-time-space,"[105] and his unpublished 1976 paper "Destruction and Creation"[106] provides insight on his philosophical perspective of looking at the world through the lens of continual analysis and synthesis—a process he called a Conceptual Spiral.[107] In classic Boyd fashion, the paper synthesized Heisenberg's *Uncertainty Principle* and Gödel's *Incompleteness Theory* to emphasize the certainty of imperfect knowledge and the continual need to question the context of a problem.[108] Boyd's goal was to create "a foundation for vitality and growth, or in a more formal sense . . . a foundation for comprehending, shaping, and adapting in an unfolding, adapting reality that is uncertain, ever-changing, [and] unpredictable."[109] Nearly three decades later, advocates of a concept called Design were similarly discussing "problem setting"[110] or "problem framing"[111] as a way to cognitively cope with a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA) world.[112] In delivering his "Patterns of Conflict" presentation, Boyd would frequently comment that "progress is the creation of confusion at a higher

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[101] Coram, *Boyd*, 378-379, 444. On page 444, Coram cites a May 6, 1991 *U.S. News & World Report* article crediting three men with the innovative tactics that won the Gulf War: John Boyd, Mike Wyly, and Huba Wass de Czege. Huba Wass de Czege has continued to be an intellectual force for a concept this author refers to as "intellectual maneuver." Wass de Czege worked extensively with Shimon Naveh to introduce "Design" to the U.S. military (Design and Naveh are discussed later in this paper). On page 378, Coram also provides an interesting phone dialogue describing the first interaction between Boyd and Wyly, who was an instructor at the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School. The dialogue helps paint a picture of Boyd's personality: Wyly, "I hear you have a theory about warfare." Boyd, "It's not a theory. It's a briefing. I call it 'Patterns of Conflict.' It's five hours long." Wyly, "My class has only two hours." Boyd, "I can't do it in two. It takes five hours." Wyly, "We don't have five hours." Boyd, "Then you get zero." Wyle eventually relented. Coram also relates a similar situation when the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) expressed interest in hearing Boyd's presentation. Boyd told their offices he needed 5 to 6 hours to provide the presentation; however, when he was told that the generals only had an hour available, Boyd responded "Since your boss is so pressed for time, here's an idea that will save him a lot of time: how about no brief?" before hanging up on the CNO's executive officer. Ibid., 329-330.

[102] Ibid., 355, 384.

[103] Ibid., 424.

[104] "Col. John Boyd," *Congressional Record* 143, no. 37 (1997).

[105] Boyd, "Patterns of Conflict*,"* 184. The concepts behind Boyd's "Mind-Time-Space" schema are essentially the same points being made today in the push for decentralized execution and mission-type orders to encourage initiative.

[106] Boyd, "Destruction and Creation.*"*

[107] John Boyd, "Conceptual Spiral Presentation by John Boyd 1*," YouTube,* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_fjaqAiOmc (accessed December 23, 2013).

[108] Boyd, "Destruction and Creation.*"*

[109] Boyd, "Conceptual Spiral Presentation by John Boyd 1.*"*

[110] John F. Schmitt, "A Systemic Concept for Operational Design*,"* http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/mcwl_schmitt_op_design.pdf (accessed December 19, 2013), 3.

[111] U.S. Department of the Army, *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5-500 (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 2008), 17.

[112] T. O. Jacobs, *Strategic Leadership: The Competitive Edge* (Washington DC: National Defense University, 2008).

level,"[113] a concept that is remarkably similar to the ideas conveyed by retired Israeli Brigadier General Shimon Naveh when discussing development of Systemic Operational Design (SOD).[114]

John Warden – The Enemy as a System

While John Boyd was instrumental in shaping the doctrinal, material, and intellectual foundation of late-twentieth century warfare, Colonel John Warden deserves credit for giving Boyd's maneuver warfare theory an analogous form. Often credited with being the architect of the 1991 Gulf War air campaign, Colonel John Warden's theory of warfare conceptualizes the enemy as a living system with nominally five concentric subsystems.[115] Contrary to mechanistically focusing on a single center of gravity, Warden's conceptualization presents multiple opportunities to leverage vulnerabilities in each subsystem.[116] He compares these enemy subsystems to the subsystems of the body: leadership (brain), organic essentials (food and oxygen), infrastructure (blood vessels, bones, and muscles), population (cells), and fighting mechanisms (white blood cells).[117]

