

# ARMOR

September-October 2010



# ARMOR

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## The M10 and the Sherman: The Difference in Capabilities Discussion Continues

Dear *ARMOR*,

I am pleased to read of Lieutenant Colonel Scott Fowler's interest in the M10 Tank Destroyer. In his article, "The M10 Tank Destroyer and M4 Sherman: The Difference in Capabilities," in the June-August 2010 edition of *ARMOR*, his comparison of cannon sizes and final conclusions are oversimplified and rather erroneous.

The difference between the M4's 75mm and the M10's 3-inch (76.2mm) cannon is not the negligible diameter, but rather the length of the cartridge case. The 3-inch gun's ammunition has about 2.5 times the powder volume, resulting in increased velocity. Using similar armor-piercing projectiles, the 3-inch gun would penetrate about 1 inch more armor than the 75mm gun at comparable ranges.

The differences between the tank and the tank destroyer were due to divergent early doctrine and resultant distinct, but eventually convergent, design philosophies. Early doctrine intended tanks for exploitation. The relatively low-velocity 75mm gun, expected to fire high-explosive ammunition against soft targets, was considered more than adequate. Tanks had to be well armored and fully protected while remaining as small and light as possible. The M4, which needed to be fightable from an enclosed vehicle, had power traverse and elevation, coaxial and bow machine guns, turret baskets, and state-of-the-art (for the time) optics and fire control.

Tank destroyers (TD), a separate branch, were specifically intended to get ahead of, and block and destroy, large enemy tank formations. Their motto was "seek, strike, destroy." Starting with truck-towed light (37mm) and heavy (3 inch) antitank guns, the concept required better mobility and led to light and heavy self-propelled gun motor carriages (GMC).

Observation of European combat vehicles highlighted the need for larger, more powerful cannons. The 75mm GMC M3, a field gun forward mounted on an armored half-track, was fielded until a suitable 3-inch GMC could be developed. The resultant M10 was itself a stopgap. Although it had a turret, it was designed more like a self-propelled gun with no turret basket, no bow or coaxial machine gun, and only manual traverse and elevation controls. The M10 was considered too slow and too big to be a proper TD. The doctrinally "ideal" TD was the later 76mm GMC M18, which was lighter, smaller, and much faster.

Just before the Normandy Campaign, M4 (76mm) tanks began to be fielded in limited numbers. The 76mm cannon was a light-weight design with a different cartridge, but it fired the same projectiles at the same velocities as the 3-inch gun. Tankers now had

the same antitank firepower as the heavy TD. Tanks were better armored and suited for close combat, while the more vulnerable TD was suited for standoff fire support. Yet, as noted by LTC Fowler, both proved to be inadequate against heavier German Tiger and Panther tanks.

Fortunately, relief came in the form of the 90mm GMC M36. Evolved from the M10, it had a lighter weight, but better armored, well-balanced turret with a turret basket and power traverse mounting a lightweight 90mm cannon. Rushed in and appearing in combat around September 1944, it was the best-armed tank-like vehicle of the U.S. Army until the appearance of the M26 Pershing at the close of the campaign.

After the war, the Stilwell board report (I forget its official title) concluded that TDs were essentially a mistake and the best weapon for fighting a tank was another tank. What was needed all along was a well-armored and armed tank. TDs were obsolete and faded into history, although many continued serving in tank-like roles in foreign armies.

None of the above should be construed as negative about the Soldiers of the tank destroyer force. Although their fundamental doctrine was quickly revealed to be ineffective, the TD battalions, companies, and platoons fought magnificently in new roles alongside, and closely supporting, infantry, overwatching armor, and supplementing field artillery with their indirect-fire capability. Like true American fighting men, when "the book" was wrong, they just threw it away and improvised. For further reading on this subject, I suggest *SHERMAN – A History of the American Medium Tank* by R.P. Hunnicutt.

### "Evolution of the Plow," Interrogating IEDs is Misguided

In his article, "Evolution of the Plow: Supporting the IED Fight," Major William F. Corryell's understanding of the tank plow is flat wrong and the need for an improvised explosive device (IED) "interrogator," as he describes it, is misguided.

In 1984-87, as the U.S. Army Armor School Project Officer, Directorate of Combat Developments, I wrote all of the requirements documents for the M1 track width mine-clearing blade (mine plow), resulting in type classification and subsequent fielding of the tank battalion countermine set (plows and rollers). I was also the lead writer (and briefer) of the Armor School's portion of the Army Countermine Plan of 1986-87. In 1988, I began a new career as a DA Civilian analyst at the Engineer Center and School where I worked on various mobility and counter-mobility systems, including the counter obstacle vehicle (COV), the heavy assault bridge

(HAB), the Grizzly combat mobility vehicle, and the Wolverine heavy assault bridge, among many others. Having retired in 2003, I often feel that it was all for naught, given what passes for "institutional memory" within the Army.

A brief tutorial, if you please: the track width mine-clearing roller was, and to this day, is still the only effective mounted *detector* we have for buried mines laid along the tracks' path. The dog-bone and chain slung between the rollers offered some hope of tripping a tilt-rod mine and perhaps, with greater luck, a magnetic influence mine before passing under the belly.

The track width mine-clearing plow is a *breacher*. Once you determine (*or guess*) where the mines are, you plow and hope you don't quit plowing too soon. The plow's tines lift the mines from in front of the tracks and the moldboards shove them with the spoil to the side, hopefully without detonating them. The dog-bone and chain between the plows is as effective and limited as that of the rollers, above.

An IED is not something to be "interrogated," as if it will reply with a "friend" or "foe" response. It is a large and hidden explosive, much like a mine or bomb (which it often is). It can be directly tripped, like a mine, or command detonated. It can be directly underneath, adjacent to, or at some stand-off from the target. Its collateral damage can be devastating. It needs to be *detected* from afar and preferably *neutralized*, not *detonated*.

In the quarter century since I started dealing with counter-mine systems, I have watched as the Army, collectively, has utterly failed to develop a solution. Organizations, such as the Combined Arms Center, TSM Counter-mine, Training and Doctrine Command, Army Materiel Command and its various labs, and Department of the Army have all failed to develop a solution. They have tried metal detectors, non-magnetic detectors, anomaly detectors, chemical agent detectors, thermal imagery, lasers, ground penetrating radar, multi-spectral fusion, millimeter wave signals, microwave heating, electronic atmospheric sniffers, and acid sprays — all (and more) of which have been discussed, dabbled with, and either dead-ended or simply lost interest.

Some believe that the problem really is "too hard" while others perhaps just "don't care," regardless, it is heart-breaking. However, I most certainly caution you that suggesting modifying the mine plow with a device you cannot even articulate doesn't do anybody much good.

CHESTER A. KOJRO  
LTC, U.S. Army, Retired

# COMMANDANT'S HATCH

COL Ted Martin  
Commandant  
U.S. Army Armor School



## The Cavalry and Armor Branch: Standing Tall at Fort Benning

As the 45th Chief of Armor and Commandant of the Armor School, I have the distinct honor of leading the relocation and integration of the Armor School into the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, Georgia. I would like to thank Major General Milano and his wife, Kim, for their tremendous work in setting conditions for the movement of the Armor School. All that is left is to aggressively execute the plan!

Our mission is unchanged: educating, training and inspiring America's armored soldiers and leaders for a lifetime of service to the nation; prepared to close with and destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver as part of a combined arms team. The Armor School at the Maneuver Center of Excellence will become the world's premier Academy of Mounted Warfare, training and inspiring our Army's 21st-century armored warriors who are:

- Skilled in the art of mounted maneuver
- Adept at boldly developing the situation through action
- Mentally and physically resilient, intellectually capable of leading under conditions of ambiguity
- Prepared to relentlessly close with and destroy the enemy with fire and maneuver as part of a combined arms team.

My number one priority is leader development. We have the finest Soldiers, vehicles, and equipment on the planet. Our Soldiers and our country deserve the most agile, adaptive, and dynamic leaders if we are to continue to dominate the battlefield. I intend to exploit the window of opportunity that opens when we begin our physical move to Fort Benning. We will use this window to conduct a comprehensive review and validation of all of our programs of instruction to ensure that they are both

in compliance with TRADOC's most recent directives and policies, and that they are relevant to the ever evolving contemporary operating environment.

As we look at ways to enhance the development of Armor leaders, I will focus the school's efforts on three lines of effort: mastery of weapons systems, mastery of tactics, and finally what the Commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence, MG Ferriter, calls "inspired leadership." I am committed to these lines of effort as I believe that they serve as the foundation of the professionalism associated with our branch.

Mastery of our weapons systems means everything from vehicle and weapon maintenance, to command supply discipline programs, to excellence in precision gunnery. We have a magnificent reputation as the finest tank gunners in world; I plan on building on that reputation. One of my top initiatives is expanding our pool of highly trained and technically proficient master gunners to meet both the training and operational readiness requirements of our Army. Leaders across the force must assist in this process by identifying qualified noncommissioned officers to become master gunners. Once trained, these master gunners will develop the training plans necessary to improve our overall gunnery skills; essential skills required to develop the situation through action in today's complex operational environment.

Mastery of tactics means getting back to the basics of Cavalry and Armor doctrine and lots of repetition... I intend on harnessing the power of all the available simulations in both the theoretical and practical aspects of mastering tactics. That means getting away from the traditional "PowerPoint" platform instruction and moving towards Virtual Battlefield Simulation 2 (VBS2)-enabled education experiences, combined with the use of the Close Com-

bat Tactical Trainer (CCTT) as a means to rapidly building proficiency in maneuver tasks. This doesn't mean that we are going to reduce mounted maneuver training; it just means that we will "train to go to the field" and will spend more of our valuable field training time reaching even higher levels of proficiency in the same amount of time. Mastery of our basic tactical fundamental skills will serve us well in the full spectrum of operations from wide area security to combined arms maneuver.

Inspired Leadership means knowing how to apply the principles of Army leadership as outlined in FM 6-22. We have all worked for inspiring leaders and one thing is clear: they are made, not born. We will help shape the development of our warriors through expert example and instruction, as well as a dedication to providing tough, realistic, and demanding training. Our programs of instruction, aggressively executed, will serve as vehicles for leaders to gain the confidence to be adept at boldly developing the situation through action. We must continually look for ways to develop our leaders so that they are comfortable in ambiguous situations; trained and educated in "how to think," not "what to think," so that they can prevail on the battlefield.

Team — the future is bright for the Armor Force. The "TAC" is set at Fort Benning, Georgia, and fully operational. Although currently small in numbers, we are supported by a powerful "team of teams" at the Maneuver Center of Excellence. Rest assured, as it has for more than two centuries, the Cavalry and Armor Force will retain its dominance as the Combat Arm of Decision.

FORGE THE THUNDERBOLT!

# GUNNER'S SEAT

CSM Ricky Young  
Command Sergeant Major  
U.S. Army Armor School



## Mastering Gunnery: The Strength of Armor

The need for units to possess specially trained and qualified noncommissioned officers to assist unit commanders with training soldiers has changed very little in the past years. One could not imagine an airborne unit devoid of jumpmasters or a maintenance team without a highly experienced team chief. There is no doubt that the Army has the best fighting force in the world.

For decades, Fort Knox has provided unit commanders with specialized soldiers who are trained in current tank technology and crew-training techniques — master gunners. The title, “master gunner,” which derives from the term “master of gunnery,” is an accomplished armor non-commissioned officer trained in advanced gunnery methodology, turret weapons systems maintenance, and gunnery training management. The acquired skills and knowledge allow him to function as the unit’s master of gunnery, the tank commander’s mentor, and the commander’s gunnery technical advisor.

The primary mission of the master gunner is to aid and assist commanders at all echelons in planning, development, execution, and evaluation of all crew-served weapons related training (individual, crew, and collective). The strength of the armor branch relies on the high level of technical competence deliberately placed in the hands of sergeants, which makes armor a unique branch. The master gunner role is exclusive to the armor branch; the only thing a commander has to do is get his crews to a position of advantage on the battlefield, and the sergeant will shoot to kill. However, even in light of the fact that master gunners are critical to sustaining our armored fleet, the existing number of master gunners is dwindling and enrollment is dropping.

The armor force remains as busy as ever with more than 80 percent of its soldiers either deployed or within 90 days of deployment. The Master Gunner Course is highly sensitive to the challenges and needs of our present-day fleet and we are taking a few initiatives to help meet the demands of the current operating environment. We have the best equipment and the finest soldiers in history; they can deploy at a moment’s notice to wherever needed and successfully meet mission requirements. Current operational tempo and increased deployment cycles make it difficult for units to send soldiers to an 11-week course; however, commanders will continue to look to the master gunner to provide the technical knowledge to train a multitude of weapons and weapons systems.

Perhaps the most exciting and innovative change is the Master Gunner Mobile Training Team (MTT), which provides training to deploying and redeploying units. The Armor School has left no stone unturned to ensure the quality of instruction equals that of the resident course. Units scheduled for the Master Gunner MTT course can expect the same 11-week course load and quality program of instruction currently executed at the resident course. To facilitate courses at home station, units will be expected to provide adequate space on a hard stand or motor pool for an 11-week period; six to eight M1-series vehicles; access to unit prescribed load list (PLL) and additional supply list (ASL); and qualified noncommissioned officers solely dedicated to the pursuit of achieving the title of master gunner.

As the new brigade combat teams change the Army’s force structure, master gunners must continue to evolve and provide current tank technology training as they

continue to broaden their scopes of expertise. Technical competence is what being a master gunner is about; however, master gunners should not be senior turret mechanics, but should instead focus on the multitude of armor weapons systems on today’s battlefield.

If commanders are serious about their unit’s readiness, then they must encourage soldiers to broaden their scope of expertise. This is a tough business; it takes discipline, extra effort, and demands that master gunners continue to evolve and grow. Even though professional development does not always fit within the unit’s life cycle, commanders cannot afford not to send soldiers to these courses. As the Master Gunner Course continuously evolves to meet the demands of a changing Army, it also needs support from the force in developing the next-generation master gunner. It is evident that the Army is experiencing personnel and time constraints while simultaneously supporting requirements of the current operating environment. However, we all bear responsibility for ensuring the future armored force is abundantly supplied with technically adept noncommissioned officers who can meet the challenges of full-spectrum operations. The investment of a high-quality noncommissioned officer for this 11-week course will yield great returns for companies and battalions well into the future. For enrollment and course information, please contact Staff Sergeant Rozmarin, telephone (502) 624-1246; or e-mail [david.t.rozmarin@us.army.mil](mailto:david.t.rozmarin@us.army.mil).

TREAT 'EM ROUGH!



# The Eternal Foundation: Reorganizing the Regimental System's Operational Framework to a Combined Arms Regimental System

by Major Joseph D. Labarbera

*“Regimental spirit and tradition can be a powerful factor in making for good morale and must be constantly encouraged. Because in the crisis of battle, a man will not derive encouragement from the glories of the past; he will seek aid from his leaders and comrades of the present. Most men do not fight well because their ancestors fought well at the battle of Minden two centuries ago, but because their particular platoon or unit has good leaders, is well disciplined, and has developed the feelings of comradeship and self-respect among all ranks and on all levels.”*

— Field Marshal Montgomery



*“What the brigade inevitably fails to recognize is that the most important military capability is the soldier, whose capabilities are maximized by serving in a unit with esprit de corps. Guiding this perspective is what one of the first British proponents of maneuver warfare, B.H. Liddell Hart wrote: ‘In war the chief incalculable is the human will.’”*



This article is predicated on the belief that the highest level echelon that can foster unit cohesion in small wars, as well as big ones, is the battalion. The echelon between the battalion and the division is the brigade, and it does not work as a combat multiplier for a variety of reasons that this article intends to address. The Army can be improved significantly by reorganizing its operational framework to a combined arms regimental system.

The Army's brigade modular cohort system will be a negative drain on the quality of battalions and companies for generations to come. This is because the brigade diminishes the esprit de corps of its subordinate units and misrepresents itself as the only capable system that can coordinate combat power. The good news is that it is continually evolving. Chapter 1 of U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team (BCT)*, explains that the current system, which consists of the heavy brigade and infantry brigade will continue to be transformed until 2020.<sup>1</sup> What's driving this is the assumption that the Army has to customize different types of brigades and special detachments for "eleven critical variables that define the operational environment."<sup>2</sup> This FM goes on to proclaim that "Existing military capabilities are the most critical variable for BCT military operations."<sup>3</sup> This shows that the focus behind the modern brigade system is directed toward capabilities and not on the human element of an Army, which is esprit de corps and cohesiveness.

What the brigade inevitably fails to recognize is that the most important military capability is the soldier, whose capabilities are maximized by serving in a unit with esprit de corps. Guiding this perspective is what one of the first British proponents of maneuver warfare, B.H. Liddell Hart wrote: "In war the chief incalculable is the human will."<sup>4</sup> This article makes the case that it is a fruitless effort to change the Army's structure to adapt to "eleven critical variables." It is the esprit de corps of our profes-

sional soldiers that makes a unit adaptive, regardless of the system. Instead of the brigade, it is the regiment that is the most adaptable formation in our order of battle because it is the most conducive to esprit de corps. Without esprit de corps, a unit cannot adapt, regardless of its label or how many assets it has. This article will also disprove the notion that the current brigade system is ideally suited to coordinate operations in any environment. It also shows the brigade system to be a convenience to higher planners, but a hindrance to building and employing combat units. The final conclusion reinforces that the brigade system diminishes the esprit de corps, which is essential to effective military organizations.

