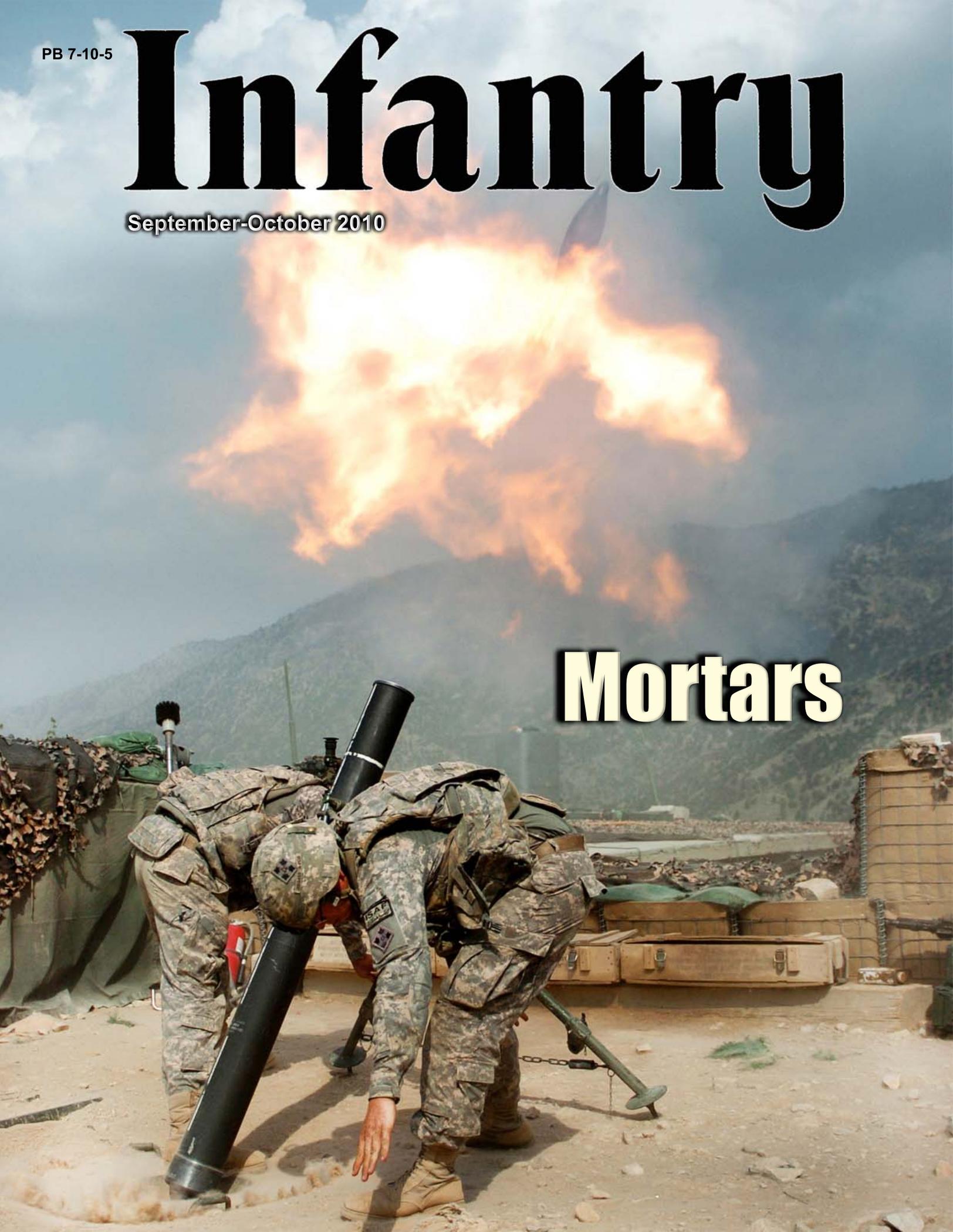


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Infantry

September-October 2010

Mortars



BG BRYAN R. OWENS
 Commandant,
 U.S. Army Infantry School

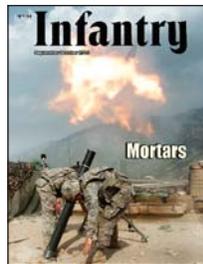
RUSSELL A. ENO
 Editor

MICHELLE J. ROWAN
 Deputy Editor

TIFFANY M. NABORS
 Editorial Assistant

FRONT COVER:

Soldiers with B Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, fire mortar rounds at insurgent fighting positions in Kunar Province, Afghanistan, on 15 August 2010. Since arriving in June, the mortarmen have fired more than 1,100 rounds. (Photo by SGT Matthew Moeller)



BACK COVER:

Soldiers with C Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment look for suspicious activity from an observation point during a mission in Zabul Province, Afghanistan, on 1 October 2010. (Photo by SPC Joshua Grenier)

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Infantry

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Volume 99, Number 3

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Commandant's Note

BG BRYAN R. OWENS

MORTARS — LETHAL, RELIABLE, AND RESPONSIVE

Mortars have been a part of our profession since at least the 18th century, but the smaller portable types familiar to us first came into use during the trench warfare of World War I. The high-angle, plunging fire of mortar rounds made them particularly effective against defilade targets, and this characteristic continues to prove useful in today's urban environment and in the steep defiles of mountain operations. The 60mm, 81mm and 4.2 mortars proved their value as small unit commanders' own indirect fire assets during World War II, in the Korean War, and throughout the war in Vietnam. We continued to rely on their high-angle fire as we trained during the Cold War and during the global war on terrorism. Even though we recognized the necessity and effectiveness of the mortar, emphasis on the upgrade and implementation of the mortar within the combined arms team received less attention than advances in the field artillery and the various munitions, fuses, combinations, effects, and increased range these systems offered.

The movement to focus on full spectrum operations conducted in extremely difficult terrain has led our combined arms planners to focus their attention on the proper employment of mortars. During the last decade, improvements in guidance systems have greatly enhanced the precision of mortar fires to the extent that the mortar now need not only be considered an area weapon. In this issue of *Infantry*, I want to highlight the important upgrades and use of our mortar systems as part of the combined arms team and to highlight new emerging mortar doctrine to the force. Army Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (ATTP) 3-21.90, *Tactical Employment of Mortars*, will soon be available to the force.

This new doctrine outlines the increased range and variation in fuse types that this highly accurate fire control system comprises. We are leading the way in finding new ways to employ old tactics by reestablishing the mortar as the Infantryman's "go to" indirect fire weapon. Today's mortar has earned a superb reputation due to the unique characteristics of its high angle trajectory; the suite of 60, 81, and 120mm versions capable of delivering a diverse array of rounds; and because of its responsiveness and reliability in all types of terrain and weather. In our current fight in Afghanistan mortars

have played a primary role in repelling attacks by overwhelming enemy forces.

Because of the current COIN strategy, our Soldiers have increasingly found they must operate in small teams — and often from very remote — outposts to effectively execute a security mission over a wide area. As part of the priorities of work, a major lesson learned has been the importance of having a responsive and deadly fire support plan. The TTPs covered in ATTP 3-21.90 have made this system even more lethal and effective. Examples of these TTPs were covered in an *Infantry Magazine* article in July 2009 which discussed the need to practice to the rear and side referred deflections and the need to create intentional sight blockages so that young squad leaders could rapidly transition to alternate aiming poles, along with reinforcement of older and once again validated TTPs of using multiple firing positions to prevent being fixed to one position and thus prevented from firing. The value of this system has also led to outpost commanders ensuring they have robust plans for defense of the mortar positions within their compound.

However, like any physical system, it is the Soldiers who execute the TTPs who will always remain at the very heart of this system. In many cases the technical skills of the mortarmen in the platoon's sections and squads are just a part of the overall package of talent the 11C brings to the table. Trained as Infantrymen, these indirect fire Soldiers also make excellent scouts and are adaptable enough to fill out a rifle platoon or cross train their cousin 11Bs in the ever-critical 11C skills. The indirect fire 11C Infantryman is clearly a multitasking Soldier and an invaluable complement to any team and mission across the full spectrum of combat our platoons and companies face today. Today, as in all of our wars fought in defense of our nation and her people, the American mortar crewman will continue to be an integral member of the combined arms team as he rains high-angle steel on target.

Follow me!



Infantry News



NEW SOLDIER SYSTEM HONORS MOH RECIPIENT

C. TODD LOPEZ

The Army christened the new Ground Soldier System on 14 June with a name that honors the late COL Robert B. Nett, a World War II Medal of Honor recipient.

The system, now in development, will be lighter and more advanced than the current Land Warrior Strike system now being used by a brigade in Kandahar, Afghanistan, according to officials at Program Manager Land Warrior. The next generation of the system will be called “Nett Warrior.”

The Army made the naming announcement during a ceremony in the Pentagon’s Hall of Heroes on the Army’s birthday. COL Will Riggins, program manager for Soldier Warrior, explained why his team chose to name their system after Nett, who earned the military’s highest award for valor.

“...We knew we wanted to maintain a Warrior Ethos,” Riggins said. “We knew we wanted to honor a great American hero. We knew that we wanted it to be a maneuver leader. This is a leader system — to make them more effective. So it was a pretty easy choice.”

Nett’s son, Dr. Robert B. Nett Jr., spoke at the ceremony and relayed insights about his father — who he called “pappy” — that revealed a man who was a Soldier to the core.

“I remember helping my dad put his medal around his neck,” Nett Jr. said. “He’d say a prayer and give credit to his men. He said he was only a representative of their actions.”

Nett, who died in 2008, enlisted in the Army in 1940 at the age of 17. He served until 1978 and attained the rank of colonel during his service. It was because of his actions during World War II, while serving as part of the Philippines Campaign, that he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

On 14 December 1944, Nett was serving as a lieutenant in the Philippines. He served as part of Company E, 305th Infantry Regiment, 77th Infantry Division. Nett commanded Company E in an attack against a reinforced battalion of Japanese that had held up the American advance for two days. Nett led the assault against the enemy soldiers.



COL Nett

While engaged with the enemy, Nett managed to kill seven Japanese using his rifle and bayonet. Despite being seriously wounded, he continued to lead his Soldiers. He was wounded an additional two times while attempting to achieve their objective.

“He calmly made all arrangements for the resumption of the advance, turned over his command to another officer, and then walked unaided to the rear for medical treatment,” reads the Medal of Honor citation. “By his remarkable courage in continuing forward through sheer determination despite successive wounds, LT Nett provided an inspiring example for his men and was instrumental in the capture of a vital strongpoint.”

Nett Warrior is a system worn on a Soldier’s body that will provide “unparalleled situational awareness” to Soldiers on the ground. The system includes a radio, a helmet-mounted display, and a handheld data input device. The wiring for the system is integrated into a protective vest. With Nett Warrior, Soldiers will be able to see their location, the location of their fellow Soldiers, and the location of known enemies on a moving map.

“What this system will mean is they are never lost, never out of reach of their buddies,” said Riggins. “They are able to adapt to dynamics of changing ... combat, and able to share all that

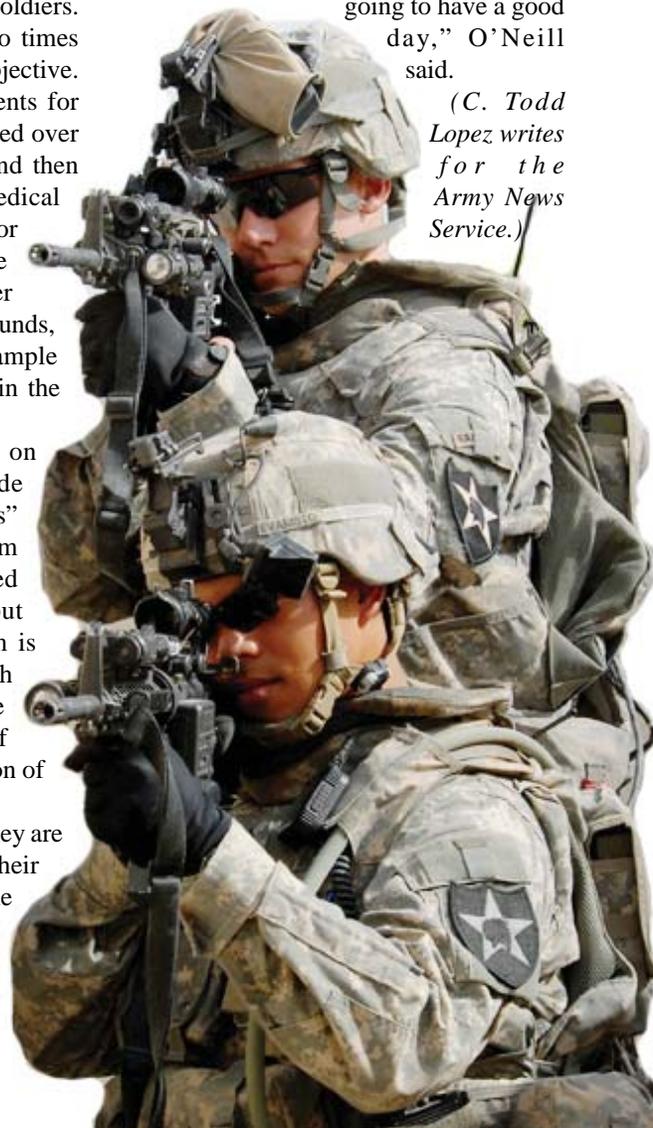
information about all aspects of their mission in order to cut through that fog of war.”

Mal O’Neill, assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, said Nett Warrior brings to ground-pounders what the F-22 Raptor brings to pilots and the M1 Abrams tank to tankers.

“You look at something like the F-22 and the Abrams tanks and you say these are decisive weapons — as soon as the bad guy knows he’s going to be flying against an F-22, he doesn’t even want to leave the ground. Same thing with an enemy tanker going up against an Abrams tank — he’s not

going to have a good day,” O’Neill said.

(C. Todd Lopez writes for the Army News Service.)



SUICIDE PREVENTION: CERTAIN MEDICATIONS MAY LEAD TO SUICIDAL IDEATIONS

CHAPLAIN (MAJ) TAMMIE CREWS

September is Suicide Prevention Month throughout the Army. What is it that takes an individual on the journey that gravitates between life and death as though death is the answer to life with all the shades of variation between those two extremes? The will to live as well as its counterpoint, the will to die, is a very complex area with no straightforward answers. One of the issues that has received little to no attention in all the Army campaigns on suicide awareness is the side effects of certain drugs that may lead some to have suicidal ideations and/or actions.

In the October 2008 issue of *Climbing* magazine, Jordan Campbell, a high-altitude climber, told the story of his struggle with madness in May of 1992 while climbing Thalay Sagar, a complicated and treacherous rock pinnacle towering 22,651 feet in the Himalayas of India. On the mountain face and for the next five years Jordan struggled with his “Goth” that was neither human nor beast but a small, black-winged demon that would not let his being rest. High in the Himalayas this demon began to torture Jordan to such an extent that he could barely maintain life. His tortuous thought processes denied him of the success of reaching the summit of Thalay Sagar. One year later and at the age of 25, Jordan described himself as “plagued by a sickness so profound and sinister I wouldn’t hex it upon my worst enemy. My day-to-day reality is mysterious fatigue married with disturbing psychological manifestations and suicidal fantasies — some too dark even to whisper.” As unexpectedly as the tormenting symptoms appeared in 1992, they inexplicably disappeared in 1998.

In 2008, 10 years after the symptoms ended, Jordan was listening to a report on the radio which suggested that anti-malarial drugs had been linked to numerous suicides among U.S. Soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. He also came across a similar report on the Internet which stated that the 2002 murders at Fort Bragg by service members had been linked to the anti-malarial drug. He realized that he first took this medication in April 1992 prior to his expedition to Thalay Sagar, and that this drug was the cause of his illness.

The side effects of this particular pharmaceutical, which are only now being fully understood, are severe anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations, nightmares, insomnia, seizures, exhaustion, and fatigue. It can also cause brain damage, heart arrhythmia, central nervous system disorders, balance

or vestibular system damage, and enduring psychological effects — most notably, suicidal ideations. By the late 1990s, the side effects of this drug were linked to scores of completed or attempted suicides as well as unexplained behavior among military personnel, Peace Corps volunteers, and international travelers.

As I prepared this article, I surfed the Internet for drugs whose known side effects include suicidal ideations and/or behaviors. Antidepressants are high on the list as well as certain drugs that assist with sleep. These medications can affect certain chemicals in the brain that control everything from appetite to mood swings. When too much of these chemicals are present in the brain, suicidal tendencies can become one of the side effects that individuals might experience.

Psychotropic medications do not affect every individual in the same way. Not every individual who takes anti-malarial medications or antidepressants or sleep aids will develop suicidal tendencies. However, it does mean that individuals who are on such medications are at higher risk for developing suicidal thoughts and/or actions. Even with this in mind, not everyone who is taking any of the medications in these drug categories should stop doing so.

Nonetheless, patients should demand greater diligence from the medical field for monitoring symptoms and for educating consumers on the risks and benefits of their treatment. It is worth noting that today a number of these medications include in their printed and broadcast advertising cautionary notices that warn of possible suicidal thoughts and other side effects.

Not all suicides revolve around relationship, work, financial, or other stress/anxiety and situationally related issues. Some suicides may be chemically based. Suicide awareness is about treatment, awareness, and an understanding of the full spectrum of options that are available for those who need assistance in facing life’s challenges. Suicide awareness is about tapping into the resources of the whole person — physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

Suicide prevention is a multi-faceted challenge, and only by addressing each nuance of the problem can we come to grips with this threat to Soldiers, Family members, and our civilian work force.

(Chaplain [MAJ] Tammie Crews is the post chaplain at Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pa.)

CYBER ATTACKS THREATEN PERSONAL SECURITY

DONALD YESSICK, PH.D

Most of us are aware of the threat that cyber warfare poses to our national and corporate security, but few realize how cyber attacks threaten our personal security. Virtually everyone is “online” these days, and most of us are vulnerable to attack. This article outlines the threats that exist, common attack vectors, and simple precautions to thwart many of these attacks.

The Threats

If your computer gets compromised, the potential consequences vary. On the one hand the attack might physically damage your computer or files. Once upon a time attackers would reveal themselves with a message such as “you’ve been hacked,” and really deviant attackers might reformat your hard drive. At least one virus wrote volumes of meaningless data to the hard drive in such a way as to maximize movement of the read/write head to wear out and destroy the drive or at least corrupt disk sectors. Today, those may be the least of your worries.

Before the Internet, most attackers wanted to be known. Modern attackers try not to draw attention to themselves, instead anonymously pressing your machine into service as part of a vast botnet of hijacked computers using remote access. Infected machines can be enslaved by botnet controllers to relay spam, host Trojan Web pages or illegal content, seek out network weaknesses, or more often, wait patiently and silently for commands. Infected machines can be controlled by remote agents or infected with programs that spy on users. Key loggers, programs that record a user’s keystrokes, might intercept and record passwords, credit card details, and other personal information useful for identity theft.

The ever-changing cyber landscape makes any attempt to catalog the myriad online threats obsolete as quickly as it is begun. Today, the technology to create, control, and hide botnets can be legally bought and sold. Vulnerabilities that allow total system access are routinely found by researchers, and the code for exploiting these weaknesses can even be found online.

Attack Vectors

Early computers were vulnerable mostly to viruses that were transmitted via floppy disks. Ironically, this old attack vector is seeing a comeback via flash drives. Most computers have an autorun feature that executes a default program when a user inserts a flash drive. This is an easy attack vector. The autorun program simply inserts infected code onto the host computer. The infecting code is often quite complex; it may not only possess the ability to infect any future flash drives inserted into the machine but also access the Internet and get updates to strengthen its behavior and its grip on your machine.



Another attack vector, known as a Trojan horse, can hide infected code in any program. Unlike the original Trojan attack, there may be no immediate signs of invasion, but these Trojan horses, too, carry a malicious payload. Trojan horses are always disguised as useful code, and the attack vector may even provide a useful utility. If you’ve ever downloaded a program or utility via the Internet, you’ve exposed yourself.

On the Internet you can even be infected through what is known as a drive-by. A Web site can take advantage of vulnerabilities in a user’s browser and infect a machine that merely visits the site. More often attackers require the user’s assistance to download and execute malicious code, but drive-by infections have been documented.

No browser is safe. While Microsoft’s browsers historically have borne the brunt in the blame game, any browser that supports plug-ins such as Flash is vulnerable. Attackers even exploit Adobe’s PDF viewer. Virtually every software product commonly used is complex enough that security vulnerabilities exist.

Attack vectors can be found in seemingly innocuous places, too. USB devices often install device drivers or dlls for proper functioning, whether the device is a battery charger, a flash drive, or a toy missile launcher. The dll code associated with the device can hide malware. Even software that comes straight from a factory can be compromised.

Attack Likelihood

This is truly scary. Brand new Web servers generally cannot be connected to the Web right out of the box, because an attempt to do so, with the idea of immediately connecting to update sites for operating system patches and updating antivirus software, generally results in a compromised system. An unprotected server can be infected in under five minutes. Critical updates to the operating system and antivirus software must be performed offline, before the server can be safely connected to the Web.

For users not running Web servers, the picture is only slightly improved. If a user connects without a firewall to block unwanted connections, a typical computer will become infected. It is only a matter of time. Population density and geography seem to play a role: an unprotected computer is virtually guaranteed to get infected running in downtown Chicago, but only likely to become infected in downtown Myrtle Beach, and only possibly at risk of infection in downtown Smallville. This is really due to the density of infected machines in any given area, however; Smallville could be the very worst place for an unprotected system.

Attack Severity

Attackers are becoming more intelligent all the time. Modern viruses are becoming semi-intelligent agents. Not only can

Glossary of Terms

Botnet: A collection of infected computers controlled remotely. The computers may be geographically dispersed. Computers snared in a botnet can accept commands ranging from sending spam to participating in a denial of service attack.

Malware: Any variety of malicious software.

Virus: Malware installed without the user's consent, usually through code injection. Legitimate software can be infected, meaning portions of the original code have been overwritten. A virus is generally designed or engineered to attack specific software through an often well-documented security flaw. The original software will usually continue to operate with the virus, because the virus needs a host.

Worm: Malware capable of spreading without assistance. Worms may replicate via networks or removable storage devices.

Trojan horse: Malware that disguises itself as legitimate software, often providing some useful purpose. This differs from a virus because rather than becoming infected, the host software is built with the infection. The idea is to distribute the software and have the victim willingly install and use the product.

Autorun: A feature that allows content to play automatically when storage devices or disks are made available to the system — for example, when the user puts a CD or DVD in the tray and the software, music, or movie begins to play without further instructions from the user. The autorun for flash drives often pops up a window that asks, "What do you want to do?" Savvy attackers have modified the options, replacing the default option with a new option, generally in the location and guise of the original default option so that users might not notice the difference. For example, the "open folder to view files option" usually appears first; if there are two of them, one is a trick.

Drive-by: Any site that downloads unsolicited or unknown content. Often the user is asked to allow an ActiveX or Java application to execute. Less frequently the drive-by can occur without any interaction from the user at all. Attack vectors requiring no user interactions have generally been discovered and patched, but not all users keep their systems up to date.

Key loggers: Key-logging software records keystrokes. Every keystroke, including nonprinting keys, can be captured and played back or read later. If a key logger is present, no password is safe, no credit card information is safe, no e-mail is private.

Screen scrapper: Screen scrappers save and transmit screen images. Screen images can be snapshots or even movies recording mouse movements or keystrokes; anything visible on screen can be captured.

Spyware: Malware that monitors computer use and preferences, usually for marketing purposes, but often for identity theft.

Adware: Malware that delivers ads, sometimes targeted in conjunction with spyware. Often these are delivered as popups, small windows that "pop up" and force the user to respond.

Cookies: Web browsers allow Web sites to store information specific to the client on the client's machine. This is a legitimate, useful tool for Web sites, allowing them to tailor content for returning users. Cookies are protected such that a Web site can view only cookies connected to that Web site's URL.

Tracking cookies: While cookies are often legitimate, tracking cookies are frowned upon. Tracking cookies are designed in such a way as to be able to communicate and collect information about various Web sites the user visits. Tracking cookies resemble spyware in that they may collect information the user has not authorized for release.

Remote access: The ability to log into a remote system and control it from a remote location. Virtually every computer supports remote login, although most users are unaware of it. After an attacker has gained access to the computer, remote access gives the attacker the ability to return at will to the infected system.

modern malware use the Internet to update, upgrade, and mutate to escape detection, modern malware may even detect detection attempts and defuse such attempts. Some current malware blocks the infected computer system from Internet sites that specialize in their detection and removal. It is believed that organized crime is behind some malware, and researchers who have poked or prodded at infected servers have had enormous cyber attacks unleashed against them for their trouble. The botnets formed by infected machines have enormous computing and bandwidth potential. They have been known to flood networks to such a degree as to make them temporarily worthless. Not only has a major university in California been shut down when researchers attempted to examine an infected server, but one of these botnets once took an entire country's banking network offline.

Simple Precautions

The good news is that precautions can be taken, and they are relatively simple. The bad news is that while protection is simple, it is also never perfect. No computer can be made 100 percent safe. Physical access to a machine by a malicious user can render virtually all precautions worthless.

Remote access, however, can be virtually locked out. The single most important precaution you can take is to turn on automatic updates for your operating system. Windows, for example, allows you to run auto updates during hours when you are likely to be asleep, minimizing disruption to your PC use. You may occasionally find that you must restart your computer when you weren't planning to, but the pain is worth the gain.

How important are those updates? The largest botnet ever, which once topped 20 million infected machines worldwide, was made possible due to a security hole that was discovered and patched via Microsoft updates. If those 20 million machines had been running auto update, they would never have been snared. Another patch corrected a serious flaw that allowed Web pages to initiate unsolicited downloads. Automatic updates will also periodically download and run a Microsoft tool updated and distributed monthly known as MSRT, or malicious software removal tool. This tool will periodically clean out any well-known attackers from your system.

Antivirus software can also be a shield in your defense arsenal. There are many varieties of antivirus software. I will not promote any particular product but know this: none of them can offer 100-percent protection. Viruses continually mutate to defeat detection. For this reason, if you have antivirus software you must make sure to update the signature files, which are how the software recognizes malicious code. As viruses mutate, antivirus software vendors update these files to cover the mutations. If you are not updating your antivirus software regularly, you might as well turn it off.

You do have to live with the danger. Total security is impossible, unless you write all of your own software. Short of that we can only minimize the risk.

(Donald Yessick, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of computer information systems at the University of West Alabama. His teaching and research interests include cyber-ethics, compiler development, robotics, networks and operating systems. From 2005 to 2010, he mentored a team for the FIRST Robotics Competition. His industry experience includes working for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama as a software developer, and consulting.)



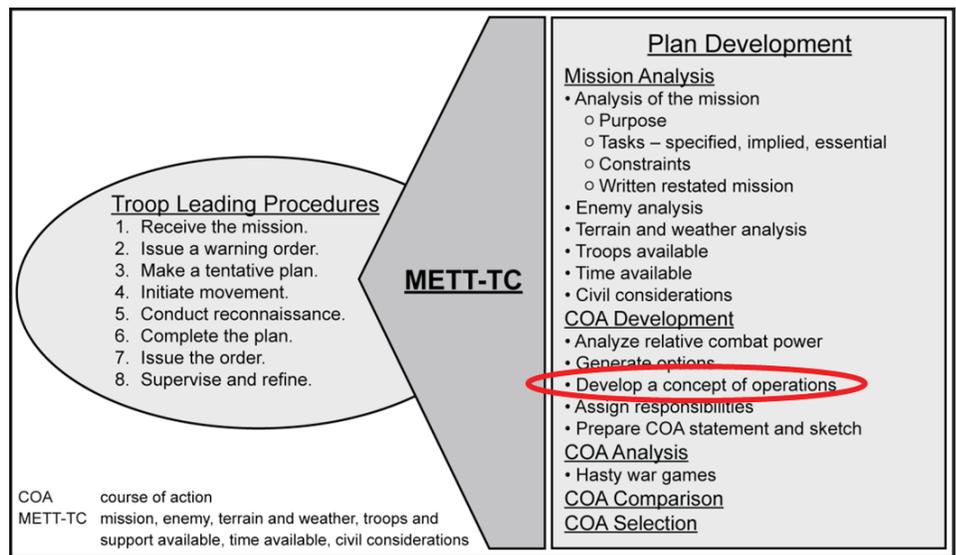
THE CONOP □ EMERGING DOCTRINE OR MISUSE OF WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE?