In Warden's abstract system, a brain-like command element synchronizes the five critical subsystems, yet the system depends on each of the subsystems. Warden believed the best way to counter the innate adaptability of an enemy was to attack the subsystems through parallel, versus sequential, warfare.[118] Warden's theory attempts to free warfare of the cognitive limitations of serial, attrition warfare, while holding that the synergistic effect of parallel warfare results in greater coercive pressure than the mere sum of each action.[119] Inputting disruptive energy into each subsystem should prevent an enemy from being able to adapt, perhaps even creating self-defeating emergent characteristics in the wake of induced confusion. Most notably, it completely discards the notion of a single enemy center of gravity.[120]

Whereas Clausewitz drew upon the language of early Newtonian physics to describe concepts such as an enemy's center of gravity, Warden's theory drew linguistic and conceptual inspiration from Systems Theory and Cybernetics while remaining consistent with Sun Tzu and Boyd-like theories of warfare.[121] Not surprisingly, Systems Theory and Cybernetics offer a logical starting point

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[113] John Boyd, "Colonel John Boyd*," YouTube,* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rbb48uUOkqQ (accessed December 23, 2013).

[114] This conclusion is based on this author's discussions with Shimon Naveh at the U.S. Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) during the period between Fall 2006 and Spring 2007.

[115] John A. Warden III, "The Enemy as a System," *Airpower Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1995). Warden's 1988 paper from the National War College was entitled "The Air Campaign: Planning for Combat" and espoused a more Clausewitzian view of warfare focused on the singular perspective of a Center of Gravity and decisive action. In Warden's writing, he continued to reference Clausewitz, while espousing concepts that seem more aligned with Sun Tzu. It is interesting to wonder whether his views morphed as a result of planning for Operation Desert Storm, or if they had already begun as a result of his studies at the National War College. It would also be interesting to know how much exposure to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* Warden received through professional military education; he clearly had been exposed to Clausewitz's theory *On War*.

[116] About a year later, while a professor at the U.S. Marine Corps War College, Joseph Strange expressed a similar concept of focusing on vulnerabilities. Like Warden, Strange tends to view the enemy as having a multitude of vulnerabilities instead of becoming focused on a single center of gravity. These approaches get to the "so what" of adversarial analysis and tend to make them more practical to the strategist and planner. For more information on Strange's work, see Joseph Strange, *Centers of Gravity & Critical Vulnerabilities: Building on the Clausewitzian Foundation So That We Can All Speak the Same Language* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, 1996); Strange and Iron, "Understanding Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities*."*

[117] Warden III.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Another key advantage of parallel warfare is that it allows greater opportunity to observe how the enemy system reacts to various actions, and it facilitates learning that would not be achievable if only focused on a single center of gravity.

[121] The title of Warden's paper is "The Enemy as a System," and Cybernetics is the study of systems (mechanical, physical, biological, social, etc.). This author found significant similarity between Systems Theory and the French

for a much-needed theory of cyber warfare, yet the study of Boyd suggests inspiration might arrive from synthesis of disparate fields.

Shimon Naveh – Systemic Operational Design

Similar to Warden, Systems Theory influenced Shimon Naveh's perspective, but his study of postmodern French philosophy, literary theory, psychology, and architectural design also had a significant influence.[122] Like Boyd and Warden, Naveh's thinking appears distinctly Sun Tzu-like in its attempt to outthink the enemy, exploit surprise, and seek asymmetric opportunities to render an enemy's strategy ineffective. According to Naveh:

> The enemy interprets space in a traditional, classical manner, and I do not want to obey this interpretation and fall into his traps. Not only do I not want to fall into his traps, I want to surprise him! This is the essence of war. I need to win. I need to emerge from an unexpected place…This is why we opted for the methodology of moving through walls . . . Like a worm that eats its way forward, emerging at points and then disappearing.[123]

Compared to Warden, Naveh is less prescriptive in offering a framework for modeling a "rival."[124] Warden provides a five-ring, bio-inspired framework picturing an enemy as a living system, while Boyd and Naveh focus more on the demand for rigorous intellectual examination and discourse regarding underlying cognitive beliefs.

Although Sun Tzu-like, Naveh's concept of Design emerges from the study of architectural design and a desire to differentiate the thought processes associated with Design from the process of military planning. Unfortunately, like Boyd, Naveh expresses most of his thoughts through briefing slides and he uses an overly active vocabulary that isolates his concepts from most military practitioners.[125] Even the fact that the word "Design" can be used linguistically as a either a noun or verb has been the source of some confusion and debate. Is Design something that one performs—a verb? Alternatively, is Design the product of some activity—a noun?[126]

The noun argument could stem from common architectural analogies where architects produce designs, architectural engineers produce plans, and then builders use plans to guide the work of artisans. The analogy is useful if one appreciates how an architect must engage in a set of dialogues with a sponsor. While the sponsor usually has some initial vision in mind, the architect may only realize what the sponsor desires through the presentation of options that generate discussions of

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philosopher Gilles Deleuze's Assemblage Theory. Deleuze's thoughts may also have been an influence on Shimon Naveh. For more information on Assemblage Theory, see Manuel De Landa, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (London: Continuum, 2006).