### **The Industrialization of the American Army**

To gain a clear perspective on how our brigade system works, it is necessary to know how the Army evolved from an effective regimental organization to the industrial Army of today. The adaptation to the attrition warfare of the Second World War led to the eroding of a military culture that stood the test of operational requirements as taxing as the Indian wars and as devastating as the Civil War. The eroding began after the Second World War, where mass national conscription expanded the Army from a single corps into multiple armies numbering ten million men. To accommodate the expansion, many division headquarters were stood up and soldiers were sent to basic training en masse and shipped to forward units as part of a replacement system. This methodology was based on a system of scientific management called "Taylorism." This means of management was invented by the industrialist Frederic Winslow Taylor. "His model was the machine with its cheap, interchangeable parts, each of which does one specific function. Taylor attempted to do to complex organizations what engineers had done to machines and this involved making individuals into the equivalent of machine parts."<sup>5</sup> This



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method, which has great results in manufacturing, was used by the Army in the Second World War to maintain attrition against the German army. It did not focus on proficiency of the tactical unit because the strategy was about outlasting the Germans.<sup>6</sup>

After the war, the Army was depleted; huge numbers of conscripted soldiers left and the Army became an occupation force. Few units maintained a regimental lineage and made esprit de corps and proficiency their modus operandi. Units, such as the 101st and 82d Airborne, kept their regimental lineage by grouping all their battle-proven regiments under one brigade, which is how they kept cohesion. However, the other infantry units did not and were further degraded by the establishment of the "pentomic army." This was a bizarre order of battle, which attempt-

ed to customize the Army to fight a war after massive nuclear holocaust, and planned to use nuclear weapons to support the units on the ground. They fought in an area contaminated by radioactive waste, as if such an area would still be key terrain after nuclear contamination.<sup>7</sup>

In this structure, units were called "battle groups" and were oriented based on missile units that would launch tactical nuclear weapons. This was also a conscript Army, whose personnel were rotated like interchangeable machine parts. According to John McGrath's recent publication, *The Brigade: A History*, the pentomic structure was flawed in several ways.<sup>8</sup> The main flaw, as it pertains to this article, was the detriment to regimental cohesion. "The battle groups, and later, the ROAD [Reorganization of the Army] brigades, combined infantry battalions from different regiments in a chaotic fashion that eliminated regimental cohesion."<sup>9</sup> The brigade combat team remains remarkably similar to this structure.

The Army attempted to solve the issue by applying the ultimate all-purpose medication in the form of U.S. Army Regulation (AR) 600-82, *The U.S. Army Regimental System*, which was intended to create a regimental culture within the brigade command structure and foster esprit de corps, as intended in 1981 when the Army Regi-

mental System replaced the Combat Arms Regimental System.<sup>10</sup> This would be accomplished by maintaining a consistent cadre and ethos that leaders at battalion level and below could rely on. The current brigade system neutralizes this approach by marginalizing the charisma and abilities of its subordinate leaders, smothering them with Armywide regulations and policies, which may not even be applicable but yet are blindly enforced. This reduces fighting units to bureaucracies weakened to the point of being compatible with garrison life.

Materializing from the brigade system is a level of command more synchronized with higher-level politics than the operational needs and character of its units and soldiers. Many brigade-level leaders have great difficulty keeping their finger on



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*“...the 75th Ranger Regiment is a light infantry unit considered by many to be the best in the world. It also has a regimental headquarters capable of synchronizing combined arms assets. Most notable, however, is the fact that soldiers from both units never mention they were in a particular battalion; instead, they claim ‘the regiment.’”*



the pulse of subordinate battalions, thus allowing their formation to be overregulated. The current Army brigade organization also resembles the European divisional system of the Napoleonic era in which methodology was used to monopolize esprit de corps on broad levels and marginalize junior officers, whose initiatives and creativity threatened its systematic and attrition-minded approach to war. It also degraded its battalions and junior leaders by using an assembly-line approach to task organization. This was all accomplished under the auspices of facilitating effective combined-arms warfare when, in reality, it was a method of funneling its leadership dynamic from a centralized source. This mentality was destructive to both Napoleon and the German army of both world wars. Both of these armies were in fact defeated by armies with regimental systems. From these examples we can see that Tayloristic approaches to structuring our Army's order of battle, such as AR 600-82, are anathema to training effective tactical units.<sup>11</sup>

### **Planting the Seeds that Sprout Esprit de Corps**

The regimental system is meant to foster esprit de corps by maintaining a professional cadre that takes personal and professional ownership of the unit. This, in itself, will allow synchronization of units and assets. Opinions within the Army maintain that the regiment is meant to be a non-modular force that does not employ combined arms and does not have the capacity to synchronize assets. These opinions are incorrect; in fact, the combined arms regiment is the most effective force at employing combined arms and synchronization, as proven under the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's (ACR's) order of battle, which includes both maneuver and supporting arms, and trains as one cohesive force. What makes this work is an intense level of esprit de corps: the regiment's esprit de corps leads to a high level of tactical proficiency, which, in turn, enables the regiment to employ its combined arms. The 3d ACR's esprit de corps contributed directly to its storied history of high performance. To use another example, the 75th Ranger Regiment is a light infantry unit considered by many to be the best in the world. It also has a regimental headquarters capable of synchronizing combined arms assets. Most notable, however, is the fact that soldiers from both units never mention they were in a particular battalion; instead, they claim “the regiment.” Both units have a reputation that speaks for itself and does not need to be exemplified with footnotes or quotes. Most importantly, both units have a steady cadre of soldiers who spend most of their careers in these units, which proves the Army already has regimental

systems in place that are not only functioning, but are also the elite among their orders of battle.

There is more to an effective regiment than just its common headquarters and regimental lineage — personnel continuity is critical to ensuring a regiment remains a nurturing infrastructure for esprit de corps. When soldiers are loyal to their regiment and professionally fulfilled, they will initiate efforts to increase the unit's overall performance. This is becoming common practice at well-led small units Armywide, but is not optimal because these levels of loyalty are relative to echelons with the strongest leaders. For example, a company performs very well during a company-led operation, but when part of a battalion operation, it sometimes becomes desynchronized or may not be as productive. In others instances, soldiers go the limit for their team or squad leader, but become introverted in the presence of their sergeant major or battalion commander, who they may not trust. The regiment sets the tone for effective leadership by promoting an environment of trust. Regardless of how bad a situation may be, individual soldiers and their immediate chains of command have a consistent sense of military identity, a bond. This bond is very comparable to a loving family; it is a constant source of strength that enables soldiers to adapt in any role or operational environment. This is because no matter what the role, each soldier is a member of the regiment, which is enough. This collective military identity has never been fully explored by psychologists; however, students of history realize that the strongest units have always had an incredible sense of belonging on the part of the individual soldier.

Other advantages to the regiment include its instinct to regenerate through self-recruitment and train soldiers to a greater level of effectiveness than external schools. Though self-recruiting may not be applicable today, the regiment can still recruit from basic training centers and specialty schools. The Ranger Regiment and Special Forces commonly give briefings at the Airborne School to “recruit” motivated volunteers. This is correctly predicated on the notion that a soldier who volunteers for a unit is likely to be a better performer than one who is indifferent. A functional regimental system in the Army would send recruiters to basic training installations to recruit volunteers, portraying their regiment as being optimal based on its lineage, training, esprit de corps, valor, etc. This negates the subsequent negativity that occurs when the Army enlists soldiers who are motivated by things other than soldiering, and assigns them to units based on their superficial desires. When soldiers are assigned to

a unit that has little or no esprit de corps, they realize that soldiering is a rugged, demanding life and tend to shut down from disappointment and count the days until their enlistment ends. Having a regiment whose cadre actively takes initiative to preserve its legacy and strengthen its character increases the professionalism of its soldiers.

The regiment is generally admired for its martial culture, and its accomplishments are heralded throughout the Army. The Army will become more self-aware when populated with a network of regiments with unique identities. For example, members of a ranger regiment train new soldiers on military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) tactics strictly in accordance with their stand operating procedure (SOP). The SOP has immediate credibility based on the fact that the regiment had actually developed the tactics. Another example is the 3d ACR's counterinsurgency mission in Tal Afar, Iraq. In this case, the regimental commander brilliantly grasped the reality on the ground and successfully drove a wedge between the enemy and the tribal population. From this example, the Army formulated a campaign plan to better operate in Iraq.

Indeed, many units in the Army have developed tactics and SOPs and many units are equally adept at counterinsurgency. However, these units were not heralded like the 75th and 3d ACR because the brigade system brands them as "generic" and creates an expectation of mediocrity from the elite-minded Army hierarchy. For example, a brigade headquarters may not be part of the same regiment as a particular battalion and therefore not share the battalion's credit for a successful mission. As a result, the brigade may downplay the battalion's success or take credit

for it. On the other hand, the regiment is proud of its subordinate units' success, which is based on a vested interest in its soldiers, who are the continuity of its long-standing heritage.

Leaders above the regimental level will have the ability to visualize an individual regiment's capabilities based on its own merits. The evidence of a regiment's command climate is indicated by the quality of soldiers seeking membership. Because a career track is centered on service in a particular regiment, officers spend a lot more time with troops and test on actual operations, as opposed to using sanitized training environments. Career tracking provides division commanders, and above, an advantage in evaluating senior officers, which is influenced by a regimental commander's time within the unit and his personal relationship with his soldiers. Truly selfless leaders, who dedicate their lives to making units stronger, will rise to higher command in contrast to the careerists who spend their careers seeking sycophantic assignments. This reinforces a better standard of what shapes competitive officers and capable fighting units.

### **Misconceptions from the Brigade's Byzantine Atmosphere Lead to a Softened Military Culture**

The brigade does not add to the cohesion and capability of battalions as it so acknowledges; in fact, the brigade pretends to be a ubiquitous headquarters that can sanitize the friction of war for higher level planners and overlooks establishing cohesive units. Another misconception is that the brigade system can synchronize various maneuver assets, which makes it necessary to put them all under one such command. This may make sense in theory, but the reality is most units in a brigade never operate to-

*"Many brigade headquarters have allowed their disconnected nature to darken their vision of their subordinates, and their staff officers are conditioned to sycophancy, casting aspersions on subordinate units. This leads the brigade to condemn and stifle initiative. For example, battalions and companies have accomplished amazing things in Iraq and Afghanistan and will continue to do so, yet their actions were not recognized; instead, they were marginalized by the jealous character of the brigade culture."*



gether until they train at a combined arms training center. Even after this training, the brigade headquarters remains a foreign entity to subordinate battalions, all of which have different regimental lineages. To forge a brigade combat “team,” as it is called, operations must be standardized across the brigade, which marginalizes the customs of the regiments. This effect is anathema to esprit de corps.

Many successful battalion and company operations have been undermined beneath the umbrella of the brigade. Many brigade headquarters have allowed their disconnected nature to darken their vision of their subordinates, and their staff officers are conditioned to sycophancy, casting aspersion on subordinate units. This leads the brigade to condemn and stifle initiative. For example, battalions and companies have accomplished amazing things in Iraq and Afghanistan and will continue to do so, yet their actions were not recognized; instead, they were marginalized by the jealous character of the brigade culture. This is because the brigade, unlike the regiment, fails to marshal the cohesiveness of its subordinates to accomplish what it sets out to do. Instead, the brigade is forced into a highly decentralized operational tempo because it cannot truly be ingrained with the battalions, who all become their own entities. The brigade then becomes frustrated and injects “guidance,” which will either take the form of an order or perhaps be disregarded — all at the convenience of the brigade and the expense of lower echelons.

Field Manual 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*, defines the brigade by what it is meant to accomplish: “as a combined arms maneuver *unit*, the BCT closes with and destroys the enemy by combining reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, long-range fires, maneuver, and the support of joint and other Army units.”<sup>12</sup> This doctrine is flawed based on the brigade’s lack of intangible ethos that make it a *unit*. Rather, it is a supervisor for subordinate battalions and does not offer anything but control and the allocation of resources. This disconnect negates the advantage of brigade’s other intended capability, which is the fact that it is the lowest level echelon in the Army that can be deployed without a higher headquarters. Ultimately, the brigade ends up under the command of an outside division headquarters, further isolating it and lending to its frustration. Lacking lineage, the fulfillment of actual soldiering and being the least accountable echelon in the Army, the brigade headquarters becomes an entity that damages the soul of the Army by killing the esprit de corps that nourishes it.

The Army’s current attempt at implementing a regimental system, which was designed in 1981, is not working. It is ceremonial at best. It was meant “to provide each soldier with continuous identification with a single regiment and to support that concept with a personnel system that would increase a soldier’s probability of serving recurring assignments with his or her regiment.”<sup>13</sup> In this system, the benefits of granting a lineage are made irrelevant by the adjustment the Army has made to accommodate its current wartime tempo. Currently units, from division to battalion level, are reflagged erroneously to accommodate the Army’s manning needs. They are also manned with the goal of pushing a unit into a deployment cycle, breaking it apart, and reconstituting it within months, just to deploy again. Soldiers reenlist for the sake of duty station preferences and deployment cycle. One Army unit looks the same as another, regardless of its mission or lineage. The intangible rewards of regimental lineage will not pay off, as they should, as long as the brigade and divisional system remains synonymous throughout the Army.

The awkward mixture of brigade headquarters and battalions that pretend to assume a regimental lineage creates a confusing and opportunistic bureaucracy, which is accommodating to the nuances of various divisions and garrison cultures, using an assembly-line approach toward task organizing. Not only is the reg-

imental lineage confusing, but battalion commanders constantly mix-match platoons and brigade commanders mix-match companies to task organize according to mission demands. This clearly indicates that the Army culture believes material capability is more important than unit cohesion, which would not be necessary if the Army had a durable and flexible regimental structure from the beginning.

The Army’s brigade cohort system is flawed in four primary areas:

- It is a hindrance to adaptive and dynamic leaders at the battalion level and below due to its synchronization with higher echelons instead of subordinate units.
- Its command climate has become negative in all aspects because it is too far removed from reality to make operational decisions or understand realism beyond a slide presentation.
- It is an entity separate from the units that actually maneuver, and instead of employing cohesively, they compete for resources and create a forum for quarreling over superfluous tasks. This mentality becomes contagious and contaminates the battalions in their dealings with subordinate commands, which stems from a softened military culture that loses its esprit de corps as a result of the brigade headquarters being an independent entity that resembles a Byzantine hierarchy.
- Through the misconception of discipline and jaded regard for its soldiers, the brigade maliciously saps the esprit de corps from battalions. The battalions, in turn, lose long-term dedication by denying soldiers a climate in which to make personal and lasting contributions to the organization. The brigade headquarters resorts to marginalizing cultures that give soldiers a true sense of belonging and ownership of their profession, and further subjects them to mundane regulations that numb their passions for soldiering.

These four flaws prove that battalions require a regimental headquarters ingrained with the lineage and history of the battalions, intimately familiar with its soldiers and culture, and leaders who righteously depend on the unit’s consistently good reputation to sustain their careers beyond that of individual achievements. Instead of being a facilitator, the current regimental system merely becomes a funnel for the bureaucratic Army’s misperceived need to regulate every occasion and limit the span of leader authority.

### The Illusion of Discipline and Cohesion

The brigade’s cultural and bureaucratic distance from its battalions lead it to misconstrue the definition of effective discipline and cohesion. The brigade system marginalizes its lower level units in the Army. As it is more connected with division headquarters, the brigade creates a misguided impression that discipline takes the form of a regulation. It goes on further to regard a regulation as equal to a standard, which is incorrect because regulations simply attempt to control human behavior by controls or restrictions. The brigade believes that a regulated unit is a better unit and blind enforcement of regulations against all personnel defines discipline, which results in leaders not leading. Instead, they enforce regulations or, even worse, become subjected to outsiders who enforce regulations for them.

Regardless of designation, leaders make units effective. It is much easier for leaders to hone their skills throughout the Army if a credible military culture exists which allows effective leaders to predominate. To do this, leaders need a climate of discipline to foster cohesiveness. “Discipline,” as defined for the purposes of this article, is “the instant and willing obedience to orders and respect for authority.” The key point in this definition is the word “willing.” Without discipline, cohesiveness cannot exist. “Cohesiveness,” for the purposes of this article, is defined as “working together for a common purpose.” There cannot be

true cohesiveness unless discipline preexists; without discipline, orders will be confused, command relationships become dysfunctional, and sense of purpose is lost, which saps the morale out of even the most eager soldiers. Every soldier, from the very young inexperienced soldier to the tough experienced warfighter, requires esprit de corps to perform better than mediocre.

Regulations do not produce discipline because the letter of the regulation becomes the leverage outside agencies use to manipulate commanders. This disrupts cohesiveness because the purpose of the organization becomes subject to the regulation it is meant to follow. Regulations are established by individuals who have long since departed the unit and are no longer accountable for its performance. The regimental system solves this schism of regulation-versus-discipline issue by relying on command authority to interpret regulations to achieve higher standards of performance.

### The Brigade Enables a Culture of Misconceptions

As a result of the Army's misconceptions on the subject of creating an adaptable unit, it marginalizes its regimental lineage, sacrificing unit cohesion and adaptability on the battlefield. Continually shifting and restructuring task organization to fit specific missions is completely unnecessary because the regimental structure is solid and flexible enough to support any type of operation. This is compared to the brigade model, whose overemphasis on flexibility serves to make it inflexible. The Army has heavy brigade combat "teams" that possess a robust personnel authorization, but binds them to vehicle platforms so that they cannot penetrate restricted terrain. The non-heavy brigade combat "teams" (which cannot be described as light because they are bound to armored trucks) lack the personnel to maintain sufficient combat power during high-intensity combat. The current management of the Army brigade "cohorts" or "teams" (Army doctrinal terminology has been inconsistent from 2004-2009) is suited for strategic-level planners, but not conducive to battalion- and company-level echelons, which need consistent military structure, a hierarchy from which to draw inspiration and institutional knowledge, and the ability to adapt to all aspects of full-spectrum operations.

This culture of mixing pseudo regimental lineage with brigade command and control, coupled with constantly juggling task organization, is a mistake. This mix-match has caused a large number of soldiers from various professional backgrounds to work together toward ambiguous end states, which has led to a facade of discipline and cohesiveness that will not stand the test of incessant and even harsher operational demands. It would be more efficient to train and deploy units that have the same type of personnel and task organization. To return to the regimental system and restart the Army toward an effective combined arms regimental system, the Department of Defense will be required to support a required framework such as:

**Year one.** Reflag each battalion in every brigade under the same regiment. This includes the reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition (RSTA) squadron, which should be reconstituted as an infantry battalion. The Army handpicks noncommissioned officers and officers to be stationed at a regiment for a 6-year period. These soldiers are given incentives, such as bonuses and guaranteed duty stations of choice, after a 6-year commitment. Also, each regiment stands up a regimental direct-action/recon unit that can project combat power for the regimental headquarters, which leads to facilitating higher headquarters' ability to affect the deeper fight.

**Year two.** Life cycle is 2 years home, 1 year deployed, which must be maintained. Perhaps deployed units can be given significantly less operational requirements to support additional

leave and reset periods when training can be conducted. Also, regional recruiting offices can recruit locally on behalf of division commanders. Soldiers are immediately assigned sponsors and enter into a regimental indoctrination program (determined based on the regiment of assignment), and then prepare to successfully complete basic training.

**Year three.** Reflag every brigade headquarters as a combined arms regiment. Assign an organic attack aviation battalion to each regiment, as well as fires cell, which can deconflict air and indirect fire by space at both regiment and battalion levels.

Each regiment should have its own training area on every post, as well as its own personnel support system. Regiments should also establish their own regulations and provide input for their own modified tables of organization and equipment (MTOEs). The final result is a better Army, whose soldiers are connected to a unit for life, which builds a way of life with families and communities that will support the Army for generations to come.