MAJ MICHAEL G. REBER

An emerging trend among students attending the Maneuver Captains Career Course (MCCC) at Fort Benning, Ga., after deployments in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF and OIF) is to critique the course for emphasizing the development of the operation order (OPORD) rather than the concept of operations (CONOP), something with which they are intimately familiar.

Further dialog with some students revealed that while they were deployed, the CONOP was the primary method by which they — as platoon or other small unit leaders — planned, resourced, and executed operations, rather than conducting detailed planning and delivering an OPORD to their subordinates. Likewise, many of them either received CONOPs from their superiors instead of traditional operation orders, or they mistook the concept of operations within a traditional operation order as “the plan” rather than considering the whole order and the planning associated with it. Further, when coupled with operations in a time-constrained environment, students tend to think of the CONOP as a shortcut — a way to abbreviate the planning process. While there is some validity to abbreviating the doctrinal orders process, it should only be done in specific cases with disciplined judgment and experience.

As a result, many students come to the MCCC believing that the CONOP is a sanctioned substitute for the orders process. The problem is that although the CONOP may currently be a reality in terms of a tool for execution, especially at brigade level and below, there is a doctrinal disconnect between what the CONOP actually is and how it has come to be used.



Appendix C, FM 5-0

Figure 1 - Concept of Operations Within the Troop Leading Procedures

First of all, what is a CONOP?

As the introduction implies, the answer varies across the Army, at least on the surface, depending on whom one asks. In the conventional Army, the CONOP is viewed as either an order in and of itself or a step within the orders production process. Within the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community, the CONOP is either part of the orders production methodology or the equivalent of the five-paragraph operation order, merely with a different name.

According to Army doctrine, the CONOP refers to the concept of operations. It is the product of a sub-step to the course of action (COA) development step of the troop leading procedures (TLPs) at company level or the military decision-making process (MDMP) at the battalion or higher staff level. (See Figures 1 and 2 for where the concept of operations fits

in the TLPs and the MDMP, respectively.) FM 3-21.10, *The Infantry Rifle Company*, describes the concept of operations as, “how the leader envisions the operation unfolding, from its start to its conclusion or end state,” and as a description of “the relationships between activities, events, and tasks, and ... how the tasks will lead to accomplishing the mission.”

FM 5-0, *The Operations Process*, refers to developing a “broad concept” as part of COA development during the MDMP, and defines the concept in the following manner: “The broad concept describes how arrayed forces will accomplish the mission within the commander’s intent. It concisely expresses the ‘how’ of the commander’s visualization and will eventually provide the framework for the concept of operations,” referring to the concept subparagraph within the execution paragraph of the OPORD. Essentially, the concept of

operations is a tool the commander uses to convey the conduct of the operation to his subordinates, with respect to the use of all units and essential warfighting functions and to assist in the development of phases, timings, and broad control measures. After the commander develops the CONOP, he uses it to refine the operation's task organization and generate the COA statement and sketch, which become the lion's share of the operation order's execution paragraph.

Additionally, the CONOP serves a doctrinal purpose in serving as a starting point in the operation approval process, which is reflected currently in operational theaters worldwide. At the company level, this occurs at the conclusion of course of action development, when a company commander would submit a COA statement and sketch to the battalion for approval. This process was articulated by CPT Stephen Tegge, commander of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who would submit "a sketch of the intent of the operation, how it nested with higher, and the task and purpose of subordinate units. It (the CONOP) just showed the scheme of maneuver and the major movements," which would help the battalion and brigade commanders "... decide if more information was necessary to allow them to approve the mission." In the meantime, the company commander would continue planning and preparation for the operation, developing the operation order, while waiting for formal approval from his higher headquarters.

At the battalion level, the CONOP serves the same purpose, in terms of gaining approval, and also emerges as a product of the COA development step of the MDMP. The CONOP is a part of an individual course of action generated by the staff and proposed to the commander. There may be multiple COAs, so the commander then approves selected COAs and issues further guidance to the staff to execute step four of the MDMP — COA analysis. In theater, this is where the battalion CONOPs are sent to brigade level or higher for approval, oftentimes with commander or theater-specific modifications.

"For us in Afghanistan, it was more than a concept statement," said LTC Dan Hurlbut, former commander of 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. It

outlined "...maneuver, fires, CASEVAC (casualty evacuation), and de-confliction and integration of air, along with 'Karzai's Rules,'" with respect to the operation. Essentially, it became a checklist of conditions that facilitated mission authorization at each level, he said.

Similarly, the CONOP was used by SOF in a similar manner in Iraq, with the added function of obtaining additional support (QRF [quick reaction force], additional forces, CAS [close air support], ISR [intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance], EW [electronic warfare], IO [information operations], PSYOP [psychological operations], CA [civil affairs], funding, authorities, etc.), to gain operational environment (OE) approval by the OE owner, among other things, according to MAJ Derek Jones, commander of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group. Regardless of echelon of command, the CONOP has a twofold purpose doctrinally — to bridge the gap between a unit's mission and how the operation will be executed and to propose and gain approval for an operation based on necessity, resources, risks, and legality.

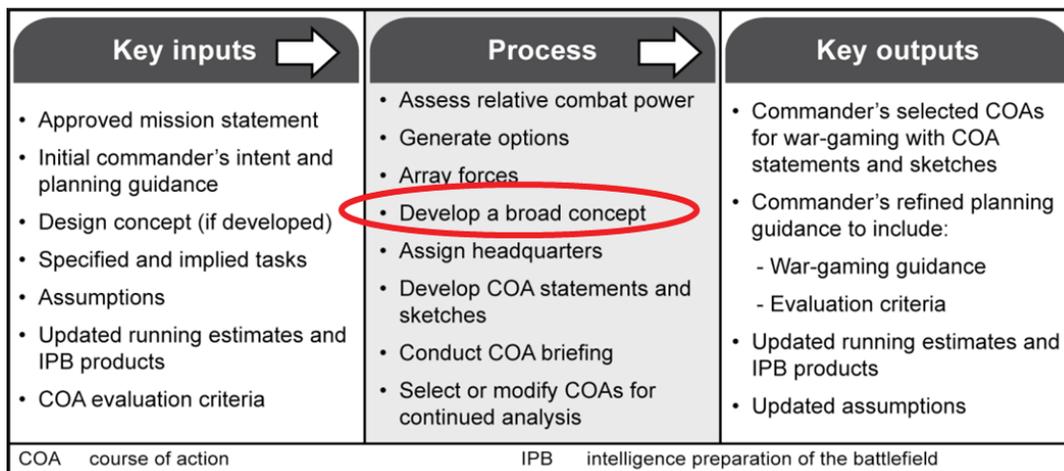
Aside from the doctrine, an operational by-product of the mission approval process is the requirement for commanders at all levels to maintain visibility on the operations being conducted in their OE. This is particularly true within the context of the full-spectrum operations framework, when the volume of missions being conducted could be quite high. Commanders require a way to easily track operations from outside actors such as training teams (TTs), that may or may not be a part of their parent organizations, and SOF elements, whose chains of command are unfamiliar and who have dissimilar operational environments. Thus, the CONOP in some current formats is also a battle-tracking tool for conventional and SOF forces alike once approved. To illustrate, LTC Hurlbut and his staff would extract key things, like the execution code checklist from the CONOP derived from his subordinate commanders' operation orders so that no matter where he was (in the command post [CP] or elsewhere), he could remain abreast of the operations occurring in his OE and make decisions about resource employment if necessary.

According to MAJ Jones, the CONOP was also used as a battle-tracking tool as well as a means to summarize completed missions

with "... a post-mission format that would be filled out with all known data, maps, etc., to allow immediate post-mission updating ... followed by a more detailed storyboard with pictures of detainees, enemies killed in action (EKIAs), captured equipment, and operational summaries." As such, the CONOP complements its doctrinal purpose as a functional tool, allowing commanders to track an operation from its inception through its conclusion.

Currently, in theater the CONOP has a third and final

Figure 2 - The "Broad Concept," Precursor to the CONOP within the MDMP



Appendix B, FM 5-0

use, which is the crux of this discussion. At multiple levels of command, the CONOP is used as a briefing tool in two ways: first, doctrinally, as part of a traditional OPORD, and second, as a way to rapidly articulate scheme of maneuver details and facilitate clarity (particularly for higher echelon commanders and staffs) for an operation, often in a time-constrained environment. On the one hand, during a normal planning cycle, the higher headquarters' CONOP would be built into the subordinate's operation order, as illustrated by CPT Steven Wojdakowski, commander of Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. "I used our (squadron) CONOP format as part of my operation order," he said, "but I always fleshed out more detail in my order."

On the other hand, CPT Tegge said the CONOP "would only be used as a briefing tool in a time-constrained environment, like a TST (time-sensitive target). I would send it up, brief my guys a quick scheme, and we would roll out." In both cases, the CONOP was used by commanders at the company level to aid their subordinates' understanding, not as a means by which to plan.

Just as the CONOP is used to ease understanding at the company level and below, it is used at company level and above for communication and coordination of plans, especially time-constrained ones. COL Mark Suich, who commanded the 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, in Iraq said prosecuting a TST was the only way the CONOP was used. For his unit, CONOP really meant "contingency operation," implying time-sensitivity. Recognizing that successful plans have certain fundamental components yet unwilling to create a cumbersome process, he and his staff developed a checklist that included, among other things, task organization, concept and movement, graphics, MEDEVAC and recovery plans, accountability, and communications architecture that had to be developed prior to execution and were subjected to a backbrief or a full rehearsal.

While commanders across the board agreed that the CONOP has its place, they acknowledged that deliberate planning and orders production were the preferred method.

What is wrong with using the CONOP as a planning and execution tool?

The major problem that arises from using the CONOP as the basis for conducting an operation is that it either inherently truncates or omits detailed planning wholesale. Planning that relies solely on the CONOP winds up becoming a "fill-in-the-blanks" exercise and does not provide for the meticulous analysis of terrain, weather, enemy, and civilian considerations that is essential to developing a plan that has a high probability for success versus one that is flawed and destined for hardship or possibly even failure. Despite the problems associated with using the CONOP as a planning tool, there are essentially three explanations for why the practice continues.

The first is a lack of education and/or experience in which junior leaders fail to grasp the importance of thoroughly analyzing the mission variables (traditionally referred to as METT-TC — mission, enemy, time, terrain, troops, and civilian considerations) during step three of the TLPs (Make a Tentative Plan) or step two of mission analysis (Conduct Initial Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield) during the MDMP. For example, a poor analysis of the terrain might result in a leader or commander failing to identify a potential ambush location based on its relationship to dominating hilltops that provide superior fields of fire and large rock outcroppings that afford the enemy excellent cover from small arms fire. Coupled with not understanding the enemy's tactics and historical tendencies of using such locations to attack friendly elements, passing through this area without mitigating the risk by deliberately clearing it by some means could be disastrous.

Another example would be the misconception that the rapid decision-making and synchronization process (RDSP) outlined in FM 5-0 is essentially a modern doctrinal provision for the CONOP process. This is not the case, however. According to FM 5-0, while the RDSP "lets leaders avoid the time-consuming requirements of developing decision criteria and comparing courses of action (COAs)," it is "based on an existing order and the commander's priorities as expressed in the order."

Essentially, the RDSP allows for quick, decisive deviations to an existing plan that merge the situational understanding and intuition of the commander and staff with synchronized combat power and minimal loss of initiative or momentum during the execution of the operation.

The second explanation is a shortcut that results from familiarity with an operational area that occurs when a unit spends a considerable amount of time in a particular location. LTC Hurlbut believes that the longer a unit occupies an area, things like fire support requests, communications plans, and MEDEVAC "tend to get routine, generating a comfort level that leads to laziness and a temptation to produce a 'plug and chug' order," versus one that is deliberately planned. While immersion does have its benefits, care needs to be taken on the part of leaders at all echelons to not allow it to trump planning and orders production.

Finally, when used as a staffing tool, the CONOP has evolved to such a degree that it always has a very specific format associated with it. Units tend to get wrapped up in formatting rather than planning and therefore miss the details that would result from logical analysis. According to MAJ Jones, SF teams "spent so much time trying to get the formatting (for the approval process) correct for the CONOP that they rarely conducted detailed planning, especially wargaming and contingency planning. In my opinion, this is the greatest failing of the CONOP process."

Regardless of the reason, using the CONOP as a planning and execution tool always seems like the easier, more expedient method. However, it almost always results in potentially dangerous analytical shortcuts that lead to a poor appreciation for how the operational environment will impact the execution and outcome of the unit's operation.

Interestingly, all of the commanders queried from both conventional and SOF units viewed the CONOP as a necessary step in the unit's battle rhythm but not as a wholesale replacement for the orders process. CPT Tegge said the CONOP did not supplant the orders production process. "For deliberate planning, it (the CONOP) is grossly inadequate," he said. He would submit a CONOP to his battalion

for approval, but “the MDMP/TLP process went on, and the OPORD was developed.” The CONOP “was not a substitute; I briefed my guys a full blown OPORD at my company CP.” MAJ Jones observed that when the CONOP was used, “especially for complex operations, the inherent weaknesses of the CONOP used as a planning tool would be readily apparent to key leaders.” If commanders across the Army tend to agree that the CONOP has its limitations, why has its misuse become such a hallmark in the present?

In answer, commanders again tend to agree. For one thing, perceptions have become a reality in the sense that the CONOP was necessary to execute operations, so it was seen more often and then became an accepted practice except in the most mature, disciplined units. MAJ Jones’ take is that “what was meant to be a staffing and approval tool was morphed by most units into a planning and execution tool with little thought to the inherent risks of using a CONOP format focused on gaining mission approval as the primary planning tool vice using TLPs/MDMP then filling in the CONOP format.” For another, there seems to be a lack of understanding at the junior officer level as to what kind of planning goes on (or should) behind the scenes to generate what is briefed in the form of the CONOP. These perceptions translate directly into a disparity in expectations between junior and senior officers with respect to the planning and orders production processes.

The greatest disconnect between the use of the CONOP and the traditional orders process, driven by the TLPs and the MDMP, seems to be leader-level perceptions and expectations, primarily among lieutenants/junior captains and senior captains (company commanders), and field grade commanders and staff officers. On the one hand, as previously mentioned, junior captains often come to the MCCC believing that the CONOP is the plan and good enough for mission execution. On the other hand, graduates of the MCCC (company, battalion, and brigade commanders and staff officers) do not view the CONOP in the same manner. They expect their subordinate leaders and staffs to use the TLPs and the MDMP to generate and issue operation orders that are complete, well thought out, synchronized, and account for realistic contingencies. In fact, LTC Hurlbut viewed the CONOP as something that was “added to, to produce a full-up five-paragraph OPORD that (the commander) would give to (his) company.”

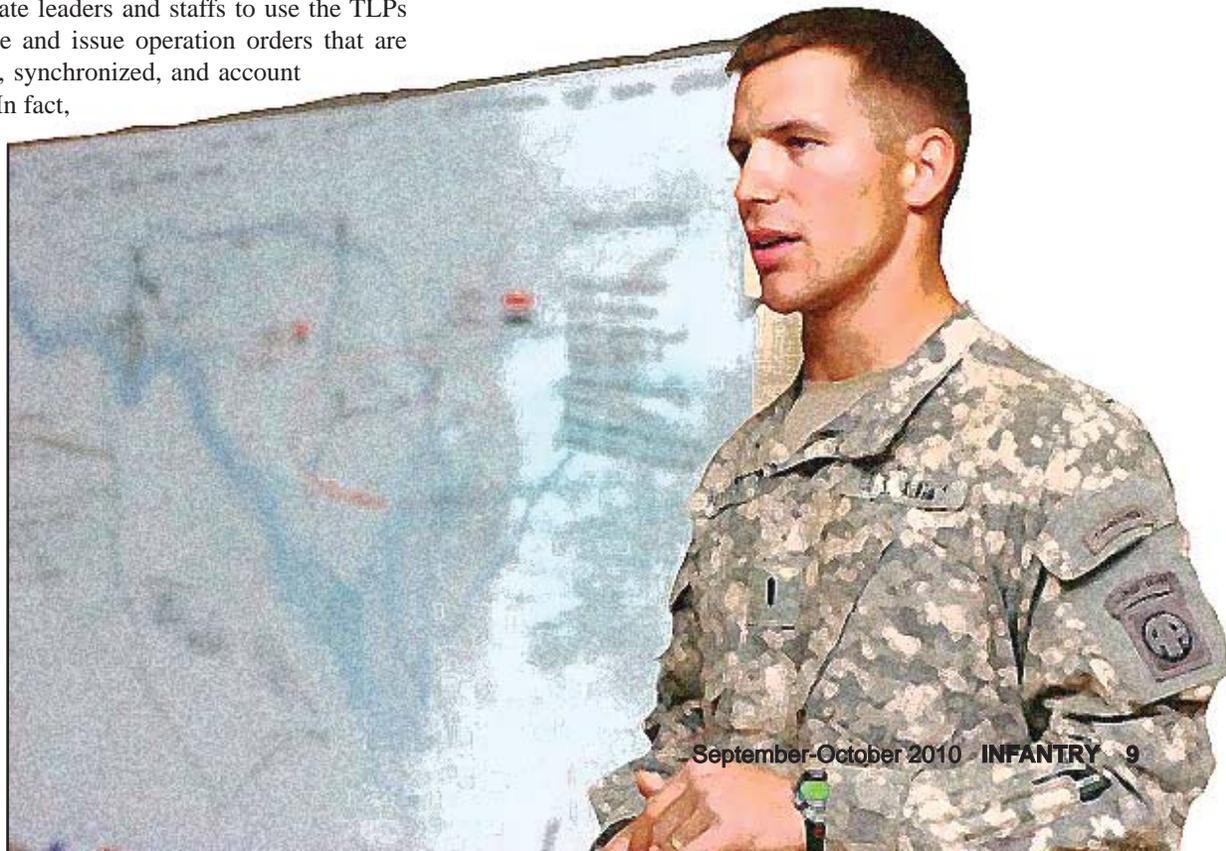
Seeing eye to eye

At its very core, this is an issue of a lack of education and experience exacerbated by the pressures of operational tempo (OPTEMPO) and time-sensitivity. Junior leaders tend to think that they have to execute more

than they have to plan. Senior leaders understand the value of planning, yet they also have the experience to know how and when to abbreviate the TLPs or the MDMP and still arrive at a complete, executable plan. The question then is: how do we, as an Army, ensure that leaders from brigade and below all see eye-to-eye with respect to planning and orders production? I believe there are three steps to synchronizing tactical echelon planners across the Army.

The first step is to educate leaders across the Army on how the TLPs and the MDMP work with respect to the methodology for determining (or in some cases deriving) the unit’s mission, developing and synchronizing a plan, and then articulating and executing that plan. Really, the education part is easy and in place already; it is done very well at all levels — from pre-commissioning sources through Intermediate Level Education (ILE) — and students typically do very well in a classroom environment. The key is to ensure that the education process is relevant and to get the planners out of their comfort zone. At the MCCC, we do this with two fundamental processes. First, we teach them how to approach each tactical problem set they face with a foundation in the necessary doctrinal analysis embedded within the TLPs and the MDMP. Second, we give them operations to plan that may be in current operational theaters, but we tailor the situation (enemy and friendly) such that they have to apply the analytical process we teach as opposed to merely relying on previous experience. When the students graduate, they understand how to glean relevant information, apply it, and generate cogent orders and quality staff products.

The second step is really a corollary to step one: re-educate planners by revisiting principles learned in the classroom out in the operational force after graduation. This tends to be more difficult, but it is crucially important. The reason why is simple: it is out in the force that students apply the lessons they learned in the classroom and figure out how to apply “art” to the “science” they learned in the





SGT Shawnon Lott

Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division and Iraqi Security Forces personnel go over an OPOD during an exercise in Baghdad on 17 February 2010.

institutional Army. How? They do this by using planning and orders production as a training event across the force for everything. Is the leader a platoon leader (PL) who has to run a range? He must use the TLPs, produce an operation order, brief it, and include the MOI (memorandum of instruction) he found in the continuity book from the previous PL that he thought was “good enough” in his written OPOD as an annex or appendix. The company commander for that PL must give him good guidance along with times for him to backbrief the commander that mesh with his TLPs, and then coach, teach, and mentor him on the TLPs and orders production. The PL should blossom because the commander is a career course graduate and a subject matter expert.

How about the battalion or brigade staff? Is it trying to figure out how to implement all of the 350-1 training, higher echelon training requirements, and an MRE (mission rehearsal exercise), while still providing the subordinate units time to train? The staff should execute an MDMP iteration, and figure out, at best, a way to do everything that needs to be done. At the very least, determine logically what can and cannot be done and why, so that the appropriate decision maker can determine where the unit’s focus needs to be in order to meet the commander’s intent. Regardless of the unit echelon, using planning principles on a regular basis will add value, proficiency, and confidence. It will also provide the necessary experience to know when the TLPs and the MDMP can be abbreviated but still achieve executable results. Just as marksmanship and land navigation are perishable skills, so is planning if not practiced.

The final step is truly implementing the doctrinal products of the TLPs and the MDMP into the unit’s day-to-day operations. According to FM 5-0, there are three doctrinal orders that are the result of either the TLPs or the MDMP: the warning order (WARNO), the OPOD, and the fragmentary order (FRAGO). Each has a doctrinal instance in which it should be used. The WARNO “initiates subordinate unit mission planning,” the OPOD has the purpose of “effecting the coordinated execution of an operation,” and the FRAGO “is issued after an operation order to change or modify that order or to execute a branch or

sequel to that order.” Additionally, the FRAGO may be issued in the form of an overlay order which is a means to “issue an order (normally a fragmentary order) that has abbreviated instructions written on an overlay.” Interestingly enough, the overlay order is probably the closest thing doctrinally to what the CONOP used now should be. However, even the overlay order is a product of detailed planning because it is a means for articulating changes to a base operation order (a FRAGO) in a time-constrained environment using overlays on a map. Ultimately, the perceived need for a CONOP as a planning and execution tool would diminish if commanders and leaders would uncompromisingly force their staffs and subordinates to use doctrinal processes and produce doctrinal products.

What would this look like? For any operation, regardless of size or scope, the appropriate echelon would conduct the TLPs or the MDMP to standard and issue an operation order, preceded by necessary WARNOs. Any follow-on missions would be the subject of subsequent FRAGOs with appropriate changes. At a minimum, the FRAGO should include a new execution paragraph with an updated concept of the operation, tasks to subordinate units and coordinating instructions, a new execution matrix, and new graphics. Repetition would allow any unit to do this, even in time-sensitive situations. The real difference would be more detailed planning up front, especially during targeting to develop specific, measurable triggers for implementation, along with well-honed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for execution. Again, this would require the interest and energy of the commander and subordinate leaders.

In conclusion, the CONOP, as it is currently used in the Army, particularly at brigade level and below, is far removed from what it was intended for doctrinally. What was designed to be a tool for staffing and gaining approval for an operation while the executing unit continued with detailed planning has become a perceived planning tool in and of itself. Its misuse through improper modeling in some instances has become so widespread that some junior leaders substitute it for their education in the troop leading procedures and the military decision-making process. Through education and practice and by being held to Army doctrinal standards, junior leaders will become expert planners again. However, this will require commanders from brigade level down to look at how their units do business with respect to the orders process and ensure that doctrine is followed, junior leaders are educated and mentored as planners, and that appropriate orders are the result.

At the time this article was written, **MAJ Michael G. Reber** was serving as a small group instructor for the Maneuver Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, Ga. He previously served as detachment commander of Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) 5221, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), for 34 months. Other previous assignments include serving as a combat engineer platoon leader and company executive officer in the 65th Engineer Battalion. MAJ Reber received his commission as an Engineer lieutenant from Texas A&M University ROTC in May 1999.

HARVEST IN THE LAND OF THE TWO RIVERS

BATTALION CAMPAIGN DESIGN IN IRAQ

MAJ WES MORRISON

Campaign design and planning, as described by FM 3-0, *Operations*, and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, is a doctrinal task that is typically carried out at the operational level of war. Despite published guidance, campaign design and planning is expected to be conducted by every battalion at the tactical level, assuming an operational environment (OE) in the Iraq theater of operations. The reason for this is simple. The process of campaign design and planning allows tactical commanders and staff to assess the situation, visualize the battlefield, and implement the appropriate mix of offense, defense, and stability operations in order to be successful in the constantly changing counterinsurgency (COIN) environment. This article will describe how the North Carolina National Guard's 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment went through this process and developed an effective campaign plan for operations conducted in Iraq from May 2009 to January 2010.

Background

In May 2009, the 1-120th assumed control of an operational environment once known as the "Triangle of Death" within the Mahmudiyah Qada, Baghdad Province. From 2005 to 2008, this area had been one of Iraq's most violent and endured extreme demographic changes due to the escalating sectarian strife that engulfed the country as a whole from 2005 to 2007. During the operational surge of U.S. forces (USF) in Iraq, huge security gains were made by working with the increasingly capable Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Sons of Iraq (SoI). By the end of May 2009, the level of insurgent activity was relatively low, a situation that facilitated economic growth and continued development of the ISF, which appeared able to maintain recent security gains with limited USF assistance. The SoI, while still being employed by the Government of Iraq (GoI), faced either incorporation into the existing government or being phased out. This left more than 6,000 armed SoI with an increasingly uncertain future and presented a tempting target for insurgent cells wanting to bring these individuals back into the insurgency and destroy the fragile stability emerging within the Mahmudiyah Qada.

Mission Analysis

The purpose of our staff mission analysis was to ensure



SGT Jon Soles

A Soldier with B Company, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, pulls security while a civil affairs team checks on a well near Mahmudiyah, Iraq, on 9 August 2009.

that we fully understood our operational environment and the complex enemy within it. From this analysis, we identified the decisive point of the operation, which we then recommended to the commander for further course of action (COA) development. One of the first tasks we undertook as a staff was to examine the upcoming critical events that would shape our deployment and use the resulting information as a frame of reference for future steps in the military decision-making process (MDMP). The most critical and perhaps least defined event that consumed the greatest amount of our effort was the imminent implementation of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between the United States and the GoI, which was scheduled to take effect on 30 June 2009. Full implementation of the agreement significantly limited our direct involvement and placed us in a role more akin to that of an advisory force. During our initial analysis, the staff also recognized that we were confronting what FM 3-24 describes as the late stage of counterinsurgency called the "move to self sufficiency," a phase during which the host nation begins to assert its authority and stake its claim to legitimacy. Our staff asked, if the GoI — and perhaps most importantly the Iraqi Army — began to push back on our security-oriented partnerships due to political posturing, especially in the run-up to the national elections, where would we be able

to focus our efforts to maintain influence and assist with the continued transition to regional stability.

We determined that the answer lay in economic development, specifically improvements in the agricultural sector. Geographically, the Mahmudiyah Qada is positioned in the fertile river valley between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This “land between two rivers” was for years considered the breadbasket of Iraq with an agricultural tradition dating back thousands of years. Unfortunately, decades of malign neglect and violent conflict had left much of the supporting infrastructure in a state of general disrepair, a situation that was particularly devastating given the years of drought that had recently afflicted the region. Most family farms failed to achieve anything beyond a subsistence level of productivity, as lack of adequate resources and outdated agricultural practices took their toll on what was once a vibrant and profitable enterprise. As a result, local markets were now flooded with imported goods from neighboring countries, which were not only of higher quality and thus more desirable, but in many cases, less expensive than locally produced produce, dairy, and poultry.