[122] Yotam Feldman, "Dr. Naveh, or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Walk through Walls*," Haaretz*, October 25, 2007, http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/magazine/dr-naveh-or-how-i-learned-to-stop-worrying-and-walk-through-walls-1.231912 (accessed February 4, 2014).

[123] Eyal Weizman, "Lethal Theory*,"* http://www.skor.nl/_files/Files/OPEN18_P80-99(1).pdf (accessed February 13, 2014).

[124] Shimon Naveh, "Systemic Operational Design: Transforming the Triad, Extending the Potential*,"* http://www.slideshare.net/ubiwar/shimon-naveh-powerpoint (accessed December 20, 2013). Naveh's work offers important practical insights and proffers three lenses through which one should view the world when trying to transition from "system framing" to "operational framing." These three lenses include viewing the Rival as Rationale, Logistics as Rationale, and Command as Rationale for the ensuing strategy (or design, if one considers the word as a noun).

[125] John Schmitt and William Young wrote early papers on design that this author found useful. Additionally, although Alex Ryan joined the Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) after the school had been exploring designs for a couple years, his academic background in Complexity Theory allowed him to quickly contribute to the intellectual development of Naveh's concepts and he has provided many coherent thoughts on design.

[126] Some in the military seem to use Design both as a verb and as a noun.

fiscal, physical, cultural, and other limitations. The sponsor and architect cooperatively agree on a design through a process of discovery that allows both to emerge with an understanding of the rationale behind necessary choices.[127] The sponsor's vision shapes, and is shaped by, the architect. Similarly, the architect shapes, and is shaped by, the sponsor's desire, engineer's plans, builder's schedule, and artisan's skill.[128]

While this architectural analogy may be helpful in thinking about the conceptual difference between designing and planning, it is surely not perfect. Thinking about Design as a noun can lead to confusion about the role of a design versus a strategy, or a plan. If one considers the underpinning and emphasis of Design, then the verb form appears to have more utility and fits better within existing military lexicon. In this sense, one can talk linguistically and cognitively about "designing a strategy" with logical consistency between Ends, Ways, and Means.[129] According to Naveh, Design requires a discourse and a scrutiny of mental constructs.[130] This logical extension of an important concept is embedded within the "orient" phase of Boyd's frequently over-simplified Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act Loop (OODA Loop).[131] Perhaps because he was a soldier, Naveh's work garnered attention by the U.S. Army as it sought to distinguish between a concept-driven method to design strategy and a planning process that many officers view as linear and checklist-driven.[132]

In recent years, overly academic language has started to fade from discussions of Systemic Operational Design, Campaign Design, Operational Design, and Design. Joint doctrine has increasingly embraced the concept, and design-type thinking has become a part of Professional Military Education (PME) courses such as the Joint Combined Warfighting School and the various staff and war colleges. The premise of design-type thinking is the application of systems, critical and creative thinking to facilitate iterative analysis and synthesis. The military should inculcate these skills at all levels if they truly hope to embrace a philosophy of command that practices decentralized control to enable initiative. At the same time, trust and confidence must become the motivation for

[127] John Boyd would describe this common/shared understanding as a "mind-time-space schema." For more information, see Boyd, "Patterns of Conflict," 74.

[128] This concept is similar to the earlier discussion about Clausewitz's belief that a commander-in-chief must function as both a statesman and a general, balancing political "ends" with available "means." The cognitive tension resulting from the noun-verb dilemma and the architect-engineer-artisan analogy discussed in this article are refinements of the author's thoughts conveyed in a paper written at the Joint Combined Warfighting School (JCWS). Reference: Mark Blomme, Matthew Childs, and Jim Di Crocco III, "Design, EBO, and JOPP: Reconciling Tension and Embracing Problem-Setting" (Joint Forces Staff College, 2010), 6-7.

[129] The Ends, Ways, Means framework is a recent construct of concepts expressed by Clausewitz in *On War*. Clausewitz spoke in terms of Ends and Means, but he clearly expressed and understanding of the importance of planning on how to link the two. Clausewitz also acknowledged this is not a novel or erudite idea: "No one starts a war—or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so—without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it." Clausewitz, *On War*, 579. Clausewitz, however, firmly believed that Ends are tied to political objectives, and he describes the How, or Way, as the operational objectives.

[130] Based on this author's discussions with Shimon Naveh at the U.S. Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) during the period between Fall 2006 and Spring 2007.