The most effective way to improve any organization is to improve on what is already established, not change it! To prevent the Army from further degradation brought on by the demands of current operations, a pure military culture is needed, which will enable the U.S. Army's proven character to withstand the test of time. The Army must rebuild and reinforce the one military structure that fosters adaptive and dynamic leaders rather than forces them to constantly conform to a rigid garrison life and ubiquitous regulations. For this to happen, the battalion must be empowered by a level of command focused on enabling battalions and companies and growing leaders rather than being consumed with the tedium of overregulating and nonmission-related issues.



### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, 2006, Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1-1.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1-3.

<sup>4</sup>Quote by B.H. Liddell Hart, English soldier, historian, and leading interwar theorist.

<sup>5</sup>Edward G. Wertheim, "Historical Background of Organizational Behavior," Essay, College of Business Administration, Northeastern University, Boston, 2007.

<sup>6</sup>Louis Morton, *U.S. Army in World War II, The War in the Pacific, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, Foreword by James A. Norell, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, DC, 1961.

<sup>7</sup>Office of the Chief of Military History, *The U.S. Army Historical Series*, "The Army and the New Look," U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, DC, Chapter 26, 1967.

<sup>8</sup>John J. McGrath, *The Brigade: A History*, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2004.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Regulation (AR) 600-82, *The U.S. Army Regimental System*, GPO, Washington, DC, 1 May 1986 (superseded by AR 600-82, 5 June 1990).

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup>FM 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*.

<sup>13</sup>AR 600-82, *The U.S. Army Regimental System*.

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# THE STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM: IDEAL FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

by Captain Richard Marsh

In 2009, the U.S. Army made a decision to transform the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) from a heavy cavalry organization into a Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) organization.<sup>1</sup> This decision was based on ongoing counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, restructuring the Army into brigade combat teams (BCTs), an increasing emphasis on information technology in seeing and understanding the battlefield, and a widespread assumption that the Stryker brigade is the ideal organization for full-spectrum operations.

Ongoing counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan created a sense of immediacy among senior defense leaders to increase the number of units optimized for counterinsurgency. The authors of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review called for a need to increase COIN capability among “general purpose forces.”<sup>2</sup> They noted that in response to this need the Army would convert a heavy brigade combat team (HBCT) into an SBCT no later than FY13. Counterinsurgency operations appear to demand a force that fields as many infantrymen as possible

and vehicles capable of rapidly and safely transporting infantrymen around the battlespace. Within this context, the 3d ACR’s heavy cavalry structure was the least optimized and the Stryker brigade structure was the most optimized.

The Department of the Army viewed the 3d ACR’s organization as the least desirable to conduct counterinsurgency operations. The Armor School argued against this view, citing the 3d ACR’s success in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) during multiple rotations. Nevertheless, the Army decided that the need for more infantry in the contemporary operating environment was paramount and the 3d ACR did not provide enough.<sup>3</sup>

The 3d ACR, in its heavy cavalry configuration, contains three cavalry squadrons, an aviation squadron, and a support squadron. Each cavalry squadron contains a headquarters and headquarters troop, three cavalry troops, a tank company, and an artillery battery. Each cavalry troop consists of two platoons of four tanks and two scout platoons of six Bradley fighting vehicles (BFV); each BFV has only two dismounted scouts. This vehicle-

heavy, dismount-light organization was optimized for high-intensity conflict. It boasted enormous firepower, the best protection available, and the most mobile vehicles at the Army’s disposal. However, this high-intensity focus was undesirable during COIN operations.

During COIN operations, foot soldiers are necessary to secure the population, build rapport with the population, and establish important connections with the government and security forces of the beleaguered state. The more “boots on the ground” a unit can employ, the better its potential for success during COIN operations.<sup>4</sup> The ACR contains the fewest number of foot soldiers of any brigade-sized unit in the Army. It contains no infantry-specific personnel; without augmentation or dismounting vehicle crews, the ACR’s dismounted capability is supported entirely by dismounted scouts.

Successful COIN operations help minimize collateral damage to civilians while troops are engaging insurgent forces. It is important that U.S. forces are not perceived a threat to a population they are trying to protect. The M1 Abrams and M3

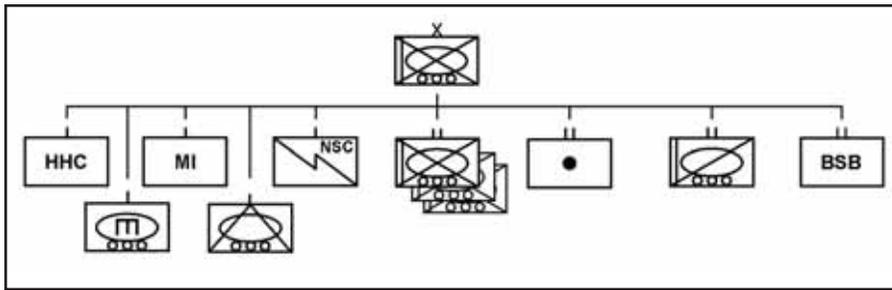


Figure 1. SBCT Organization<sup>5</sup>

Bradley are large combat vehicles that make the 3d ACR so effective during high-intensity combat by virtue of their armor and massive firepower. However, these weapons can cause collateral damage, which may exceed an acceptable measure in all but the most concentrated high-intensity COIN operations. Therefore, in the eyes of senior Army leaders, the primacy of the M1 and M3 in the 3d ACR make the heavy cavalry organization undesirable for COIN operations.

Conversely, the Stryker brigade structure represents the ideal organization for COIN operations. A Stryker brigade consists of three motorized infantry battalions; a reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition (RSTA) squadron; a field artillery battalion; a brigade support battalion (BSB); an antitank company; an engineer company; a military intelligence company; and a signal company. Each infantry battalion contains three infantry companies and a headquarters and headquarters company (HHC). Each infantry company contains three rifle platoons, a section of 60mm and 120mm mortars, a mobile gun system (MGS) platoon of three MGS vehicles, and a sniper team. This organi-

zation boasts an authorized strength of 1,351 infantrymen, the largest of any brigade-sized unit in the Army. In addition, it fields 51 snipers, also the highest density within any BCT. Furthermore, all troops can be carried in the fast, lightly armed and armored Stryker vehicle. This large quantity of highly mobile infantrymen is ideal for COIN operations.

The Army sees the Stryker vehicle as the ideal vehicle for COIN operations: its .50-caliber machine gun does far less collateral damage than the 120mm main gun of the M1 or the 25mm main gun of the M3; its wheeled nature is ideal for driving on hard-surface roads such as those found in most population centers where COIN operations occur; and its wheels are low maintenance and comparatively fuel-efficient. While the constant short-range patrolling of a COIN environment takes a huge maintenance toll on the M1 and M3, the Stryker can conduct patrol missions and not suffer similar maintenance burdens.

In addition to creating a perceived need for more COIN-optimized BCTs, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have greatly strained the Army's aviation resources,

which prompted it to create more combat aviation brigades (CABs).<sup>6</sup> For the Army to economically create more aviation brigades, it consolidated aircraft that were dispersed throughout maneuver units around the Army. The assets of the 3d ACR's aviation squadron fielded an important portion of aviation resources needed for the 12th CAB.<sup>7</sup> The Army's desperate need for the valuable aviation resources further motivated the Army to transform the 3d ACR.

Restructuring the Army into a BCT-centric force contributed to the Army's decision to convert the 3d ACR into a Stryker brigade. The need to make the Army more agile and adaptive to 21st-century opponents, who would not fight along linear fronts but from all sides, motivated the Army's move to a brigade-centric force.<sup>8</sup> The Army organized its maneuver forces into infantry brigade combat teams (IBCTs), heavy brigade combat teams (HBCTs), and formed a new category of medium brigades, known as "Stryker brigade combat teams (SBCTs)." These brigades were standardized across the Army, regardless of division affiliation. Brigades from mechanized infantry and armor divisions became HBCTs or were converted to IBCTs or SBCTs. Brigades from light, airborne, or air assault divisions became IBCTs.

Along with restructuring the Army into BCTs came the concept of modularity, which deduced that any one BCT could be "plugged in" to a higher headquarters and serve the same role with the same capability as any other BCT of its type. The 3d ACR, with its unique organization, did not fit into this "modular" concept and therefore was in need of conversion.<sup>9</sup>

Converting the 3d ACR also reflects a change in how the Army identifies cavalry's role on the battlefield, considering advances in information technology. Converting the 3d ACR is part of the Army's trend to maneuver away from cavalry units capable of fighting for information. Since the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s, the Army has swung between favoring cavalry units organized and equipped to fight for information versus units optimized for stealth.<sup>10</sup> Debate has long raged within the cavalry world over whether cavalry forces should be designed to fight for information or designed to stealthily avoid direct engagement and gather information principally through observation.<sup>11</sup>

The Army that went to Operation Desert Storm in 1990, employed cavalry optimized to fight for information. However, following that successful operation, the digital revolution of the 1990s swung



"The M1 Abrams and M3 Bradley are large combat vehicles that make the 3d ACR so effective during high-intensity combat by virtue of their armor and massive firepower. However, these weapons can cause collateral damage, which may exceed an acceptable measure in all but the most concentrated high-intensity COIN operations."

the pendulum back in favor of lighter, stealthy cavalry organizations.<sup>12</sup> The Army believes it can eliminate the need to fight for information by employing an array of sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles, and digital communications equipment. Cavalry does not need the protection of tanks and BFVs because sensors of the future force are meant to grant cavalymen perfect information.<sup>13</sup> This information, in turn, allows cavalry units to engage the enemy at the time and place of their choosing, safely out of harm's way, using long-range precision munitions. As a result, future cavalry could be mounted on lighter platforms such as the Stryker vehicle. The light, digital nature of the SBCT, therefore, promises an increase in the capability of commanders to gather information about the enemy while providing the Army with a force ideal for full-spectrum operations.

The Army's decision to convert the 3d ACR into an SBCT reflects the importance of deployability and perceived capability to conduct full-spectrum operations that the Army has attached to force structure. Following the end of the Cold War, the United States reevaluated the structure and location of its forces around the globe. The size of the Army was reduced to nearly half its size and many of its forces stationed in Europe and Asia were brought back to the Continental United States (CONUS).<sup>14</sup> Since Europe no longer needed defending and there existed no credible land-based threat endangering the American homeland, Army senior leaders sought to reorient the structure of the Army to enable its deployment from CONUS to anywhere in the world. Furthermore, the Army had to have the capability of conducting not only high-intensity combat operations, but also operations other than war such as humanitarian missions and peacekeeping operations. Therefore, the Army sought force structures with the capability to conduct any operation across the spectrum — from humanitarian assistance to high-intensity combat. A single operation could span this spectrum, hence the term “full-spectrum operation.”<sup>15</sup>

The Army built the SBCT to fit the requirements of full-spectrum operations. It is highly deployable compared to a unit equipped with tanks. Stryker vehicles are capable of being loaded on a C-130 cargo plane and unloaded virtually anywhere in the world. By harnessing the power of its sensors, digital communications, vehicles, and infantrymen on the ground, an SBCT can engage enemy forces during high-intensity operations, through its combined arms capability, or conduct peacekeeping operations using its low-



“The Army’s decision to convert the 3d ACR into an SBCT reflects the importance of deployability and perceived capability to conduct full-spectrum operations that the Army has attached to force structure.”

impact vehicles to mitigate impact on the local population. Alternatively, the 3d ACR was slow to deploy, and seemingly less capable of conducting full-spectrum operations.

The Army decided to convert the 3d ACR into an SBCT as a result of the overall trend since the late 1990s’ move toward a more deployable and technology-dependent force. The SBCT also provides much-needed “boots on the ground,” of which there has been a critical shortage during ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The contemporary operating environment, therefore, created a sense of immediacy for the transformation of the 3d ACR, which helped cast aside the arguments of those who sought to preserve its old heavy cavalry organization.

In the near-term, the Army will likely not see degradation of its capability to wage COIN operations as a result of the transformation of the 3d ACR. However, the

absence of a corps-level reconnaissance asset will hinder the Army’s ability to wage large-scale, high-intensity operations against enemy states. This capability gap will necessitate a move to strengthen the battlefield surveillance brigades (BfSBs), which filled the role vacated by the 3d ACR in the midst of the contemporary operating environment and the information-age Army.



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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Gina Cavallaro and Kris Osborn, “3D ACR to become 3D SCR,” *Army Times*, 3 October 2009.

<sup>2</sup>Headquarters, Department of Defense, *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, 2010, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup>Daniel R. Murdock, Correspondence with Author, 20 April 2010. Mr. Daniel Murdock was a member of the combat development office of the Armor School, Training, Doctrine, and Combat Development Directorate (TDCD) during the time of the Army’s decision to convert the 3d ACR. He provided the author insight into the basis for Army’s decision to convert the 3d ACR.

<sup>4</sup>David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Praeger Security International, 1964, pp. 21 and 65-66.

<sup>5</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, August 2006.

<sup>6</sup>2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup>Daniel R. Murdock, Correspondence with Author, 20 April 2010.

<sup>8</sup>FM 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*, p. 1-5.

<sup>9</sup>Daniel R. Murdock, Correspondence with Author, 20 April 2010.

<sup>10</sup>Dr. Robert S. Cameron, *To Fight or Not to Fight? Organizational and Doctrinal Trends in Mounted Maneuver Reconnaissance from the Interwar Years to Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Combat Studies Institute Press, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2010, p. xvi.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 417.

<sup>13</sup>For a discussion of the Army’s attempt to achieve “information dominance” through technology see H.R. McMaster, “Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War,” Student Issue Paper, Center for Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, November 2003, Volume S03-03.

<sup>14</sup>Cameron, *To Fight or Not to Fight?*, p. 335.

<sup>15</sup>FM 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*, pp. 1-7 to 1-9.

# The Mobile Gun System Platoon

by Captain Timothy McDonald



Three months into my tenure as a mobile gun system (MGS) platoon leader, and 2 days into my first training rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, my commander approached me and asked, “Are you ready to be a platoon leader?” I fervently responded, “Yes, sir!” He responded, “No, are you ready to be a rifle platoon leader?” As any young second lieutenant might, I recall “knowing” very clearly that I was ready. I was ready to lead nine men and three MGS vehicles toward any attack or support-by-fire position necessary to destroy the enemy with overwhelming fires. But I also knew that I had only one MGS, instead of three, and units in Iraq did not engage in direct-fire fights on a daily basis. When my commander posed his question, I should have realized that I would have to be ready to do more than maneuver three MGS vehicles to a position from which I could destroy the enemy.

Such is the case for MGS platoon leaders and their platoons now as it has been since 2004. Though MGS platoons doctrinally provide direct-fire support to rifle squads in the assault, the allocation of such overwhelming firepower — or even the assault itself — is not often the essential task in current stability operations. MGS platoons require some alteration, usually in the form of an augmentation, to accomplish the mission established by the company commander. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-21.11, *The SBCT Infantry Rifle Company*, says

little about how commanders redesign the nine-man platoon into an element capable of realizing stability and counterinsurgency tasks; however, historical precedent provides several success stories.<sup>1</sup>

To understand the design of the oft-criticized MGS platoon, first consider the framework behind its establishment. Senior Army leaders have long determined it imperative to possess a medium capability with greater survivability than a light or airborne force, but a deployment time significantly less than a heavy armored force. The establishment of the rapid deployment task force in the late 1970s serves as recognition that heavy armor forces take too long to deploy. As early as 1982, the Army attempted to develop a medium force capable of overcoming these constraints. Through off-the-shelf procurement, the M1047 light armored vehicle (LAV), based on the General Motors of Canada eight-wheeled Piranha, arose as the forerunner to fulfill the capability gap.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, developmental problems and a reluctance to divert funds from the heavy armored forces required to defeat traditional Soviet threats led to cancellation of the program. Despite this setback, the Army’s inability to deploy Abrams- and Bradley-centric Task Force Hawk from Germany to Albania for use in Kosovo in the spring of 1999 convinced senior leaders that change was necessary.

Thus began the design of a new rapidly deployable and easily sustainable medi-

um force that would meet the demands of future international conflicts. Senior Army leaders of the time demanded that brigades of the yet-to-be-named platform possess the capability to deploy anywhere in the world within 96 hours. Given constraints in strategic air assets, this requirement largely predicated the use of Air Force C-130s, consequently limiting the vehicle’s size and weight. Furthermore, as with the LAV, the new platform would have to be selected from off-the-shelf vehicles to keep procurement costs low. In November 2000, the Army selected the LAV III, built by the teamed General Motors of Canada and General Dynamics Land Systems Division (GDLS), and subsequently named it the “Stryker,” as we now know it. Similar to the LAV, the Stryker exists as several variants, which include infantry carrier vehicle (ICV); reconnaissance vehicle (RV); antitank guided missile (ATGM) vehicle; command-and-control vehicle (CV); mortar carrier vehicle (MCV); fire support vehicle (FSV); engineer squad vehicle (ESV); medical evacuation vehicle (MEV); nuclear, biological, chemical reconnaissance vehicle (NBC RV); and the Mobile Gun System (MGS) vehicle (Figure 1).

Unlike most other variants of the Stryker, the MGS required extensive development prior to full-scale fielding, which remains unfinished. Early prototypes topped the scales at more than 52,000 pounds, would not fit into a C-130, and suffered from high-azimuth restrictions to the main

gun. All-too-familiar stories of MGS vehicles rolling on their side when shooting at 90-degree angles over the hull plagued testing efforts and created tremendous controversy regarding the practicality of the overall design. In developing the LAV-105, the Marines experienced similar problems and consequently cancelled its production. To be fair, demands on the vehicle are extremely high. The MGS must provide its Stryker rifle company with not only an antitank and direct-fire capability to reduce bunkers and fortified buildings, but it must also meet the size and weight constraints that define the Stryker brigade combat team's (SBCT) overall strategic mission.

The MGS, as it exists today, delivers direct supporting fires to infantry squads deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (OIF and OEF). Although it still exceeds the 38,000 pound threshold for C-130 airlift, it has largely overcome other design setbacks. The MGS uses a 105mm M68A1E4 rifled cannon in a low-profile, fully stabilized turret designed to shoot on the move at 360 degrees. The vehicle carries 18 main gun rounds, eight of which are ready, while the remaining ten are held in the hull-mounted ammunition "replenisher." Its effective range is 2,000 meters with an actual rate-of-fire of eight rounds per minute.<sup>3</sup> The main gun fires four types of ammunition, which includes kinetic energy (SABOT), high-explosive antitank (HEAT), high-explosive plastic (HEP), and antipersonnel (canister) rounds. In addition to the main gun, the MGS mounts a .50-caliber machine gun at the vehicle commander's (VC) hatch, a coaxial M240C with 1,600 rounds of ready ammunition, and two M6 grenade launchers.