Within this environment, where thousands of young men, especially from the politically isolated Sunni communities, faced such a bleak economic outlook, there is little doubt the draw of the insurgency began to take hold in the earlier years after the fall of the Baathist regime. The bloody history of that period, together with the pullback from all-out civil war is beyond the scope of this article, yet it is critical to recognize the role that alternative employment opportunities, particularly the SoI, played in turning many of these Sunni tribes against al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) and other violent extremist groups.

In the weeks after our transition of authority, the battalion commander was able to get a sense of how agriculture was the driving force behind the economic stability of the region through his battlefield circulation. Local community leaders and tribal authorities, not to mention the individual farmers who often provided a “man on the street” viewpoint, repeatedly spoke of the need to make basic improvements in the agricultural sector.

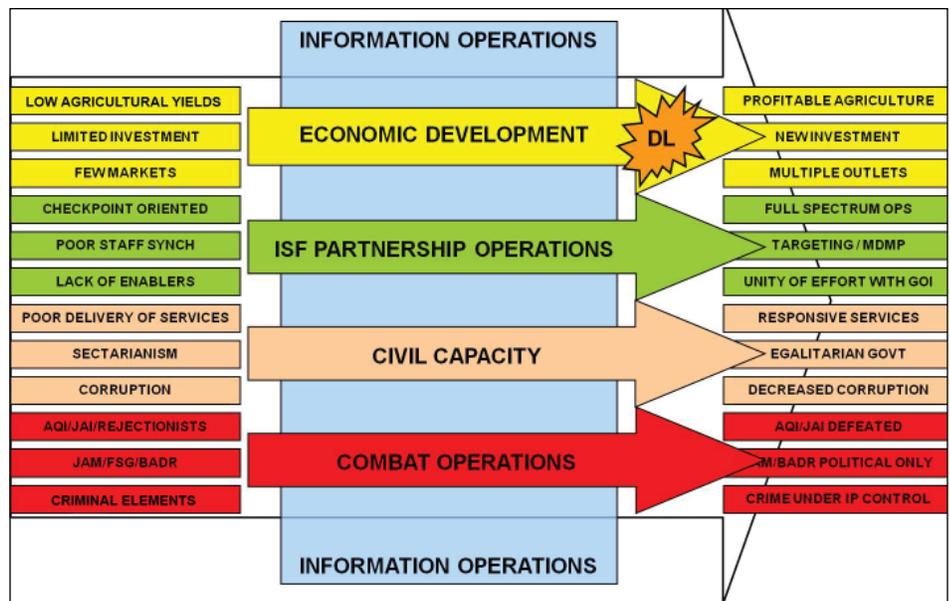


Figure 1 — Campaign Design

In nearly every outing, the commander patiently listened to locals describe how water for irrigation and livestock, fertilizer for produce, and better market outlets would positively affect the local economy, thus creating newfound incentives for security. In his initial guidance, the commander directed the staff to focus on agri-business as the key component of the economic development line of operation that he wanted to pursue as a part of the battalion’s campaign plan. With this guidance in mind, the staff reviewed the efforts of previous units and various other development organizations to ensure that past projects and initiatives were not needlessly repeated. We found that past units had invested Commander’s Emergency Relief Program (CERP) funds into the agricultural sector before (it would be foolish to assume that we were the first to come to these conclusions), but those operations were primarily focused on the local poultry industry, rather than other sub-sectors such as produce and dairy. Therefore, as we moved towards course of action development, the staff, with the commander’s refined guidance, explored potential interventions within those areas that had not received prior assistance from the U.S. government.

Course of Action Development

The battalion commander gave specific enough guidance to make our staff process more of a directed course of action.

Through the information provided by the mission analysis and his own battlefield circulation, the commander presented four lines of operation (LOOs) to frame the battalion’s campaign design. Economic development would be the decisive LOO supported by ISF partnership operations, civil capacity, and combat operations all encompassed in continuous information operations (IO).

Figure 1 graphically summarizes the battalion’s campaign design. On the left, the current conditions within the OE are listed. On the right hand side, we established our desired end state, recognizing that these objectives may not be detectable or even achievable within the limited time frame of our deployment. The resulting campaign design was broad enough to allow for innovation and change while still providing the battalion with focus for the synchronization of lethal and non-lethal effects. These advantages would prove critical as conditions within the OE actively fluctuated from traditional COIN operations to stability operations often week to week and even day to day.

To make the campaign plan more tactically oriented for our maneuver companies, we also assigned enduring tactical tasks derived from the newly published FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, within the concept of the operation paragraph. The intent of these tasks was to simplify the language of the campaign

“The scheduled reduction of brigade combat teams in Iraq was a reality for planners at all levels ... With fewer forces to conduct patrols from joint security stations (JSS) and an increasingly restrictive direct logistical support channel to the ISF, the key sources of influence, besides those forged from personal relationships, would disappear as the responsible drawdown began to take effect.”

design into distinct tactical tasks that could be briefed at the company and platoon levels, thus nesting the daily platoon and section missions within the battalion’s overall campaign design. With the ongoing transition to self-sufficiency and relatively low level of enemy activity, we found that FM 3-07 provided more applicable tactical tasks for our maneuver units. For example, tactical tasks such as providing civil security and support to economic and infrastructure development supported our campaign design. The listed purposes for stability operations tasks also suited the existing OE in terms of providing a secure environment or shaping the environment for host nation success. At the conclusion of COA development and after approval from the battalion commander, the staff had produced an overall campaign design that consisted of four lines of operations, with the decisive line being economic development. Within the concept of the operation, each company had tactical tasks that supported the overall campaign design and tied each company’s task and purpose to the overall emerging campaign plan.

Decisive to this COA was the successful reintegration of military age males back into the workforce. This effort primarily targeted the thousands of SoI members, who, in our OE, were predominantly rural Sunnis. These individuals had been lured away from the insurgency, largely along tribal boundaries, because of a general revulsion to the merciless AQI methods, a desire to reassert their traditional authority over the land, and the draw of stable income. With newfound stability following the 2007-08 surge of U.S. forces, the GoI embarked upon the delicate process of ending the SoI program by transitioning members into various government positions. The program, however, struggled with well-documented issues of credibility and efficacy, thus making the more than 6,000 SoI members within the Mahmudiyah Qada particularly vulnerable to renewed recruitment efforts by insurgent groups. Once again, the rural Sunni populations confronted the possibility of increasing political and economic isolation. This looming crisis weighed heavily on the staff as we moved towards COA analysis. Here, we would rigorously test this decisive point and the overall COA to determine how it played against the framework of our critical events and further predictive enemy analysis.

COA Analysis

With a fully developed COA that met the commander’s intent

and planning guidance, the staff now needed to conduct a thorough analysis of the COA to:

- (1) Determine its strengths and weaknesses, and
- (2) Ensure that it provided a viable framework for successful long-term operations.

To accomplish these tasks, we utilized previously described critical events and the belt method for our analysis. Two of the critical events would prove most beneficial in our COA analysis and will be discussed below in greater detail — the already mentioned implementation of the BSA and the drawdown of combat forces to pre-surge levels, which was set to begin in October of 2009.

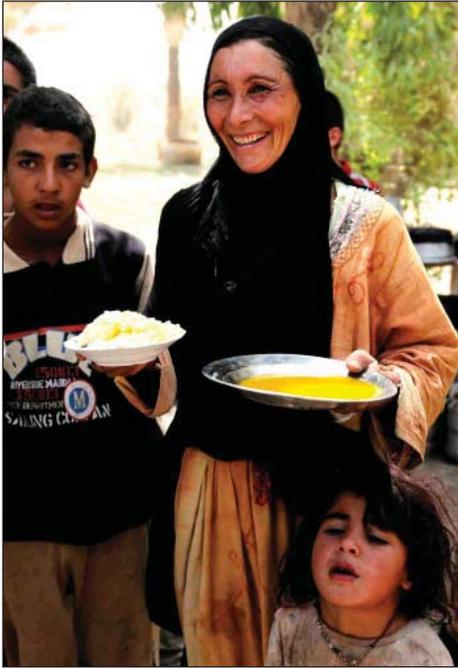
Due to our MDMP taking place in early June of 2009, less than 30 days before the implementation date of the next phase of the BSA, the staff attempted to utilize recent statements made by the Iraqi government and senior American military officials in our analysis. Though mostly political in nature, these statements concerning the emergence of ISF and departure of U.S. forces led to a false but very challenging perception within the ISF and Iraqi public concerning the terms and nature of our presence after 30 June 2009. Therefore, the staff was able to utilize this perception and predict a gradual loss of influence of USF over the ISF in the coming months. This reinforced the decision to make economic development our decisive line of operation.

The scheduled reduction of brigade combat teams in Iraq was a reality for planners at all levels. When our staff looked at the impending drawdown during COA analysis, it was again clear that our influence with the ISF would continue to wane. With fewer forces to conduct patrols from joint security stations (JSS) and an increasingly restrictive direct logistical support channel to the ISF, the key sources of influence, besides those forged from personal relationships, would disappear as the responsible drawdown began to take effect. Once again, this assessment continued to support economic development as the decisive line of effort.

One weakness and eventual tactical risk we would accept with this COA was scale. In other words, could we make a difference on the broader economy with the limited time and resources at our disposal? This was an issue that was actively debated among the staff, especially as our most powerful tool, CERP, was becoming more and more cumbersome in its administrative processes. This risk would have to be mitigated through detailed battalion-level, non-lethal targeting that successfully pinpointed where and how CERP dollars would be employed most effectively. The “big picture” was relatively clear — deny extremists and terrorists the ability to recruit military-age males back into the failing insurgency while building up an emerging agricultural-based economy. Implementing such a plan, however, would require a true change in mind-set and the identification and utilization of non-traditional skills at all levels.

Execution

The centerpiece of the battalion’s campaign plan was the implementation of a “value chain” model for economic development. This concept was based on the premise that interventions should simultaneously address all components of a given industry, from production to distribution and sales. In our case, we chose to target the dairy sector. This selection



SGT Mary Phillips

An Iraqi woman shows the butter that was made on her family's farm near Mahmudiyah to Soldiers from the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 120th Infantry on 23 June 2009.



SGT Mary Phillips

LTC Jack Mellott, commander of 1-120th CAB, talks with owners of a dairy farm on 23 June 2009.

was not made at random. Instead, we took into account the significant investment of past units in the local poultry industry, which had resulted in the formation of a poultry association, infrastructure support to chicken hatcheries, and the construction of a chicken processing plant. Additionally, the directed non-lethal reconnaissance conducted by our maneuver units provided further evidence that investments in the dairy industry might yield both immediate and long-lasting effects on the local economy.

To address the needs of the individual farmer, the battalion created a number of standardized micro-grant "template packages" for the most commonly requested items. These packages included the purchase of livestock, complete with feed and veterinary care, to increase herd size and introduce stronger lines into existing gene pools; the provision of stainless steel milk storage and cheese-making equipment to improve the quality and sanitation of locally produced goods; as well as numerous other interventions all intent on improving production quantity, quality, and thus profitability for local dairy farmers. These micro-grant templates were fully developed at the battalion level and then pushed down to the maneuver companies for review and implementation. The project files were organized in such a way that patrol leaders, most of whom were trained as CERP project purchasing officers, could readily process without a great deal of administrative labor. By empowering our platoon leaders with these micro-grant packages, we found that they could influence hostile and "fence-sitting" areas within their respective company OEs, areas that they knew best from their daily patrols. The process also presented the patrol leaders as the ones who were controlling the flow of money and resources, thus providing much needed influence with local leaders, who were often inclined to dismiss substantive

discussions with lieutenants and senior NCOs. Not surprisingly, the templates significantly expanded the reach of our non-lethal operations as the patrol leaders had more interactions with farmers than the small and often undermanned civil affairs teams (which also allowed them to focus on our larger, battalion-level projects). By the completion of the deployment, the battalion had processed twice as many micro-grants as the other battalions within the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, a sum totaling more than \$225,000. This figure is particularly striking when considering that each micro-grant did not exceed the \$5,000 threshold established for BCT commander approval. Additionally, more than 60 percent of these micro-grants were directly related to the dairy value chain.

At the next level up the chain, which centered on collection and cold storage, the battalion pursued the construction of two milk collection centers. These centers would collect milk from local farmers and store it in a sterile and sanitary manner until it could be transported to what would be our capstone project, a dairy processing plant for final processing and distribution to markets throughout Iraq. The project was developed in coordination with both the GoI and an agricultural association that was registered as a non-governmental organization (NGO) headed by a national sheik of the Janabi tribe. The Janabis had benefited socially and economically by aligning themselves with the previous regime, a well-known move which had reduced their influence when the new, Shia-majority government came to power. While the Janabi tribe had historical ties to the insurgency, disagreements with AQI had largely marginalized and isolated the sheik in the period before the surge and establishment of the SoI. The battalion commander believed that by working the project through the national sheik of the Janabi tribe, we could reestablish his authority and influence over the area and deter

any resurgence of AQI within his tribe. During the battalion's nine months in theater, we were able to start construction on all elements of the dairy value chain and thus reinforce our early commitment to profitable agricultural development.

The value chain initiative was not the only way in which the battalion tackled economic development in the agricultural sector. One of the keys to successful agriculture in Iraq is water access, which as described above was a difficult and worsening problem. Rather than haphazardly placing wells or clearing canals, the battalion committed its mortar platoon to conduct non-lethal intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) on the location and flow of canals within the OE. The platoon produced one of the most detailed mapping projects undertaken within the Mahmudiyah Qada to date. By carefully mapping and pinpointing choke points in the canal system, we could focus our efforts by cleaning only the choke points and placing wells where access to canal waters was severely limited. This information was shared with the Ministry of Irrigation which also utilized the maps to direct GOI-funded projects that complemented our efforts at water distribution. These projects enhanced the ability of farmers to grow crops and animal feed, while also providing much needed water for livestock. Like many of our battalion's projects, the water access line of effort targeted agriculture, but it also generated civil capacity and contributed to better health, as clean water for drinking and hygiene became more prevalent in many areas. Perhaps most importantly, especially during the continued transition to GOI self-sufficiency, the actions greatly improved the popular perception and legitimacy of the GOI, often in areas that had yet to see any meaningful delivery of essential services.

Battalion efforts on lethal LOOs such as ISF partnership and combat operations did not stop, but as already mentioned above, the ISF partnership suffered after the implementation of the BSA on 30 June 2009. Though joint lethal targeting was still conducted, it was increasingly accomplished at lower echelons as senior ISF leaders, particularly at brigade and above, were driven by election politics and a desire to be seen as independently maintaining security within their respective OEs. There was, however, some success with our Iraqi Army partners in non-lethal targeting and execution. Our battalion's Alpha Company, which partnered with the 1st Battalion, 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, conducted a very successful combined medical operation in a rural village that the ISF commander felt was vulnerable to infiltration. A joint medical team, composed of assets from the Iraqi Army, the Ministry of Health and our battalion, performed assessments and provided treatment to more than 200 local villagers and made referrals for many more. Additionally, our civil affairs team offered humanitarian assistance packages while conducting interviews with the residents waiting in line. The event was tremendously successful and greatly improved the image of the Iraqi Army in the area. Our Iraqi partners immediately recognized the value of such operations, a lesson which proved to be a "foot in the door" towards maintaining our continued operations, both lethally and non-lethally, well after 30 June 2009.

Our lethal intelligence sharing at the battalion level led to detainment of several high value targets throughout the deployment. Our ability to share intelligence at the company and

battalion level of the Iraqi Army was sufficient to disrupt enemy operations in a number of areas. This success was, however, always dependent on the relationship between the USF company commander and their respective partner ISF battalion commander. When that relationship was strong, so was our success in lethal targeting and operations.

The Value of a Battalion "Campaign Plan" and Lessons Learned

Whether the Army decides to doctrinally accept the term "campaign plan" for use at the tactical level is irrelevant to how valuable such a document can be when it is grounded in a strong MDMP process that focuses on quality mission analysis. Our campaign plan provided us with a clear focus for the synchronization and massing of lethal and non-lethal effects upon a well-defined decisive point. This process allowed us to deter the SoI and other military-age males from rejoining or participating in



SGT Jon Soles

CPT Sara Woods, a civil affairs officer, checks a water pump filter in a sunflower field near Mahmudiyah, Iraq, on 9 August 2009.

violent activities that would have contributed to the instability of the elected GoI.

A quality battalion campaign plan must be grounded in a thorough mission analysis that accurately examines what previous units have accomplished in order to leverage the CERP dollars already invested. At the same time, the analysis must also take into account the current economic and security realities within the battalion's assigned battlespace. The resulting campaign plan must be flexible enough to allow for new initiatives and modifications to suit an ever-changing environment while still focused enough to have lasting effects within the limited operational time frame of the current deployment cycle. The battalion staff must be able to research and critically evaluate current events and recently published material in their mission analysis in order to prepare a good predictive analysis not only of the enemy but also the future direction of the host nation government.

Despite recent improvements in Combat Training Center rotation scenario development, the true complexities of the situation on the ground cannot be fully replicated. Therefore, the battalion, especially the staff, must be prepared to employ a majority of its time and resources towards non-lethal operations if that is what the situation on the ground demands. Our use of maneuver forces as non-lethal ISR assets paid huge dividends in our ability to contribute to continued stability in our OE throughout the period of our deployment. In all, our battalion invested more than \$6.5 million in CERP projects while directing more than 60 percent of those funds directly towards economic development in the agriculture industry. In only nine months, the battalion was able to process more than \$225,000 in micro-grants while beginning construction on our key value chain initiatives — the two milk collection centers (costing more than \$240,000 each) and our capstone project, the Lutifyah Dairy Processing Plant (which will cost more than \$770,000 when complete). The campaign plan set the goal for creating significant new investment in profitable agriculture and the "dairy value chain" was truly representative of that process.

Though focused on the dairy industry, our leaders did not stop there. Guided by the campaign plan, our platoon leaders and staff continued to bolster the poultry industry with additional micro-grants and projects. Improved infrastructure and essential services tied in with numerous water and electricity projects that eventually would have a lasting impact on agriculture as well, thus continuing our focus and impact on the local economy.

One drawback by designating our decisive LOO as economic development may have been our inability to improve upon our ISF partnership relationship. This was, however, a risk we anticipated. With the political realities of the BSA and our impending drawdown of forces, it is unclear whether our focus in the non-lethal arena negatively affected these relationships. Our companies continued to conduct regular joint patrols and combat operations with their partners. As stated before, our battalion was able to capture high value targets right up until the transition of authority, although the process was not as integrated and efficient as we had desired. The resistance to joint targeting at the Iraqi Army brigade level was most likely driven more by the leadership of the Iraqi Army brigade commander, who seemed tired and worn out by previous years of hard fighting and a high operational tempo, rather than our focus on the non-lethal operations.

In summary, a good battalion campaign plan built on quality mission analysis that utilizes the principles of campaign design as outlined in FM 3-24 will provide tactical units with a valuable framework for ensuring the synchronization of past efforts with the realities of the present in order to gain the maximum effect in the limited time available.

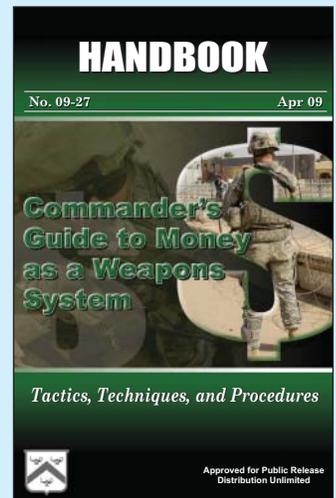
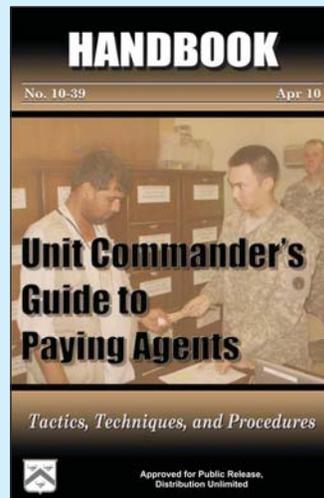
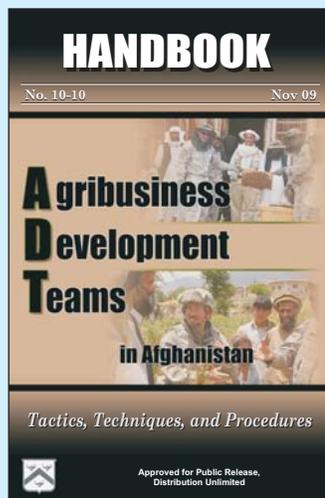
MAJ Wes Morrison commanded an Infantry rifle company in Iraq in 2004 and then served as executive officer for the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 120th Infantry again in Iraq in 2009. Both times he served with North Carolina National Guard's 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team. MAJ Morrison holds a master's degree in Military Studies from American Military University.

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PARTNERSHIP FULL CIRCLE

THE KEY TO SUCCESS, DEPARTURE FROM BAGHDAD

LTC DARRON L. WRIGHT AND MAJ DAVE VOORHIES

The 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), 2nd Infantry Division conducted its relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA) with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division in September 2009 and assumed the operational environment (OE) known as the northwestern belt of Baghdad that includes districts within the Amanat (city) and surrounding qadas to the west.

When we arrived, we found an OE that was relatively stable and growing every day in civil capacity. With that said, there were and continues to be many challenges to face as we move forward with the responsible drawdown of forces (RDOF) and eventual departure.

Our greatest challenge was that of maintaining security throughout an OE that in past years (pre-surge) was volatile to say the least. We had to figure out a way to disrupt the enemy in the post-Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) era and ensure/enable safe and successful national elections.

The second biggest challenge is the paradigm shift inherent in post-SOFA operations and having to work by, with, and through Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). The 30 June 2009 security agreement signed by the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the United States handed over the security responsibility to the ISF.

The answer to these challenges and key to success was partnership.

“Partnership, which is the brigade’s decisive effort, is the ability to create access with your Iraqi brethren,” according to COL John Norris, 4-2 SBCT commander.

Whether it is gained through the ISF for security patrols and planning or through the Iraqi tribal elders or sheiks who influence the people, access leads to situational awareness, which eventually facilitates force protection — both yours and theirs.

Force protection is critical to maintaining the force, sustaining a competent and confident ISF relationship, and engendering

popular support for GoI legitimacy. For U.S. forces and ISF, trust is achieved from the people they are sworn to protect in the first place. We also cement our own legitimacy to lead and train the ISF by exploiting opportunities to shape ISF successes, such as employing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) enablers; using teams that analyze explosives (weapons intelligence teams and combined explosives exploitation cells); and surging combat power rapidly to support ISF operations.

Faced with these problem sets and coupled with a good understanding of the current environment in Baghdad, our brigade adopted and formed its strategy prior to its rotation through the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) for its mission rehearsal exercise (MRE) in June 2009. Upon arrival in theater, we made a couple of adjustments and put the strategy into practice (see Figure 1).

Our goal coming into Iraq was to assist

our partners and enable them to create the conditions for irreversible momentum.

Our strategy is built on the premise that we — U.S. forces and specifically the Raider SBCT — focus on the population as the center of gravity (COG), partnering and working by, with, and through the other entities (Iraqi Army [IA], Iraqi Police [IP], Sons of Iraq [SoI] and local/governmental leadership and agencies). By conducting combined planning, targeting, and daily combat/stability operations, this would lead to unity of effort and ultimately irreversible momentum. Unity of effort is the driving force; without it success is unlikely.

According to FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, “Unity of effort must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation. Otherwise, well-intentioned but uncoordinated actions can cancel each other or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit.”

All entities are critical for this strategy to work, and success hinges on one another. If

Figure 1 — Irreversible Momentum



one entity is removed from the partnership, then unity of effort will not be achieved; hence, success is suspended in the balance. Once irreversible momentum is achieved, this sets the conditions for the departure of U.S. combat forces from theater and leaves behind a standing army and police force capable of meeting the security needs of its people and country.

The first and central step to our strategy was focusing on and securing the population. Chapter 1-131 of FM 3-24 states: "The cornerstone of any COIN effort is establishing security for the civilian populace. Without a secure environment, no permanent reforms can be implemented and disorder spreads."

In a "people's war," the population's vote and will is stronger than the enemy's. Their tacit approval and support is the difference between victory and defeat. Although counterintuitive by nature, moving to contact with the populace and defending them while living among them forces the enemy to react to you. One would think the enemy owns the initiative by choosing the time and place by which to attack. However, in a COIN environment with a secure population, the enemy has nowhere to stage an attack from, no one to trust who can support intelligence, and certainly nowhere to hide once the attack has taken place. Fear and uncertainty follow in the enemy's decision cycle. He knows that any overt move on his part will be met with scrutiny by the people and violence and death or capture by the security forces.

In the western belt of Baghdad, the key to influencing the people is through their tribes. The tribes lead through consensus and a series of ancient rites of law that transcend the Muslim religion. The wisest and, oftentimes, eldest of the tribe with appropriate blood ties to the original clan decides upon the communal behavior of his tribal members. Often, these tribes hold sway over millions of people! If you win the tribes over, as U.S. forces (USF) did in Anbar Province in 2007 with the Sunni Awakening, then you have a high probability of winning support to end the insurgency in your area. The insurgent, much like a cancerous cell, can sometimes be "cut-out" and removed; but that doesn't necessarily mean more won't reappear. Like the cancer cell, the insurgent needs

the radiation therapy applied by the members of his own tribe to defeat his ideas, neutralize his base of support, and destroy his resolve to continue fighting for a cause deemed erroneous by loss of tribal legitimacy. Engaging and partnering with the western Sunni and Shia tribes — particularly with their own army and police — will lead to pervasive stability and an eventual end to the insurgency there. It will also solidify ISF and tribal commitments to "cut-out" the AQI terrorists and criminals, who nihilistically threaten every Iraqi's future.

Partnership in Action (By, With and Through ISF)

How it works: Partnership is founded on three principles: presence, persistence, and patience. All three are linked together and must be applied to form a true partnership.

We achieve partnership through six fundamental initiatives:

1) Leading By Example (Coaching, Teaching, and Mentoring):

We do this daily to model behavior (teach them what right looks like) and further teach training strategies and leadership techniques that empower ISF leaders and soldiers. We integrate ourselves daily at every level, both with Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police forces, executing combined planning, targeting, and training at every echelon of command. The majority of our time is spent on the street as both USF and ISF patrol the villages to disrupt the enemy while engaging the population in order to earn their respect and trust. This is what we refer to as presence, and it's our presence that's making a difference.

2) Joint Operations Centers (JOC):

Through a joint operations center, there is a combined, integrated, and synchronized effort at synergizing security within the OE. Instantly, all security forces are alerted, informed, integrated, synchronized, and launched to action against the threat at hand. USF and ISF battle commands become "one" in this regard. The JOC allows us to understand the situation, visualize a plan, describe the plan, and direct forces and other enablers accordingly. JOCs have come a long way from their inception in 2005; today, we (USF) have broken down the cultural/political barriers enabling the IA and IP to integrate and share intelligence

and conduct coordinated operations. This type of cooperation was unheard of in previous years. Both groups operated independently without rhyme or reason, sometimes engaging each other with direct fire during routine patrols due to the lack of coordination and synchronization.

Today, there are JOCs at the brigade level down to the battalion level, and in some cases, they are established at the company level. These command posts truly exercise battle command and are the nuclei of partnered/combined operations. All reports, significant activities, enemy intelligence, informant tips from the field generated by ISF or USF are directed for collation to the respective JOC. From there, ISF commanders (IA or IP) can quickly decide and direct forces. They can also request support from USF or our enablers such as attack aviation, unmanned aerial vehicle surveillance, artillery support and even close air support if required. JOCs are the lynchpin and catalyst to successful combined operations and have proven their "worth in gold" many times over.