[131] The author draws this conclusion from years of inquiry with graduates of various U.S. military staff and war colleges. USMC officers seem to have a much deeper appreciation for Boyd's contribution to the corpus of warfare theory than any other service, including the Air Force. Robert Coram's book, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War,* helped this author understand the strong association between John Boyd and the USMC. As a graduate of the Air Force Squadron Officer School, Air Command and General Staff College (ACSC), Air Force Institute of Technology, Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), Air War College (AWC), Joint Combined Warfighting School (JCWS), and a student at the Army War College (USAWC), the author has experienced very little formal exposure to John Boyd's work. Nevertheless, while studying Naveh's theory of Systemic Operational Design there was a nagging suspicion and curiousity that led to further exploration of Boyd's work.

[132] Ketti C. Davison, *Systemic Operational Design (SOD): Gaining and Maintaining the Cognitive Initiative,* SAMS Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, May 25, 2006), 15.; William T. Sorrells and others, *Systemic Operational Design: An Introduction,* SAMS Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 2005), 10-11.

individual action. This may be difficult to achieve in a culture that revolves around inviolable deference to rank. These are not exclusive concepts, but initiative derives from trust and confidence, not merely legal authority and prescribed obligation.[133]

Conclusion

Before his death, Clausewitz indicated that he hoped *On War* would last more than "two or three years."[134] The fact that it is widely studied nearly two hundred years later suggests he achieved his aim. *On War* provides a prophetic theory summarizing the confluence of tendencies and motivations leading to war and limiting its aims, and his descriptive theory on war remains prescient today. In contrast, theory on warfare stagnated for over a century under the influence of his prescriptions for the conduct of war. As technology and industrialization increased the efficiency of killing, Clausewitzian-style theory of warfare continued preaching the virtue of mass and postulating decisive engagement while minimizing, if not ignoring, surprise and maneuverability.

Unlike Clausewitz, Sun Tzu's principles for warfare have demonstrated an uncanny ability to survive the clash of time and technology. Throughout the twentieth century, technology continued to increase the lethality of firepower, but it also enabled a renewed focus on speed, stealth, and maneuverability. While many technologies were at play, none necessitated a departure from Clausewitzian-style warfare more than the airplane. It changed the speed and dimensions of warfare while lifting many geographical constraints and resulted in a renaissance of Sun Tzu-like theories on warfare. Central to that renaissance was John Boyd's willingness to challenge conventional wisdom. His ability to critically analyze and creatively synthesize diverse viewpoints enabled him to answer questions that many others refused to ask.

In many ways, Boyd's approach to theory is similar to Shimon Naveh's design-type thinking and is the essence of what previously allowed Julian Corbett, and later John Warden, to provide their contributions to theory. Emerging space and cyber theory may be able to draw upon existing maritime and parallel warfare theory, respectively; however, theorists must be willing to recognize and accept that these new domains may well disrupt existing notions of warfare. Cultural barriers to critical thinking must not be allowed, and students must question the validity of theories of war and warfare. Failure to do so will lead to another stagnation of theory and eventually strategic failure. The future belongs to those who ask questions and embrace design-type thinking while remaining open to the possibilities of imagination.

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[133] The legal authority of command will remain an important aspect of military service, but initiative is less likely to stem from legalistic motivations than from a sense of teamwork that revolves around trust, confidence, and a shared goal. Trust and confidence are crucial and must be bi-directional within an organization, but they are also crucial factors in facilitating unity of effort amongst organizations that have no formal command relationship. Hence, trust and confidence can have vertical and horizontal aspects. General (Retired) Gary Luck is fond of the phrase "the speed of trust", which he borrows from a book of the same title by Stephen M.R. Covey. In a paper on the insights and best practices of joint operations, Luck says, "we see successful commanders building personal relationships, inspiring trust and confidence, leveraging the analytical ability of their staffs, prioritizing limited resources, and decentralizing to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets to empower their subordinates. However, we continue to see a tendency among commanders to control subordinates to a point where they unintentionally compromise the unit's agility and speed." Gary E. Luck and Mike Findlay, *Joint Operations: Insights and Best Practices*, 3rd ed. (Norfolk, VA: United States Joint Forces Command, 2011), 3; Stephen M. R. Covey and Rebecca R. Merrill, *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything* (London: Pocket Books, 2008).

[134] Clausewitz, *On War*, 63.
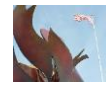
RAF Enhanced:
Civil-Military Engagement Teams

Colonel Timothy D. Brown

Now is the time to integrate the Defense Department's Regional Alignment of Forces (RAF) initiative with the efforts by the State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) to generate civil-military operational engagement teams focused on conflict prevention, crisis response, and stabilization. Interested teams should be resourced and capable of designing and implementing activities that address the underlying causes of destabilizing violence. Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) and expeditionary CSO diplomats will be hamstrung without whole-of-government synergy, unity of effort, and unity of command in regionally focused diplomatic, informational, military, and economic initiatives.