The MGS platoon is comprised of three vehicles with a crew of three men each. Led by a 19A platoon leader and a 19KR4 platoon sergeant, the small platoon maintains a robust command-and-control (C2) capability. The first two vehicles are commanded by the platoon leader and platoon sergeant, while the remaining vehicle is commanded by a 19K staff sergeant; all three are crewed by E4-E5 gunners and E2-E4 drivers. (Figure 2)

With regards to its capabilities, the MGS platoon offers markedly greater firepower than the Stryker rifle platoon — something the infantry has lacked. Moreover, the MGS boasts a gunner's sight that exceeds in capability the imaging modules of the remote weapons station on the ICV; and the VC also employs an additional sight called the commander's panoramic viewer (CPV), which is similar in function to the commander's independent thermal viewer (CITV) on the M1A2 Abrams main battle tank. The coaxial machine gun offers precision 7.62mm fires with ac-

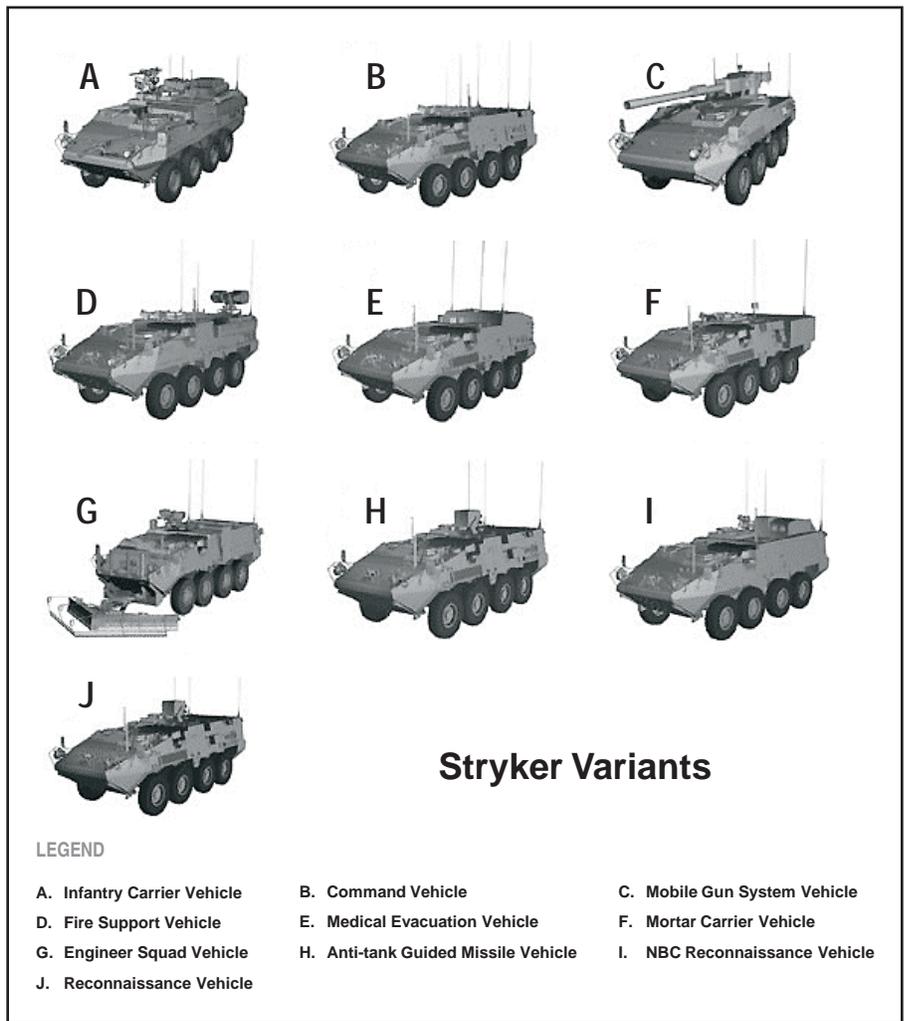


Figure 1

curacy greater than can be expected from a dismounted weapons squad — a feature that should provide commanders supreme confidence when vehicles are in support of dismounted squads.

Like all other things, the MGS platoon also possesses certain limitations. Much like the Abrams, the vehicle has significant blind spots, which must be over-watched by dismounted elements in dense

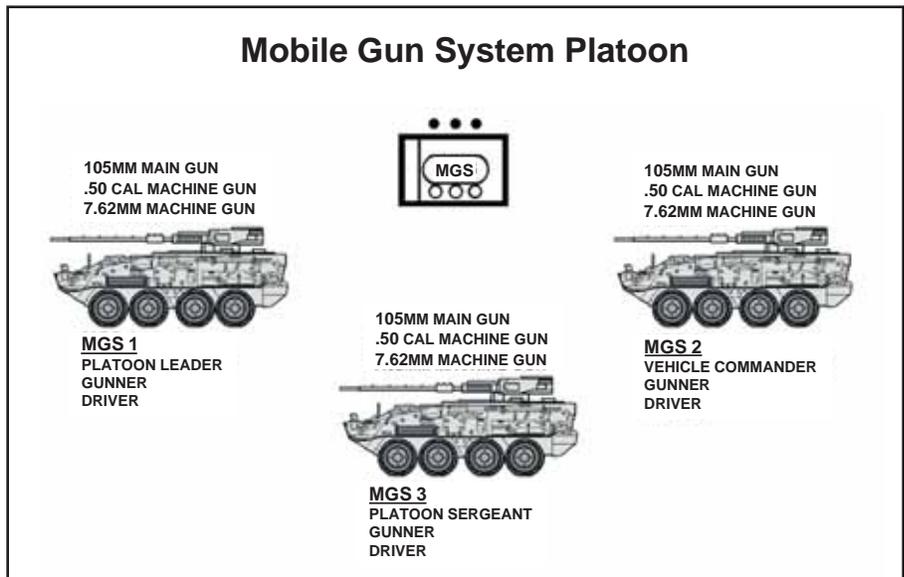


Figure 2



*"The MGS, as it exists today, delivers direct supporting fires to infantry squads deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (OIF and OEF). Although it still exceeds the 38,000 pound threshold for C-130 airlift, it has largely overcome other design setbacks. The MGS uses a 105mm M68A1E4 rifled cannon in a low-profile, fully stabilized turret designed to shoot on the move at 360 degrees."*

terrain or built-up areas. The vehicle also weighs significantly more than other Stryker variants and is, therefore, less mobile in certain terrain — particularly on wet or loose soil. With only nine soldiers, the platoon offers no dismounted capability. Furthermore, because the platoon leader is tied to the vehicle, the commander will effectively forfeit a C2 asset by assigning a platoon leader's vehicle to another platoon.

As stated in FM 3-21.11, the MGS platoon's fundamental mission is to provide mounted, precision direct-fire support to the SBCT infantry company.<sup>4</sup> Its function is to destroy or suppress hardened enemy bunkers, machine gun positions, and sniper positions, and create infantry breach points in urban, restricted, and rolling terrain.<sup>5</sup> In the offense, the MGS platoon can doctrinally conduct attack by fire, overwatch/support by fire, or bypass. Its defensive tasks include defend from a battle position, participate in a counterattack, and perform as a reserve to conduct a spoiling attack to block enemy penetration or reinforce a defending platoon.

Experienced commanders know these tasks manifest themselves in many forms during stability operations. MGS platoons remain ready to attack by fire or counterattack during the conduct of convoy escort. In this role, commanders maximize economy of force while maintaining mobility and survivability. Also in the offense, the MGS can breach to provide a point of entry for assaulting infantry. Through the use of its high-explosive plastic rounds, the MGS creates holes in walls or barriers in thickness of up to 8 inches of reinforced concrete. MGS platoons, or sections, essentially defend a bat-

tle position while overwatching a traffic control point (TCP) or blocking position. The same can be said when MGS vehicles isolate an objective by fire as a part of an infantry company cordon and search. Both tasks capitalize on the platoon's standoff and lethality. Ultimately, commanders must employ their MGS platoon where and when they need to take maximum advantage of its inherent capabilities of firepower, maneuver, shock effect, and survivability.

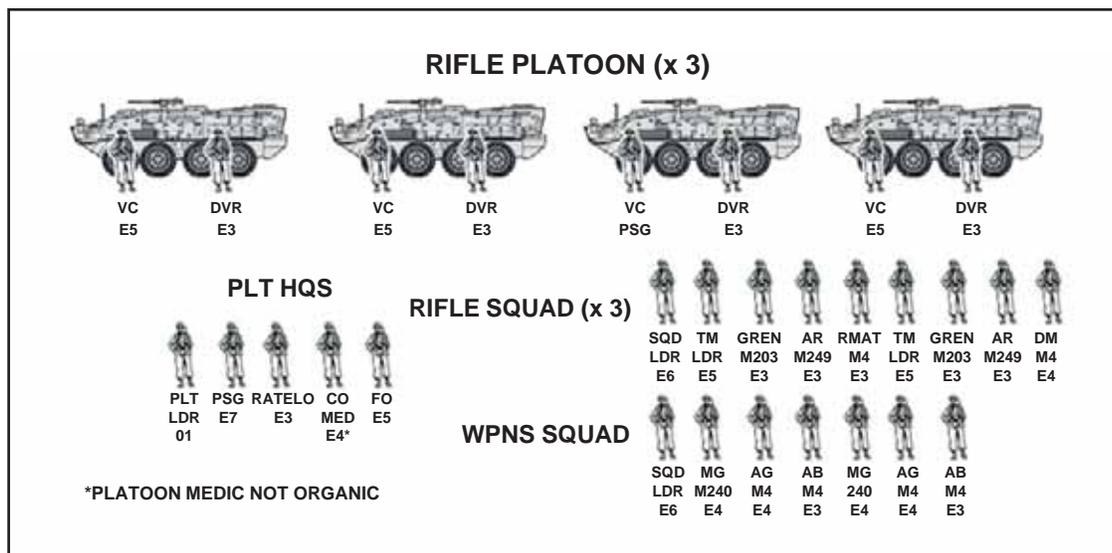
To accomplish these tasks, doctrine describes two primary methods of task organization for the MGS platoon. The first is platoon pure. In this configuration, the platoon can mass firepower onto an objective and maneuver similar to a tank platoon. The platoon can accomplish separate tasks or the commander can attach it to a rifle platoon. Platoon-pure organization works well when the company operates in open terrain where it can employ long-range fires. It does not work well when operating in built-up areas or other forms of complex terrain where standoff is not available — the platoon is vulnerable to dismounted threats because of its significant blind spots.

The second method of task organization consists of single or dual vehicle sections attached to rifle platoons. In this configuration, the MGS offers additional firepower to rifle platoons in a more decentralized environment or in complex terrain. As previously mentioned, in this role, the commander may forfeit a C2 asset by assigning the MGS platoon leader's vehicle to a rifle platoon. However, he may also create more experienced vehicle sections when an MGS platoon leader or platoon sergeant assumes control of

rifle platoon ICVs after its occupants have dismounted.

While both methods offer advantages and disadvantages, the commander's choice ultimately depends on the rifle company's mission. He must decide how best to augment his rifle squads. After all, this is the quintessential purpose for the MGS: provide direct support to rifle squads during the assault. This choice is not unique; light infantry battalion commanders have long shared this predicament with regards to its heavy weapons company. In both cases, the unit is designed to support dismounted infantry, but its additional firepower is not always needed. In cases where it is not, the unit has difficulty accomplishing its mission without further augmentation. Where additional firepower is needed, the commander must array forces in a manner that does not minimize available C2 assets. The choice — quite frankly — poses a dilemma with ill-defined solutions.

In contrast to doctrinal task organization and identified tactical mission tasks, the factors of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available and civilian considerations (METT-TC), and the operational considerations prevalent in ongoing stability operations, have dictated altogether different conditions for successful mission accomplishment. According to former battalion- and company-level leaders, SBCTs in OIF have historically found themselves with more missions to accomplish than there are platoons to accomplish them. While an SBCT is probably not peculiar in that fact, the perception of these units from leaders of heavy or light brigades is that SBCTs, and sub-



**Figure 3.** SBCT infantry rifle platoon organization

sequently Stryker infantry battalions, should possess the capability to do significantly more. Each rifle company has four combat platoons — sometimes five if the commander chooses to use headquarters as an escort element — and three of those platoons have four vehicles each capable of dismounting an entire infantry squad (Figure 3). Coupled with their ability to generate combat power over long distances in very short periods of time, Stryker infantry battalions and companies often found themselves detached from their parent units and reattached to others that demanded of them more than could be reasonably performed. And where that was not the case, SBCTs owned geographic areas of responsibility significantly larger than previously known and consequently maintained near-unsustainable troop-to-task requirements. As a result, brigade and battalion commanders in SBCTs determined rifle companies required four stand-alone combat platoons rather than three.

Couple this requirement with ever-present tactical situations that effectively negate the MGS platoon's inherent advantages, commanders face an easy decision: assign missions to the MGS platoon that are normally conducted by rifle platoons. Unfortunately, several problems arise when a medium armored platoon receives these tasks. It is too small; the platoon leader and platoon sergeant are tied to their vehicles because there are no additional armor crewmen, and when in a consolidated formation, the vehicles are difficult to protect in complex terrain and densely populated areas. Nevertheless, operational considerations demand the company commander determine where, when, and how to employ the platoon to maximize its advantages.

The result is a myriad of task organizations that add capabilities in some areas, but forfeit them in others. Of these, there are two predominate outcomes. Typically, the commander attaches the company mortar section and sniper team to the MGS platoon to create a 21-man organization. The platoon then requires additional vehicles to accommodate the dismounted infantrymen. The MCVs can fulfill this role to some extent, but they

are difficult to employ in the assault. In many cases, the company executive officer's ICV joins the unit along with the FSV when available. Although this may sound like a ragtag outfit, many companies have successfully used this task organization (hereinafter referred to as "course of action (COA) C," after its complement of 11C mortarmen) for the purposes of civil military operations, convoy escort, commander escort, and sev-



*"The MGS platoon is comprised of three vehicles with a crew of three men each. Led by a 19A platoon leader and a 19KR4 platoon sergeant, the small platoon maintains a robust command-and-control (C2) capability. The first two vehicles are commanded by the platoon leader and platoon sergeant, while the remaining vehicle is commanded by a 19K staff sergeant; all three are crewed by E4-E5 gunners and E2-E4 drivers."*

eral other specialty missions requiring minimal dismounted maneuver capability when direct-fire contact is unlikely (Figure 4).

An alternative outcome requires a commander to altogether rethink how he arranges his rifle squads. While there are several variations of this less-used course of action, it essentially creates a true fourth maneuver platoon by task organizing rifle squads from rifle platoons. Units have employed this course of action (hereafter referred to as "COA B") by attaching as

few as one rifle squad and its ICV to as many as three squads (Figure 5).

Along the spectrum of deviation from the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE), commanders must consider the cost of downsizing their rifle platoons to the benefit of a fourth maneuver element of comparable size. Much like the decisions of brigade and battalion commanders in determining the number of platoons required to accomplish their mission, the company commander must consider the factors of METT-TC

when determining the structure of this fourth platoon. Foremost of these concerns will obviously be the mission. What will each of these platoons be required to do on a daily basis? Will they control platoon focus areas or areas of responsibility? To what extent will they need to partner with a host-nation security force counterpart? Will they have a force protection requirement to secure a combat outpost (COP) or joint security station (JSS)? The commander must also assess his operating environment for the likelihood of violence and be prepared to assume risk. What threat will the platoons face on a daily basis? Is it likely they will encounter complex ambushes in the conduct of their missions?

The foremost consideration is whether the rifle company will act as a land-owning unit. As troop numbers decrease in Iraq, for instance, units maintain larger areas of responsibility. This, in turn, increases the demands placed on each remaining unit. High volumes of tasks will require four very versatile platoons capable of accomplishing them. COA B suits this scenario by providing four equally capable platoons that can accomplish each of these missions. Moreover, commanders can easily arrange the schedule to ensure two platoons simultaneously patrol so they can mutually support one another. Fewer platoons or less evenly matched platoons make this possibility significantly less feasible.

Commanders that own not only their own geographic area of responsibility, but also a COP or a JSS may consider COA B to alleviate the strains of force protection and combat patrolling on their platoons.

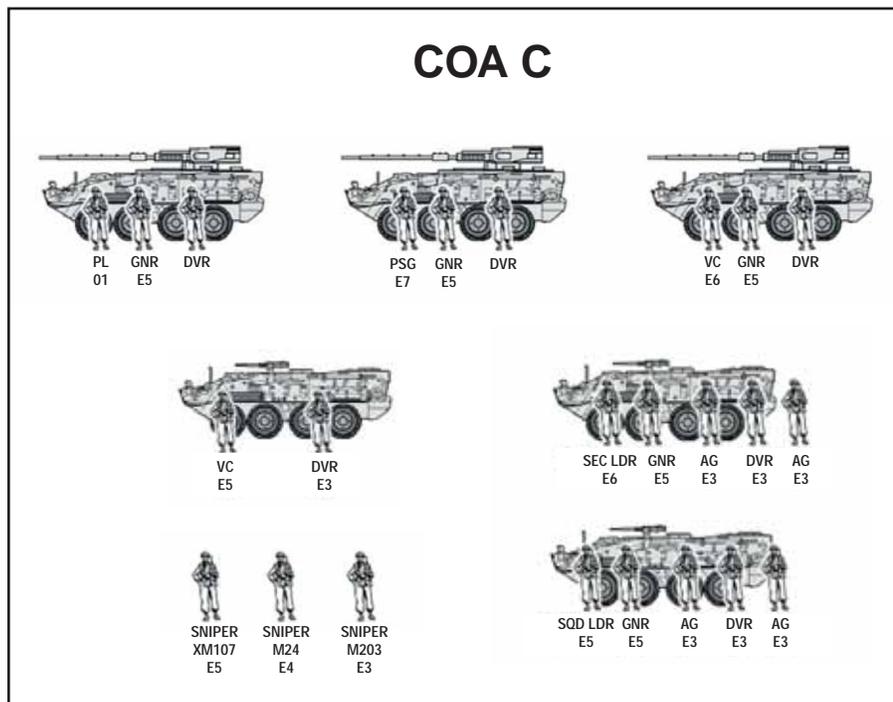


Figure 4

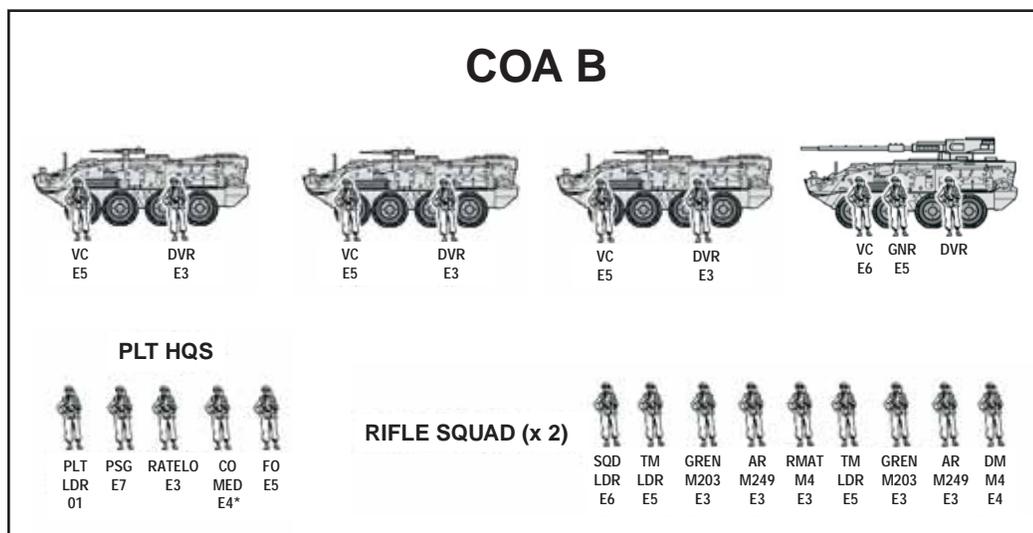


Figure 5

In this scenario, the company requires one platoon to secure the outpost and at least one platoon at a time to patrol. COA B creates a fourth combat platoon, which consequently retains for the commander greater flexibility to allow the third platoon to patrol in either its focus area or assist in a day/night patrol schedule, while providing the fourth and final platoon with refit/retrain opportunities or to serve as a reserve/quick reaction force (QRF). While COA C may also provide some capability to this end, it is unlikely the fourth platoon it creates can provide the same patrolling or force-protection capacity.