3) Training Management:

Nesting a training and operations cycle with ISF operations will change the way they view combat. Good units train for combat; great units train while in combat. Developing a cyclic process for combat operations, training and maintenance, and well-deserved vacation time will pay huge dividends and enable the ISF to one day become a self-sustaining professional force. We attack this through the use of our assigned military transition teams (MiTTs) or federal police transition teams (FPTTs). These teams are 10-12-man teams that cover down on IA and IP units and provide training and mentoring.

4) Stabilize the Sons of Iraq:

These insurgents-turned-patriots are the linchpin for reconciliation with the Shia-dominated GoI and the Sunni minority. These Sunni freedom fighters risked their lives and families by turning against AQI and, in some cases, their own tribes in efforts to support ISF and GoI. Partnership and respect must be extended to them, and their future employment and security rests on our ability to coach ISF and GoI to provide support for them and create employment opportunities for them in the growing Iraqi civil services industry. Give

credit where credit is due; the rise and establishment of the SoI program and its integration into the security plan is a key and contributing factor to the reduction of violence and decrease of overall attacks throughout all of Iraq, most notably in Baghdad and Al-Anbar provinces.

5) Calling on the Police:

Partnership is attracting the police to take center stage with regard to securing communities from coercion, threats, and extortion. Seen as a maturing asset within Baghdad proper, it is in its infancy in the western belts of the city. Once the Army departs, the IP must be a competent and ready force if stability is to dominate one day. The GoI overall security plan calls for the federal police to take over all security responsibilities of Baghdad (the Amanant). This has happened in some cases, such as Kadamiyah and other places, but not in total. Great efforts/strides are being made to transition control of security over to them. In regards to the west side of Baghdad, our brigade reached out to IP through key leader engagements and a series of other meetings and brought them into the fold. For instance, we have been somewhat successful at increasing police commanders' participation and attendance at local Nahia and Qada council meetings along with IA leadership. This was unheard of in Iraq but is now taking place. We have drafted a plan at further expanding the JOCs to include police representation. This is an exercise of persistence and patience and is slowly paying off in our OE as it is key in establishing unity of effort.

6) Planning and Executing Combined Combat Operations:

Shared risk, combat, and victories strengthen partnership. They also feed on the principles of unity of effort, the offense, and mass. Both ISF and USF learn from each other and become truly mutually supportive by uniting against the common drivers of instability that threaten Iraqi sovereignty. From these combined combat operations, ISF commanders also become adept at making critical decisions and over time develop the combat leader's greatest asset: judgment.

A recent demonstration of this occurred last October when one of our local IA brigades received a human source tip (walk-up informant) that a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) was being constructed in a neighborhood close to our base. The Iraqi brigade commander quickly took the information and immediately gathered his key staff and formed a plan to go after and seize the target. The IA brigade did all the required planning with little to no assistance from USF. Once their plan was set, they brought in our partnered battalion, shared intelligence, and asked that USF accompany them and establish the outer cordon around the target house. Within four to six hours, the house was cordoned off, and the IA executed its raid. The raid netted three detainees, who were part of an AQI cell operating in the area. Most importantly, they also captured a 24-passenger bus that was nearing completion as a VBIED.

Had the Iraqi Army and USF not acted quickly, this could have resulted in death and destruction in the thousands. Bottom line,

“Through our partnership and training of the ISF and our civil-military operation efforts in building civil capacity, we (USF) will depart this country and leave behind a legitimate Iraqi army and federal police force that can provide for the security and defense of a free, sovereign, and self-reliant Iraq.”

this was a great combined operation by all involved and serves as a demonstration of the effectiveness a partnership can achieve. There have been other success stories, but this by far has been the most notable.

By following these six initiatives, our brigade is moving forward and clearly forging the way in achieving/setting the following conditions which serve as the bedrock for our and Iraq's future success:

- Sustainable ISF capacity,
- Sustainable security, and
- Sustainable stability.

This is our strategy to achieve irreversible momentum. It is simply a way that is being forged on the streets and in the western belt of Baghdad by, with, and through our Iraqi partners.

The key to success in Iraq is partnership. Gone are the days of just putting an Iraqi “face” on the operations. Today in Baghdad, we have come full circle — Iraqi Security Forces are clearly in the lead and in charge, and USF are strictly in a supporting role. How you pursue that role determines success or failure. Our brigade chose to take an active approach by reaching out to the ISF and local civic leaders. The 30 June 2009 security agreement was not an obstacle; it was more of a milestone and a metric of success whereby the United States has achieved one of its strategic goals: forming an Iraqi army and federal police force that is trained and has the capacity to lead and is in charge of security for Baghdad.

An option we could have pursued in accordance with the security agreement was to consolidate our forces and just “hang out” on the forward operating bases and surrounding bases and wait for the 911 call from the ISF, an option that some have chosen. This is passive partnership and really is counterintuitive to success. You must take an active stance and continue to foster/forge partnerships by active participation both with the ISF and local civic leaders.

Daily combined operations and key leader engagements by, with, and through the ISF, local leaders, and tribal sheiks are working and have netted measurable results. Further, this approach allows us access and enhances our own force protection as well as theirs and the population. Through our partnership and training of the ISF and our civil-military operation efforts in building civil capacity, we (USF) will depart this country and leave behind a legitimate Iraqi army and federal police force that can provide for the security and defense of a free, sovereign, and self-reliant Iraq.

At the time this article was submitted, **LTC Darron L. Wright** was on his third tour in Iraq and was serving as the deputy commanding officer for the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division in northwest Baghdad. He previously served as the battalion commander of the 1st Battalion, 509th Airborne Infantry Battalion at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.

At the time this article was submitted, **MAJ Dave Voorhies** was on his second tour and was serving as the brigade executive officer for 4-2 SBCT. He had also previously served as a military transition team (MiTT) leader in northern Baghdad.

REVERSE HELICOPTER GOVERNANCE: LEVERAGING THE CONVENING POWER OF THE DIVISION

LTC LANCE OSKEY

“Military efforts to support governance help to build progress toward achieving effective, legitimate governance. Military support to governance focuses on restoring public administration and resuming public services while fostering long-term efforts to establish a functional, effective system of political governance. The support provided by military forces helps to shape the environment for extended unified action by other partners. Their efforts eventually enable the host nation to develop an open political process, a free press, a functioning civil society, and legitimate legal and constitutional frameworks.”

— FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*

Understanding the Problem: The Complex Environment of MND-N

MG Mark Hertling, commanding general of Task Force Iron and Multi-National Division-North (MND-N), understood that a hindrance to political progress in the northern provinces was a simple lack of communication between provincial and national leadership. As such, he directed that the 1st Armored Division’s governance efforts focus on bringing together the senior leadership of the Baghdad-entrenched Government of Iraq (GoI) with and to the provincial leaders of the northern provinces. The simple geography of MND-N (consisting of the four northern provinces of Ninewa, Kirkuk, Salah ad Din, and Diyala and is bordered by the three provinces of the autonomous Kurdish Regional Government [KRG]) contained a very complex set of issues which hampered political and economic development in the north (see Figure 1).

Furthermore, the division had the challenge of coordinating cross-provincial actions in partnership with the four provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). Each province contained a distinct ethnic, tribal, and religious composition; therefore, each maintained distinct security and governance problem sets. Adding to the complexity of the operational environment of MND-N were the interrelated Kurdish issues that affected each of the four northern provinces. (By way of comparison, Multi-National Force-West and its battlespace of Anbar Province consists of one major tribal group, one partnered PRT, and one provincial government.) The division fires and effects coordination cell (FECC) was the staff agency responsible for the division’s economics and governance progress. It was the FECC’s mission to plan, prepare, and execute a series of executive level, cross-provincial conferences.

Helping to Support “Good Governance”: Facilitating Communication

The practice of bringing GoI senior and ministerial leaders from Baghdad out to the provinces was a significant evolution from earlier practices of “helicopter diplomacy.” Helicopter diplomacy was the successful practice of bringing senior leaders from the provinces to Baghdad to discuss economics and governance issues with key GoI officials. The evolution of this concept from

“Iraqi and U.S. military and political leaders gather for the United and Strong Conference in March 2008. The purpose of the conference was to discuss issues and recommend solutions to the common problems facing the seven provinces north of Baghdad.”

SPC Alfredo Jimenez Jr.



“helicopter diplomacy” to “reverse helicopter diplomacy” allowed the consolidated northern provinces to collectively voice their concerns to the central government. The emphasis on hosting these conferences in the north instead of Baghdad sent a significant message to the provinces — that the central government was concerned to the point that they were willing to leave their offices in Baghdad to listen to the people in their own cities.

With thorough media coverage (local and national Arabic media sources were always given priority, western media was invited as well) for each venue, the citizens were informed through print and broadcast media that their local leaders were working with and through the central government on their behalf. Over the course of the deployment, MND-N hosted a variety of conferences on topics ranging from a narrow focus such as oil, electricity, and agriculture initiatives to broadly focused conferences addressing economics and reconstruction in all of northern Iraq.

“Build It, and They Will Come”: The Division Conference Series

The Multi-National Division-North’s various conferences manifested in several variations:

- * Single province, single topic
- * Single province, multiple topics
- * Multiple provinces, single topic
- * Multiple provinces, multiple topics

In the single province, single topic conference, key GoI representatives were able to focus efforts on a single theme. An example of this was the Ministry of Agriculture-focused visit to Kirkuk Province. This single province, single topic focus (with multiple GoI representatives to include the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Water Resources) allowed for the agricultural community in Kirkuk to better connect with the key GoI representatives on those issues. At the division level, the FECC ensured that the interests of the brigade combat team/province were addressed, while at the same time the agenda of the GoI was also met. In all of these conference variations, division assistance in gaining the commitment of appropriate GoI representation began early. Working through the division liaison officer to the U.S. Embassy, engagements to gain ministerial support were critical. Additional resources from division included translation headsets, coordination with the brigade combat team public affairs officer for media support, and air movement support.

In a single province, multiple topic conference, the leadership of the central government is able to interact with the leadership of the province on a variety of issues. An example of this variation was one of the many visits Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Al-Essawi made to the northern provinces. The “best practice” for this engagement is for the PRT to coach/teach/mentor the provincial directors general to provide a short, prepared presentation on the two or three most important issues within their area of responsibility. Initially, the division/PRT/BCT must shape an agenda for the Multi-National Force-Iraq to present to the GoI. Over time, the amount of assistance from the coalition diminished, but division assistance was still required to enable these conferences. The level of support varied depending on PRT involvement and the capacity of the provincial leadership. Division support to these



SPC Karla Elliott

The Northern Iraq Women’s Conference held in June 2008 covered topics such as job opportunities, education, health, security and legal issues.

conferences was the same as in the previous model; however, additional preparation with the BCT/PRT was often necessary to help ensure that the multiple provincial presenters were prepared with appropriate information for what was essentially an executive level conference. A sample agenda for a single province, multiple topic conference is depicted below, but all parties had to remain sufficiently flexible to allow the actual agenda to allow for the DPM to make changes to the itinerary.

- o 1000 — GoI arrives at the airfield (in this case with a GoI C130)
- o 1000-1030 — Ground transportation to PROV HALL (CF MRAPs w/ ISF augmentation)
- o 1030-1130 — Small security meeting in GOV Office to include local military leaders
- o 1130-1230 — Ninewa leadership presents issues/ provincial action plan to DPM
- o 1230-1330 — Lunch
- o 1330-1430 — DPM presentation regarding GoI commitments towards Mosul Reconstruction
- o 1430-1530 — PRESS CONFERENCE
- o 1530-UTC — Ground movement to airfield, air movement to Baghdad

The multiple provinces, single topic conference utilized division movement assets to bring BCT/PRT/Provincial representatives together to discuss a single topic. The Energy Conference series (to discuss and resolve oil and electricity issues in the north), the United and Healthy Conference (to identify major health issues

and opportunities), and the Women’s Conference (to provide empowerment and identify opportunities for the women in the north) are all examples of this format. These conferences rarely had provincial governors present and took on a more “worker” type format where break-out sessions and detailed discussions on the topic were featured. Division assistance to these type of conferences was significant. As representatives from all of the provinces (to include the KRG) were invited, the division’s role in selecting the cross-provincial level issues for presentation was critical to ensuring the conference had applicability to the entire audience. Division enablement for the multiple province-level conferences was more substantial and involved not only hosting the conference, but also (as in the case with the Women’s Conference) contracting for an appropriate venue, contracting for meal support, contracting for additional transportation, and continuous engagements to gain guest speakers, as well as to gain local, national, and international media coverage.

The multiple provinces, multiple topic conference represents the conference variation that is largest in scope, planning, and resources required. This type of conference was attended by the most senior representatives of the state as well as provincial governors and senior coalition interlocutors. Representatives from all the major media outlets were invited with personal media follow-ups to help gain media coverage. These types of conferences were the most staff intensive and required extensive planning and preparation.

Division support to these conferences was the most extensive, and included ensuring that amenities associated with this type of executive level conference were on hand. VIP rooms, high-quality local food, live music (positioned during transitions and during lunch), floral arrangements, official photographs, and conference mementos were examples of the attention to detail demanded for this type of conference. Combined protocol planning and pre-execution checks ensured that the venue was properly prepared and that the various dignitaries were afforded the proper accommodations as dictated by protocol.

The content and presentation of these conferences required extensive combined staff work between the GoI lead planners to ensure that the conferences merit the time investment of the senior leaders present. Linkages between past engagements, conferences, and visits between the attendees were established.

Topics presented in these conferences were categorized as such:

* **Issues raised to check on progress.** These issues include “follow up” issues from earlier commitments in previous venues. For example, during one of the later Mosul conferences, DPM Essawi announced the delivery of agriculture relief to farmers of the province. This announcement was a follow up on previously published drought relief commitments made by the GoI.

* **Issues raised to inform.** These inform the GoI on cross-provincial issues that require assistance from the central government. For example, during a discussion of fuel shortages during the division United and Strong III Conference, MG Hertling was able to inform the provinces and GoI of the actual fuel allocation and fuel pick-up rates across the provinces. This information helped better frame the discussion at hand.

* **Issues raised to gain a commitment.** Although few definite decisions are made by the senior GoI leadership, commitments

“Branding” of Conferences

UNITED and PROSPEROUS

- Icon used for the division economics conference
- Icon used by the GoI in their parallel development of conference support materials (programs, banners).
- Icon developed by division PSYOPs, agreed upon by GoI officials and tested with local audience prior to use



UNITED and STRONG

- Icon used in the division’s security conference series
- Icon used by MD-N throughout three conferences of the same name

Figure 2

to address the issues raised are then followed up in subsequent engagements, visits, and conferences. As an example, the commitment to hire and train female Iraqi Police (IP) for the Diyala Province was fulfilled a few months after the topic was addressed in the Women’s Conference when 50 female IPs graduated from training.

All events are media and information operations opportunities, and these conferences are no exception. The division “branded” each major conference initiative to facilitate recognition of the conference and their results. The distinctive icons were often picked up by the province or central government and similarly used in subsequent related meetings and smaller conferences (See Figure 2).

What We Learned: The Lag Time of Conference Results

Immediate, quantifiable results following any of these conferences were difficult to measure. Media monitoring of coverage of the events in local media through our open source intelligence cell provided feedback on relative importance of the conference based on amount of coverage. This cell continuously monitored and reported on local media broadcasts (internet, print and television). In the case of western media, these sources often combined the conference into larger stories and themes.

The MND-N engagements team combined (in some cases) with a digital recording of the session allowed the staff to capture any commitments made for follow-up. Examples of specific tasks accomplished (at least in part) due to the accountability of the conferences include the following:

UNITED and JUST IP Conferences: Increased IP hiring and training.

UNITED and HEALTHY Conference: Increased partnership between PRT health officers to include establishment of first responder training.

WOMEN’S Conference: Addressed the hiring of Female IPs in Diyala, gained support for the “Doves of Peace” radio show in Diyala, and gained support for establishment of women’s groups in all four provinces.

ENERGY Conference: Encouraged greater fuel pickup rates from the Baiji refinery and contributed to the release of water from the KRG dams to support irrigation in Diyala.

UNITED and STRONG Conferences: Established a Sons of Iraq program throughout the four provinces and incorporated the Kurdish Regional Government into division conferences.

UNITED and PROSPEROUS Conference: Announced a follow up on \$13 million in medium-sized loans delivered to MND-N businesses through the Ministry of Industry and Minerals Loan Program. This conference also launched the establishment of follow-up provincial visits by DPM Essawi to gauge status of reconstruction/essential services.

In the case of the United and Strong III and United and Prosperous Conferences, both deputy prime ministers were thankful for the division's efforts in convening the various parties to discuss the issues. Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih later followed up United and Strong III with a security team visit to Mosul, whereby he told MG Hertling that he learned the value of getting out to the provinces through the model of the conference. Similarly, DPM Essawi ordered his staff (following the United and Prosperous Conference) to host a "Southern Provinces Economic Council" and model it after our United and Prosperous (held in September 2008). Additionally, DPM Essawi launched follow-up visits to each of the provinces to continue the momentum gained through the initial United and Prosperous Conference.

As this article addresses much of the preparation required for these conferences, the transition from planning to execution is equally important. Planning briefs to the commanding general were facilitated during the weekly G5 Plans updates, and full operation orders were published to coordinate activities. Handover briefs from the FECC planning cell to the G3 division operations team (both day and night shifts) also occurred, and complete operations schedules for each conference were used to track progress and troubleshoot as necessary. During execution, a full command and control cell was established at each venue to aid the division command post in command and control.

The Way Ahead: Enabling Governance in a Post-United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) Environment

Instead of allowing the central government to remain in Baghdad,

MG Hertling and MND-N executed a variety of interrelated conferences that facilitated discussion between the provinces and the GoI, with each conference serving as an accountability mechanism to commitments made in previous conferences as well as an azimuth for future actions. Though a large amount of staff energy and resources were expended to host these events, the Iraqi leadership began to increase their level of assistance in each and now requires little assistance in hosting similar events. However, division-level assistance is still necessary as some topics (KRG/GoI issues, the always contentious fuel and electricity issues, women's issues) require an honest broker that both sides trust. The division serves this role — as an interlocutor for both parties. In a post-UNSCR environment, the ability to host these types of conferences may become more challenging. The following considerations apply:

- With a change in provincial leadership following the 2009 elections, some provincial leaders may be less likely to maintain a "close" relationship with the coalition. Coalition partners will need to reestablish their relationships and encourage participation in these types of forums.

- Likely coalition troop withdrawals (mandated in the Status of Forces Agreement) will result in more and more security burdens passed to the Iraqis. Finding suitable, secure venues to host large conferences in relatively secure areas will be the task of the provincial government and not the coalition forces. The most notable impact to these conferences is the reduction in rotary wing air support to assist in moving the parties to the conference venues.

- With security improving and the state of Iraq more and more "returning to normalcy," conference topics may trend towards civil topics such as women's issues, health issues, minority issues, and education issues, to name a few. PRTs, the U.S. Agency for International Government (USAID), and other non-governmental organizations should also be encouraged to host these type of conferences.

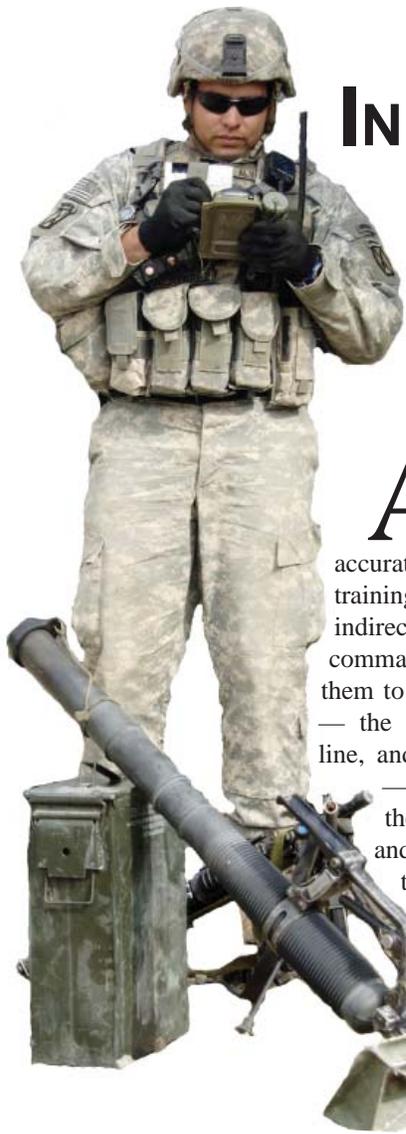
Although the counterinsurgency truism that no solution in one city or province can be replicated in another, we feel that the convening power of a division-level organization was a significant enabler to the progress gained under Task Force Iron's deployment. Too often, the excuses by the local government on why they can't host such a conference are precisely why these conferences can prove effective. Topics will be contentious, travel arrangements (to include weather accommodations) will be frustrating, and combined planning efforts will be exhausting — but the results of the conferences can help further the mission.



SPC Alfredo Jimenez Jr.

During the United and Strong Conference, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker (left) and MG Mark Hertling listen as Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih comments on an issue.

LTC Lance Oskey is currently the commander of the 2nd Battalion, 54th Infantry Regiment (One Station Unit Training) at Fort Benning, Ga. He previously served as chief of training for the Department of Military Instruction (DMI), United States Corps of Cadets, U.S. Military Academy at West Point. This article is based on his experience as the deputy effects coordinator for MND-N (1st Armored Division) from 2007-2008. He previously served as the S3 for 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and executive officer for the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1/25 ID (SBCT) during OIF 3.



INFANTRY MORTAR LEADER COURSE FOCUSES ON CONSTANT MODERNIZATION OF FDC

IMLC INSTRUCTORS

An Infantry commander's mortar sections are responsible for providing immediate and accurate indirect fire support. Proper training of the three elements of the indirect fire support team provides the commander with the confidence to use them to their full potential. The elements — the forward observer (FO), the gun line, and the fire direction center (FDC) — require continual assessment of their respective complex individual and collective tasks to demonstrate technical proficiency and tactical awareness. Improved weapons, ammunition, and fire direction technology create training challenges for mortar leaders.

The Infantry Mortar Leader Course (IMLC), based at Fort Benning,

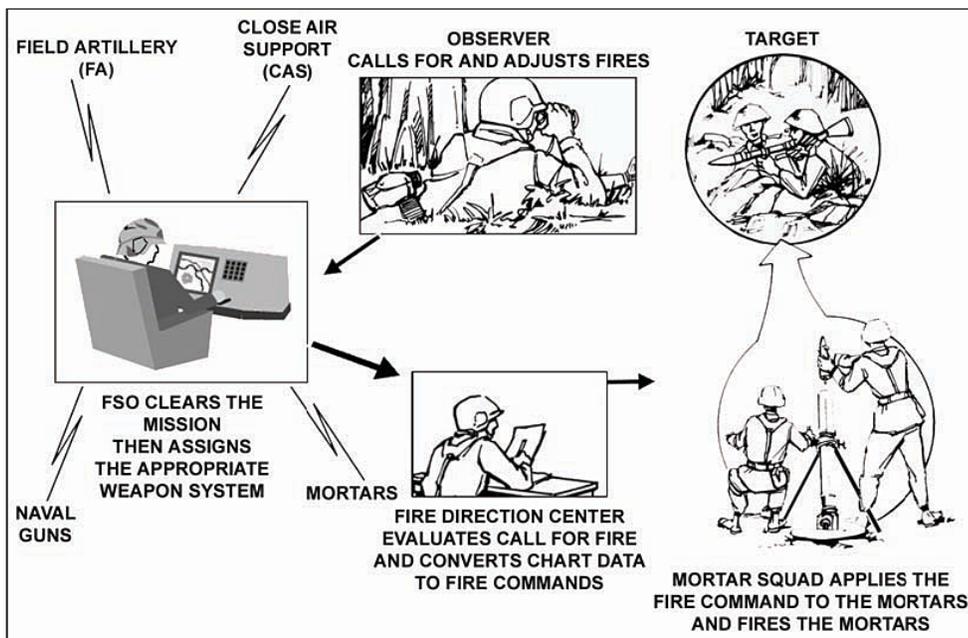
Ga., is considered the mortar leader's master gunner course. This distinction requires an evolutionary training philosophy that means the professional instructor must remain a consummate student and be at the vanguard of recent advancements. As IMLC instructors, we take this responsibility seriously and provide the Infantry's future mortar leaders with the skill sets they need to build their commander's confidence in their ability to perform their mission.

The IMLC provides FO and gunner skills training to facilitate conceptualizing the synchronization of the three elements of a commander's indirect fire team. What the course focuses on, however, is the constant modernization of the fire direction center. The FDC is the brains of the mortar section. Soldiers in the FDC, called computers, must translate forward observer information into the gun commands, which ensure timely and accurate fire support.

Technological advances in the 1980s began the transition from manual fire direction tools to digital. In 1985 the M23

Mortar Ballistic Computer (MBC) ushered in the digital age of fire direction technology. The MBC is lightweight, handheld, and powered by either an internal battery or external cables to various power sources. The MBC software enables the FDC to receive digital transmissions from the fire support elements (FSE) and process updated weather information to maintain weapon accuracy. The MBC was designed to support all types of U.S. mortars and ammunition with multiple fire mission scenarios. It weighs seven pounds (including the battery) or eight pounds (including the battery and case assembly). It is portable, can be used in all-weather operations, and has built-in self-test circuits. The MBC requires fire mission data input to compute fire commands needed to effectively execute a mortar fire mission. When the MBC is connected to an external communication device, such as a digital message device (DMD) or the forward observer system (FOS), the FO fire mission inputs are automatically entered and may be reviewed and edited by the MBC operator. When the MBC is not connected to an external communication device, the MBC operator manually enters all fire mission data. The fire commands are then relayed to the gun line in accordance with the unit standing operating procedures (SOP). FDC computers can decrease mission response time while processing data for all types of fire missions safely and accurately. Rudimentary by modern standards, the MBC remains a viable back-up fire direction system for many Guard and Reserve units.

Figure 1— Indirect Fire Team



Improved hardware and software design during the 1990s provided the FDC with a revolutionary system for delivering mortar fires. Initially fielded for the vehicle mounted heavy 120mm mortar, the M95 Mortar Fire Control System (MFCS) uses digital technology and GPS positioning to enable a mortar section to send and receive digital call-for-fire messages, determine the pointing and position of the weapon, and calculate ballistic solutions.

The MFCS is currently installed on the M1064 mortar carrier and the Stryker mortar carrier to support a wider and deeper tactical situation. Future fielding options include the trailer-transported and Bradley-vehicle-mounted 120mm mortar. The MFCS enables a mortar section to set-up, fire, and move within seconds rather than minutes. The improved accuracy reduces response time and fratricide, and the software and hardware are maintained at unit or higher maintenance levels. The digital interface enhances the mortar section's situational awareness with battlefield updates of fire-plans and fire support coordination measures. The MFCS is also capable of producing ballistic solutions for the 60mm and 81mm mortars in the ground mounted mode and for multiple fire mission scenarios. The MFCS, however, lacks the mobile flexibility that our light Infantry and Special Operations forces require. Hardware and software engineers then set to work on a replacement for the M23 MBC.

Twenty years after the MBC reached its maximum effectiveness, the Army introduced the M32 Lightweight Handheld Mortar Ballistic Computer (LHMBC). It is a one-for-one replacement for the MBC in our light Infantry, Airborne, and Special Operations units. It uses similar MFCS software to provide ballistic solutions in a handheld ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) case. The LHMBC weighs about three pounds and is powered by internal rechargeable batteries. External cables maintain a constant charge for extended periods of operation. The LHMBC gives the FDC improved capabilities over the MBC with a faster processor and a Windows operating system, and it is expandable with GPS and digital communications. While software upgrades can be handled at the unit level, hardware upgrades are direct support or above maintenance level. Similar to the MFCS, the LHMBC provides firing solutions for all U.S. mortars and ammunition in a variety of fire mission situations. While the LHMBC can send and receive digital messages with the FSE, the FDC must send the ballistic solutions to the gun line by voice.