"The forces of geopolitics, globalization and history are reordering the balance of international economic and political power, presenting the United States and its like- minded allies (the West) with the greatest threats to their global influence in perhaps 500 years."[1] Rising regional powers and increasingly disruptive non-state actors that "breed conflict and endanger stability, particularly in Africa and the broader Middle East" threaten to undermine the global institutions that have maintained international order for the past half-century.[2] In response to a sluggish economy, a looming debt crisis, and numerous foreign policy disappointments, many Americans are calling for a refocus on domestic issues. The interconnectedness of the global system precludes any possibility that the U.S. will ever retreat to the homeland proper. This state of affairs necessitates proactive American leadership with innovative ideas and economy of force solutions.

In the 2012 Special Operations Command Posture Statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Admiral William McRaven argued for the use of both direct and indirect approaches to countering the nation's adversaries, stating that a direct approach "ultimately only buys time and space for the indirect approach and broader governmental elements to take effect." Thus, long-term

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[1] Reginald Dale and Daniel J. Mahaffee, *America in a Multipolar World: The Regional Working Groups* (Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, 2010), 2, accessed April 15, 2014,
http://www.thepresidency.org/storage/documents/America_in_a_Multipolar_World_Regional_Working_Groups.pdf.

[2] Michael Glenn Mullen, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2011: Redefining America's Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2011), 3–4.

activities like building partner capacity, engaging key populations, addressing local needs, and advancing ideas that discredit and defeat the appeal of violent extremism are essential.[3]

Military forces are experts in projecting hard power to defeat enemy combatants. The campaign in Iraq, however, demonstrated that winning the contest of arms alone is not in and of itself sufficient. The combatant-centric strategy initially employed by coalition forces swiftly delivered regime change in 2003.[4] But that approach nearly ended in mission failure. The game-changer occurred in 2007 when General David Petraeus recognized the need for a population-centric, broader governmental civil-military approach to address root causes of the then mounting violence and increasing instability found throughout Iraq.[5]

In 2011, after observing the "military's inability to field adequate numbers of appropriate personnel" to perform the types of tasks needed to address instability in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans, dating back to the 1990s,[6] the State Department established the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO).[7] The CSO charter is to "engage in conflict prevention, crisis response and stabilization, aiming to address the underlying causes of destabilizing violence."[8] The Bureau works with both government and nongovernmental organizations in over 20 countries to interrupt cycles of armed conflict, reduce drug and gang related violence, clear minefields, support elections, and assist victims of natural disaster.[9] A core function of CSO is to lead, coordinate, or influence partners in multinational public and private prevention or stabilization efforts.[10] Due to a lack of manpower and funding, however, CSO efforts are limited in that regard.[11]

The primary human capital source designated for the CSO to manage in the field is the Civilian Response Corps (CRC). Established in 2008, The CRC is an interagency unit envisioned to have over 4000 active, standby, and reserve civilians who provide a broad array of "civilian skills needed to help stabilize" areas threatened by violence.[12] Inadequate appropriated funding and valid but competing priorities in government agencies have marginalized CRC participation and limited its growth. To date, the CRC has reached only a fraction of its envisioned size and the CRC-R, civilian reserve, has not (yet) been established.[13]

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[3] ADM William H. McRaven, U.S. Navy, *Posture Statement of Commander: United States Special Operations Command* (Washington DC, 2012).

[4] Barbara Salazar Torreon, "US Periods of War and Dates of Current Conflicts" (Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2011), accessed April 16, 2014, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS21405.pdf.

[5] David H. Petraeus, "How We Won in Iraq," *Foreign Policy*, October 29, 2013, 14–15, 21, accessed January 22, 2014, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/10/29/david_petraeus_how_we_won_the_surge_in_iraq.

[6] *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, November 12, 2003), 10–20, accessed April 16, 2014, http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA435041.

[7] Nina M. Serafino, *In Brief: State Department Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 2012), 1.

[8] "Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations," *U.S. Department of State*, last modified April 16, 2014, accessed April 16, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/cso/.

[9] U.S. Department Of State, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, "Creative Solutions for Stabilizing Conflict," Other Release, last modified July 5, 2013, accessed November 2, 2013, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/pl/2013/206639.htm.

[10] Serafino, *In Brief*, 3–5.

[11] *CSO at Two Years: Engaging Around the World*, Report (Department Of State Bureau of Public Affairs, March 13, 2014), accessed April 17, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/cso/releases/pressreleases/2014/223397.htm.