The degree of host-nation partnership also plays an important role in task organization. As with advise and assist brigades in Iraq, various companies support Iraqi army (IA) or national police (NP) battalions. Commanders should seek to evenly partner their platoons with the IA/NP battalions' subordinate units. If there are three companies, three large platoons provided by COA C may achieve the mission with greater ease of effort. Conversely, four companies may require four evenly sized platoons. Using the same example, commanders may also need to frequently escort a situational training team (STT). COA C also suits this requirement as relatively few rifle squads are necessary to secure a small team of advisors.

Aside from mission type and quantity, an evaluation of the intensity of violence along the spectrum of conflict is by far the most important consideration. This concern should remain prevalent in the analysis of each of the aforementioned issues. Platoons that encounter or expect to encounter complex ambushes, regardless of the mission, obviously benefit from greater numbers of rifle squads. In this case, COA C minimizes the commitment of forces to secondary efforts and provides the greatest number of maneuver forces at the place most needed. Similarly, campaigns that approach in violence a medium- or high-intensity conflict should be considered far differently than those of the low-intensity conflict considered above. COA B may be entirely impractical if the adversary is a traditional motorized or mechanized force. The commander should obviously consider each of his alternatives in such instances, but he may likely assess the tactical risk too great and therefore unacceptable.

Finally, consider the commander's personal requirements in sector. Keeping in mind the missions commanders need to accomplish and the importance of economy of force, consider which unit might best provide escort in the area of operations. COA B maintains the greatest flexibility to commanders because it does not require the use of a combat platoon to serve as escort. It essentially allows for the use of a fifth maneuver platoon, comprised of the mortars, snipers, and fire-support team. These elements provide a wide range of capabilities when used as a company tactical assault command post (TAC).

As can be expected, an analysis of the aforementioned considerations yields entirely different results in varying operating environments. Current stability operations differ widely from one locale to another and change over time. The list of

questions may no doubt extend far beyond those listed above. Moreover, this analysis is ongoing and often the focus of entire operations, much less the standing task organization. Ultimately, however, these concerns focus on a single question: does the mission require fewer platoons with greater capability or more platoons with slightly less capability? This question — albeit overly generalized — should serve as the framework from which to make this challenging decision and draw a few basic conclusions.

Generally, COA C will better serve commanders who intend to use the fourth platoon as a specialty platoon to escort an explosive ordnance detachment (EOD) or a STT, or to conduct civil military operations. In addition, COA C achieves economy of force by not reducing the size of the rifle platoons. It also maximizes protection and maneuver should the commander believe platoons will make direct-fire contact often. COA B, on the other hand, provides for more evenly balanced platoons all capable of achieving similar tasks — a consideration especially important for large land-owning or otherwise resource-constrained commanders. Additionally, this course of action does not reduce his ability to place indirect fire on targets of opportunity by using his mortar section as a rifle squad (as does COA C); nor does it limit the employment of the company sniper team or the commander's ability to use either headquarters element as an agile fifth platoon as his TAC.

A tremendous contribution to the practicality of both of the aforementioned courses of action is one very important fact: until 2009, no Stryker infantry battalion company boasted a full complement of MGS vehicles. The first MGS platoons employed ATGM variants while most SBCTs still employ a mix of MGS, ATGM, and ICV variants. These ad hoc organizations unfortunately present a clear and significant capability gap in the amount of direct-fire support needed by infantry squads in the assault. Furthermore, a platoon of nine soldiers with one MGS, one ATGM, and one ICV poses a tremendous challenge to tactical leaders in deciding not only how best to maximize its advantages, but also how to employ it in any situation. Commanders in this predicament, frankly, have had little choice other than to adopt one of the aforementioned courses of action.

Yet, the current shortage of MGS vehicles across SBCTs will not likely remain the norm. In spite of this, the considerations outlined above regarding the em-

ployment of the MGS platoon still serve tactical leaders. Stryker rifle companies were designed to be fast, survivable, lethal, and agile. Rifle company commanders have at their disposal tremendous capability — the totality of which has never been known at the company level. The MGS platoon fulfills a vital role in this organization. Some conflicts will not allow for the maximization of its advantages, however. In these cases, commanders need not relegate their MGS platoons to menial efforts. Courses of action, such as those illustrated above, provide the company through task organization an additional means to accomplish its mission.

Although not defined in doctrine, the aforementioned outfits have proved successful in their various forms for several years in many operating environments. The key to their utilization then becomes the soldiers' ability to execute when the necessity arises. Therefore, in anticipation of the potential MGS platoon mission sets, commanders must cross-train their 19-series soldiers. Junior soldiers must understand and excel at dismounted movement and battle drills. Noncommissioned officers must possess the confidence and competence to lead battle drills and the platoon leader must know how to plan and control platoon units in their execution. With these competencies in place, the MGS platoon will fight and excel as a member of the most dynamic combined-arms company in the United States Army.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-21.11, *The SBCT Infantry Rifle Company*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, January 2003.

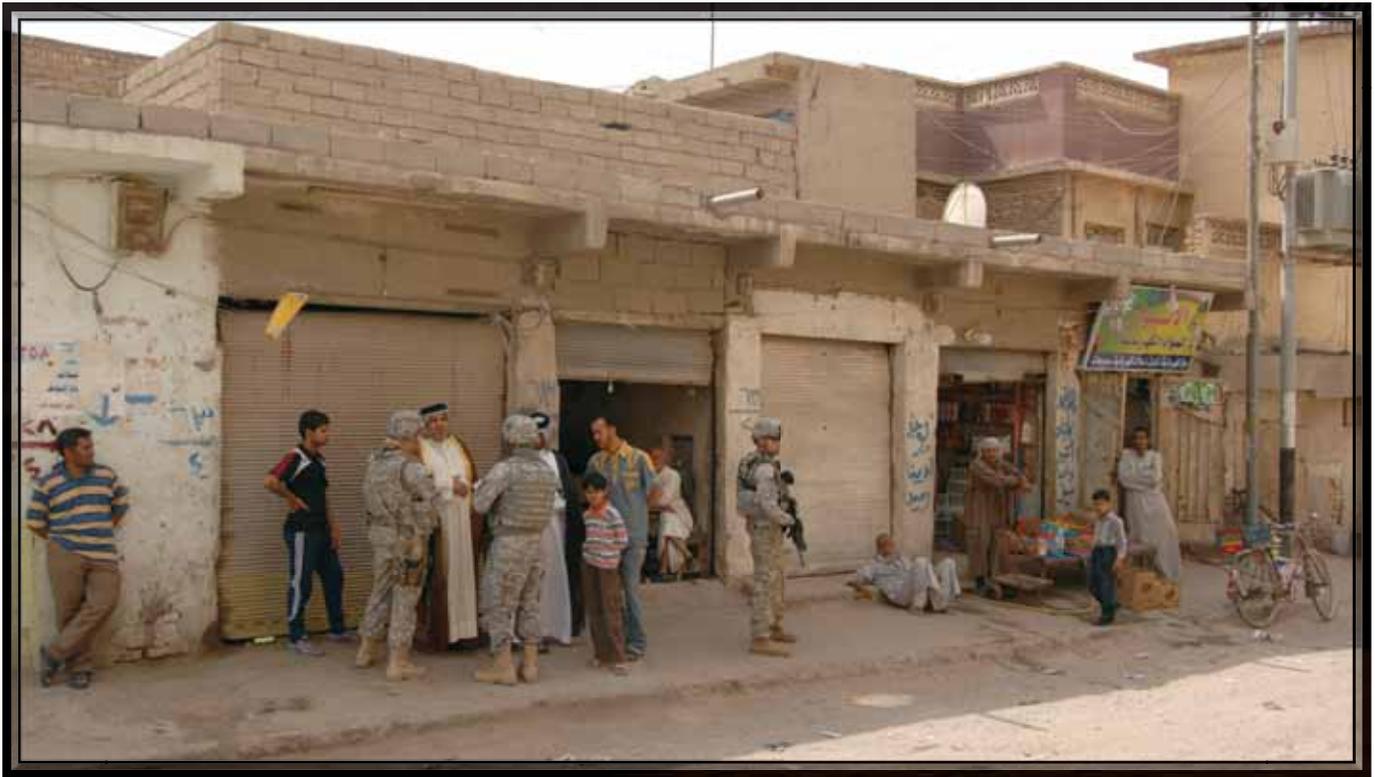
<sup>2</sup>Gordon L. Rottman, *Stryker Combat Vehicles*, Osprey Publishing, Westminister, MD, 2006, pp. 6-7.

<sup>3</sup>Although the rate of fire is commonly listed as 6 rounds per minute (RPM), the autoloader reloads the main gun every 6 seconds. The gun can therefore shoot the entire carousel of ready ammunition in 48 seconds, but additional semi-ready rounds must be replenished, which takes considerably more time.

<sup>4</sup>FM 3-21.11, *The SBCT Infantry Rifle Company*, p. B-1.

<sup>5</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-20.151, *The Mobile Gun System Platoon*, GPO, Washington, DC, 12 January 2006, p. 1-1.

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# The Civil Warfighting Function: Political Considerations on the Modern Battlefield

by Captain Sean M. Castilla

The time has come for a new warfighting function (WFF) in U.S. Army doctrine. The way in which the U.S. Army perceives the nature of war has changed. In our Army's history, until recently, "political considerations may have governed the strategic conduct of war, [but] they had little connection with the tactical-level management of violence. That was purely military — army business."<sup>1</sup> Our experience with counterinsurgency operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan has fundamentally changed our way of thinking. Whereas, the current six warfighting functions (movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, command and control, and protection) were sufficient for past conventional enemies, we currently face enemies whose objectives are "essentially of a political nature" and fight wars in which "politics becomes an active instrument of operation."<sup>2</sup> Thus, future armed conflict will require that the military decisionmaking process (MDMP) be augmented with the introduction of a 'civil' WFF, which emphasizes the primacy of political considerations on the modern battlefield. Before an argument for a civil WFF can be elaborated, it be-

comes necessary to review three basic assumptions about the future operational context the U.S. Army will face.

## Future Operational Context Assumptions

The argument for a civil WFF is predicated on three assumptions regarding the nature of future armed conflict:

**Assumption 1.** The political nature of warfare must not be divorced from a strategic, operational, and tactical understanding of the battlespace in which we operate. The 2009 Army Capstone Concept posits that "future enemies will attempt to influence the will of the American people and key allies through propaganda, disinformation, and attacks on U.S. and ally assets at home or abroad."<sup>3</sup> The political means through which our adversaries will attempt to control both American and foreign populations will continue to be decisive in our current and future operations.

Operational success can no longer be measured in terms of damage inflicted on opposing forces. The Army learned, through its experiences in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, that it can win tactical

and operational battles, but still lose the war if it is unable to win the strategic battle for hearts and minds. Also, the growing emphasis on the political nature of warfare is not an isolated phenomenon unique only to the counterinsurgency conflicts the U.S. Army fights today. Should the Army engage in a future high-intensity conflict, it must be assumed that enemy forces will employ a hybrid strategy using both conventional and non-conventional tactics to "limit the U.S. forces' ability to develop the situation out of contact and achieve overmatch with long-range weapons."<sup>4</sup> In short, the U.S. Army must be prepared to engage enemies across the full-spectrum of operations, even if they are primarily conventional forces.

**Assumption 2.** The U.S. Government will continue to rely on the Army to conduct stability operations abroad. Stability operations are defined as "military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential govern-

mental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief... before, during, and after combat operations, across the spectrum of conflict.”<sup>5</sup>

The deployment of the 2d Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82d Airborne Division, to Haiti following a catastrophic earthquake is the most recent example of employing U.S. forces in support of stability operations. Other examples include the 2004 tsunami disaster in Southeast Asia and the devastating 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. These stability operations are often politically charged, have international implications, and are just as complex and challenging, if not more so, than high-intensity conflicts. Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, explains the important role of stability operations best in U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*, as “America’s future abroad is unlikely to resemble Afghanistan or Iraq, where we grapple with the burden of nation building under fire. Instead, we will work through and with the community of nations to defeat insurgency, assist fragile states, and provide vital humanitarian aid to the suffering.”<sup>6</sup>

**Assumption 3.** As defined below, the elements of combat power in future (and current) armed conflict are inadequately captured by today’s WFFs:

*“Combat power:* The total means of destructive, contrastive, and information capabilities that a military unit/formation can apply at a given time.

*“Elements of combat power:* Leadership and information plus the six warfighting functions, which include movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, command and control, and protection.

*“Warfighting functions:* A group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives.

*“Intelligence:* The related tasks and systems that move forces to achieve a position of advantage in relation to the enemy.

*“Fires:* The related tasks and systems that provide collective and coordinated use of Army indirect fires, joint fires, and command and control warfare, including nonlethal fires, through the targeting process.

*“Sustainment:* The related tasks and systems that provide support and ser-

VICES to ensure freedom of action, extend operational reach, and prolong endurance.

*“Command and control:* The related tasks and systems that support commanders in exercising authority and direction.

*“Protection:* The related tasks and systems that preserve the force so commanders can apply maximum combat power.”<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, the terms “combat” and “warfighting” are misleading terms when used during the MDMP due to the widely varied operations the U.S. Army executes at the low end of the spectrum of conflict. The current six WFF exclusively focus on the application of the Army’s power against a conventional threat operating within a political vacuum. In fact, the only WFF that even remotely considers political or civil-military factors is intelligence. Yet, even this WFF addresses such factors only with regard to area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (ASCOPE) relating to villages, towns, cities, and other populated areas within a unit’s area of operations (AO). Future operational challenges the Army will face will increasingly be compounded by political and civil-military factors, which will have theater, regional, and international implications.

### The Case for a Civil Warfighting Function

The Department of Defense’s (DOD) 2008 National Defense Strategy states



*“Operational success can no longer be measured in terms of damage inflicted on opposing forces. The Army learned, through its experiences in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, that it can win tactical and operational battles, but still lose the war if it is unable to win the strategic battle for hearts and minds. Also, the growing emphasis on the political nature of warfare is not an isolated phenomenon unique only to the counterinsurgency conflicts the U.S. Army fights today.”*

that “arguably the most important military component of the struggle against violent extremists is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we help prepare our partners to defend and govern themselves.” Political initiatives of this nature will improve the socioeconomic conditions of our partner nations, “undermining the sources of support, and assisting in addressing root causes of turmoil.”<sup>8</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates echoed this theme in a 2007 speech: “One of the most important lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that military success is not sufficient to win ... [Future] conflicts will be fundamentally political in nature, and require the application of all elements of national power. Success will be less a matter of imposing one’s will and more a function of shaping behavior — of friends, adversaries, and most importantly, the people in between.”<sup>9</sup>

There appears to be a deliberate effort from the DOD to subordinate the importance of the military’s combat efforts to an overarching political strategy that “integrates all elements of national power,” increasingly referred to as the “whole of government approach.”<sup>10</sup>

This strategic paradigm shift necessitates an increased appreciation of the political context and civil implications when conducting mission analysis of the Army’s missions. The current six WFFs largely ignore such a context. The only WFF that even remotely addresses such

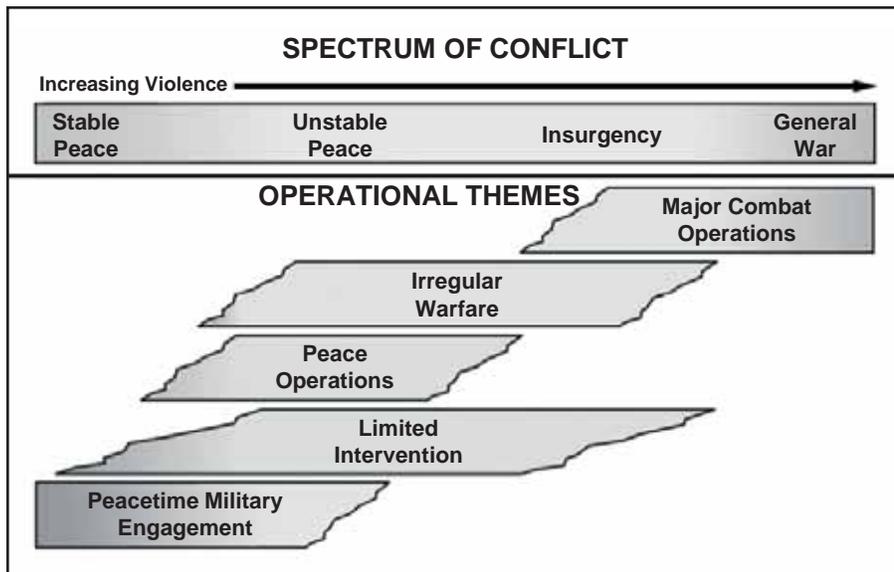


Figure 1

civil military implications is command and control, which includes tasks for both information engagement and civil affairs tasks. To gloss over other civil-military tasks, such as stability operations, security cooperation, and security force assistance, seems incongruent with the realities of today's operational environment. Although, realistically, Army forces are applying political and civil considerations to operations every day, there exists no doctrine to acknowledge the primacy of political considerations during the MDMP.