Prior to 1985, our primary means of fire direction rested with manual tools. The 107mm or 4.2" mortar used the graphical firing fan (GFF), while the 60mm and 81mm mortars used the M16 or M19 plotting boards. Each of these devices are limited only by

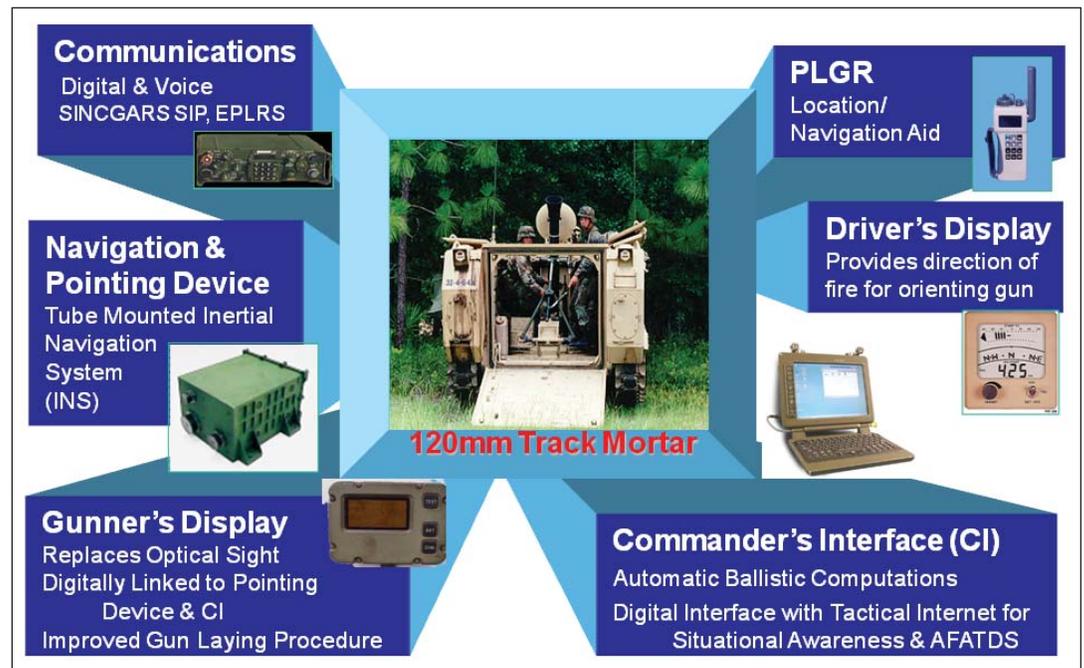


Figure 2 — M95 Mortar Fire Control System

the operator's knowledge and skill. With the elimination of the 107mm mortar and the GFF, the M16 plotting board has stood the test of time to remain the primary manual tool for the FDC computer. Mastering this device requires practice and situational awareness. The computer receives and transcribes an observer's call for fire into a graphical portrayal of the battlefield onto the plotting board. He then manipulates the device to read and translate the proper data to the gun line for accurate fires. With a three-dimensional mind-set, advanced users consider deviation, range, altitude, observer perspective, and even changing weather conditions to process any type of fire mission into a timely and accurate fire for effect. The computer constantly updates the plotting board to evolve into a quick reference situation map for the FDC.

As IMLC instructors, we believe that keeping our mortar leaders up-to-date on the technical challenges of hardware and software advancements is only part of their professional development. While digital fire direction enhances communication and speed, there is no substitute for the knowledge gained from mastering the manual tools. When elements of technology fail, the FDC and gun section must seamlessly revert to the degraded, or manual, method of fire direction. Also, the digital devices' accuracy and effectiveness are contingent on the operator's skill and attention towards establishing the correct set-up information. Any incorrect information will result in inaccurate firing data. IMLC instructors stress the value of technological advancements while instilling an appreciation for the mindset of knowing what right looks like while using the manual tools. The M16 plotting board remains the best tool we have to help our Infantry mortar leaders conceptualize the synchronization between the three elements of a commander's indirect fire support team. That conceptualization contributes to fully trained mortar sections that gain and maintain their commander's confidence.

For more information on the IMLC, visit <https://www.benning.army.mil/infantry/197th/course/imlc/index.htm> or call (706) 545-9730.

MORTAR MANNING IN THE BCT

SFC CHRISTOPHER CROSSLEY

Modularity has affected almost every formation in the brigade combat team (BCT), and mortar formations are no exception. Overseas contingency operations sometimes call for non-standard or non-traditional solutions when it comes to manning ad hoc mortar formations. When commanders man these organizations, however, they need to ensure that they continue to rate those Soldiers in their current duty positions.

Consider this example: a mortar section leader in an Infantry BCT rifle company is a staff sergeant (SSG). If he is tasked to perform duties as the personal security detachment (PSD) NCOIC for the command group, he is still rated as the mortar section leader, with additional duties as a security detachment NCOIC. His daily duties and scope are changed on his efficiency report to reflect what he is currently doing on a daily basis. He is rated this way because there is no authorized duty position of PSD NCO or security detachment NCOIC.

Because of this, there is no reason a Soldier can be given leadership credit that is on par with his peers serving in mortar formations. The enlisted force does not use terms like “branch qualified” or “key and developmental.” What we do say is that Infantry leaders need to have a certain amount of time in core positions in order to be fully or best qualified for promotion to the next higher level of advancement.

For an indirect fire Infantryman (11C), that minimum qualification time is 12 months in a valid SSG leadership position, generally either as a squad leader or section leader, and an additional 12 months in a skill level three leadership position. Historically, the best qualified 11Cs have had more than 24 months in a valid SSG level leadership position as a section leader. There are no authorized mortar platoon sergeant positions in any reconnaissance formation in a brigade combat team.

For many years SFC 11Cs have been rated as platoon sergeants in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and other reconnaissance squadrons. The authorized position is a mortar section leader. Because platoon sergeant time is critical for the master sergeant selection process, SFC 11Cs in the section leader position thought they were being disadvantaged and thus were rated as a platoon sergeant.

In fact, there is no authorized position for any 11C (skill level one through four) in any brigade combat team outside of a mortar section or platoon. Infantry proponent promotion guidance is quite clear on this subject, and the centralized promotion boards are aware of the problem. Modularity has also caused some confusion with authorized positions from one organization to another.

Charts outlining mortar manning in Infantry, Heavy, and Stryker BCTs can be viewed online at <https://www.infantry.army.mil/magazine>. These charts may clear up any misunderstanding of what is and what is not an authorized duty position for an 11C in any of the brigade combat teams. This article is not in any way, shape, or form attempting to guide any commander to a course of action that they need to take in order to accomplish an assigned mission or limit their choice in manning.

At the time this article was submitted, **SFC Christopher Crossley** was serving as the 11C career management NCO, Office of the Chief of Infantry, Fort Benning, Ga. He currently serves as the senior CMF 11 career manager.

SFC Christopher S. Ryffe is the new 11C career management NCO. He can answer questions pertaining to this article via e-mail at christopher.ryffe@us.army.mil.



Soldiers with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, fire 60mm mortars during a mission in the Zirat Mountain area of Paktika Province, Afghanistan, on 7 July.

SGT Jeffrey Alexander



MORTARS AS A COUNTER TO THE EMERGING THREAT OF THE STAND-OFF ATTACK

LTC (RETIRED) ARTHUR A. DURANTE JR AND LTC (RETIRED) MICHAEL R. HARRIS

Infantry units supported by mortars face the possibility of many different types of attacks on today's battlefield. Enemy attacks include but are not limited to the traditional ground assault preceded by intense preparatory fires and supported by heavy direct-fire weapons...

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, fire 120mm mortars during operations in Afghanistan on 26 March 2008.

SPC Derek Niccolson

However, there is an asymmetric tactic emerging in today's operational environment that, although not new, has the potential to be effective unless unit leaders take positive steps to counter it — the stand-off attack. This is an increasingly common type of attack in which the enemy attempts to inflict casualties and damage to U.S. forces without actually engaging in a close assault.

An insurgent force attempting a close assault will often specifically target mortar units for stand-off attack out of fear of their lethality and effectiveness. Mortar units must counter stand-off attacks while remaining prepared to conduct a fully integrated defense against a ground assault by delivering counter-preparation, close, and final protective fires.

Defining the Stand-off Attack/Attack by Fire:

A stand-off attack is a common enemy tactic, one used extensively by insurgent and guerrilla forces. In U.S. doctrine this type of attack is called an "attack by fire," but for the purposes of this article "stand-off attack" is used to identify an attack made against U.S. forces. The stand-off attack is not new to warfare. It has been used in the past as an asymmetric tactic often intended not only to inflict casualties but also to have a psychological and sometimes strategic impact.

A stand-off attack is normally delivered from beyond the effective range of U.S. small arms fire and is often over before the U.S. unit can bring counterfire or air strikes against the attackers. These types of attacks are normally initiated from long range using heavy direct and indirect fire weapons using direct lay or direct alignment expedients from within defilade to deliver sudden and intense fires on the U.S. unit. Stand-off attacks are sometimes conducted from a single location, but often they are complex surprise attacks from multiple firing locations.

The enemy normally plans when he will cease fire and break contact. He may plan to fire a specific number of rounds, fire until counterfire begins in his vicinity or he may fire for harassment over a period of time. Usually, he will only cease fire and break contact when he starts receiving effective counterfire or is threatened by reaction forces maneuvering against him.

A stand-off attack is seldom decisive by itself, but it can be used by an enemy to achieve the following:

- Cause damage and inflict casualties;
- Harass, fatigue, and demoralize U.S. forces;
- Create a siege mentality by forcing U.S. units to remain in their fortifications;
- Demonstrate the insurgency's presence and strength, enhancing morale and recruitment;
- Suppress U.S. indirect fires in support of other units;
- Distract and deceive U.S. units to conceal the enemy's true intentions;
- Prevent U.S. forces from moving to assist another unit under attack;
- Gauge the strength and reaction times for U.S. supporting weapons;
- Entice U.S. reaction forces to move into pre-planned ambushes or areas seeded with IEDs; or
- Undermine the U.S. political will with a steady trickle of casualties.

A stand-off attack can be conducted using a variety of weapons,

often combining both direct and indirect fires. The most common stand-off attacks include fires by mortars, rockets, recoilless rifles, and rifle-propelled grenades, sometimes combined with the fires of machine guns (direct and indirect) and even rifles. Artillery fires may be part of a stand-off attack, but normally the weapons systems used are lighter and more easily displaced than artillery pieces.

Normally, an indirect fire stand-off attack does not achieve significant precision. The fires are often spread over a wide area and not concentrated on any one target. However, enemy forces have access to modern maps and electronic navigation devices. These, coupled with simple math and rudimentary fire control systems such as a gunner's quadrant and a compass, can allow them to achieve a fair degree of accuracy with mortars and rockets against fixed bases. The fires of a stand-off attack may be concentrated against the mortar unit and other crew-served weapons positions in an effort to achieve results through mass rather than precision.

Very precise direct fire stand-off attacks are possible by insurgents from long range if they are equipped with modern sniper rifles, recoilless rifles, or guided anti-tank weapons.

The advantage to an insurgent force conducting a stand-off attack is that it minimizes the chance that it will suffer significant casualties while at the same time allowing it to potentially inflict such casualties and damage on a U.S. unit.

In the traditional ground assault, an enemy force is fully committed. The assault forces have few options once the attack begins. They must continue to assault, possibly enduring heavy losses, or attempt to break contact and withdraw under fire, something that is tactically difficult and often costly. On the other hand, an enemy force conducting a stand-off attack is not fully committed and can cease fire and break contact almost at will.

A stand-off attack can be conducted without the large numbers of troops needed for an assault and is therefore easier to conceal during the movement-to-the-objective phase. After the stand-off attack is complete, a small enemy force can more easily disperse, caching heavy weapons for another day, and withdraw out of the area using multiple covered and concealed routes.

Responsibilities at All Levels

Commanders at all levels are responsible for predicting and countering stand-off attacks. Information gathered by all sources should be analyzed for any indications of an impending attack. Indicators vary depending on the local situation. Patrol sightings, reports of the enemy stockpiling/caching ammunition, local villagers being pressed into service as porters, increases in local radio and phone traffic, as well as tips from locals should all be monitored and considered. Unexplained movement out of an area by the populace is a possible indicator of an impending attack.

Historical reports should be reviewed for information on previous attack times and firing locations. Commanders should direct patrols to search for and report the locations of suspected repeat firing positions. Base plate and bipod marks in the dirt, discarded arming pins or ammunition packing material, rocket and back blast burn marks, or rocks piled up to brace rockets are all indications that a position has been used before and is likely to be used again.

Fortifications and protective positions should be built wherever possible. As in any defense, these should be constructed so as to allow the U.S. forces to not only survive a sudden onslaught of fire

but to continue to return fire without being suppressed.

Unit leaders should make a determination of the type and caliber of weapons likely to be used in a stand-off attack and construct fortifications adequate to protect the unit. Mortar unit leaders should ensure that their mortars are protected and that they can be brought into action against any likely enemy firing positions within range.

It is important to maintain observation of possible infiltration routes, assembly areas, and firing positions by patrols, observation posts, unmanned aerial systems (UASs), unattended sensors, and aerial observers. Reaction forces, both ground and aerial, should be on alert for immediate employment. Supporting fires from other unit locations must be integrated by the headquarters controlling the area of operations.

Role of the Mortar Unit Leader

The mortar unit leader is not the only person responsible for preparing for and countering a stand-off attack, but he is uniquely qualified to play a key role at the company and platoon level as an indirect fire planner and fire support coordinator.

Through training and experience, he understands the limitations and capabilities of indirect fire weapons. He has experience planning fires based on terrain analysis. He also has good situational awareness gained through the communications that link him to the firing units, the fire direction center, supporting indirect fire units, and the unit commander. He controls the fires of the unit's most lethal, most responsive, and longest ranged weapons, the ones most suitable for countering a sudden violent stand-off attack conducted by an enemy that can fire suddenly and withdraw quickly.

Effectively countering stand-off attacks requires the mortar leader to also access and coordinate with the intelligence and target acquisition assets available to support his unit.

The key to the mortar unit leader's success in this role is the ability to plan, prepare, and execute counterfires that are delivered quickly enough to hit the attacking force while it is still in the firing position or as it is withdrawing.

The mortar unit leader should be proactive and advise the unit commander on the potential for a stand-off attack, the possible types and numbers of weapons



U.S. Army photo

An Afghan National Army company commander inventories a cache of mortars, rockets, and ammunition rounds found in several caves during a munitions recovery operation in Afghanistan.

that might be employed, possible firing locations, and most importantly, how the immediately responsive fires of the mortar unit can be used to counter the enemy attack quickly. These actions fall under the concept of PLAN, PREPARE, and EXECUTE.

Identifying and Mitigating the Threat

The planning phase starts with the mortar unit leader conducting extensive terrain analysis of the area around the unit's location to identify and template likely enemy firing positions. He should gather data on the range and capabilities of the type of weapons the enemy uses in the AO. By drawing range circles for various enemy weapons, he can look at the terrain those circles encompass and template where an enemy is most likely to locate his firing positions.

As a rough guide, Figure 1 shows the maximum ranges of some common former Soviet/Warsaw Pact weapons (The effective range of sniper weapons is highly dependent on the skill and training of the sniper).

There are many other possible sources for information on the threat of a stand-off attack to any specific unit location. The mortar unit leader should discuss enemy capabilities with the unit S2, the reconnaissance platoon leader, the senior sniper, and the supporting field artillery unit's S2. The company fire support officer (FSO) is also a potential source of information.

The preparation phase begins with the unit commander directing that local security patrols report the precise grid location of

GP-25 series 40mm grenade	400 meters
7.62x54mm sniper rifle	600 meters
Rocket-propelled grenade	1,000 meters
7.62x54mm medium machine gun	1,500 meters
AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher	1,700 meters
73mm SPG-9, 82mm series recoilless rifle	1,800 meters
12.7mm machine gun, 14.5mm and 20mm heavy sniper rifles	2,000 meters
60mm mortar	2,500 meters <i>(out to 5,500m for the long range versions)</i>
Guided AT missiles Milan, Arrow 8, AT-4, AT-5, AT-7	2,000-3,000 meters
82mm mortar	4,000 meters
120mm mortar	7,000 meters
107mm artillery rocket	9,000 meters
122mm artillery rocket	18,000 meters

Figure 1 — Approximate Ranges of Common Former Soviet/Warsaw Pact Weapons

any positions identified as previously used by the enemy for either firing or observing fires against the unit location. Additionally, infiltration and exfiltration routes should be identified.

If identified likely enemy firing positions are not easily recognizable from the mortar firing positions, some sort of marking of them may be required. This can be as simple as improvised aiming stakes around the rim of the firing position. More elaborate steps can be taken by the unit to either overtly or covertly mark the actual area around the likely stand-off attack position. Painted rocks or tree stumps can be used as target reference points (TRPs).

When conducting this terrain analysis to identify and locate likely enemy positions, the mortar unit leader should not limit himself to identifying only distinct single points. The enemy may move his weapons around among several good defilade positions along the reverse slope of a hill or ridge. The ability of the mortar crews to fire searching or traversing missions should be considered as a technique for covering these likely firing positions.

The end result of the mortar unit leader's analysis will be a number of potential enemy firing positions. These should then be converted to targets, and to a series or groups of targets (see FM 7-90, *Tactical Employment of Mortars*, for a discussion of how mortar units identify and engage series and groups of targets). This is followed by determining the most appropriate weapons to engage each individual target, group, or series.

For those targets assigned to the mortar unit, further analysis is required to determine the most appropriate type and amount of ammunition to plan and pre-stock for their engagements. Normally, a mix of bursting white phosphorous and high explosive rounds set for proximity burst is the most effective against enemy gun and mortar crews firing from both direct and defilade but without overhead cover.

The mortar unit leader must determine the optimum amount and type of ammunition to have prepared for countering a stand-off attack. He rarely will have as much ammunition as he thinks he might need, and too much ammunition stockpiled in the firing position at one time is a risk when exposed to heavy enemy fire. Crew members or other personnel should be identified ahead of time to move to the ammunition storage area and begin the replenishment of ammunition.

An important part of preparing to counter a stand-off attack is for the unit to conduct detailed and realistic rehearsals of actions to be taken by leaders, fire direction center personnel, and mortar crews. The fleeting nature of a stand-off attack demands that counteractions be rapid and consistent. Everyone in the unit should be aware of what actions to take if and when the enemy initiates a stand-off attack.

Locating the Attackers

The execution phase of countering a stand-off attack begins once the unit is able to identify known or suspected enemy firing positions. These are engaged as soon as the unit can initiate fires. There are many ways to identify known or suspected enemy firing positions. Direct observation from the mortar firing position during an attack is only one of them. Others include reports or data collected before or even during the attack from the following:

- UAS operators
- Observation posts and local patrols
- Lightweight Counter-Mortar Radar (LCMR) operators
- Adjacent units
- Aerial observers and forward air controllers
- Forward observers
- Crater analysis matched to the terrain template
- Unattended ground sensors

- Attached or supporting sniper teams
- Radio and telephone intercepts
- Tactical questioning of local personnel
- Interrogation of prisoners of war or detainees.

A tactically proficient enemy may make it difficult to precisely locate his position even while he is firing from it. Sometimes the best a unit can do is to identify possible enemy locations. These should be checked quickly against the pre-attack analysis list (template) of likely firing positions.

Engaging and Countering the Stand-off Attack

Countering the stand-off attack (execution) is the series of key actions that integrate all the planning and preparation efforts by the mortar unit leader. The mortar unit is capable of delivering large volumes of exceptionally lethal counterfire that can search out and destroy enemy forces even when they are firing from long range and from within defilade.

The key to executing those fires in a timely manner is the planning and preparation done before the attack. This planning and coordination must include a detailed analysis of any possible collateral damage as well as take into consideration any no-fire or restricted-fire areas. The enemy is likely to shift to firing from any restricted fire areas he can identify. These locations should be covered by sniper teams. The location of patrols and other friendly elements must be tracked continuously.

A unit that has planned and prepared for a stand-off attack can initiate counterfires on preplanned targets almost immediately, firing series and groups of preplanned targets. A well-rehearsed mortar unit can engage multiple preplanned targets in a matter of minutes, without lengthy coordination or detailed orders from the commander.

Stand-off attacks are normally conducted from hasty positions that are particularly vulnerable to air-bursting munitions. Most often, direct fire stand-off attacks are targeted visually. This makes mixing smoke in with the air-bursting high explosive (HE) particularly effective against them. HE fires can even disrupt the firing devices of enemy remotely or time-delay fired weapons. (If any of the firing devices can be recovered after the attack, they may provide valuable intelligence).

While these targets are being engaged, the commander has the opportunity to further refine his understanding of where the enemy is firing from and how the attackers can best be defeated. At an appropriate time, the commander may order the mortar unit to shift fires from known, suspected, and likely enemy firing positions to other targets such as withdrawal routes or enemy observation posts.

As supporting units such as attack helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft are brought to bear against the enemy, the mortar unit may be ordered to shift or temporarily cease fire. If a ground reaction force is committed, the mortar unit may be ordered to fire in support of that unit, using either preplanned or immediate fires.

LTC (Retired) Arthur A. Durante Jr. recently retired as deputy chief of Doctrine, Doctrine and Collective Training Division, Combined Arms and Tactics Directorate, U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga.

LTC (Retired) Michael R. Harris's 23-year Army career included Infantry and Special Forces operational assignments as well as combat development at the Infantry Center, High Technology Test Bed, JFK Special Warfare Center, and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Since retiring in 1994, he has supported USSOCOM as a research and development consultant on weapons programs and currently works for the command's Directorate of Science and Technology.

BATTLE COMMAND IN COIN

LTC JOSEPH MCLAMB

The operational environment in which one conducts counterinsurgency (COIN) operations is markedly and, in some ways, radically different from that in which one conducts operations closer to the high-intensity level. Yet most of our command and control mechanisms and procedures — arguably our entire philosophy of command — is centered upon a commander operating at the high end of conflict. Recognizing the differences in the operational environment and making necessary adjustments to the command and control systems can be more important and more difficult than one might think.

The following observations and conclusions represent the reflections of the leaders of an Infantry battalion at the end of a combat tour in Iraq in 2008. They reflect the experiences of a particular unit in a particular setting, and their general applicability is open to question. Our goal in publishing these observations is to generate a professional conversation from which we can learn from the experiences of others. We recognize up front that not all of what

is proposed will prove to be of value across the Army but nevertheless hope to make a contribution to the professional discussion.

The Operational Environment of a Counterinsurgency

The natural environment of COIN operations is one of anger and frustration. This may appear to be an overgeneralization or the view of a committed pessimist, but perhaps it is neither. Rather, it may be a fairly accurate reflection of the very nature of a counterinsurgency environment. In three deployments with COIN operations, I've seen little to make me believe that the anger and frustration that seem so common are due to poor leadership, enemy activity, or even the general perception of how the war is going. Regardless of ebbs and flows in all these factors, many Soldiers are angry and frustrated a fair portion of the time. I believe this reflects the inherent nature of combat in a counterinsurgency, and should be recognized, accepted, and mitigated by leaders. To understand why this is so, I think it is useful to examine several factors that

appear common to most COIN operations but may be less prevalent in other forms of conflict.

Intellectual stress

In his 1997 book *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory*, Shimon Naveh wrote about the special challenge of commanders and planners at the operational level, coining the term “cognitive tension” to reflect the mental “controlled disequilibrium” required of officers tasked with translating broad strategic and political objectives into concrete tactical tasks for units to accomplish. Simply put, it requires a considerable amount of intellectual energy and discipline to balance the need to achieve political goals with the actual capabilities of the units tasked to achieve those goals. And in this Naveh appears to be correct — all evidence seems to indicate that this is indeed a difficult and tiring task.

But when Naveh wrote about cognitive tension, he envisioned commanders and



Soldiers with B Company, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, and Iraqi Army soldiers move to the location of a weapons cache search in Shula, Iraq, on 12 October 2008.

SGT Manuel Martinez

staff officers at the campaign headquarters wrestling with political objectives assigned by the government, while subordinate headquarters were assigned more simplistic tactical tasks such as “seize this terrain” or “destroy that enemy force.” His model was World War II, where political considerations were the concern of men with four or more stars on their shoulders.

In a COIN environment, however, Naveh’s cognitive tension extends well below the general officer level. Even squad leaders feel the controlled disequilibrium of trying to balance today’s assigned tactical task with the larger political objective the tactical task is designed to support. But unlike Naveh’s notional commander, the squad leader is not surrounded by a staff of professional operational planners to assist him in seeing the problem clearly. It is no great surprise that many leaders find this challenge a source of considerable frustration and anger. Counterinsurgency is, first and foremost, an intellectual challenge, and this places a higher level of mental stress on leaders at lower echelons than other types of conflict.

Primacy of external factors

Faced with the requirement to balance tactical instincts with an understanding of the political objectives, leaders are further frustrated by a characteristic of COIN operations that is almost universally missing from our pre-deployment training scenarios. In training, the primary factor that determines how any given scenario resolves itself is the action of the U.S. unit; in a counterinsurgency this is rarely the case. While we can influence almost any situation, our ability to direct the outcome and control all the other factors involved is never absolute, and in most cases we are not even the decisive element.

This appears to be true at every echelon in a counterinsurgency and is a source of a considerable amount of frustration. Commanders find themselves responsible for the accomplishment of tasks that absolutely require the active support of any number of agencies and entities outside of their control, and the need to build a consensus and gain cooperation slows and complicates even the most straight-forward operation. In many cases, external factors are not only outside the commander’s control but completely invisible and unknown. Clashing directly with our “fight on to the objective and

“Someone once said, ‘The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing,’ and nowhere is this more true than with COIN operations.”

complete the mission” culture, this fact of life of COIN is the root cause of much of the misunderstanding often seen between headquarters at various echelons.

The elusive decisive operation

Someone once said, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing,” and nowhere is this more true than with COIN operations. Commanders who try to follow this apparently simple advice, however, soon find themselves frustrated by the complexity of the task. It seems simple that our doctrine makes the process of identifying the decisive operation and then designing all other operations to either support the decisive operation or sustain the force, but in reality it is a daunting prospect. At least three factors make identifying and maintaining the decisive operation a frustrating task for commanders in COIN.

First, a tremendous number of things need to be done correctly. If a high-intensity conflict can be likened to boxing (where the goal is to knock out your opponent with one well-aimed shot to a critical point of the body), then counterinsurgency is more like grappling (where one must isolate all the enemy’s extremities and then slowly choke him out; leaving one arm or one leg uncontrolled will allow your opponent to continue to work against you and perhaps even escape your hold). Commanders cannot simply select one or two aspects of COIN operations and ignore the rest. This isn’t to say that all elements are of equal importance, but to recognize that none of them are unimportant.

Second, the modern tendency to increase the size of brigade and division staffs has resulted in something of a dilemma for commanders below the brigade level. Simply put, the ability of the higher headquarters to come up with good ideas far exceeds the ability of the subordinate units to put those ideas into action. And with staffs getting larger and larger, there are more and more staff majors to champion each good idea. Brigade commanders might be surprised to learn how frequently a major on the brigade staff calls a subordinate battalion

to discuss a project that is invariably introduced as “the brigade commander’s top priority.” Division staffers are even more apt to make a similar call to brigades (and often battalions as well), and battalion staffs are not without guilt in this regard, although the smaller size of the battalion staff somewhat reduces its ability to chase competing priorities.