[12] Serafino, *In Brief*, 6–7.

[13] Ibid., 7.

The State Department requested $45 million for CSO's 2014 budget.[14]   By comparison, war funding for Iraq in 2008 surpassed $140 billion—roughly $390 million per day.[15] The long-term costs are much higher. Including Afghanistan combat operations through the end of 2014, total costs for the post-9-11 campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq through 2017 are projected to run between $4 and $6 trillion.[16] Deliberate and consistently funded prevention and stabilization efforts aimed at assisting host nation partners to reduce instability and defeat the appeal of extremism are considerably more affordable and likely more effective than financing intrastate and regional conflict. Programmed active and reserve military manpower, employed by combatant commanders through RAF in a soft power role, can fill CSO's human capital void.

The Army Chief describes the RAF as designed to assist Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners to foster a stronger global security environment.[17] Africa Command (AFRICOM) is now using active and reserve military units in the regional alignment program to build military-to-military relationships and prepare foreign partners to serve as peacekeepers.[18] The Army Reserve includes deployable medical, legal, agricultural, development, and other specialists with expertise cultivated in fulltime civilian professions. If appropriate civilian skills were properly tracked, well-qualified reservists could be leveraged to support CSO initiatives by filling the undeveloped CRC-R billets.

A key element of the RAF initiative is that it leverages trained and ready military forces when they are otherwise not deployed. RAF provide a source of expeditionary manpower. The Army Brigade Combat Team (BCT) aligned to AFRICOM, for example, has approximately 4,000 Soldiers which is strikingly comparable to the total CRC manpower shortage.[19] Where CSO possesses unique expertise in designing conflict prevention and stability activities, the military is unmatched in manpower, logistics, planning, and training capacity.[20]

A regionally aligned CSO staff, fully integrated at the executive level and below into each geographic combatant command (GCC), is needed to properly coordinate civilian-military prevention and stabilization activities.[21] Where robust GCC military staffs excel at planning and execution, they critically lack expertise resident in the civilian agencies. Exchanging liaison officers is simply an inadequate response.[22] Instead, reciprocal assignments that exchange upwardly mobile Foreign Service and military officers could respond to immediate needs while building better senior leaders for the future.[23]

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[14] *Fiscal Year 2014 Congressional Budget Justification: Foreign Operations* (Department of State, 2013), 20, accessed April 14, 2014, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/208290.pdf.

[15] Amy Belasco, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11* (Congressional Research Service, March 29, 2011), 3, accessed March 20, 2014, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf.

[16] Linda J. Bilmes, "The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets," last modified March 2013, accessed October 26, 2013, https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=8956&type=WPN.

[17] GEN Raymon T. Odierno, "Regionally Aligned Forces: A New Model for Building Partnerships," *Army Live*, last modified March 22, 2012, accessed October 27, 2013, http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2012/03/aligned-forces/.

[18] Michelle Tan, "AFRICOM: Regionally Aligned Forces Find Their Anti-Terror Mission," *Defense News*, last modified October 20, 2013, accessed November 8, 2013, http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131020/SHOWSCOUT04/310200014/AFRICOM-Regionally-Aligned-Forces-Find-Their-Anti-terror-Mission.

[19] Serafino, *In Brief*, 6–7.

[20] AMB Marc Grossman, "U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (2011-2012)", November 1, 2013.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

The CSO's expeditionary diplomatic corps must be sufficiently robust and resourced to train alongside and then deploy with the RAF military units in support of CSO in the field. Forming teams with apt preparation and training will build trust while simultaneously identifying knowledge, capability, and capacity gaps. As soon as teams deploy to forward locations, relationships with local nationals, language and cultural immersion, and the focus on the mission itself will make resolving interagency coordination issues more difficult. For maximal success, civil-military operational engagement teams should build relationships, resolve questions of authority, and establish a common purpose well before arriving in a host nation.

Under the Budget Control Act of 2011—also known as sequestration—Congress and the executive branch are aggressively pursuing cost savings government-wide.[24] Budget considerations are forcing military service chiefs to critically underfund readiness, drastically cut force strength, and, in effect, take "a decade-long modernization holiday."[25] Conflict prevention and post conflict stabilization initiatives are the right investment to protect U.S. national security interests in the long run. They must be prioritized and properly funded, however, if we are to forestall far more costly military interventions in the future.[26] Spending years and trillions of dollars to establish questionably effective broad governmental elements capable of executing decisive activities is not acceptable. We must not repeat the experiences of Afghanistan and Iraq. To do so would not only consume increasingly scarce national resources, but could well erode America's credibility and international standing.