A good illustration of this peculiar doctrinal gap is demonstrated by the following excerpt from an article reviewing Africa Command's (AFRICOM) mission, "Not overly focused on traditional warfighting capabilities, the [AFRICOM] mission emphasizes professionalism with African militaries so they can independently conduct peacekeeping operations."<sup>11</sup> How can the nation's newest combatant command, responsible for the entire continent of Africa, operate without emphasis to the 'traditional' WFFs? This command, which focuses primarily on security force assistance and stability operations, finds itself in the precarious position of employing its combat power in an operational environment that does not neatly fit into the preexisting WFFs. Clearly, it would make sense to have a WFF that could doctrinally bridge the gap between 'traditional warfighting capabilities' and tasks that are more prominent in environments other than high-intensity conflict.

A more recent example of this doctrinal gap is the early 2010 offensive, Operation Moshtarak, in Marja, Afghanistan. During this offensive, which Richard C. Holbrooke (U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan) argues is per-

haps "the greatest [offensive] in the history of counterinsurgency," there was a very deliberate effort to clear Marja of Taliban forces, hold the city, build the infrastructure and government, and transfer authority to Afghan forces and officials.<sup>12</sup> The hold, build, and transfer elements of this offensive clearly fall within the realm of proposed civil WFFs because they involve the use of forces to improve infrastructure and socioeconomic nodes, and increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Afghan political authorities. Without the benefit of official operations orders or after-action reports for this offensive, it appears as if the clearing portion of the offensive was a shaping operation for the far more crucial political and socioeconomic portion, which was likely the decisive operation.

The concept of a civil WFF is not a novel concept here; it merely reflects the realities on the ground. Therefore, it is time to introduce a new civil WFF, one that further defines related tasks and systems to facilitate a greater appreciation of the political, socioeconomic, cultural, and organizational considerations in the operational environment, and provide integrated and coordinated efforts to shape these conditions to achieve a position of advantage for commanders. This function includes tasks such as enhance situational understanding; conduct psychological operations (PSYOP) activities; conduct civil-military operations (CMO) activities (to include civil affairs activities); impose civil order; perform local economic assessment and engagement; build partnership capacity with other nations; and humanitarian relief operations.

To understand the implications of adding a civil WFF, it is necessary to further examine its proposed tasks:

- Enhancing situational understanding is accomplished by informing the commander of the political context in which his unit is operating, enabling a better understanding of second- and third-order effects, which are affected by the commander's actions.

- Psychological operations are "operations that convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, and objective reasoning, and ultimately influence the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals."<sup>13</sup>

- Civil military operations are "the activities of the commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, government and nongovernment civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area of operations to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve U.S. objectives."<sup>14</sup>

- Imposing civil order means that U.S. forces work in conjunction with local authorities to reestablish security, essential services, and authority during times of crisis.

- Local economic assessment and engagement is the process U.S. forces use to conduct atmospheric to determine the economic viability within an area of operations, identify key businesses, and decide how best to apply programs such as commanders emergency response program (CERP) funds to aid economic reconstruction.

- Building partnership capacity with other nations implies the use of security force assistance, security cooperation, and foreign internal defense.

- Humanitarian relief operations are missions, such as natural disasters in foreign countries, to which U.S. forces are tasked to respond.

The civil WFF can be used as part of any one of the operational themes, which include peacetime limited engagement, limited intervention, peace operations, irregular warfare, and major combat operations. Whereas, the movement and maneuver and fires WFFs are less applicable on the 'stable peace' end of the spectrum of conflict (see Figure 1),<sup>15</sup> a civil WFF would be equally applicable throughout the entire spectrum. Additionally, like

other WFFs, it can function as a decisive, shaping, or sustaining operation.

## Implications

Adding a seventh WFF would have important implications on how the Army plans its missions. A doctrinally sanctioned civil WFF would increase the weight of civil considerations during the mission analysis portion of the MDMP, particularly when conducting intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB); identifying specified, implied, and essential tasks; determining constraints; and identifying critical facts and assumptions.<sup>16</sup> It should also be used when analyzing relative combat power and should be weighted heavily as an evaluation criterion when conducting a course of action comparison.

A civil WFF could also impact how command posts function. It may prove advantageous to add a civil functional cell to the command post organization, which would reinforce the importance of political implications to current operations, future operations, and plans integrating cells (see Figure 2).<sup>17</sup> The intent here is not to add an extra level of bureaucracy to the business of command posts or increase their already robust footprint, but merely to stress the importance of a civil WFF in the operational environment.

A civil WFF would further ensure that our forces integrate with U.S. Government interagency partners more effectively. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that President Obama wants to make sure that our “civilian and military efforts operate in a coordinated and complementary fashion where we are engaged in conflict.”<sup>18</sup> Dedicating more effort and manpower toward a civil WFF would increase our capacity to provide liaisons for interagency partners and contribute to a ‘whole government’ approach during daily operations.

Ultimately, the addition of a civil WFF would more accurately capture the elements of combat power available to commanders. Combat power encompasses not just a unit’s destructive capabilities, but also its constructive and information capabilities.<sup>19</sup> A civil WFF would augment the constructive and information components of combat power elements, thus more accurately depicting the complete situation on the battlefield and enable leaders to make well-informed decisions.

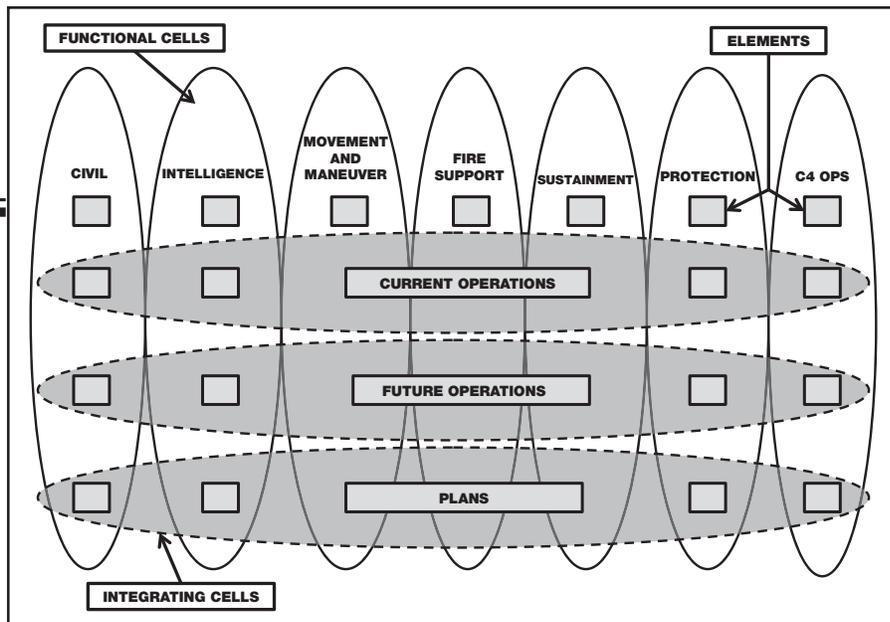


Figure 2. Command Post Organization

The WFFs, to include civil, combined with information and leadership, form the elements of combat power.

Our military leaders continue to enforce the idea of subordinating the military sphere to the political sphere. It is important to remember that the application of military power is but one tool among a host of many others that the U.S. Government uses to meet its foreign policy objectives. The National Defense Strategy has already reinforced this concept, and although President Obama has not yet released his National Security Strategy document, members of his cabinet have hinted that he will continue to stress the fundamental pillars of our foreign policy — we should “lead with diplomacy.”<sup>20</sup>

This article proposes nothing radical; our Army has been operating in an operational environment over the past 9 years in which the political and civil demands of reality on the ground have already necessitated recognition of the primacy of politics in our operations. The addition of a civil WFF would merely reinforce this reality with solid doctrinal recognition. It would truly reflect the entirety of the elements of combat power available to commanders on the ground.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 2005, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Praeger Security International, Westport, CT, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Headquarters (HQ), U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet (Pam) 525-3-0, *The Army Capstone Concept, Operational Adaptability: Operating under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict*, Fort Monroe, VA, December 2009, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, 2008, p. vi.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., foreword.

<sup>7</sup>HQDA, U.S. Army FM 3-0, *Operations*, GPO, Washington, DC, 2008, pp. 4-1 to 4-7.

<sup>8</sup>Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy*, June 2008, pp. 8-9.

<sup>9</sup>Robert M. Gates, “Landon Lecture (Kansas State University),” 26 November 2007, <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1199>, accessed 4 February 2010.

<sup>10</sup>Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 2010, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Colonel Stephen J. Mariano and Major George L. Deuel, “Crisis Prevention: USAFRICOM, Partnerships, and the U.S. Army,” *On Track*, Autumn 2009, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>Jordan Reimer, “Holbrooke Hails Marja Operation, Relationship with Pakistan,” *American Forces Press Service*, 16 March 2010, <http://www.army.mil/news/2010/03/16/35909-holbrooke-hails-marja-operation-relationship-with-pakistan/index.html?ref=home-headline-link0>, accessed 18 March 2010.

<sup>13</sup>HQDA, FM 3-13, *Information Operations: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, GPO, Washington, DC, 2003, p. 2-3.

<sup>14</sup>HQDA, FM 3-05.401, *Civil Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, GPO, Washington, DC, 2007, p. 1-4.

<sup>15</sup>FM 3-0, *Operations*, p. 2-5.

<sup>16</sup>HQDA, FM 5-0, *The Operations Process*, GPO, Washington, DC, March 2010, Chapter 3.

<sup>17</sup>HQDA, FM 5-0.1, *The Operations Process*, GPO, Washington, DC, March 2006, Chapter 2. Diagram based on Figure 2-2, p. 2-7.

<sup>18</sup>Derek S. Reveron, Atlantic Council, *Obama’s National Security Strategy Unfolding*, 16 July 2009, [http://www.acus.org/new\\_atlanticist/obamas-national-security-strategy-unfolding](http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/obamas-national-security-strategy-unfolding), accessed 7 February 2010.

<sup>19</sup>FM 3-0, *Operations*, p. 4-1.

<sup>20</sup>Derek S. Reveron, Atlantic Council, *Obama’s National Security Strategy Unfolding*.

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**Part 9 of the ARMOR Series:**

# Highlighting the Most Significant Work of

## Volume VI, Supplemental: Prince Feisal ibn Hussein From King of Syria to King of Iraq (1918-1921), of the Multivolume Collection of Dr. Ali al-Wardi

by Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, U.S. Navy

### Foreword

*The 21st-century national security challenges facing the United States require a new way of educating, teaching, and shaping our combat forces. Increasingly, we require soldiers to possess significant knowledge of a region, and its history, tribes, sociological, and religious characteristics. This knowledge, sometimes referred to as “human terrain,” is emerging as an important tool that is as critical to understanding foreign lands as physical terrain and topography. Knowing the human terrain gives our military units insights into the population and its culture; it enhances operational effectiveness, bolsters force protection, and helps reduce conflict. It is key to executing counterinsurgency strategy. Commander Aboul-Enein has worked tirelessly to educate our deploying units on the nuances of Middle East history, Islam and the diverse viewpoints of 1.3 billion Muslims, and the intricacies of militant Islamist ideology.*

*This series, which introduces the father of Iraqi sociology, Dr. Ali al-Wardi, is a valuable contribution to our understanding of Iraq and its neighboring countries. Commander Aboul-Enein’s review of Wardi’s supplement to Volume Six of his social aspects of Iraqi modern society focuses on the rise and fall of Prince Feisal ibn Hussein as King of Syria from 1918-1920. His forcible eviction from Syria by French forces would leave a scar not only on Feisal, who later would become King of Iraq from 1921 to 1933, but also a scar on the collective political psychology of the Levant. Understanding the origins and ongoing historical narratives of this scar tissue, from an Iraqi point of view, is an example of studying Iraq’s human terrain. Such empathy is necessary for a military unit to operate effectively in a very complex battlespace.*

*I applaud ARMOR for devoting significant space in several editions of its journal to highlight this important multivolume work. As part of the Defense Intelligence Agency’s Joint Intelligence Task Force-Combating Terrorism, we intend to use the entire set of ARMOR’s collection to educate our analysts deploying to Iraq so they may benefit from the service Commander Aboul-Enein and ARMOR have rendered in translating, analyzing, and highlighting this Arabic work of military significance.*

**Mr. Ed Mornston, Director, Joint Intelligence  
Task Force for Combating Terrorism**

This is the ninth essay in this collection of review essays highlighting the multivolume work of the father of Iraqi sociology, Dr. Ali al-Wardi (hereafter referred to as Wardi). The last essay discussed Wardi’s views on the decline of Hussein ibn Ali, the Sherief of Mecca, and the political capital he amassed in the aftermath of the 1916 Arab Revolt, making himself king of the Hejaz (the region in which the holy cities Mecca and Medina are located). This led to the rise of Ibn Saud, and the seeds of the creation of modern Saudi Arabia. This essay focuses on Hussein ibn Ali’s son, Feisal ibn Hussein, who eventually would become king of Iraq (see the seventh essay in this series for details on the ascension of Feisal ibn Hussein as king of Iraq), during his time as king of Syria from 1918 to 1920. His eviction as king of Syria by French forces in the Battle of Maysalun would impact the

political psychology of Feisal, and would leave a deep internal mark on the region when he ascended to the throne of Iraq.

### **Dynamics of the Arab Revolt Changes from Ally to Challenger**

The collapse of the Ottoman 7th and 8th Armies in the Battle of Megiddo was the death knell of Ottoman power in the Middle East. This laid open the British forces advancement to the Levant and Damascus. The Arab Revolt, under Prince Feisal ibn Hussein, aided in the envelopment in the Jezreel Valley. In a twist of historic irony, this is also the sight of the Battle of Armageddon mentioned in the Book of Revelations. This history was not lost to British forces as they dismantled Ottoman mili-

# Iraq's Social, Political, and Military History



The French Army marches through Syria.

tary might in the Levant. Wardi is extremely light on the actual tactics of the Battle of Megiddo and other military campaigns, but does a marvelous job discussing the political and social impact of wars fought in the Levant, Iraq, and Arabia. For those interested in the tactical intricacies of the Ottoman battles with British forces during World War I, consult the works of the late Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn and Captain Cyril B. Falls, who wrote an official two-volume history titled, *Military Operations: Egypt and Palestine* published in 1928.<sup>1</sup> A delightful 2005 paper, "Armageddon's Lost Lessons," published by the Air University Press and written by U.S. Army Major Gregory Daddis, is also a recommended read.<sup>2</sup>

As Damascus lay open, and the Ottomans were no longer a threat, a new phase in the relationship between the British and the Arab Revolt developed. General Edmund Allenby wanted to enter Damascus with Prince Feisal and his irregular Arab army

in a quest to be portrayed as an ally of the Arabs, not a conqueror. This was not to be, as a race between British divisions and the Arab Revolt ensued, with both forces arriving within hours of each other in October 1918. Technically, the tribes representing Prince Feisal, the Howeitat, the Ruwailah, and the Druze, entered Damascus from the south, while Australian cavalry scouts entered the city from the west. Along with the forces of the Arab Revolt were former Ottoman officers of Iraqi origin: Nuri al-Said, T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), Nuri Shaalan of the Ruwailah, Auda Abu Tayi of the Howeitat, and finally Sultan al-Atrash of the Druze. They claimed Damascus for Prince Feisal and his father, Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca. Feisal would be declared king of Syria that month.

Wardi reveals an unexpected power center in Damascus that supported the Arab claim of Damascus, as they were the grandsons of the famous Algerian resistance leader, Abdel-Kader, who



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tenaciously fought the French occupation of Algeria in 1832 and lost. By 1918, his descendants had hundreds of North African followers who brought law and order to Damascus. T.E. Lawrence despised these North Africans; in return, they attempted to incite his murder. Looting was rampant and it would only be controlled when regular officers of the Arab Revolt opened fire on looters with heavy machine guns. These killings usually would have led to tribal vendettas, but because this was done in the name of order and *adl* (justice), it was viewed as execution and thereby no shame was attached to killing looters. Although Wardi does not discuss this, it is likely that Arab-on-Arab violence was more palatable than British-on-Arab violence.

### British General Allenby Arrives in Damascus

British Commander, General Allenby, arrived in Damascus on 3 October and arranged for a meeting with Prince Feisal at the Hotel Victoria, where he outlined the details of the Sykes-Picot agreement. According to this agreement, Syria, to include Damascus, was allocated as a French sphere of influence. Allenby explained that Feisal could rule Syria temporarily, on behalf of the French, and that it would include only Greater Syria, not Lebanon or Palestine. In Wardi's account, General Allenby turned to T.E. Lawrence and asked if he had informed Feisal of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Lawrence responded in the negative, and added that he did not know of the agreement. Feisal, who was visibly upset, objected to this imposed agreement. In response, General Allenby decided to take a military approach, ending the meeting by saying to Feisal that he (Allenby) was commander in

chief and Feisal was a general under his command and was to obey orders until this matter was sorted out.

As a result, T.E. Lawrence asked to resign from military service and return to England. He had spent 2 years among the Arabs and an even longer time traveling throughout pre-World War I, World War I, and post-World War I Middle East. Lawrence of Arabia, before departing Syria, had become a household word thanks to American journalist Lowell Thomas, who spent 2 days with him and created the Lawrence myth. After his resignation, Lawrence devoted himself to advising Prince Feisal at the peace conference in Versailles, sending a cable to the Sherief of Mecca, Feisal's father, recommending that Feisal represent Arab interests in Versailles.

### Feisal in France:

#### Intrigues of the Versailles Conference (1919)

Feisal, Lawrence, and Nuri Said departed from Beirut for Paris in late October 1918. Arriving in Marseille 5 days later, Feisal was received by French Colonel Bremond. The French military officer, who served in pacifying North Africa and had a thorough grasp of Arabic, told Feisal that while France welcomed him as an honored guest, it did not recognize Feisal in any diplomatic capacity. Bremond then turned to Lawrence and told him that he welcomed him as a serving British officer, but could not continue to extend the welcome if he did not wear his appropriate uniform and discard his Arab robes. Lawrence grew angry, returned the high French decorations awarded him, and left for England.