Finally, working in opposition to the first two factors but adding to the stress on commanders and leaders, is the desire of subordinate units to reduce “the main thing” to “the only thing.” Faced with a seemingly unending flow of tasks that must be accomplished, the temptation to select one aspect of the operation and focus on it to the exclusion of all others is very powerful. This is especially true when a unit sees a clear payoff from one aspect of operations. For example, if lethal targeting results in the destruction of a dangerous IED cell, many leaders will want to reduce their efforts in other areas in order to concentrate more energy on “what works,” confusing short-term payoff with long-term success.

Taken together, these factors place additional stress on commanders and leaders, who find themselves inundated with tasks from their higher headquarters, pressured by subordinates to seek short-term solutions, and all the time confronted with the need to measure the relative importance of each task in terms of its ability to achieve the required end state. It is little wonder that many leaders find this situation frustrating.

Isolation

Counterinsurgency operations tend to be both decentralized and distributed by their nature. Companies and sometimes smaller units operate out of isolated facilities scattered across the battalion area of operations. Although in urban environments the distance between these facilities may be relatively small, the sense of being surrounded by thousands of local nationals often gives these compounds a feeling of tremendous isolation.

The impact of these conditions on units is twofold. First, units find it easy to believe that their higher headquarters fails to appreciate their efforts and does not adequately understand the situation that they face. I know this is a common phenomenon across all types of conflict, but the isolation of small units seems to make the “those bastards at battalion” syndrome

markedly more prevalent. The second impact of prolonged isolation is that units lose visibility on the efforts of their sister units, and their ability to calibrate estimates of their own hardships and successes atrophies. As a result, units at all echelons tend to believe that they are pulling more than their weight, suffering more than their share of hardships, and receiving less than their share of the available resources. Again, this appears to be a natural tendency of units in COIN, not an indictment of small unit leadership. But whatever the cause, the result is the same — a general sense of anger at not being properly appreciated, resourced, etc.

The impact of isolation on unit leaders is even more pronounced, particularly for leaders who command a small, isolated outpost removed from their higher headquarters and their peers. Under these conditions, even the most mature and self-confident leader finds his mental well-being under pressure over time and may come to question his own competence, his relationship with his higher headquarters, his understanding of the mission, or other significant components of command. If the unit is taking casualties, the impact of isolation is even greater.

Precision as the cornerstone

Perhaps the greatest source of frustration among leaders in a counterinsurgency is the critical and persistent need for precision. If mass can be viewed as the cornerstone of high intensity combat, then precision plays the same role within COIN. This is especially true in an urban environment, where any munition, lethal or non-lethal, is almost certain to have an impact far beyond the intended target. The negative consequences of a misstep often outweigh the potential gain if things had gone according to plan.

The impact of this environment on leaders is marked, and tends to be more pronounced among the deepest and most disciplined thinkers. The better a leader understands his operational environment, the greater his awareness of the consequences of indiscriminate actions. One only has to imagine a young captain, isolated from his peers on an outpost surrounded by local nationals and under pressure from his higher headquarters and his own Soldiers to neutralize an enemy cell who has killed two of his subordinates, to understand the level of intellectual and emotional discipline required to maintain a commitment to precision. The temptation to “do something,” even if you aren’t really certain of the consequences, is very real.

If you don’t know what to do, you probably shouldn’t do anything at all. After years of COIN experience, I’ve come to believe that this may be more true than most Army officers are willing to admit. But officers who do accept it must also recognize that this makes it even more critically important that we do know what we are doing — that we not make a mistake out of ignorance



SGT James Hunter

A Soldier with the B Company, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, communicates with an Iraqi Army commander while on patrol in a northwestern Baghdad neighborhood on 6 August 2008.

or impatience. Fighting with precision is extremely demanding on leaders at every echelon, because it requires constant restraint, forethought, and intellectual engagement.

Experience has demonstrated the need for a robust command and control system that can operate effectively in the real COIN environment, complete with anger, frustration, uncertainty, and fatigue, requiring leaders from squad to battalion level who constantly monitor the command and make adjustments, some small and some very large. Over the course of months and years in Iraq, we’ve learned a lot about battle command.

Battle Command in COIN

In COIN operations, anger, frustration, uncertainty, and fatigue make up the lion’s share of the friction which is inherent to all forms of armed conflict. And just as commanders in Clausewitz’s era developed command and control systems that mitigated the effects of friction on their contemporary type of battlefield, so must modern commanders adjust their battle command systems to offset the impact of the modern operational environment on their Soldiers, leaders, and organizations. Our time in Iraq served as a yearlong experiment in battle command in a COIN environment.

We tried several different approaches to battle command during our deployment, all intended to reduce the impact of the operational environment on the organization. Some failed miserably and had to be eliminated. Others proved more successful, especially after we made adjustments based on experience. But none worked exactly as we envisioned, and none remained in place, unchanged, over the course of the deployment. If there is a central “lesson learned” for us, it is simply that the challenges and requirements for effective battle command change and evolve as the battlefield changes and evolves. A great system or technique can be rendered obsolete by the replacement of a key leader, a change in enemy tactics, or even

a change in the weather. Leaders must approach battle command as a system that requires constant attention and adjustment. Every time we grew comfortable with our system and became hesitant to change to match new conditions, we regretted it.

But while the techniques and procedures changed throughout our deployment, a relatively small number of fixed principles emerged from our experience. Some of these were pretty obvious from the beginning, although often we did not understand the full ramifications of violating them. Others only emerged in retrospect, when we took time to ask ourselves, “Why are we doing this differently now than we did it two months ago?” Each of these principles reflects the challenges that are unique to COIN, even if they find some applicability in other circumstances as well.

Train to standard; fight to intent

In training, success is defined by adherence to the published task standard. This is a proven approach to training for combat operations, as it provides a realistic gauge of whether or not the unit can accomplish the same task in combat.

In combat, however, the task standard loses its primacy as the measuring stick against which performance is measured — mission accomplishment is the gold standard of success. And mission accomplishment is largely defined by the commander’s intent of the higher headquarters. This introduces a level of ambiguity not commonly seen in our training standards, as commander’s intent tends to be far broader than the detailed checklists found in our training manuals, a consequence of the complexities and uncertainties of the real world in which the commander operates.

As a result, the commander’s intent takes on an importance in combat that far exceeds its usual role in training. What we discovered in Iraq is that formulating, interpreting, and disseminating commander’s intent is both critical (which we knew beforehand) and extremely difficult (which we did not). It seemed simple enough at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), but in actual combat making the commander’s intent work requires a great deal of effort from both the commander and his subordinates.

Simply writing a meaningful commander’s intent is a challenging task. Over the years, I’ve been advised to:

- 1) “Cover every possible contingency so that your subordinates will know what you would do in any given situation,” and
- 2) “Make it simple enough so that every private in the battalion will understand it.”

Neither piece of advice proved to be particularly helpful, at least not all the time. My ability to predict every contingency proved to be less than adequate, and many times company commanders were well on their way to solving unanticipated problems before I was even aware they existed. Broad guidance proved to be much more effective in most circumstances. But we also discovered that guidance that was simple enough for a private often failed to be very helpful to a company commander facing an unanticipated situation without the immediate oversight of his battalion commander. “Everything should be made as simple as possible,” someone once said, “but no simpler.” Counterinsurgency is a very complex business, and simplifying your intent to a handful of clichés isn’t very helpful to subordinates trying to cope with that complexity.

Even well-reasoned and clearly written commander’s intent is not particularly valuable unless the people who are trying to execute the intent are personally familiar with the commander. This runs counter to the whole idea of the value of the written

intent, but our experience leads me to conclude that a subordinate’s understanding of the commander himself is the single most important factor in determining whether the subordinate will interpret the intent correctly. Platoon leaders and platoon sergeants who have trained with a company commander for an extended period and are familiar with his tactical views and preferences will almost always understand the commander’s intent, even if it is not doctrinally complete and lacks clarity. The success rate is much lower when subordinates have to interpret the intent based only on the words themselves. The primary lesson that I drew from this experience is that having a solid understanding of the commander is the cornerstone of making the commander’s intent an effective tool; the written product is of secondary importance compared to this.

Disseminating the commander’s intent also proved to be much more challenging than I anticipated. The primary cause of this difficulty, at least at the battalion level, was me. Although I reviewed the written commander’s guidance pretty regularly, and we published changes on a frequent basis, on a number of cases my intent changed based on changes in the operational environment but I failed to notify anyone. Most of the time this was because I failed to recognize the change myself until I found someone operating outside of my intent as it really existed, but inside my published, but outdated, intent. Each time this happened I had to take a deep breath and admit to myself that the causal factor in the misunderstanding was me.

The commander’s intent should and will change over the course of a deployment. Sometimes the change comes instantly, as a result of a recognized change in the operational environment. Following the tactics, techniques, and procedures taught at JRTC (commander backbriefs to the staff following reconnaissance, weekly review of intent, etc.) will ensure these changes are captured and disseminated to subordinates. Sometimes, however, the commander’s intent changes slowly and almost subconsciously, as a series of relatively unimportant indicators collectively drive the commander to see the battlefield differently than in the past. The commander may not even be aware of his shifting perception until some event forces it to his attention.

Prior to this experience I saw the commander’s intent as a written product that was crafted prior to the order and published as part of Paragraph 3. Now I would define the commander’s intent as a common understanding of the tactical problem and the general approach to the solution, shared by the commander and his subordinates, and constantly shifting to match changes in the operational environment. If this view of the commander’s intent makes it a more powerful tool, it also makes developing and maintaining the commander’s intent a never-ending task.

Maintain a common operating picture that extends throughout the operational environment

Commanders will rarely agree on a solution until they agree on the problem. It turned out to be a lot more difficult than I anticipated to create an information management system that allowed the battalion commander, the battalion staff, and the company commanders to see the battlefield the same way. The amount of information available in a counterinsurgency is remarkable, but digesting the information and then arriving at some meaningful conclusions requires leaders at all levels to be focused on the task.

After several experiments, we went to a daily battle rhythm that was chiefly designed to force us to share our assessments of the

battlefield with all the other primary leaders within the battalion. Despite many attempts to go to a reduced frequency, only a daily, live interaction between the commanders allowed us to see the battlefield in the same terms.

This may sound like overkill, and I am aware that many leaders have argued that the slower pace of COIN makes daily meetings between commanders unnecessary. Our experience indicated otherwise. Without a frequent and routine forum in which all the commanders and the staff could listen to and question one another, the common operating picture quickly fragmented into several disjointed views of the battlefield. Only almost constant verbal and written communication allowed us to have a common vision of the tactical problem.

One other aspect of this problem became increasingly important during our deployment. Understanding the operational environment means having some means to collect and analyze data from across the entire OE, not just the unit's area of operations. For example, although we were initially focused almost exclusively on our own AO, over time we learned that we needed to maintain a robust understanding of the situation in Sadr City and Karbala (and sometimes Najaf) in order to really understand what was happening in our portion of Baghdad. Over time, we developed systems for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information about the entire operational environment, rather than just the area of operations.

Conduct leader reconnaissance

Even after our information systems reached full maturity and the staff was providing reliable and accurate assessments of the AO, I found that only personal reconnaissance provided the level of resolution that allowed me to make decisions with confidence. I frequently moved around the battlefield to answer information requirements of my own. In some cases, I could answer these requirements by meeting with an Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) counterpart, a local national influence leader, or one of my own subordinate leaders (not always a company commander; sometimes a particular squad or platoon leader was the best source of information). At other times simply standing on the correct street corner or walking through a market area and paying attention to the crowds provided

“Even after our information systems reached full maturity and the staff was providing reliable and accurate assessments of the area of operation, I found that only personal reconnaissance provided the level of resolution that allowed me to make decisions with confidence.”

the information I needed. And many times I placed myself to watch a friendly operation, conducted by us, the ISF, or a combination of the two. The experience taught me the incredible value of personal reconnaissance.

Develop command and control nodes to meet specific mission needs

We deployed into theater with a “standard set” of command and control nodes — a battalion tactical operations center (TOC), a tactical command post (TAC), and company command posts. Over the course of the deployment, these changed substantially, and we found that unique situations often require “made to order” command and control nodes that must be built, manned, equipped, and trained for a specific requirement. Once the requirement was complete, the C2 node could be disbanded.

As an example, at one point in the fight we had four companies conducting routine stability operations within their company areas of operation, while two other companies were conducting defensive operations to isolate a problem community on the extreme western flank of the battalion area of operations. In order to manage the span of control of these very different operations, we left the four companies in the east under the control of the TOC, but placed the two companies in the west under a TAC which we formed “out of hide” under the control of the S3 and moved to the western-most joint security station in the battalion area of operations. We maintained this configuration until the deliberate operations in the west were complete, then returned to our “normal” C2 arrangement and returned the S3 and his team to the TOC.

The equipment and manning of all of the battalion command posts and the company command posts changed throughout the rotation. In almost all cases, the changes reflected a need to adjust to a temporary problem, and most of the time we reverted back to our “standard” configuration once the temporary need was removed.

The primary lesson learned for the

battalion was that command and control is a constant and dynamic problem, not one that can be solved once and then safely ignored. Innovative and adaptive leaders and staff officers are a prerequisite to allow you the flexibility you need to adjust to changing situations.

Guard your leaders

I did not give adequate attention to protecting subordinate leaders from the impact of a COIN environment until well into the rotation. It was only after we began to see the effects of fatigue, stress, and isolation on the company and platoon leadership that we took steps to reduce them.

We took three major steps to mitigate leader fatigue in theater. First, we required all platoon sergeants and above to participate in a leader rest program, which took them to a secure area away from the battalion for three days. We directed attendance in the program and published the roster as an order. This allowed leaders to participate in the program without the sense that they were walking away from their duties.

Second, the command sergeant major and I sat down with the platoon sergeants, platoon leaders, and leadership of each company once a quarter and discussed what had happened in the previous quarter and where we were going in the next. These two-hour sessions seemed to play a pretty important role in helping leaders recalibrate their perspectives and in providing some feedback on how they perceived the battlefield.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, once a week we brought the battalion staff and the company commanders together for a synchronization meeting. This was the only face-to-face group meeting of the week, and I think the real value of the meeting came in the discussions the attendees had before and after the meeting. This weekly meeting allowed company commanders to talk to one another and the staff, vent their frustrations, and see that everyone else was dealing with the same issues. There is, of course, some risk in requiring commanders

to physically assemble on a regular basis, but in our case I believe the benefit justified the risk.

We also benefited from an unintended consequence of a pre-deployment professional development effort that proved to be of considerable assistance in helping leaders understand and cope with combat stress. Prior to deployment, all the officers in the battalion read *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* by Jonathon Shay. Our immediate goal was to help ourselves understand post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). When we met to discuss the book, however, it soon became clear that the idea of “themis” (doing what is right) was the concept that resonated with our leaders. More than a year later, it was not uncommon for company commanders and platoon leaders to use the term “themis” in their explanation of their actions on

the battlefield. Over time I came to see that Shay’s idea — that leaders can protect their subordinates from PTSD by doing what is right and requiring the same of their men — served as a powerful motivator for junior leaders, helping many of them understand that maintaining strict discipline and caring for their Soldiers are two expressions of the same thing. If I had a second chance at the deployment, I would have introduced *Achilles* at the beginning of the training cycle, and used Shay’s ideas as one of the central pillars of our approach to leader development.

The steps that a unit takes to mitigate leader stress will change from situation to situation, of course. Our experience indicates, however, that commanders must take purposeful and deliberate steps to protect their subordinate leaders in order to keep them fully functional throughout the deployment.

Train for the real environment

Having completed the tour, it now appears clear to me that there is one central truth about the battalion’s performance in Iraq: We had success in those areas where our training scenarios accurately reflected the uncertainty, ambiguity, frustration, and anger of a COIN environment; we did less well in areas where our training scenarios painted a more optimistic picture of the battlefield environment. I am certain that our successes in Iraq were

won in the training areas and live-fire ranges of Fort Campbell, and that our struggles originated there as well.

If I had it to do over again, I would make the training environment for squad leaders, platoon leaders, and company commanders even more ambiguous and complex than we did in our pre-deployment training. We went to fairly elaborate lengths to create a realistic training environment, but I would place even greater emphasis on this if given another opportunity. To give some idea of what I mean by this, I distinctly remember a young staff sergeant becoming so agitated with a local national role-player during one training exercise that the chain of command had to remove him from the scenario and allow him to calm down before executing the lane again. If I had a chance to train the battalion again, my goal would be to make every training scenario as immersive and realistic as that one was.

After three years in Iraq, I am fairly confident that leaders who operate in a counterinsurgency can fully expect to conduct their duties in an environment characterized by uncertainty, frustration, fatigue, and a powerful sense of isolation. Only by creating similar conditions in our home-station training environments can we adequately prepare leaders for the realities of battle command in COIN.

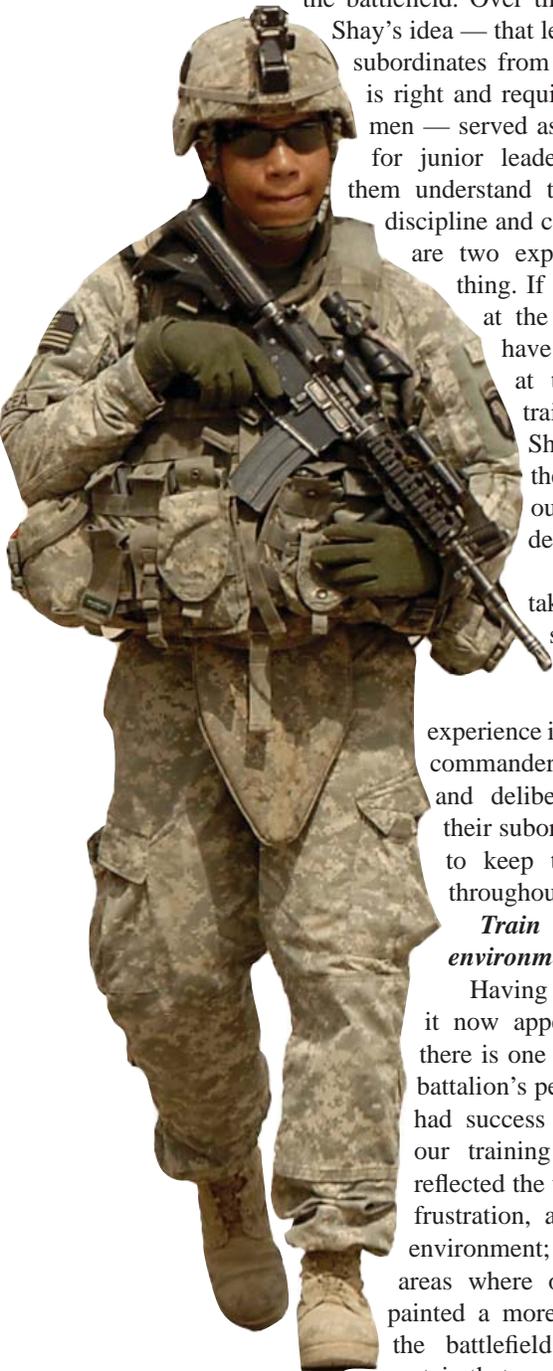
Conclusion

Battle command is tough business under any set of circumstances. The operational environment of a counterinsurgency creates its own special challenges, and commanders must recognize and take action to overcome those challenges in order to be successful. Leaders fighting in a counterinsurgency are almost certain to be frustrated much of the time, angry about circumstances beyond their control, uncertain about what is happening or what events mean, and isolated from their peers and normal support groups. The stress on the leader, from squad leader to battalion commander, is constant and unrelenting. If less intense than the stress of high intensity conflict, it is nevertheless pervasive and inescapable.

Our experience in Baghdad provides evidence that, unless countered, the stress of COIN degrades the battle command system over time. But that same experience clearly teaches that leaders can effectively counter, or at least significantly mitigate, the consequences of stress to the battle command system. Pre-deployment training that accurately replicates a COIN environment, a common understanding of both the tactical problem and the general form of the solution to the problem, an aggressive approach to gaining and sharing an understanding of the area of operations, and a commitment to guard subordinate leaders from prolonged stress and fatigue are key components in maintaining an effective battle command system in COIN. All of these factors can significantly reduce the impact of the operational environment on the ability of the unit to not only survive in combat but to win.

LTC Joseph McLamb is currently assigned to the Advanced Operational Art Studies Fellowship within the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kan. He commanded the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during OIF 07-09, having previously served as the battalion S3 in OIF I and the BCT S3 in OIF 05-07.

LTC McLamb welcomes feedback on this article at joseph.mclamb@us.army.mil.



Training Notes



MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING IN COIN: *ACHIEVING SIMPLICITY THROUGH INNOVATION*

LTC DANIEL C. HODNE

Providing effective training to our indigenous counterparts in a counterinsurgency requires innovation. This tenet applies broadly to all aspects of training, but it is particularly important when it comes to raising the standards of an army's marksmanship proficiency. Through "out of the box" thinking, the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU), in its first 120 days in Afghanistan, made a profound impact on Afghan National Army (ANA) marksmanship training. The unit's innovation in marksmanship training techniques also has wide-reaching implications to broader foreign internal defense efforts.

USAMU support to the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A) during Operation Enduring Freedom began with the unit's offer to the commander of U.S. Forces – Afghanistan/International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan to provide a persistent presence of marksmanship trainers, comprised of the best marksmen and marksmanship instructors in the world. The trainers would be made available on a rotating basis for as

long as required. Favorably received, the resulting coordination led to the deployment of the USAMU's first training team in December 2009. The unit worked very closely with various headquarters at different levels to set the conditions for the long-term marksmanship training mission. These commands included Basic Warrior Training (BWT), Combined Training Advisory Group – Afghanistan (CTAG-A) and NTM-A, which provided the USAMU trainers with access and reach to all of the remote basic warrior training (RBWT) sites. The marksmanship trainers' first task was to make their own assessment of the current state of ANA training and proficiency in the BWT system and determine ways to make it even better.

Although experts in all aspects of service rifle employment, instruction, and maintenance, SFC Kyle Ward, NCOIC of USAMU's Service Rifle Section and leader of the first deployed team, and his NCO team had little to no experience in training foreign soldiers. After all, for the USAMU, this marksmanship

training effort would be a historic first. In 1968, the USAMU (then U.S. Army Marksmanship Training Unit) deployed teams to establish division-level sniper schools at various locations throughout Vietnam. In 2003, another USAMU team deployed to Iraq to raise marksmanship proficiency within the ranks of the 1st Armored Division. Both of these earlier efforts focused solely on training U.S. personnel. For the first time in the unit's history, the focus would be placed on training foreign Soldiers. For a unit without past experience to draw from, the challenges would be uniquely demanding. In his article titled "Security Force Assistance: A Change in Mindset," which appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of the *Infantry Bugler*, LTG William B. Caldwell IV, NTM-A commander, commented: "The true problem solver understands



USAMU photos

SFC Jason Parker, a three-time Olympian in the sport of International Rifle, provides a block of instruction to ANA cadre. The consistent application of a simple POI in a train-the-trainer method is crucial to success.

that answers are situation-dependent and not derived in rote fashion from doctrine. We need to understand our doctrine and how it applies, but we cannot afford to let doctrinal molehills become impassible mountains. We need to display flexibility of mind that allows us to anticipate, transition, and stay ahead of changing environments.”

The USAMU team members proved to be adept problem solvers, primarily due to their subject matter expertise. Knowledge enables innovation, and having expertise on all aspects of the marksmanship fundamentals, ballistics, and the weapon itself provided the team with unique perspectives from which to approach challenges. Each team member’s extensive experience in all aspects of rifle marksmanship enhanced the team’s ability to clearly focus on the fundamentals and convey them with ease in a variety of ways. Although the fundamentals of marksmanship are derived from our doctrinal best practices, the techniques used to convey the fundamentals may not be. While the fundamentals remain unchanged, the manner in which we teach and apply them must be tailored to the target audience. Simplicity in training must be the goal, especially when working through cultural and language differences. Applied to the ANA, our training program had to be ultimately perceived as uniquely Afghan — it had to be sustainable over the long-term; it had to be tailored to the specific needs of the ANA; and it had to be easily applied throughout the ANA training infrastructure to foster consistency and ensure unity of effort.

Building and training the ANA are daunting tasks. Adding to these challenges are factors beyond control such as a high illiteracy rate, significant percentage of poor eyesight amongst ANA recruits, and cultural predisposition (some ANA soldiers believed that their bullets would strike their intended targets simply “if God wills it”). Overcoming these challenges and achieving success will come through consistent application of a simple program of instruction taught in a train-the-trainer method. This effort is easier said than done, and it cannot happen overnight. It requires easily mass-produced training aids, well-trained instructors, and efficient use of resources (time on the range, weapons/ammunition, and instructors) all from an Afghan perspective.

After observing the ANA marksmanship training program, the USAMU trainers focused on simplifying their standard practices. The solutions required innovation in three key areas:

- Zero and qualification,
- Instructor-to-student ratio, and
- Training resource management.

The team used creative thinking to come up with simple solutions to address each of these areas that are also designed to help the

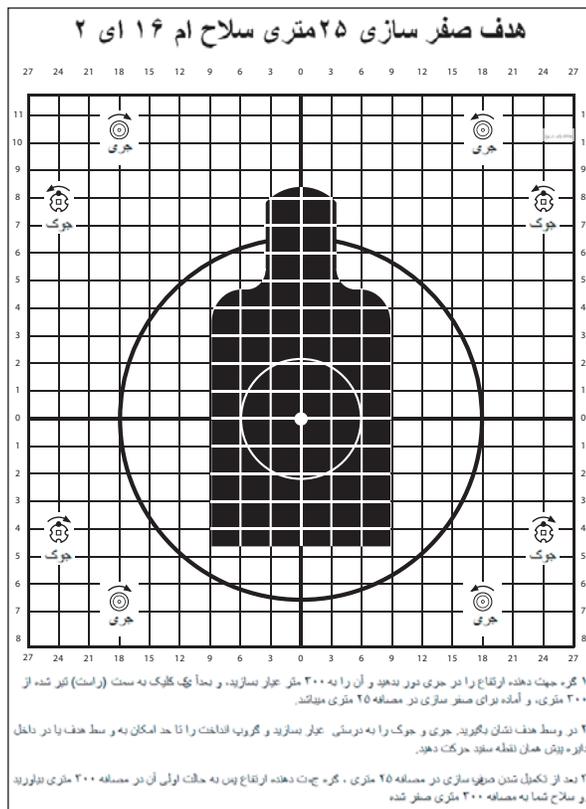


Figure 1— Multipurpose Target in Dari

silhouette, and the circle within the target corresponds to the width of the 300m E-type silhouette. The 200m silhouette is an ideal target to help reduce the complexity of qualification while maintaining relative difficulty based on eyesight considerations. Of note, when using a control group of ANA Drill Sergeant School students to qualify four times on both the ALT-C target and the MPT, data proved that 80 percent of the control group’s total score on the ALT-C target came as a result of hits on those targets larger than the 200m silhouette (50, 100, and 150 meters). The 200m silhouette represents a target that is the same size or smaller than 80 percent of those on the existing ALT-C target.

The Afghan perspective was the most important reason for the success of the MPT. Use of this target eliminated the need for multiple targets, and it can be mass produced by a copy machine or common office printer. Its simple design enhanced ANA recruit understanding of task and purpose while effectively measuring the Soldier’s understanding of marksmanship.

“Use of the current ALT-C target required these new ANA recruits to immediately become problem solvers instead of allowing them to focus strictly on the fundamentals of marksmanship,” said SGM Martin Barreras, the USAMU’s sergeant major.

Introducing more challenging scenarios that combine decision-making and marksmanship are effective training tools; however, timing of their implementation should only come after a trainee has demonstrated a full understanding of applying the fundamentals. For new ANA recruits, the MPT proved to be ideal.

The MPT had some additional benefits. The use of only one standard-size silhouette eliminated common aiming mistakes that occur on the existing ALT-C target with its various target

ANA over the long-term. These solutions included a multipurpose target (MPT), peer coaching, and training management.