Expanding and integrating the Defense Department's RAF strategy and the State Department's CSO Bureau is a useful way for the United States to reassert itself abroad for meaningful conflict prevention and stabilization initiatives. The GCC is the right location and functional level to integrate Defense and State executive leadership and staff to develop strategies, review authorities, plan missions, and coordinate operational engagement team employment. Establishing the right sized U.S. national security apparatus requires numerous trade-offs if we are to successfully balance national priorities and strategic interests. Given fiscal realities and the current global environment, conflict prevention and stabilization are vital national security interests. Congress and the President should prioritize and fully resource coordinated efforts to integrate RAF and CSO activities in the GCCs, civilian agencies, and military services. Countering disruptive forces through well-coordinated long-term prevention and stabilization efforts is not just more affordable than conventional military intervention, it should prove far more effective.

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[24] Bill Heniff Jr., Elizabeth Rybicki, and Shannon M. Mahan, *The Budget Control Act of 2011* (Washington, DC: U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, August 19, 2011).

[25] Tilghman, Andrew, "Hagel: Cuts Will Shrink Pay, Benefits and Force," *Defense News*, last modified July 31, 2013, accessed November 8, 2013, http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130731/DEFREG02/307310023/Hagel-Cuts-Will-Shrink-Pay-Benefits-Force.

[26] Serafino, *In Brief*, 10.
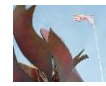
Thinking about Strategic Landpower

Colonel Landy T. Nelson

Land component forces must evolve to meet the threats and challenges of the twenty first century. The Strategic Landpower White Paper released in May 2013 by the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Commander of Special Operations Command lays an important framework for critical thinking, lively debate, and ultimately advances implied solutions for how best to adapt landpower forces in support of national security objectives. The framework is flawed, however, by its limited definition of Strategic Landpower as the "application of landpower towards achieving overarching national or multinational (alliance or coalition) security objectives and guidance for a given military campaign or operation."[1] Landpower must be conceived more broadly and must include the additional governmental tools which will be required in concert with ground forces to achieve strategic success. Conceptual broadening is essential for three reasons: (1) Army, Marine, and Special Operation forces cannot achieve national strategic objectives alone; (2) The current ad hoc and stovepiped framework of Unified Action is not sufficient to meet twenty first century challenges; and (3) a more comprehensive definition of Landpower that incorporates other governmental departments may provide the needed impetus to reform U.S. approaches to national security. In short, relying primarily on U.S. power within the land domain is ill advised.

Advancing a narrow definition of Landpower promulgates unrealistic expectations about what Landpower alone can actually achieve and limits thinking about land force best practices in the twenty first century environment. While the White Paper correctly identifies strategic success as often occurring within the land domain, it fails to acknowledge that this success is most likely to be achieved by the collaborative application of many elements of national power, not by Landpower alone. That land forces will necessarily perform a fundamental role and will set the conditions for other instruments of national power to achieve desired political endstates is highly probable if not virtually assured. The U.S. may yet find itself in a major conflict in which destruction of adversarial land forces is the prime strategic objective. Given the contemporary security environment, however, such a scenario is not likely.

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[1] Strategic Landpower Task Force, "Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills" (May 2013), 3. Whitepaper link at Strategic Landpower homepage, http://www.arcic.army.mil/Initiatives/strategic-landpower.aspx (accessed 10 September 2013).

Much more probable are multiple scenarios in which the United States faces a wide range of challenges, including state and non-state actors operating as regular, irregular, or hybrid threats. Adaptive adversaries will exploit technology and telecommunications, develop and employ assorted capabilities such as cyber, proxy forces, possibly weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and generally maneuver away from the U.S. preferred way of warfare.[2] Success against twenty first century adversaries, therefore, will require more than destroying combat forces. The U.S. government will need to blend lethal military operations with a broader range of tools—including financial, intelligence, law enforcement, diplomatic, developmental, and strategic communications—in order to influence multiple audiences and ultimately to break adversarial will. Offensive operations and use of deadly force will still be required. Their execution by land component forces, however, must be combined with defensive and stability operations in order to create the conditions necessary for employing diplomatic, informational, and economic tools in support of the desired political outcome.

The U.S. military, of course, attempts to integrate tools from other agencies under the joint doctrine of "Unified Action"—defined as the "synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort."[3] Because the different departments and agencies develop and execute the bulk of their plans and strategies independently, Unified Action, however, rarely meets this laudable goal. The net result is failure to bring a truly unified approach to the problem. At best, Unified Action results in separate civilian and military operations that the military or other lead agency attempts to coordinate and integrate. Far too often, however, unity of effort is not achieved. When it is, that unity is achieved by perceptive, cooperative leadership on the ground in the absence of apt and much needed thoughtful design. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan clearly demonstrate the failure of the current ad hoc approach to achieving national security goals. If the U.S. intends to shape the outcomes of confrontations, conflicts, and crises in the complex twenty first century environment, then we cannot continue muddling through with a Unified Action scenario as currently practiced.