In January 1919, Feisal departed France for England. During his time in England, he met King George V and was awarded the Victoria Cross. He also met with Chaim Weizmann and discussed prospects of a Jewish presence in Palestine. The meeting between Weizmann and Feisal is the subject of much mythology, but Wardi provides a scholarly Arabic perspective. According to Wardi, Feisal agreed to the integration of Jews in Palestine only if the Arabs were given their self-determination and independence in Arabia and the Levant, to include Lebanon and Palestine. However, these were impossible requests to meet in light of the Sykes-Picot Agreement.

Feisal returned to Paris in preparation for the Versailles Conference in December 1919. After Feisal's formal request to attend the conference was rebuffed, he was assigned two seats by British Prime Minister Lloyd George. The British and the Arabs both wanted to renegotiate the terms of Sykes-Picot Agreement. The British were eyeing parts of what is now Mosul to merge it with Iraq, instead of Syria. It was deemed that Mosul would provide a more economically viable British mandate as part of Iraq. The presence of the Arabs under Feisal could provide an opportunity for the British to play the Arabs against the French and possibly gain Mosul. Prince Feisal, although marginalized in the actual conference, did get a chance to address the conference and amplify the Arab contribution to the war effort. Feisal's remarks on Arab sacrifices made the difference in de-



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*"Feisal's days were numbered as the self-proclaimed king of Syria. As hard-liners and pro-colonialists took power in France, assigning the hawkish General Henri Gouraud (shown at left) as commissioner-general of Beirut, Georges Clemenceau was voted out of office in favor of Alexandre Millerand, a socialist who leaned toward the conservatives to balance a tenuous governing coalition."*

laying France's plan to annex Syria. Instead, the conference attendees assigned a commission, known as the "Crane Commission," to look into the desires of the local populace. During the conference, Feisal additionally made many influential friends, to include Woodrow Wilson's wife, Edith Wilson (formerly Galt), and French author, Anatole France. These new friends also advocated for Arab self-determination.

Feisal did not linger in France; he made his way rapidly back to Syria to prepare the populace for the arrival of the Crane Commission. The Commission affirmed Feisal to be monarch of Greater Syria only and asserted the independence of Lebanon from Syria. The Crane Commission's findings meant nothing; France simply swapped Mosul to Britain for British support for France's right to assume the mandate over the rest of Syria and Lebanon. Feisal's days were numbered as the self-proclaimed king of Syria. As hard-liners and pro-colonialists took power in France, assigning the hawkish General Henri Gouraud as commissioner-general of Beirut, Georges Clemenceau was voted out of office in favor of Alexandre Millerand, a socialist who leaned toward the conservatives to balance a tenuous governing coalition.

### **Feisal's Ministers in Syria: Challenges and Ultimatums**

In Syria, King Feisal's first cabinet was preoccupied with an imminent French invasion. They also dealt with sectarian violence between Lebanon's Christians and Shiites, stimulated by the French arming Christians and Sunnis, and members supportive of King Feisal arming Shiites. French forces intervened in these sectarian massacres in Lebanon and demanded from Feisal that all railways in Syria and Lebanon be placed under France's disposal; the Compulsory draft be abolished; the French mandate over Syria and Lebanon be accepted; those stoking sectarian violence be punished; and French currency in the Levant be imposed.

Feisal, feeling he had no choice, accepted the ultimatum, which led to rioting in Damascus and other parts of Syria. A Syrian cleric, Rashid Rida, incited religious opposition to the French and Feisal. Rida would later be exiled to Egypt, where he stimulated a young Hassan al-Banna, who would later go on to establish the Muslim Brotherhood, the first Islamist political party in 1928. The rioting hardened Feisal's resolve against the French. Wardi reports that Feisal concluded that he arrived as the conqueror of Damascus and would leave only if forcibly evicted.

Another debate among Feisal's ministers in Syria was regarding the successful push of French forces from Asia Minor by Kemal Ataturk as he established the Republic of Turkey. The debate centered on whether or not to aid the Turks; however, with only 4,000 troops and 12 cannons, it was decided unfeasible. In addition, concerns arose as to whether Ataturk's forces would push deep into Syria, which might exploit the French retreat. This victory by Ataturk led to the redirection of retreating French forces toward the preservation of Syria. The objectives of the French were to show that Feisal's ministers, as well as the king himself, were incapable of restoring order. On July 1920, a robust French force arrived and defeated an Arab army at Khan Maysalun. King Feisal headed toward the Umayyad Mosque, which was perhaps among Islam's earliest mosques and an architectural gem, built in the late 7th century in the center of Damascus. There, he called on the populace to defend Syria, raising and arming 10,000 volunteers. But this was no match for French artillery, armored units, tanks, cavalry, and infantry, supported by biplanes. Youssef Uzma, the defense

minister, along with thousands of other Arabs, died in the Battle of Maysalun in late July 1920.

### **King Feisal Evicted from Syria: Examining His Failures (1920)**

Feisal had 48 hours to depart from Syria. He first went to Der'aa, and then Haifa. From Haifa, he traveled on to Switzerland, and from there, Italy. Feisal spent 3 months in Italy, where he paid 100 gold liras to the editor of *Il Popolo d'Italia*, a young Benito Mussolini, to publish pro-Arab and anti-French columns. In Italy, he also established contact with Turkish officials to conspire against the French. Feisal would end up in London, at the invitation of Lord Curzon, who offered him the throne of Iraq.

Wardi compiles assessments from several advisors to Feisal, while he was briefly king of Syria, as to why he failed. They include:

- Resistance by the Syrians to conscription, much like their resistance to Ottoman conscription.
- Feisal's nepotism; he assigned those close to him in the Arab Revolt to positions of authority and marginalized Syria's elite tribes and families.
- Feisal's style of running Syria like an Arabian tribal fiefdom and not recognizing the proud urban and civil nature of governing an ancient metropolis like Damascus. The Bedouin and urban styles of governance were widely different.

- His minister of education, Sateh Hussari, attempted to secularize Syria's education system, which quickly led to friction between the populace and King Feisal's cabinet.
- Feisal used scarce forces to pacify sectarian tensions and he was a political amateur in the hands of more experienced British policymakers and advisors.
- When Feisal proclaimed himself king of Syria in 1918, he had no agenda, platform, or plan for the country beyond Arab nationalist slogans. Some of his advisors, after the fact, questioned if he should have negotiated with the French a timetable for the mandate to end.
- Why did Feisal accept the French ultimatum, only to fight them weeks later at Khan?
- Maysalun? This particular question haunts many Arab historians to this day.

The events that led to Feisal's rise and fall in Syria, coupled with his experiences in London and Versailles, and his temporary exile, would shape his political education. He learned valuable lessons that would be employed when he assumed the throne of the newly created nation-state of Iraq.

America's military planners and those operating in the region will find this history relevant, as it has shaped the regional narrative and colonial victimization felt by the Iraqi people. Because the United States has been labeled as "imperialist, occupier, and colonialist," to name a few, we should be more aware that these slogans are tied to the collective history of the region. Any counters to the propaganda that the United States is a new colonial master in the Middle East need to include an understanding, grounding, and immersion into the history that has led to the political insecurities of this region. Therefore, it is vital that we immerse America's combat forces in the history of the region using Arabic sources to provide deploying units infor-

mation dominance that encompasses the historic, cultural, sociological, and religious perspectives of the Middle East.

The tenth essay in the series will review Wardi's chapters on the rivalry between Hussein ibn Ali, the Sherief of Mecca, and Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud, then emir of the Nejd (Central Arabia) for control of the Arabian Peninsula. This time period would see the rise of Ibn Saud, and the eventual creation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Hussein, in whose name the Arab Revolt was conducted, evolved into a major liability for his sons, Abdullah and Feisal, as they assumed the thrones of the newly created mandates of Jordan and Iraq, respectively.



### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Great Britain, Committee of Imperial Defence, Historical Section, *Military Operations: Egypt and Palestine*, Compiled by Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn and Captain Cyril Falls, London, 1928.

<sup>2</sup>Major Gregory A. Daddis, U.S. Army, "Armageddon's Lost Lessons, Combined Arms Operations in Allenby's Palestine Campaign," Air Command and Staff College, Wright Flyer Paper No. 20, Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, February 2005.

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"On July 1920, a robust French force arrived and defeated an Arab army at Khan Maysalun. King Feisal headed toward the Umayyad Mosque, which was perhaps among Islam's earliest mosques and an architectural gem, built in the late 7th century in the center of Damascus. There, he called on the populace to defend Syria, raising and arming 10,000 volunteers. But this was no match for French artillery, armored units, tanks, cavalry, and infantry, supported by biplanes. Youssef Uzma, the defense minister, along with thousands of other Arabs, died in the Battle of Maysalun in late July 1920."

# A Case Study: *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* and a Company during COIN Operations

by Captain Andrew P. Betson

In April 2009, to establish doctrine for brigade and below units conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, Department of the Army published Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, as a counterpart to FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.<sup>1</sup> FM 3-24.2 represents a continued effort by the Army to see and understand the current operating environment (COE) and enact a certain amount of doctrinal change toward flexible, adaptable units prepared to face full-spectrum operations.<sup>2</sup> The manual's foreword states that future threats to the United States will likely be less conventional and their inherent nature "places a premium on tactical leaders who cannot only close with the enemy, but also negotiate agreements ... restore basic services, speak the native (a foreign) language, orchestrate political deals, and get 'the word' on the street."<sup>3</sup>

This article provides a company-level translation of the tenets defined in U.S. Army doctrine. The operations and task organization of our company, Team Apache, 4th Battalion, 64th (4-64) Armored Regiment, in the post-surge neighborhood of Sadiyah, Rashid District, Baghdad, in 2008, serve as a case study

of how to properly execute doctrinal fundamentals of counterinsurgency as described in FM 3-24.2.<sup>4</sup> This article does not preclude the necessity to read, understand, and practice doctrine, but may aid commanders in preparing for and executing counterinsurgency operations.

## Doctrinal/Theoretical Framework

Lessons learned from soldiers and scholars conducting stability, support, and major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan drove the production of FM 3-24 and, subsequently, FM 3-24.2.<sup>5</sup> The manual superbly establishes a framework that a company commander can work within during deployment, and further provides supporting tasks that drive each line of effort (LOE). Chapter 3, "The Fundamentals of Counterinsurgency," particularly Section III, illustrates the span of subjects that the tactical counterinsurgent must consider to successfully influence the big picture.<sup>6</sup> The manual best captures the fundamentals and supporting tasks in Chapter 5, "Comprehensive Tactical Planning in Counterinsurgency," with a schematic (Figure 1).<sup>7</sup>

*Tactics in Counterinsurgency* provides a firm foundation for company grade of-

ficers to develop the intellect necessary to effectively understand their environment. Team Apache's operations in Sadiyah provide a case study for organization and actions within the framework defined. To understand its value, however, you must understand the Sadiyah situation and keep in mind, "If it works in this province, it might not work in the next."<sup>8</sup>

## The Sadiyah Situation

Sadiyah is a dense, urban, politically affluent residential neighborhood in south central Baghdad that once housed Ba'ath Party elites during Saddam's rule. When the country plunged into sectarian turmoil, as a result of the Samarra Mosque bombing in 2006, the residents of Sadiyah found themselves at the fault line of competing religious sects. Sunni extremists and their associates were attempting to spread influence from the Doura and Abu T'Shir areas to the east. Meanwhile, Shia extremists, mainly under the influence of Jaysh al Mahdi (JAM), attempted to spread their area of control from Baaya and Risala, west of Sadiyah. The vast majority of the mixed Sunni/Shia residents of Sadiyah, much like most of Baghdad, abandoned their homes, busi-



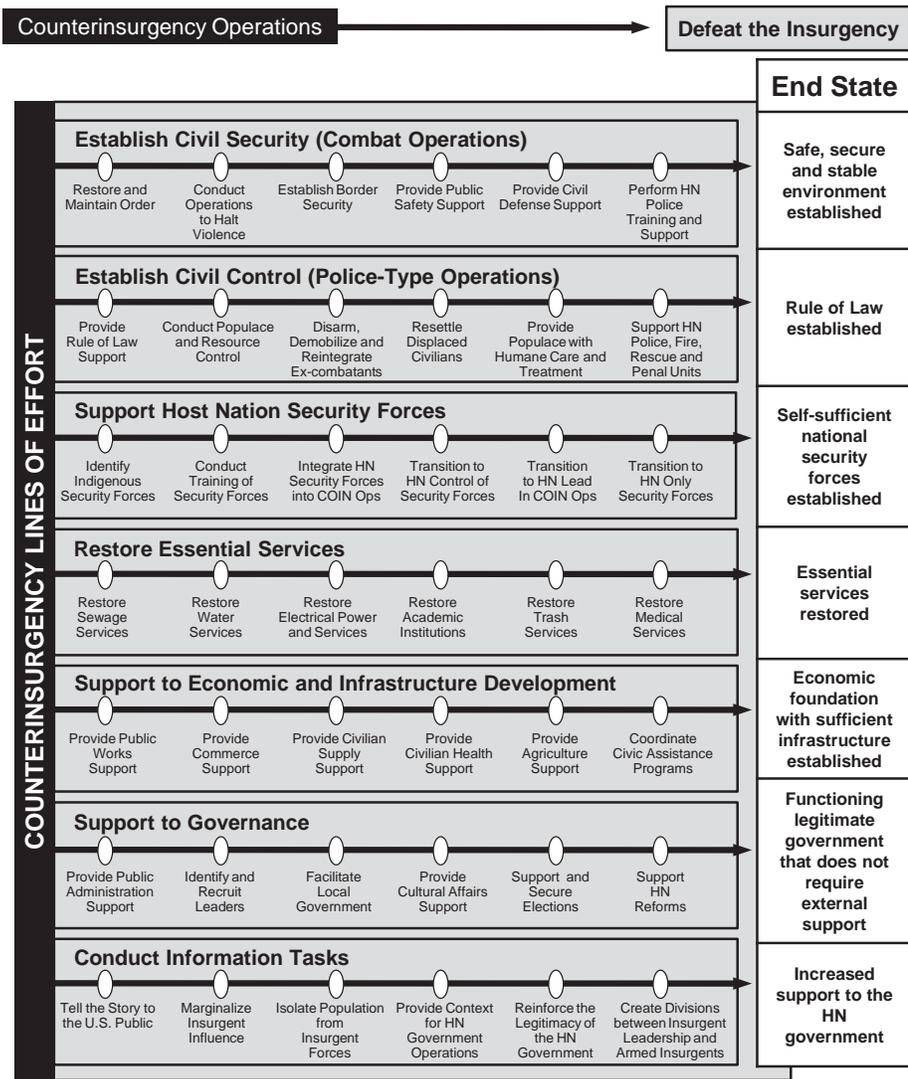


Figure 1

nesses, schools, and restaurants to escape violence. This resulted in a collection of empty homes, which were perfect for squatters (often displaced from other neighborhoods), insurgents, and terrorists to occupy.

The 4-64 Armored Regiment “Tusk-ers” assumed responsibility of southwest Rashid in November 2007 from the 1st Battalion, 18th (1-18) Infantry Regiment “Vanguards,” in the final months of the famous “surge” of 2007-2008. The Vanguards faced the bulk of the violence in Sadiyah and set conditions for the Tusk-ers to succeed. The Vanguards initiated a major effort to isolate the four most dense and developed muhallahs of the neighborhood with 12-foot high concrete barriers, called T-walls.<sup>9</sup> When the Tusk-ers assumed authority, the Sadiyah wall neared completion, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were found or detonated at a decreasing rate of about one every other week, and a corrupt National Police battalion was transferring authority of the area to 1st Battalion, 24th Brigade, 6th Division, Iraqi Army (1-24 IA Brigade).

The 1-24 IA Brigade, along with the National Police brigade headquarters, which was in charge of western Rashid, partnered with C Company, 1-18 Infantry Regiment, at a company combat outpost (COP) in the far southeast corner of the enclosed muhallahs. The “Sons of Iraq” program, which was established by 1-18 Infantry Regiment, failed to contribute significantly to security for tense political reasons, and a recent memory of corrupt National Police forces caused the people of Sadiyah, represented by a quasi-legitimate support council, to staunchly resist authorizing civil control by the Iraqi Police.<sup>10</sup>

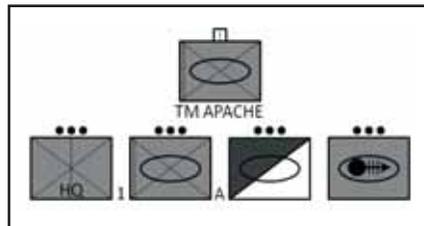


Figure 2

Upon relieving 1-18 Infantry Regiment, the Tusk-ers’ battalion commander immediately identified Sadiyah as his decisive operation. Following completion of the wall, the Tusk-ers, along with their Iraqi Army partners, executed a major clearing operation, Operation Sadiyah Dawn. As part of this operation, the Tusk-ers also established a new COP in Muhallah 821, appropriately named “COP 821.” Following clearance, the IA controlled the single civilian entry point into Sadiyah, and U.S. forces lived in a more centralized location, setting the conditions for stability operations to take hold.

To address this ambiguous security situation, the battalion task organized the scout and mortars platoons into a company-sized unit called “Team Apache.” The company team also had a headquarters platoon capable of independent maneuver made up of the fire support team and some infantrymen from the platoons (Figure 2).

#### Addressing the Lines of Effort in a Counterinsurgency

FM 3-24.2 does not directly assign responsibilities for LOE, as described in Figure 1. Below are seven essential LOEs performed by Team Apache in Sadiyah; each identifies key leaders, responsibilities, methods, and results (both positive and negative).