Multipurpose Target (MPT)

— SFC Ward’s team developed a simple design for a zero and qualification target that allows for ease of understanding of marksmanship, ease of measuring the Soldier’s ability, and ease of mass production. This MPT is intended for ANA use and to replace the existing 25-meter ALT-C qualification target and the 25m zero target. The MPT is also designed for grouping, zeroing, and qualification. It provides trainers with multiple options for assessing Soldier training and their ability to effectively engage targets at 100, 200, and 300 meters.

For example, the circle surrounding the target represents the width of a 100m E-type



One of the USAMU-trained ANA marksmanship instructors coaches an ANA drill sergeant candidate through the shadow box exercise during a training session.

shapes. It also eliminated trainee confusion and a requirement for additional briefings on the ALT-C target engagement procedures, resulting in a time savings. One simple target reduced the ammunition requirement for qualification, which in turn provided more ammunition for training. Finally, the larger 200m silhouette provided soldiers with a larger aiming point, which allowed them to overcome poor vision and led to a more accurate zero. (Note: Since this article was written, the Afghan Ministry of Defense has approved the MPT for use.)

Use of a 200m silhouette must not be confused with use of a 200m zero! The USAMU endorses the 300m zero. However, we realize that a commander may elect to zero at other distances based on METT-TC (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, time, civil considerations). It is important for commanders to know that the M-16 family of weapons is designed for the 300m zero. They must also understand that zeros at different distances will have profound effects on the trajectory of the bullet. Although some argue for the 200m zero based on their recent experiences (namely Iraq), careful consideration should be given to the 200m zero. The perceived benefits may not outweigh the overall reduction of the weapon's effectiveness at 300m ranges and beyond (after action reports from Afghanistan cite much longer range engagements). For example, when engaging targets with a true 200m zero at 300m, the bullet path from an M4 is more than 10 inches below the line of sight. The ballistic drop compensator of the weapon is designed for a 300m zero. The 200m zero results in the ballistic drop compensator no longer being calibrated, which reduces effectiveness at 300m and beyond. The same concept applies when utilizing optics, such as the M68 with a 200m zero. With a true 300m zero, the bullet path from an M4 is 6.7 inches above the line of sight at 200m before crossing the line of sight at 300m. The use of the ballistic drop compensator enables the Soldier to engage targets out from 300-600m. Therefore, from a ballistics perspective, and for continuity and consistency with the remainder of the Army, the USAMU recommends the 300m zero.

Peer Coaching — The USAMU team overcame the high instructor-to-student ratio through implementing this technique. It

facilitated a deeper understanding of the marksmanship fundamentals, greater participation/focus amongst more trainees, and more efficient use of range time. Peers can at times be the hardest critics. With peers critiquing each other, we found that peer coaching naturally accelerated the learning process. ANA soldiers who quickly applied the fundamentals served as useful peer coaches. This practice helped transcend the language barrier, train a larger number of future trainers, and served as a source of pride and accomplishment for those selected to help train the other recruits. This simple technique also allowed the trainer and translator to focus on the ANA range cadre and those ANA Soldiers requiring more instruction. Use of peer coaching with its reliance on active participation in training directly contributes to improved retention of the information, faster application of the training, and broader expansion to the force as more Soldiers will have confidence in their ability to transfer their new skills in marksmanship.

One of the major training inhibitors when working with indigenous forces is the barrier of a common language. The peer coaching technique effectively allows for better communication of the abstract concepts of front sight focus and sight alignment. With the frequent scarcity of competent translators, a well-trained and informed, indigenous soldier is one of our most powerful training tools.

Training Management — In order to make an immediate positive impact on ANA training management, the USAMU sought to ensure that the program of instruction would immediately become an Afghan one. The lack of available, quality marksmanship training materials in Dari/Pashtu required that the deployed team quickly develop them. The team modified and streamlined existing classes already utilized in the USAMU's successful Squad Designated Marksman (SDM) and Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM) programs to better fit the mission profile. Working with local translators, the classes were converted to Dari and Pashtu. New photos of ANA soldiers demonstrating proper positions replaced those of U.S. personnel, and the team distributed the classes on compact disc to the ANA Drill Sergeant School. Acknowledging the utmost importance of the primary recruit trainers — the drill sergeants — and modeling the train-the-trainer method from the USAMU's Basic Rifle Marksmanship Instructor Course designed specifically for drill instructors, our team implemented a train-the-trainer program for the ANA Drill Sergeant School and marksmanship cadre at KMTC.

Training management also required the team's assistance in guiding the ANA in running their training to enable concurrent use of range time, efficient ammunition allocation, and continuity of instruction. A simple modification to the training schedule produced a vast improvement in training quality. The USAMU team recommended implementation of an offset for training of each Afghan company, a *toli*, by one day in order to allow the trainers to focus on 350 trainees instead of 1,400. The previous practice dedicated two days of marksmanship training for 1,400 new ANA recruits. The follow-on mass qualification would create waits and idle time of up to three days before zero and qualification. Staggering the *tolis* facilitated a lowering of the

student-to-instructor ratio, receipt of higher-quality instruction, and better use of idle time for more productive concurrent training. Their efforts resulted in more beneficial training and an increase in live-fire training by 66 percent.

Simultaneously, the team worked with the ANA range cadre to improve their understanding of marksmanship training, the decisive point of the entire marksmanship training effort. They focused the ANA instructors on improving firing positions by maximizing artificial and bone support, sight alignment, trigger squeeze, sight adjustments (zeroing), and concurrent training. Concurrent training had to be simple. The USAMU trainers broke it down into four stations — shadow boxes, dime/washer drills, prone supported, and prone unsupported. This training also kept the goal in mind of providing the ANA with more knowledgeable instructors to make this marksmanship training program their own. In every case, ANA marksmanship cadre were first taught the “how” and “why” of marksmanship theory and then encouraged to take the lead in training their fellow soldiers.

ANA marksmanship qualification rates improved markedly with the implementation of these initiatives. In order to expand the application of these best practices from an Afghan perspective, the USAMU coordinated all of these innovations with the various HQs with equities, briefed the ISAF commander and command sergeant major, and ultimately submitted the innovations through the appropriate ANA headquarters to Afghan Ministry of Defense for approval. As coalition partners learned of the USAMU presence, they requested our involvement in Afghan Officer Candidate School and Officer Training Brigade venues.

The USAMU effort benefited greatly from a close relationship with the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, led by LTC Michael Loos. True to their motto “Deeds Not Words,” 2-22 IN also constantly sought new ways to improve the training of the ANA, a mission for which they had the responsibility. LTC Loos treated our NCOs as though they were his own, listened to their needs, and provided support with manpower, logistics, and equipment.

The ability to train 1,400 Afghan basic trainees in the fundamentals of marksmanship and execute a qualification in a week was only possible through the coordination of multiple

organizations. Foremost was the ANA range cadre — a specialized group of 15 Afghan instructors whose sole focus was marksmanship training. This small group was augmented by a range cadre of Soldiers from 2-22 IN, who worked hand-in-hand with the ANA on a daily basis both on and off the ranges. In the midst of this arrangement was the Military Professionals Resources Incorporated (MPRI) NATO Weapons Team. The MPRI team, calling on extensive experience as military instructors, mentored the ANA cadre in efficient running of ranges and began the program of concurrent instruction which 2-22 IN expanded. Finally, mentors from Detachment 62 of the 95th Reserve Division coordinated directly with the training battalion and brigade command groups to ensure proper resourcing. The 2-22 IN had responsibility in synchronizing all the stakeholders and was the execution arm to the basic training BRM.

During range week each toli occupied four ranges, each with approximately 90 Soldiers. Detachment 62 mentors ensured each toli had rounds, targets, magazines, lubricants, and all of the necessities to qualify 350 recruits. The toli arrived for training with their assigned 2-22 Infantry squad, a group that followed and trained the recruits from their initial reception through graduation. Once on the range, the ANA cadre took control of the firing line while the U.S. Soldiers monitored to ensure that each recruit conducted pre-marksmanship refresher training through direct training and mentoring. MPRI NATO Weapons personnel tracked all of the data and acted as the command and control node for each range, synchronizing the Afghan and coalition effort to a common outcome. Through the combined effort of these elements, the qualification rate for Afghan recruits rose from 45 percent in January to 97 percent in May. The average for 10 training ANA battalions (kandaks) across the country was higher than 70 percent, and this should continue to increase significantly with the new techniques and procedures.

USAMU’s mission in Afghanistan also benefited tremendously from funding received from Training and Doctrine Command’s Security Assistance Training Field Activity (TRADOC SATFA) through the Security Assistance Training Management Organization (SATMO). SATMO deploys hundreds of Soldiers per year to dozens of countries on a continuous basis in support of



USAMU instructors discuss sight corrections with shooters and peer coaches during a training session.



ANA drill sergeant students receive training on the assembly and disassembly of the M-16 rifle during one training session.

Department of the Army security cooperation objectives. SATFA and SATMO are key enablers to Army sustainment of combatant commanders' security assistance, foreign internal defense, and counterinsurgency efforts. The USAMU is grateful for the support received from these organizations.

The second and third USAMU marksmanship training teams took advantage of all available opportunities to proliferate effective marksmanship training for our Afghan counterparts. These teams rotated through various RBWTs to conduct marksmanship training in a train-the-trainer format. They also trained ANA Drill Sergeant School cadre in a similar fashion to the USAMU BRM Instructor Course, while simultaneously providing marksmanship train-the-trainer instruction for U.S. trainers of the ANA Officer Candidate

School. The USAMU Custom Firearms Shop gunsmiths trained ANA armorers at these locations in the appropriate level of maintenance and how to identify issues that must be submitted to a higher level. The timing of the transition of former Soviet (AK47) to NATO (M16) individual weapons led to the incorporation of a gunsmith for each team. The USAMU also deployed one of its female NCOs to support the inaugural ANA Female Officer Candidate School. She provided pistol marksmanship training to both the female officer candidates and their instructors. The USAMU is extremely proud for its role in this truly historic undertaking.

Raising marksmanship proficiency is a critical component to raising overall combat readiness. Through developing and implementing an innovative multipurpose target for zero and qualification, a peer coaching technique to accelerate the training process, and a system for more efficient use of range resources and training time, the USAMU's teams contributed to and will continue to contribute to the attainment of COIN objectives in Afghanistan through enabling the execution of marksmanship training to become purely an ANA effort. USAMU recommendations allow for a repeatable and sustainable system for marksmanship training that may continue long after coalition forces depart. Further, these methods that have been implemented successfully in Afghanistan have direct application to broader U.S. Foreign Internal Defense activities. The key to these efforts will always be the acceptance that the American way of training may not always be the most effective when working with indigenous soldiers. Innovation may be required to keep the instruction simple and focused on the indigenous trainers. Doing so will ultimately yield a lasting system of training that our indigenous counterparts readily accept.

LTC Daniel C. Hodne is the commander of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga. A Special Forces officer, he commanded two companies in the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and participated in many security cooperation missions throughout the Middle East and Horn of Africa. He also served in two combat tours in Iraq. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Military Academy and a Master of Arts from Louisiana State University. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Joint Forces Staff College's Joint Combined Warfighting School.

USAMU Offers Marksmanship Training Courses

The USAMU should be considered as a resource to unit commanders for their marksmanship training and small-arms research and development requirements. The unit trains thousands of Soldiers per year through a combination of Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM), BRM Instructor, Close Quarters Marksman (CQM), and Squad Designated Marksman (SDM) Courses. All of the instruction provided is at the train-the-trainer level to ensure that students have the ability to train marksmanship at their home units.

The **CQM Course** is a five-day training program which focuses on the fundamentals of pistol and rifle marksmanship so the Soldier can progress to engaging targets rapidly and accurately from 0-150 meters under normal conditions. The **SDM Course** is a five-day training program that focuses on the Soldier's need to rapidly and accurately engage targets from 100-600 yards under normal conditions. The program begins with the fundamentals of marksmanship and progresses to more rapid and accurate engagements, employing the individual rifle. The **CQSDM Course** is a 10-day training program that focuses on addressing the Soldier's need to rapidly and accurately engage targets from 10-500 yards under normal conditions. The course addresses two major marksmanship skills: rifle and pistol marksmanship as it applies to an urban environment and long range precision rifle marksmanship. The **BRM-IC** is a four-day training program that focuses on giving the marksmanship trainer the knowledge and tools to effectively teach BRM.

For more information or to schedule training, visit <http://www.usaac.army.mil/amu/>.

COMBINED ARMS TRAINING AND NEW, EMERGING THEORIES ON TRAINING

MAJ WILLIAM J. DOUGHERTY AND MAJ MATTHEW B. DENNIS

The platoon level is where the fight exists in today's operational environment (OE). The OE requires units to control enormous areas. Proficiency in combined arms fighting is required, as platoons must operate far from mutually supporting elements. The greater distances or terrain separation between supporting elements produces isolatable targets for the enemy. If the enemy can quickly mass against such targets, then he will achieve temporary local superiority. The major risk mitigation to an isolated platoon and the opportunity to destroy a large number of the enemy is the simultaneous employment of multiple fire support assets combined with ground maneuver.

Infantry platoons seem to struggle to conduct combined arms operations. This struggle may be a direct result of a lack of combined arms training at the platoon through battalion levels. The lack of combined arms proficiency invalidates a basic principle of FM 3-21.8, *Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*, which states: "The Infantry will engage the enemy with combined arms in all operational environments to bring about his defeat."

This training deficiency manifests itself at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, La., where the simultaneous application of firepower assets on an enemy element is a rare event. Indeed, even the sequential application of firepower is

an only slightly more prevalent event than the above. Based on these observations at JRTC in 2007 and 2008, Infantry platoons are fighting on their own. When help arrives in the form of attack aviation, it is usually too late to contribute anything other than medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) security. The tubes of the Field Artillery and mortars remain cold because no one even considered their use in a troops-in-contact (TIC) situation. The problem is that, most likely, no one at the platoon, company, or battalion had collectively trained combined arms fighting prior to their rotation.

The application of firepower in all its forms is exponentially more effective when applied simultaneously rather than sequentially. Simultaneous application of complementary firepower is a proven U.S. military capability. Examples of this ability are suppression of enemy air defense (SEAD) in support of operational shaping operations, preparatory fires in advance of an air assault, and a joint air attack (JAAT).

The former examples all have three common facts. One is time to plan the operation. The second is experienced personnel within staffs conducting the planning. The other is the general lack of friendly ground

A Soldier with the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division sights in a 105mm howitzer during an exercise with the Iraqi Army on 21 February 2010.

SPC Michael J. MacLeod



forces anywhere near the targeted area. These three facts reduce coordination requirements and risk.

In unplanned danger close situations, leaders can perceive the simultaneous coordination requirements between air, indirect and ground as beyond the capability of less experienced platoon leadership. This perception will result in the utilization of firepower in a sequential manner. If firepower assets are used, they pass to the platoon in contact, one by one or sequentially, in order to deconflict assets by time rather than space.

This sequential application of firepower is inherently easier and safer to coordinate. Leaders are haunted by the scene in the film *Platoon* in which Sergeant Barnes beats the platoon leader with a handmike because of his “F’d up fire mission” impacting on top of the platoon. Sequentialism gives company, battalion, and brigade leaders not directly involved in the fight greater control of perceived fratricidal risk.

When the above situation occurs, unit leadership will negate the greater effect of firepower combinations and undermine the ability of the leader in the fight to create a tactical dilemma for the enemy. The result is a missed opportunity to apply our inherent strength against an enemy that has chosen to identify and expose himself. At worst, the platoon in contact could risk defeat.

The goal then of simultaneous firepower combinations is creating a tactical dilemma for the enemy. This situation for the enemy, in which all potential decisions are unsatisfactory, looks something like this:

Enemy: “If I stay in position, artillery fire will either obliterate me or force me to move. If I move, then I will expose myself to small arms fire. Even if I can mask my movement from enemy ground units using terrain, I will expose myself to helicopter observation and attack.”

The choices for the enemy are now such that staying in place is bad, but leaving is equally as bad. The enemy’s dilemma is solvable when any one piece of the firepower plus maneuver equation is not present. Removing either the maneuver force, indirect fire, or attack helicopters reduces the enemy’s unsolvable dilemma to a solvable problem. This is why many engagements result in the enemy escaping. The enemy is never fixed. Friendly maneuver is dangerous because suppression does not occur. Locating specific enemy positions proves difficult because the enemy is not forced to move.

At the JRTC, the result of not employing firepower simultaneously is a “gunfight vs. fire and maneuver” situation. This is where the platoon remains in the same place that it started the firefight. It simply exchanges small arms fire with the enemy. Techniques of high explosive (HE) suppression, fixing, destruction through HE and maneuver remain unrealized. Winning the firefight requires more than expert marksmanship; it requires an understanding of the entire system of combat power and its integration at the platoon level.

platoons must practice simultaneous combinations of firepower.

“Platoons must practice simultaneous combinations of firepower. Maneuver battalion leadership must emphasize this skill set so platoons can confidently operate beyond the supporting distance of sister units but inside the range of overwhelming and highly responsive supporting fires and powerful attack aviation assets.”

Maneuver battalion leadership must emphasize this skill set so platoons can confidently operate beyond the supporting distance of sister units but inside the range of overwhelming and highly responsive supporting fires and powerful attack aviation assets.

Conducting a combined arms live fire is not the training answer to the above issues. A combined arms live fire is usually either a firepower demonstration or a canned execution of planned targets well outside of danger close distances. Unfortunately, the enemy rarely parks himself underneath a planned target and is usually within danger close distances to friendly elements. Realistic training scenarios are required to replicate the most dangerous conditions in which a platoon might find itself.

We propose conducting a situational training exercise (STX) that synthesizes multiple skills sets required of platoon leadership in the simultaneous employment of firepower. Knowledge and skills proficiency in the following areas are required *before* conducting the STX:

KNOWLEDGE

- Risk estimate distances (REDs) of all weapon systems available for employment
- Shell and fuse combinations and the associated pros and cons of each
 - Sheaf selection pros and cons (converged vs. open)

DEMONSTRATED PROFICIENCY

- The polar method of call for fire using the creeping fire method of adjustment
- Lateral separation techniques for the simultaneous employment of indirect fire and attack helicopter fires using informal airspace control areas (Gun-target line separation and use of east-west or north-south grid line separation. Map exercises can serve as a start point for instruction.)
- Close combat attack (CCA) call-for-fire and marking techniques

Once platoon leadership has demonstrated understanding of the above techniques and knowledge, they will then synthesize all tasks during the STX. The conditions of the STX are:

- The platoon is operating separate from the rest of its company.
- It is in radio contact with its company command post (CP). That CP relays its fires requests to the firing units.
- Fires available are whatever assets are likely available to the platoon but should include at a minimum FA fires and attack helicopters.
 - o Artillery/grenade simulators will mark the indirect fire (IDF) round impacts.
 - o Actual helicopters are preferred but simulation is acceptable. The simulation is provided through someone (preferably an actual pilot) communicating with the platoon on the radio.
- The location of the firing unit(s) is known. (An actual firing unit is not required but preferred).
- The participation of a fire direction center (FDC) is mandatory.
 - o The FDC directs the fire markers based on their computed grid.

o Based on the polar method, the FDC will know the friendly location relative to impact and demonstrate proper selection of safe shell/fuse combinations.

- The platoon makes contact with at least a squad but preferably a similar or larger force than itself. (Later iterations can have multiple enemy locations to increase difficulty.)

The key enabler for the entire STX is the ability to replicate the impact of indirect fires at any distance from the friendly element. The lesson of an inaccurate call for fire, when the round impacts on your platoon, will teach attention to detail more than any other method. Conversely, the impacts on enemy locations and a realistic enemy reaction to HE fires will demonstrate the power of proper firepower employment.

Proper investment in fire marking will pay huge dividends towards achieving training objectives. Sister battalion fire support elements (FSEs) can serve as the fire-marking group. STX firefight locations are controlled and known. Therefore, select fire marker positions based on likely initial round impact locations. Armed with a GPS and communication with the FDC, multiple markers can expeditiously cover the potential engagement area. Plenty of simulators and rehearsals ensure fire markers can provide timely and accurate round marking. The fire markers are not covering an area like the entire box at JRTC but a small area in which the firefight will occur. This will facilitate a realistic feel for the speed of the call for fire (CFF) to a round's impact.

Instructions to the opposing forces (OPFOR) should emphasize realistic reactions to small arms and HE exposure. The key activity of observer/controllers (O/Cs) during execution is controlling for suppressive effects from small arms and HE on both the friendly and enemy elements. This necessitates O/C coverage down to the squad level on both sides. Communication between O/Cs for expeditious and realistic assessment of suppressive and lethal effects is critical. MILES (Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System) is not required, but a good O/C assessment of all direct and indirect fire effects is essential.

Realistic marking of helicopter fires is difficult. During the hours of visibility, continuously communicate with the aircraft and work off of the target reference points (TRPs) known to the O/Cs, fire markers, and pilots. During the hours of limited visibility, pilots can mark the location of their fires with IR lasers. Whether or not an actual helicopter participates, the main point is deconflicting air, IDF, and ground maneuver to facilitate simultaneous application of firepower on an enemy force. Attack helicopters must observe the impact of IDF rounds in order to take advantage of the resulting effect on the enemy.

The entire STX and resultant after action review (AAR) should focus on achieving a synthesis in the orchestration of simultaneous firepower employment. The platoon leadership must demonstrate the ability to safely and accurately call for and adjust fires at extreme danger close ranges. They must also demonstrate an ability to deconflict airspace in order to facilitate the safe employment of IDF and helicopters simultaneously in the target area. Finally, the platoon must demonstrate an ability to maneuver under the suppression of close supporting fires to close with and destroy a fixed enemy. The above presupposes the knowledge of risk estimate distances and the ability to shift fires off target at the right time to enable an assault.

The observations addressed above from the perspective of a JRTC O/C suggest that the problem exists in home station training. These problems, while conventionally based, frequently manifest themselves in our counterinsurgency (COIN) environment as well. While serving as an operations officer in the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), our advisors continually observed units who did not fully exploit the capabilities sharing the same operational area. Many units learn to build relationships and collaborate only after considerable time. For these problems to be so common and widespread leads one to wonder about the root cause(s).

Army Training Doctrine

Though the U.S. Army is often said to be improvisational, the training doctrine and techniques are anything but adaptive. What we have today is the legacy of the 1980s "Cartesian analysis" of each combat task into its most basic parts with assigned standards for mechanistic training (*The Operational Art: Developments in the Theories of War* by B.J.C. McKercher and Michael A. Hennessy). Starting with the Army Universal Task List and flowing down to individual Soldier-level tasks, every movement has been documented for every combat task conceived. These tasks are then typically trained in isolation to physical performance standards. The current system was devised by GEN Paul Gorman under GEN William Depuy and was coined "performance-oriented training." The separation of training and education also solidified under Depuy (*General William E. Depuy: Preparing the Army for Modern War* by Henry G. Gole). Training was related to physical performance while education was reserved for "those Soldiers who can think." In Depuy's defense, the system he devised made sense for the operational environment of his time. The operational environment has changed; perhaps our training methods should as well.

The latest edition of FM 7-0 makes some improvements, but the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process and modular units lead to a lack of habitual relationships. FM 7-0 lists among its fundamentals of planning for training:

- *Maintain a consistent mission focus;
- *Coordinate with habitually task-organized supporting organizations;
- *Focus on the unit's mission essential and supporting tasks;
- *Lock in training plans; and
- *Make the most efficient use of resources.

The most efficient use of resources is to perform multiple tasks in a combined arms manner in an Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP)-based scenario. Because units are graded on this standard, many scenarios are essentially committed to memory and the ARTEP becomes a collective battle drill in many cases. Chapter 2 of FM 7-0 says to train as you will fight. The current scenarios Soldiers face in combat are seldom the same as what is found in ARTEP scenarios.

Another challenge is in planning training with habitually task-organized organizations. Rarely do units wind up in an area of operations (AO) with their habitually associated units. If habitual relationships exist, training synchronization is often strained by different ARFORGEN timelines. In order to train as you will fight, perhaps it is more appropriate for units to seek out units with complementary capabilities on a more ad hoc basis. Units may not



SSG Edward Reagan

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division locate a target before a combined arms exercise in Iraq.

go to war with their usual relationships, but it is necessary to build relations with the units you find yourself in war with. Offering and participating in “opportunity” training builds a proper mind-set for the current OE.

The suggestion in the last paragraph may be at odds with two other principles. Maintaining a consistent mission focus and locking in training plans condition units and leaders in a way that is not consistent with training as you will fight. While a unit must be proficient in its core capabilities, it may be useful to shift mission focus or operational theme within the training cycle to gain experience in the various applications of a unit’s capabilities to achieve differing outcomes. While locking in training resources and land may be an imposed requirement, flexibility should exist for commanders to change the focus. Doing so will achieve the scheduling predictability desired, while simulating the unpredictability of real-world missions.

Two efforts are underway that have gained the Army’s attention. The adaptive leader methodology (ALM) and the AWG’s outcomes-based training and education (OBT&E) are becoming more common throughout the Army. Both of these methods seek to break the task-oriented approach of the past and focus more on problem solving and intangible attributes. One can think of these methods as “leader reaction training” with your own assigned equipment against real problems that you create. These methods go a long way for enhancing the problem-solving abilities of small teams. While

OBT&E re-connects the cognitive domain with physical training, ALM’s central feature is the tactical decision game (TDG). Tactical decision games are developed by leaders as scenarios that require quick thinking and adaptive solutions. Using the TDG method, units can create realistic STX lanes that have multiple solutions and allow leaders to think outside the box. The output of a TDG is a plan. If taken a step further, a junior leader can be given the opportunity to test his/her solution and may invite capabilities from across the installation to participate. This creates opportunity training for other units and fosters the mind-set of building relationships.

Too often training in combined arms operations for a platoon involves the separate pieces of the system. The platoon may train at the GUARDFIST (Guard Unit Armory Device Full-Crew Interactive Simulation Trainer) on call-for-fire procedures; it may conduct squad and platoon attack battle drills (concentrating on only small arms employment); it may quiz and test the platoon on REDs and bursting diameters of shells; it may conduct CCA call for fires when the local aviation unit goes to the range, and it may observe the impacts of mortar rounds during a mortar training and evaluation program (MORTEP). It will go to the range and practice marksmanship. Unfortunately, most platoons will not receive training to synthesize all these pieces into a coherent whole. The result is a demonstrated lack of proficiency at the JRTC and during the initial months of combat, if ever. It is doubtful this type of holistic training happens between a JRTC rotation and the deployment.

Given the complexity of the current operational environment and the inadequacy of ARTEP manuals to describe scenario/task combinations likely to be seen, the TDG is a powerful tool for commanders to use in training. Using the TDG, the commander can develop scenarios based on his visualization of the likely environmental conditions. Subordinates can then negotiate the scenarios using creativity under the principles of mission command. Training in this manner builds confidence, increases agility and innovation, and may even improve the commander’s visualization.

Platoons need realistic firefight experience before their first encounter with a determined enemy. The above training concept provides platoons the experience that synthesizes multiple tasks into a single exercise. It provides platoon leadership the chance to expand their knowledge and practice of the battle geometry of combined arms fighting. This is a platoon’s core competency. Additionally, it gives company, battalion, and brigade leadership confidence in their platoons’ tactical proficiency. This all-around confidence will permit trust and enable the full realization of combat power. Waiting until JRTC or combat for a platoon to acquire combined arms experience is unacceptable.

At the time this article was written, **MAJ William J. Dougherty** was a student at the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) and had recently completed Intermediate Level Education (ILE). His previous assignments include serving with Task Force 2, Joint Readiness Training Center and commanding C Company, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

At the time this article was written, **MAJ Matthew B. Dennis** was a student at SAMS and had recently completed ILE. His prior assignments include serving as a squadron S-3 and group current operations OIC in the Asymmetric Warfare Group. He previously commanded HHB, 17th Field Artillery Brigade and B Battery, 5th Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment.