Trends in the global environment indicate that a multitude of forces will create more frequent and more violent conflicts and catastrophes.[4] Major impacts to the global security environment include: Rapid global population growth which will put tremendous pressure on states to compete for energy, water and food to support life and economic and societal development;[5] a growing cyber awakening in which perceptions of inequality and other grievances are heightened, intensified, and lead to social tension, instability and potentially conflict;[6] a continuation of ideological extremism driven by religion, ethnic differences, or nationalism;[7] and predicted increases in global temperature will prompt shifts in agricultural patterns and food production likely to trigger humanitarian crises, if not conflict per se.[8] All have the potential to undermine U.S. contingencies.

Diverse pressures on the global security environment, coupled with likely adaptive adversaries, will require the U.S. government to develop and execute comprehensive approaches that employ

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[2] Robert W. Cone, *Operational Environments to 2028: The Strategic Environment for Unified Land Operations* (Joint Base Langley-Eustis, HQ Training and Doctrine Command, August 2012), 14.

[3] Martin E. Dempsey, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 15 October 2013), 284.

[4] Paul R. Newton, *Global Strategic Trends out to 2040, 4th Edition* (Shrivenham, UK: UK Ministry of Defense, 27 October 2013), 15.

[5] *Operational Environments to 2028: The Strategic Environment for Unified Land Operations* (August 2012), 22; *Global Strategic Trends out to 2040, 4th Edition* (Shrivenham, UK: 27 October 2013), 25.

[6] Ibid, 34.

[7] Ibid, 12.

[8] *Global Strategic Trends out to 2040, 4th Edition* (Shrivenham, UK: 27 October 2013), 26.

expeditionary interagency teams capable of applying a broad range of tools to achieve national security objectives. While the Strategic Landpower Task Force cannot direct this to happen, it can effect a paradigm shift by conceiving of Strategic Landpower more broadly as the application of U.S. power in the land domain, to include military, intelligence, diplomatic, financial, developmental, and strategic communications tools, to achieve U.S. national security objectives. This conception entails a significant change from Unified Action by recognizing that operations in the land domain must begin as a comprehensive interagency approach from the proverbial "get-go," rather than as military operations in which relevant agencies are essentially integrated as an afterthought.

Creating institutional change in our approach to national security will be difficult. In the past, many national security experts have recommended changes and have identified legislative action needed to establish the necessary authorities, funding, and training.[9] Despite these and other insightful recommendations, however, reform has not taken place and top-down legislative change seems unlikely. A paradigm shift is required. The Strategic Landpower Task Force should lead the way by embracing new ideas about Strategic Landpower and collaboratively developing concepts with the interagency for employing and implementing expeditionary teams. The goal would be to prompt Executive Branch reform with an Executive Order (E.O.) that captures these concepts while identifying lead and supporting departments and their associated roles for national security missions. To force a more integrated approach under austere fiscal conditions, the E.O. should establish a consolidated budget line for national security, including at minimum the Department of Defense, Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Intelligence Community.[10]

While addressing security challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. government developed and employed several programs of note. Specifically, the Provincial Reconstruction Team program—created to employ combined teams of military, diplomatic and reconstruction experts in Afghanistan and in Iraq—could serve as a prime model for developing expeditionary interagency teams. Additionally, the Ministry of Defense Advisory Program, while only composed of DoD personnel, should be reviewed as a potential model for training and deploying civilians to assist foreign governments with institutional capacity building. These two model programs focus solely on stability operations. Others will need to be developed to address the full spectrum of operations in the land domain where each is tailored and scaled with the appropriate blend of lethal and non-lethal tools. Creating fresh innovative concepts while adapting existing ones with buy-in from other governmental agencies may be the spark required to prompt needed reform for dealing with the complex problems of the twenty first century.

While this paradigm shift and institutional change will be far from easy to implement, it constitutes an important first step toward adapting our land forces and other national security tools to more effectively apply U.S. power in the land domain. Change might well begin with an expansion of the definition for Strategic Landpower. The Strategic Landpower Task Force must expand its reach to include the other elements of national power. Combat operations have drawn to an end in Afghanistan. The time to reconsider, think broadly, and innovate has arrived. Failure to do so, especially with regard to Strategic Landpower may result in a failure to achieve U.S. national security objectives. That is not a risk we can afford to accept.

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[9] Stephen J. Hadley and William J. Perry, *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America's National Security Needs in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institutue of Peace, 2010), xii.

[10] Ibid, xiii.

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