MOVING TOWARDS AN OBT&E MODEL IN ROTC

1LT ALEXANDER JOHNSON

Army officers must be adaptable, flexible, and agile thinkers and decision makers. If there was ever any doubt about this, it has been removed by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is expounded by the Army's most senior leaders and in the pages of the leading military journals. These critical traits cannot be learned overnight. Army lieutenants have too much information and too many skills to learn at the Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) II and BOLC III to dedicate significant time to developing them. Quarterly field problems or a month at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) or National Training Center (NTC) are also unlikely to suddenly bestow these abilities upon lieutenants. This is why developing adaptability, flexibility, and agility must begin in BOLC I, either in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Officer Candidate School (OCS), or at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA). These commissioning sources need to refocus their fundamental approach to junior officer development away from training — teaching future lieutenants how to accomplish a task — and towards education — teaching them how to approach any task.

This is not a revolutionary idea. Outcomes-based training and education (OBT&E) and the adaptive leader methodology (ALM) are two models that have been developed relatively recently and provide a useful framework. The difficulty is in putting the concepts into action. This article is a description of the changes one ROTC battalion made to better prepare its cadets to be adaptable, flexible, and agile Army junior officers.

The Johns Hopkins University Army ROTC program has a rich and proud history, counting more than 50 flag officers among

its alumni. The cadets have ROTC class four hours a week: two hours of classroom instruction and two hours of practical application called leadership lab. The classroom instruction portion is cadre driven with the cadets broken down by year group. The first- and second-year cadets' class focuses on the basics of Army leadership. In their third year, the cadets receive instruction on troop-leading procedures and small unit Infantry tactics. The fourth-year cadets learn about leadership theory, ethics, and Army staff organization and functions. They apply these lessons by running the cadet battalion and planning and executing leadership lab.

At Johns Hopkins, leadership lab traditionally followed a fairly conventional pattern. There would usually be a class taught by one of the upperclassmen. The subjects were typically Infantry squad battle drills and soldier skills such as evaluating a casualty, individual movement techniques, hand grenades, land navigation, etc. After the class, there would be a walk-through or a practical exercise. There was generally not much mental agility or flexibility required. Cadets were required to absorb the lesson and successfully repeat the points of performance.

In the winter of 2008, the battalion's cadet leadership looked at the leadership lab instruction and came to the conclusion that in order to develop the adaptability and flexibility the battalion's future lieutenants would need, the focus needed to shift from training tasks to an education-oriented OBT&E-based approach. This determination was the easy part. The difficulty laid in implementing this kind of approach. The battalion leadership also had



Courtesy photos

Cadets with Johns Hopkins University Army ROTC brief an operation order.

to find a way to accomplish this goal with just two hours each week and one weekend each semester in which to train.

Numerous units in the Army have recognized the need to shift the underlying concept behind training. The approach that most have adopted is OBT&E. The concept behind OBT&E is to focus on the total outcome of a task, rather than focusing on the execution of the task. This forces the trainee to concentrate on thinking creatively about how to accomplish the task instead of trying to replicate a series of steps. It also inculcates trainees with initiative and the expectation that there will not be a "book" answer to all problems.

ALM is one application of OBT&E. It is based upon the idea of experiential learning. Trainees are exposed to a range of scenarios and problems, and this improves their ability to make sense of new situations, find patterns and opportunities, and quickly make effective decisions.

The basis for OBT&E and ALM lies in two scientific concepts: COL John Boyd's Observe-Orient-Decide-Act Loop (OODA) and Gary Klein's recognition-primed decision (RPD) model. The OODA Loop argues that units must respond more quickly to their environment than their opponents in order to triumph. RPD, however, is less well known among military personnel. The model shows that under conditions of time pressure, ambiguous information, ill-defined goals and changing conditions, experienced people can use their expertise to make good decisions more quickly than using traditional analytical decision-making models.

Based on the OODA Loop and the RPD model, the battalion leadership decided that the best way to make the cadets better decision makers was to increase their base of experience. The primary means used to accomplish this was squad situational training exercises (SSTX). Over the course of the semester, the cadets were presented with a multitude of different scenarios, starting simply and becoming more complex as the semester went on. SSTX is one of the best ways to force cadets and Soldiers to make quick decisions in a stressful, time-sensitive, and ambiguous environment. A field leader's reaction course (FLRC) and tactical decision games were also used to expose the cadets to unfamiliar situations.

To shape the scenarios, the semester began with a road to war brief. This familiarized all of the cadets with the fictional war they would fight for the remainder of the semester. The war was a mix between the Balkans and Iraq, with a battlefield that included enemy insurgents, friendly armies, local police, a self-interested militia, a native population, and the media. The variety of actors on the battlefield allowed for a wide array of scenarios that kept the cadets off balance.

For the next month, leadership labs were spent doing SSTX. Again, the scenarios began simply. During the first

week, the squads conducted a movement to contact, but instead of the enemy being in a single location as the cadets were used to, there were insurgents in two mutually supporting positions. The second week found the squads conducting ambushes, but the enemy discovered the squad's position and engaged the squad before reaching the kill zone. During the third week, the cadets knocked out a bunker where insurgents retreated and then probed the squads' defensive positions with harassing fire. In the fourth week, the squads came across an insurgent who immediately surrendered while they were conducting a movement-to-contact mission. As they searched and secured the prisoner of war, they were engaged by another insurgent in a hidden position.

The SSTX did present a problem in making the training valuable and worthwhile for all of the cadets involved. Typically, only the squad and team leaders get valuable leadership training out of SSTX. The rest of the squad can coast, worrying only about accomplishing their limited duties as a member of the squad. This did little to help develop every cadet in the battalion into an adaptable, flexible, and agile Army officer. A teaching phase was added to the planning time to solve this problem. Each squad was broken down into groups of three or four cadets prior

to briefing the platoon operation order. The evaluator then briefed the platoon operation order to the entire squad. A junior or experienced sophomore in each group taught the relevant battle drill to his group and walked them through the squad leader's troop leading procedures (TLPs). After 15 minutes, the squad would regroup, and the evaluator would identify which group was going to lead the mission. The group leader would be the squad leader, and the other members of the group would be team leaders. This gave the group leader a strong incentive to do a good job teaching. The designated squad leader would then brief his operations order, and the squad would conduct the mission.

This addition of the teaching phase to the planning process served as a training tool for the juniors. All of them had to come to leadership lab every week prepared to teach a battle drill. They also had to be ready to explain the TLPs that a squad leader would go through and the different parts of the squad operations order. This reinforced what they had been taught in their class and forced them to truly know and understand the battle drills, TLPs, and operations order format they would need for success at Warrior Forge, the five-week training exercise following junior year. The teaching phase also exposed the freshmen and sophomore cadets to what they would be expected to master as juniors. It provided them with foundational knowledge of battle drills, TLPs, and operations orders that they could build off of as juniors. Finally, it was a retention tool. The freshmen and sophomore cadets universally preferred learning about battle drills and TLPs to lying in a security perimeter.

Over the course of the semester, the battalion staff also introduced reading lists and weekly news articles to the cadets. This was done to encourage self-driven professional development and to foster awareness of current events as they related to the contemporary operating environment.

The sixth week of the semester presented another challenge in making the training education oriented. Land navigation is a critical skill that is one of the two events most likely to cause a cadet to not graduate from Warrior Forge. Thus, it was mission essential for the battalion to



Cadets with Johns Hopkins University Army ROTC conduct a situational training exercise.

devote a leadership lab to teaching map reading, point plotting, and other skills required for success in land navigation practical exercises and written tests. The difficulty was making the training challenging and engaging for all cadets, regardless of whether it was their third year or second month in ROTC. In order to do this, the cadets who self-identified as being uncomfortable with plotting points, finding azimuths, and identifying terrain features received a class on those fundamentals of land navigation. The remaining cadets played tactical decision games that incorporated written land navigation skills.

The tactical decision games proved to be a critical addition to the program of instruction. They forced the cadets to develop imaginative solutions to tactical problems that were beyond their experience. The tactical decision games were incorporated into land navigation by having the cadets find the location of the friendly and enemy units using intersection, resection, terrain features, road distance, and other map reading and land navigation techniques. After the cadets placed the friendly and enemy units on the map, they received a tactical scenario and had five minutes to formulate a course of action. When five minutes were up, one cadet presented his plan to the class. The class then discussed the pros and cons of the plan and considered possible alternatives.

Most of the tactical decision games were adapted from Marine Corps MAJ John Schmitt's book *Mastering Tactics*. The book provided several scenarios involving light Infantry at the company level and below, and most critically, provided discussions of possible solutions. As the battalion staff gained confidence in leading the discussions with the cadets, more of the tactical decision games were drawn from *Marine Corps Gazette's* archive.

The tactical decision games proved to be a critical addition to the program of instruction. They forced the cadets to develop imaginative solutions to tactical problems that were beyond their experience.

SSTX resumed the next week. The scenario was a reconnaissance mission in which an enemy courier moved between the squads' reconnaissance and surveillance teams and the squads' main bodies. The following week, the battalion conducted a FLRC. A FLRC is great for developing RPD because it places the cadets in an alien situation in which they face an extraordinary problem that they must think creatively to solve. Additionally, the cadets would have to lead an FLRC lane at Warrior Forge, and the battalion leadership wanted the juniors to have done this at least once prior to being evaluated on the exercise. This brought the battalion up to the main training event of the semester, the battalion field training exercise (FTX).

The battalion FTX was the only time in the semester that training could be conducted with far fewer time constraints and with resources like a land navigation course and blank ammunition. Because of this, those SSTX and land navigation events were the focus of the weekend-long exercise. On Saturday, training began early with a day land navigation practical exercise. It was a slightly shortened version of the day land navigation test the cadets would face at Warrior Forge. In the afternoon the battalion conducted three iterations of SSTX. The first was a squad attack mission in which the squads encountered two neutral militia men with intelligence on the way to the objective. The second was an ambush mission where a civilian sets up a picnic in the kill zone just prior to the insurgents walking into it. And the third was a reconnaissance mission where the squads observed an insurgent beating a civilian. This was the first time the cadets saw players other than the enemy on the battlefield.

While the battalion waited for nightfall to conduct the night land navigation practical exercise, the cadets worked through more tactical decision games. The week six training had been worthwhile, and the tactical decision games were a resource-cheap way to effectively utilize a shorter block of time. The tactical decision games were conducted the same way as in week six, except without the land navigation component. This greatly shortened the time required to work through a scenario. The night land navigation practical exercise was the final training event of the FTX.

The ninth week of the semester marked a return to SSTX lanes on campus. The scenarios continued to involve different players on the battlefield, with a movement-to-contact mission in which the squads encountered a civilian and then took fire from the enemy while communicating with the civilian. The following week, the squads conducted a reconnaissance mission where they discovered a friendly Soldier about to execute an enemy insurgent. While the squad dealt with that situation, a member of the media approached and began to cover the incident.

The next week was the yearly battalion awards banquet and so the cadets' dress uniforms had to be inspected to ensure that they met Army standards. However, the cadet battalion leadership did



During the Spring 2008 field training exercise, cadets discuss possible solutions to a tactical problem during a tactical decision game.

not want this to be the sole outcome of leadership lab. Upon completing the uniform inspection, the battalion broke up into small groups and worked through more tactical decision games. During the semester's final week of training, the battalion returned to SSTX. In the final scenario, the squads had to conduct a mission with an embedded journalist in which they encountered a civilian. While engaging with the civilian, the squad took fire from some militiamen and the civilian was wounded.

There were several fortuitous circumstances that were very helpful in shifting the approach to leader development in the spring of 2008. There is a large park behind the Johns Hopkins campus that is somewhat forested. The battalion was able to carve out three training lanes that were 50 to 100 meters in length and about 50 meters wide. While this was not a lot of space, it was enough to conduct semi-realistic field training on an almost weekly basis. The commander and cadre were also very supportive of the cadet battalion staff's efforts. They gave remarkable latitude to try things that had not been done before and gave invaluable advice throughout the semester. The fundamental shift would have been impossible without their support.

Upon final review, there were several positive results. Every cadet came out of the semester with at least a basic understanding of what a leader does to prepare his unit to accomplish a mission. The training was also structured in such a way that cadets with greatly varying levels of knowledge all got value out of the exercises. The less experienced cadets became familiar with the TLPs and other leadership skills, while the teaching role forced the more senior cadets to master the material.

The cadets also seemed to universally prefer the new challenges that the refocused education program presented. If this led to greater interest in professional development or increased levels of cadet retention, then those are successes in and of themselves. Most importantly, the cadets seemed to get less flustered by hectic situations as the semester wore on. This suggests that not only did the cadets become more confident in their problem-solving abilities, but that they became more flexible and adaptable. This outcome allowed them to be more comfortable operating in an ambiguous and chaotic environment.

There are broader points that can also be drawn from the Blue Jay Battalion's program of instruction in the spring of 2008. First, it reinforces the idea that leader development is a responsibility at every echelon, from the team level on up. Developing flexible and adaptable Soldiers and leaders cannot start and stop at the schoolhouse door. Every Army leader must ask himself every day, what am I doing to force my subordinates to be agile, flexible, and adaptable? Furthermore, Army leaders need to empower their subordinate leaders to develop these skills in their Soldiers by giving them latitude in planning and executing training.

Second, we can improve adaptability, flexibility, and agility by making training unpredictable. Routine and predictability are the enemies of flexibility and adaptability. When Soldiers become accustomed to knowing what to expect, their ability to



Cadets with Johns Hopkins University Army ROTC work on a course of action during a tactical decision game in 2008.

quickly adjust to a changing environment begins to degrade. Army leaders must try to find ways to incorporate adaptability and agility development into all training. Even classroom briefings should contain an element of developing these traits.

These changes will be uncomfortable, and they will meet resistance. Human beings, by nature, enjoy routine. They want what is familiar and to know what lies ahead. But Army leaders must push their subordinates out of their comfort zones because that is exactly what the enemy will seek to do. If Soldiers learn to effectively operate amidst unfamiliar and ever-changing circumstances, they will be better able to cope with these conditions in combat.

In April of 2003, in what is now a well documented incident, an Army officer diverted a potential disaster using his adaptability, flexibility, and mental agility. When faced with a mob of angry Iraqi civilians, he directed his Soldiers to point their weapons at the ground and take a knee, as a gesture of respect. In today's contemporary operating environment, junior officers are faced with situations requiring just this kind of creative decision making. It is not a skill that one can accomplish by following a series of steps that can be taught once and maintained with periodic review. It takes years of practicing. We must start developing these traits at BOLC I and continually work to improve them. At Johns Hopkins University, the ROTC battalion's cadet leadership took an approach that was based on OBT&E and ALM, emphasized education rather than training, and worked to build effective RPD by widening our cadets' base of experiences. This started the cadets on a path towards becoming adaptable, agile, and flexible leaders, who are prepared to get inside the enemy's decision cycle and win in a chaotic, ambiguous, and multi-faceted environment.

1LT Alexander Johnson is currently assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment at Fort Campbell, Ky. He served as the cadet operations officer of the Johns Hopkins University Army ROTC Battalion in the spring of 2008. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Johns Hopkins University, where he was commissioned into the Infantry as a Distinguished Military Graduate in 2008.

Book Reviews



Grant's Lieutenants, Volume 1, From Cairo to Vicksburg (2001) and Volume 2, From Chattanooga to Appomattox (2008). Edited by Steven E. Woodworth. Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, \$29.95 and \$34.95 respectively.

Reviewed by CSM (Retired) James H. Clifford.

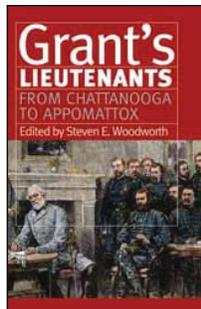
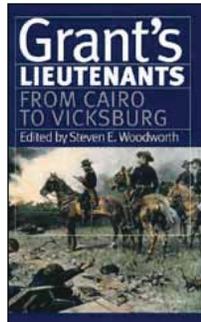
Human beings fight wars; therefore, the interaction between humans is a more important factor in war than weapons, tactics, and strategy. *Grant's Lieutenants* is an anthology of 23 essays in two volumes, discussing the relationship between the Union's greatest general, Ulysses S. Grant, and his most significant subordinates.

The 14 authors are all respected historians, scholars, and writers familiar to Civil War readers. The lieutenants range from those well-known partners of Grant — William Sherman, George Meade, Philip Sheridan, James McPherson, and Andrew Foote — to those with whom he had antagonistic relationships — John McClernand, Benjamin Butler, Lew Wallace, and William Rosecrans. Also included are some lesser-known personalities — W. H. L. Wallace, C. F. Smith, Grenville Dodge, and Peter Osterhaus.

These books are part of the publisher's Modern War Studies library. Books on Grant tend to take on either a generally negative viewpoint, as in William S. McFeely's *Grant*, or a completely positive viewpoint, as in J. F. C. Fuller's *Grant and Lee*. This book offers both sides of Grant that usually coincides with the nature of the relationship the subject had with him. John F. Marszalek penned the opening essay of each volume on the relationship between Grant and Sherman. In chronicling the relationship, he shows how two prewar failures came together to produce successes that would have eluded either of them individually.

On other hand, the essay on McClernand, written by Terrance J. Winschel, and that on Benjamin F. Butler, by Mark Grimsley, present Grant in less generous terms. Winschel's Grant is jealous of politically appointed generals and concerned that volunteers might overshadow the contributions made by West Point-trained professionals. Grimsley's Grant is guilty of setting Butler up for failure with an unworkable chain of command and vague orders. Although not positive pictures of Grant, these essays do illustrate Grant's political acumen — his ability to handle President Lincoln's appointees and sense of timing by dumping them when they were no longer useful to the President.

Other essays present the different sides of Grant's character. The essays on Andrew Hull Foote and David Dixon Porter reveal Grant's skillful leadership in joint operations. The essay concerning



the relationship between Grant and C. F. Smith, exposes a side of Grant that is able to deal with the awkward situation of having his former superior placed in a subordinate position.

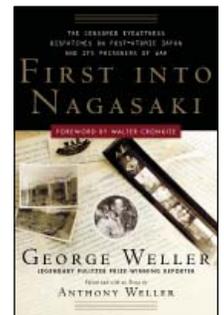
Books of this type are popular and serve an important purpose in the study of military history. Personal relationships in war are justifiable targets of examination. This one puts all Grant's important wartime career in one place, creating a sense of balanced perspective on the man. The essays can be read sequentially or as one's interest warrants. *Grant's Lieutenants* is a worthy addition to anyone's Grant library.

***First Into Nagasaki, The Censored Eyewitness Dispatches on Post-Atomic Japan and Its Prisoners of War.* By George Weller, edited by Anthony Weller. NY: Crown Publishers, 2006, 320 pages, \$25.**

Reviewed by LTC Keith Everett, USAR.

George Weller, winner of a 1943 Pulitzer Prize for his World War II reporting from the Pacific Theater, disguised himself as a U.S. colonel and entered Nagasaki only weeks after the atomic bomb was dropped on the city. Censors stopped his dispatches and photographs from reaching the public at that time. Weller kept the carbon copies of his work stored away in a crate. After Weller died in 2002, his son Anthony found the missing dispatches and photocopies. Anthony read the accounts of the new unknown radiation sickness, the terrified eyewitness accounts of the attack, and sickening stories told of the inhumane treatment of Allied Soldiers held in Japanese captivity, including the horrific experiences of Soldiers on the POW ships. His father's dispatches and photographs hit home with an authenticity possible only through firsthand views of the horrible effects of an atomic attack and its resulting radiation sickness. The original Nagasaki dispatches, which were censored and destroyed by MacArthur, are brought back with this publication.

The atomic bomb dispatches cover observations from 6 September through 10 September 1945, about four weeks after the atomic bomb destroyed the heart of Nagasaki and the will of the Japanese people. Surprisingly, many survived the initial blast, although they were dangerously close to the ferociously hot fireball near ground zero. Everything above ground was destroyed. Those protected by a trench, or a combination of strong ceilings or walls, were able to survive. The effect of the radiation on so many thousands of people was noted. Wells took time from his observations to take short impressions from POWs of the bomb and about treatment of the men at some of the camps. These POW impressions were gathered, like snippets from a group nightmare



and shared through selected dispatches.

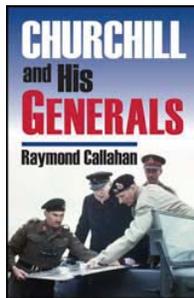
The several days spent around Nagasaki gathering impressions and photographs gives an idea of what an atomic bomb can do at the human level. These impressions, captured at a critical time and uncensored by political correctness, touch on the devastating human toll among enemy noncombatants. The visits to Nagasaki's hospital reveal the doctors' baffled concern over "disease X" slowly killing otherwise unscathed Japanese. Disease X will later be called radiation poisoning. Japanese doctors found no treatment for disease X's symptoms of a reduction of white corpuscles, throat swelling, vomiting, and diarrhea. Often, hemorrhages below the skin appear over an infected person's body, similar according to one X-ray specialist, to an overdose of X-rays.

About halfway through the book, a few chapters capture American British, Dutch and Australian prisoner of war observations of what they saw from heavily guarded camps in Japan. These listings of a sentence or two per prisoner are followed by more details of the horrible, deadly POW experience in Japan. Part of Weller's book is a collection of interviews of some of the 300 survivors of Japanese "hellships," so called because of the horribly cramped conditions with little food or water on the seven-week journey from Manila to Japan. The unforgiveable, inhumane conditions were bad enough to slowly kill hundreds of men during the voyage. In Japan, the inhumane treatment continued in the new POW camps. Many of the details of life, suffering, and death during such a voyage and later in a Japanese camp are captured by these interviews. However, officers stepped forward and provided brave and selfless leadership when the only hope of reward was death. These shining examples illustrate what leadership really is – guiding men living at their worst, to do the right things, giving all POWs the best chance to survive. These leaders saved many men, often at the cost of their own lives. The book ends with an essay by George Weller's son, Anthony, wrapping the collection up with his take on censorship by MacArthur and the meaning of his father's lost dispatches. The essay was unnecessary; his father's dispatches speak for themselves.

Churchill and His Generals. By Raymond Callahan. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007, 310 pages, \$34.95.

Reviewed by BG (Retired) Curtis H. O'Sullivan.

So much has been written about and by Winston Churchill that the question inevitably arises: "What's new?" Raymond Callahan, a professor emeritus of history who has written another book on Churchill, tries a different approach. He covers the evolution of the wartime Army in a multifront global conflict that was too much, alone, for an overextended fighting force. He gives passing attention to the mixed blessings of coalition warfare and how a powerful ally can compensate for weakness and excessive demands. His main thrust is the relationship between the prime minister and his major combat commanders — good and bad, or less fortunate. He assesses the performance of leaders in different categories and tries to bring out



how imperial political concerns can vary from goals and problems on the battlefield.

This is not exactly the principle of civilian supremacy versus professional military knowledge but is related to it. Both sides of the equation were aware of the dwindling manpower pool and how that constrained activity, but from opposite ends of the tunnel. The bigger picture showed how American production could be balanced against a diminishing birthrate at home.

There are observations on 60 or so British generals. Of these, about a dozen should be familiar to most readers of the subject. The others may only be known by the real cognoscente. In addition to the special emphasis Callahan attempts, this is an excellent overall account of the British Army in WWII — maybe the best of the considerable number I've read. It is very well researched. There is not a separate bibliography, but the notes on further reading serve the purpose. The notes are of the extended variety and contain a wealth of information. They could have been placed more conveniently at the "feet" rather than the end though.

The author has a special interest in the Indian Army and makes frequent references to the friction and distrust between it and the regular British Army. Among the generals, he has favorites and preferences that not all may share. For example, he feels that William "Bill" Slim was clearly the outstanding British commander of WWII and the best since Wellington. There is no question that his exploits as commanding general of Britain's Fourteenth Army after October 1943 were extraordinary, but it should be kept in perspective of what it contributed to winning the war — and against a foe that Callahan describes as beaten, diseased, and starving by July 1944. Other appraisals are well balanced.

The nine photographs are well above the usual stereotypes and make you wish there were more of other key individuals. There are a few minor mistakes on such things as grades held, but they don't detract from the story. Highly recommended!

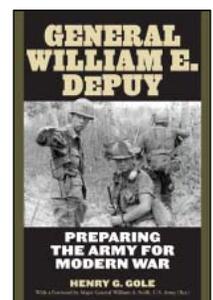
General William E. DePuy: Preparing the Army for Modern War. By Henry G. Gole. Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 2008, 208 pages, \$35.

Reviewed by CDR Youssef Aboul-Enein, U.S. Navy.

General William DePuy's career combines leadership, unconventional tours of duty to include classified activity with the CIA, and finally a passion for the U.S. Army that led him to helping rebuild the Army's confidence from the shadow of Vietnam. He left an indelible mark on the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and helped cultivate the force needed to fight modern war.

DePuy was born in South Dakota in 1919. His introduction to the Army came through the National Guard and the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) unit at his college. Graduating in 1941, he was swept up in the vortex of World War II and an America in need of military officers.

Seeing combat in World War II, DePuy gained an appreciation for some German Army operational techniques, and later as a young



field commander he infused German infantry tactics and techniques into the U.S. Army. DePuy's unit — the 357th Infantry, 90th Division, First Army — landed on Utah Beach in 1944 and marched through France into Germany, finally ending in Czechoslovakia in 1945.

DePuy's post World War II assignments included a murky CIA assignment to address the rise of Communist Chinese influence and marginalization of the Chinese Nationalists. Among the most interesting parts of the book is the quarter of the book dedicated to Vietnam. From 1964 to 1967, DePuy served as a trusted adviser to GEN William Westmoreland, commander of the U.S. forces in Vietnam. He took command of the 1st Infantry Division, the Big Red One, in 1966. He was hard on his staff, but loved his Soldiers. What distinguishes his leadership style is that he constantly asked his Soldiers questions; he was always learning and had the humility to listen intently to his troops' ideas. He understood that field leadership meant ensuring that Soldiers not lapse into carelessness.

Constantly learning and questioning, DePuy developed new tactics like "cloverleafing," a tactic that could be used by platoons to battalions in which several hundred miles were marched with a split unit in a cloverleaf to probe for the enemy while always having the ability to regroup and mass fire.

The book continues with DePuy returning to Washington to become Special Assistant to Counterinsurgency and Special Activity (SACSA). It is an excellent chapter on the policymaking of President Johnson's administration and the agonizing debates on Vietnam, starting with making sense of the Tet Offensive. DePuy would use all these experiences to place the Army on track to fix its broken morale after Vietnam.

America was fortunate to have GEN DePuy as commander of TRADOC during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. He surrounded himself with Army thinkers to make sense of this unique war that involved denial, deception, and the equalization of infantry in taking on tanks with anti-tank weapons. Addressing air superiority with saturation of surface-to-air missiles (SAM), in essence the war pitted western technology (Israel) with Soviet hardware (Egypt and Syria), and DePuy used this to develop performance-oriented training — what we would today call "train as we fight."

The book ends with a synopsis of articles written by DePuy that had been published in Army journals. He died in 1992, but not before seeing the American ground forces he helped shape fight Iraq's Republican Guard in Operation Desert Storm.

I recommend this book for those interested in tactical and strategic leadership.



TSgt Joe Laws

A Soldier with Provincial Reconstruction Team Kapisa scans the area from the gunner's hatch of his Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle while traveling through the Surobi district of Afghanistan. The PRT routinely performs missions throughout Kapisa to interact and engage with local leaders. The PRT's mission is to stabilize the region by enabling local governments to care for, educate, employ, and protect their people through the construction of basic infrastructure and mentorship.

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Infantry Magazine Contact Information

E-mail — michelle.rowan@us.army.mil

Telephone — (706) 545-2350/6951 or DSN 835-2350/6951

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