#### LOE 1: Establish Civil Security

Establishing civil security is the most important mission for maneuver platoons. Team Apache’s platoon leaders each possessed their own area, corresponding to Sadiyah’s muhallahs, which reinforced positive relationships with the population. As part of a daily patrol matrix, platoon leaders achieved presence by identifying focal points in their muhallahs and engaging the population during patrols, which were aptly named “engagement patrols.” They did this with host-nation (HN) forces as often as possible and used this opportunity to expand the information campaign in the area. Because of the limitations of interpreters, engaging the population fell on platoon leaders or platoon sergeants while the remainder of the platoon provided local security.<sup>11</sup>

After taking command, I enacted an enduring company-level operation, Apache Brolo, where each platoon leader identified a “main effort,” compared to the size of a handful of city blocks. The operation was derived from an example set by 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment (1-4 Cavalry), commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James Crider, in eastern Doura. The 1-4 Cavalry’s Operation Close Encounters could be described as a census, as it

included an extensive list of questions about everything from family ties to education and jobs. Crider explains that “the operation increased the personal contact between our soldiers and the population, thereby increasing the number of safe opportunities for those willing to provide intelligence.”<sup>12</sup> Like Crider’s men, Team Apache platoon leaders were armed with a list of questions and given the guidance to *take their time*. Accepting invitations for dinner or tea was highly encouraged; at times, we could accomplish more by spending the entire patrol at one house drinking chai rather than visiting a multitude of houses on several streets. *There is always tomorrow.*

The day-to-day patrol matrix does not downplay the importance of kinetic action, however. Team Apache’s operations in Sadiyah also included directed raids, which were based on significant signal and human intelligence against known terrorists and insurgents. One platoon effectively dismantled an IED cell using intelligence gathered during engagement patrols and other sources. Our targeting process and intelligence collection for these operations were directed by a savvy fire-support noncommissioned officer from the company team. His impromptu team rounded out the civil security LOE through communications with the battalion intelligence shop and other intelligence teams.

### **LOE 2: Establish Civil Control**

Establishing civil control in Sadiyah was delayed until the end of the deployment based on a gap in establishing effective unity of command with the U.S. Air Force police training team responsible for working with the Iraqi Police in Sadiyah. Much like partnering with host-nation forces, approaching this LOE effectively includes a strong relationship between the transition team and ground commander. This leads to a clearer understanding of the scope of authority and effectiveness of the civil control elements.

Knowing crucial facts about the local police aids in the transition of civil authority; for instance, the Iraqi Police were divided as a patrol police and station police, with separate types of headquarters, organizations, and responsibilities. Gathering such information helps strengthen the police’s legitimacy among the local population. If the locals do not trust the civil-control element, as in Sadiyah, the commander must first bring the host-na-



*“Sadiyah is a dense, urban, politically affluent residential neighborhood in south central Baghdad that once housed Ba’ath Party elites during Saddam’s rule. When the country plunged into sectarian turmoil, as a result of the Samarra Mosque bombing in 2006, the residents of Sadiyah found themselves at the fault line of competing religious sects.”*

tion forces together with the local governing population and then slowly relay authority to the policing forces. We began this process by collocating Iraqi Police checkpoints with IA checkpoints, but transferred authority before we could see the effects.

### **LOE 3: Support Host-Nation Forces**

Maneuver platoon leaders supported host-nation forces through constant engagement with 1-24 IA Brigade, which had its own challenges. Initially, we designed the patrol matrix based on feedback from platoon-level leadership regarding where they wanted — or needed — to develop the situation within their muhallahs. Bluntly, U.S. forces picked up the IA and told them “this is where we are going; now we’ll follow you.” Two methods improved these day-to-day patrols: the IA battalion commander, with help from his transition team chief, assigned areas of operations for the IA companies in the neighborhood; and Team Apache began to steadily follow the IA patrol matrix.

Prior to changing commanders, 1-24 IA Brigade was effective during cordon operations and in manning checkpoints in the neighborhood, yet lacked coherent organization at the company level. Under the new commander, who was a graduate of the Italian Staff College, each IA company established its own COP (safe house) within its defined area, and created rosters that corresponded checkpoints with the company responsible. This organization also allowed our leaders to interact more effectively by becoming acquainted with IA company commanders, their strengths and weaknesses, and the capabilities of their command and control nodes. To prevent complacency, they also conducted checkpoint and company-level command post capability inspec-

tions, which allowed face-to-face discussions between company commanders to address issues. By developing habitual relationships with IA company commanders, our platoon leaders could begin the transition of engagement patrol leaders. The patrol matrix, by the end of our tour, loosely ensured coverage throughout the neighborhood, but allowed the IA company commander to choose the precise location.

The IA battalion commander took advantage of security conditions in Sadiyah and my attendance at his weekly command and staff meeting to plan

larger scale cordon operations, using Team Apache in a support role. While he used Team Apache for closing gaps in his cordon, we used them to influence the population with our own information operations campaign.

### **LOE 4: Support to Economic and Infrastructure Development**

Millions of dollars passing through the hands of our fire support officer (FSO) provided the skeleton key for success in supporting economic development and the general advancement of Sadiyah. *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* uses the term “money as a weapons system” three times in its text.<sup>13</sup> While cynical observers will scoff at the idea of “buying security,” the proper use of money at the company level can influence all LOEs for the commander. We assigned the headquarters platoon to the FSO for approximately 2 days during the week to assist in completing many important tasks along current and future LOEs.

The downside to successful isolation achieved by the Sadiyah wall (mentioned above) is the deadly effect that limiting traffic will have on the economy. This was my first lesson in city planning and zoning — businesses attract people. Sadiyah had two major bustling markets before the exodus of its residents, and many other small markets, such as furniture production, sewing, ice production, and more. Each provided an opportunity to bring the neighborhood back to life; the “microgrant” program provided the elixir. A microgrant is a sum of money, determined by the size and potential of the requestor’s business, awarded from the commander’s emergency relief program by the land-owning U.S. force. Mentioned above, a critical factor in this program was our battalion commander’s decision to weigh Sadiyah as his main effort.

My FSO's plan for the application process and payment of the microgrants achieved more than originally expected. Shaking off a previous attempt to "sprinkle" microgrants throughout the area, he identified the most critical markets capable of bolstering public confidence and, in turn, supporting security and resettlement. With information collected from the population, the FSO identified the most prominent market in the neighborhood, which was the "cherry market."<sup>14</sup> The FSO began with an information campaign, in cooperation with the support council, which provided applications — on an assigned day — to shop owners with an open shop and *proof of ownership*. This required our soldiers to interpret legitimate government documentation, often with the help of local support or neighborhood councils. The chance of receiving a microgrant brought shop owners back to their stores. The day the applications were distributed was the busiest day in the marketplace since our unit had arrived in Baghdad!

The FSO divided his element into teams, which handed out applications after validating deeds and taking photos of each applicant and his shop. Over the next few days, applicants reported to COP 821 with completed applications, valid identification, and ownership deeds. Before they arrived, the FSO generated packets for each applicant to determine the category (determining money) and ranking (determining priority for payment) assigned to each shop. At the COP, the owner (or posing owner) was required to enroll in a biometric database maintained by coalition forces, which was used to cross-reference forensic evidence from criminal or terrorist attacks. One can see how the effective execution of this process was so helpful, let alone the legitimacy that the local government and coalition forces deposited on payment day.

Developing the economy, under proper security conditions, is the most important improvement factor to consider as security improves. Opening stores for business and actually bringing people into the marketplace significantly improved the quality of life of the remaining residents. The "declaration" of safety measures, or perception thereof, spread to residents who had left the neighborhood (or country) and resettlement began. As residents returned, more security became necessary as these individuals had an investment in long-term success and likely provided intelligence.

#### **LOE 5: Restore Essential Services**

Along with the glory and satisfaction of economic development comes the tedious

work of essential services for the fire support team (FiST) and headquarters platoon. Experience with this LOE demands company-grade officers be familiar with aspects of city planning to be successful in stability operations, as these are key terrain for insurgents and counterinsurgents. The local thug, small crime boss, or sleeper insurgent cell will control local power generation, gas distribution, and other such essential services, to make money and intimidate the population. Controlling this LOE demanded day-to-day tedium, but resulted in two major projects that advanced overall success in the neighborhood.

To collect extensive information requirements for essential services assessments, the FSO was given exclusive control of the headquarters platoon 2 days a week. Having certain predictability allowed the FSO to coordinate with local government officials to be present during assessments of essential services such as schools, generators, and gas distributions. When local government elements, such as support council members or neighborhood council members, saw these shortcomings and made themselves present for town hall meetings, results materialized. During school openings, Iraqi brigade and battalion commanders were also present, which assigned legitimacy to host-nation forces.

A market lighting project, in particular, received overwhelming support from the population in Sadiyah. After the effects of a microgrant surge took hold on the spruce market (prior to the cherry market project), we saw an opportunity to support the growth of the economy, essential services, and security with a well-funded, single project. Given an intelligent general contractor, local workers rewired the original street lights along the market (long since shot out or destroyed entirely) to a large generator within sight of COP 821 and an IA checkpoint. The project funding provided start-up costs, the first tank of gas, and initial maintenance, but the key aspect of the project was the long-term plan. The support council, by vote, identified a manager for the micro-generation, which was provided by the project's generator. Shop owners paid for a power line, from the central street lights to their shop, at a manageable price (determined comparable to what it would cost from the government supply), and their monthly payments sustained the maintenance and gas prices for the generator. Although many questions arose after the grand opening, the contract's long-term stipulations provided an identifiable, local point of contact when things were not working properly, thus reducing the

reliance on American intervention — and dollars.

A larger micro-generation project throughout the battalion area followed a similar model as the Sadiyah street lights. This project further emphasized the city planning that inherently follows stability operations along this LOE. Emplacing the generators required host-nation security, noninterference with water lines, and provided a lucrative target for opportunistic thugs looking for money. It's easy to identify how one simple services project has the potential of crossing all LOEs.

The FSO was quick to garner as much information as possible relating to power, water, and sewage operations, and identify the Iraqi administrator charged with the responsibility of each service. This information was passed on to ensure we were familiar with these key players before we attended scheduled governance meetings.

#### **LOE 6: Support to Governance**

The Sadiyah governance plan produced an interesting collection of dilemmas, which represented the sensitive nature of counterinsurgency. Prior to transferring authority to the Tuskers, the Vanguarders, much like other units, coordinated a vote for establishing a support council in Sadiyah, with equal representation regarding Sunni and Shia. The result was a well-funded support council with a suitable headquarters inside the major neighborhood muhallah. The council, under U.S. forces guidance, divided into committees that reasonably matched our LOEs, mainly essential services.

These weekly meetings generally drew all of the elected members, some volunteer members, representatives from IA and U.S. forces, and often the National Police brigade commander and U.S. battalion commander. The focus and effort put into this council gave it *de facto* legitimacy.

After a legitimate attempt at learning enough Arabic to track topics of conversation, I found that the less I was involved, the more the council accomplished. While I held a place at the head of the table, I did not have my interpreter interrupt the meeting to translate, but allowed the council to work through topics with occasional updates in English. I made a point to develop relationships, which included chai at homes and in mosque courtyards, and encourage discussion on politics and economics. A commander who does not accept invitations to religious celebrations, dinner, or casual conversation is missing the "mark" on successful counterinsurgency operations.



*“As part of a daily patrol matrix, platoon leaders achieved presence by identifying focal points in their muhallahs and engaging the population during patrols, which were aptly named ‘engagement patrols.’ They did this with host-nation forces as often as possible and used this opportunity to expand the information campaign in the area.”*

There also existed a neighborhood council for Sadiyah, which had literally been ostracized and undermined as a casualty to the establishment of the support council. The most important meeting we had regarding governance LOE was a chance meeting in the battalion conference room with the FSO and an embedded provincial reconstruction advisor from the U.S. State Department, who was working for the brigade. During this meeting, the advisor sketched out how essential services and governance was *meant* to work in a government that higher-level officials were attempting to establish. The support council, our most effective organization, literally undermined the legitimate local government with our unwavering support. By emplacing a semi-legitimate elected support council body in Sadiyah, we, in a sense, had become the insurgents. The personalities within the two councils constantly butted heads, which made for tense moments when our platoon leaders requested local presence on engagement patrols or during infrastructure assessments.

Understanding this, we set about supporting and empowering the legitimate local government, but not without certain friction. It was difficult to convince the neighborhood council chairman that we supported him when our support for the

support council implied otherwise. While so many attended these support council meetings, I was the only security representative who attended the actual, legitimate neighborhood council meetings. I overtly began supporting the neighborhood council by inviting them to support council meetings, and then inviting the IA commander to attend neighborhood council meetings.

The delicate nature of this LOE demands the apt and constant attention of a commander. Command of the politics presents multiple lines of communications to the population. A commander must be willing to protect these lines of communications, despite the associated uneasy feelings.

#### ***LOE 7: Conduct Information Tasks***

FM 3-0, *Operations* describes information as a “powerful tool ... as important as lethal action” in the modern operational environment, and further states that, “commanders use information to understand, visualize, describe, and direct warfighting functions.”<sup>15</sup> Given this, and the ambiguous nature of counterinsurgency operations, one can see why FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, emphatically states that “Conduct information tasks

are part of all military operations in an area.”<sup>16</sup>

Months after taking command, it became apparent that the amount of reporting going up to the battalion (and subsequently brigade), far outweighed the information being pushed down, even within our company. Reality ‘hit’ when one of our platoon leaders stated that he could only talk about “how few hours of power there are” for so long. Although frustrated that he had missed so many opportunities for discussion, his comment established that we were using the most important details of our information campaign only to appease higher headquarters — the voracious monster.

Following this revelation, our FSO dealt the responsibility of providing proper talking points during the company’s nightly synchronization meetings. By opening this conduit of information, our patrol leaders had something to discuss with the people of Sadiyah. Armed with this information, engagement patrols carried a purpose and end state beyond just answering a list of questions. This LOE finally rounded out engagement patrols, both combined with host-nation forces and Apache Brolo, and connected them with reciprocal LOEs, which resulted in

effective presence throughout the neighborhood.

### Resettlement – The Elephant in the AO

Resettlement of displaced civilians proved to be the most challenging aspect of stability operations in this environment. FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, fail to properly acknowledge the importance or complexity of this inevitable challenge.<sup>17</sup> Much like the essential services listed above, insurgents and criminals fought for control of this key aspect of human terrain.

The system we developed to prevent the enemy from taking advantage of this sensitive objective consisted of three parts:

- U.S. forces were not involved in removing families (squatters) from homes, therefore we involved host-nation forces. Specifically, IA soldiers directed civilians, who came to checkpoints with luggage and indicated they were resettling, to report to the support council.<sup>18</sup>
- The support council collected and consolidated information about each person to provide a weekly list of returning internally displaced persons.
- Ensuring the weekly list corresponded with engagement patrols, which included patrol leaders requesting families to produce a deed to their property. If the patrol discovered resettled families, they would be directed to report to the support council, if they had not done so.

Word spread quickly and people soon became aware of our efforts to validate the reentry of families. These efforts



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quickly mitigated potential corruption seen in other areas, as one demographic group simply dominated the resettlement of civilians as a way to control which insurgent or idealistic group controlled the area. Understanding the importance of resettlement and its relation to the development of the host-nation forces' legitimacy drove almost all our operations by the time we transitioned authority to our replacements. This fundamental aspect of stability lacks proper consideration in our manuals and often comes as an afterthought — when the enemy has already seized control.

### Lessons from Sadiyah

Conducting stability operations in a counterinsurgency weighs heavily on the commander's intellectual understanding of the tasks he faces. Each LOE will influence another as quickly as a warning shot on a busy street. Given a doctrinal framework to operate within and an understanding of the complexities of the enemies therein, company-grade leaders

have only reached the line of departure, or the beginning. The framework provided by FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, effectively brings deploying units that far, but falls short on providing vignettes on how to organize to accomplish the tasks it demands.<sup>19</sup> The operations and task organization of Team Apache, 4-64 Armor Regiment, although a product of a specific time, place, and situation, serve as a case study of how to properly execute these doctrinal fundamentals. All the company's successes resulted from great junior leaders and great men working hard in a confusing world.

In closing, below is a summary of lessons learned based on Team Apache, 4-64 Armor Regiment's deployment to Iraq:

- Create a feasible approach to *each* LOE described in FM 3-24.2.<sup>20</sup> It will ultimately help maneuver platoons during day-to-day patrols and achieve *effective* presence.
- *Saying* the population is key terrain is different than *understanding* why it is key terrain.
- View your area as a city planner would when addressing essential services. For example, emplacing a generator might flood a market.
- Ensure local successes are not undermining the big picture.
- Resettlement is a critical aspect of stability operations, which is greatly ignored in our doctrine.
- Units would greatly benefit from a training support package or mission training plan associated with FM 3-24.2.<sup>21</sup>



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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, April 2009, p. ix; and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, GPO, Washington, DC, December 2006, p. x.

<sup>2</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. x.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*; and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.

<sup>6</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, Chapter 3.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., Chapter 5.

<sup>8</sup>FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, p. 1-28.

<sup>9</sup>Section off neighborhoods and serve as the basis for the address system in the city.

<sup>10</sup>While the Sons of Iraq program failed, our "Daughters of Iraq" program provided female searchers at entry points to Sadiyah, and at the neighborhood bank, which reopened with our help after multiple bombings.

<sup>11</sup>The engagement can also be effective with a particularly affable individual who can convey information talking points.

<sup>12</sup>Colonel James Crider, "Inside the Surge: One Commander's Lessons in Counterinsurgency," Working Paper, Center for a New American Security, Washington, DC, June 2009, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*.

<sup>14</sup>We named it the "cherry market" based on its location on Route Cherry. In fact, it was a major fish and fruit market for Baghdad.

<sup>15</sup>FM 3-0, *Operations*, GPO, Washington, DC, 2008, p. 4-3.

<sup>16</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, p. 5-11.

<sup>17</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*; and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.

<sup>18</sup>This measure was possible because of the displacement money that the Iraqi government claimed they would pay to internally displaced persons.

<sup>19</sup>FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

# Reflections on Instructing at the Armor School Maneuver Captain Career Course

by Major Rupert N.H. Greenwood, British Exchange Officer

*The Maneuver Captain Career Course (MCCC), Fort Knox, Kentucky, is a 20-week (103 workdays) course attended by armor, infantry, special forces, and a handful of other branch captains from the U.S. Army, U.S. Army National Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, and allied armies. It is one of two MCCC's; the other is held at Fort Benning, Georgia. The course is divided into two phases, company and battalion. These phases are then further split into 12 modules, each approximately 9 days in length. Instruction and learning are almost always conducted in a 15-man small group. This concept of small group collaborative learning, with mentorship provided by the instructor, is nearly identical to that found at the United Kingdom Defence Academy. I had the privilege to be a small group instructor (SGI) for three courses during my time at Fort Knox.*

This article is primarily intended to be a reflective piece of my time as an instructor at Fort Knox; however, as the last British exchange officer to serve at Fort Knox, I will take this opportunity to make two simple recommendations.<sup>1</sup>

These recommendations are clearly plagiarized from the U.S. Army Armor School, but if incorporated, could add value to British army officer training. The first recommendation encourages the British army to combine elements of its Commanding Officer Designate Course, Company Commander Combined Arms Tactics Course, Platoon Commander Battle Course, and Troop Leader Course. The second recommendation suggests the British army review how much time it spends on officer individual training and the environment in which the training is conducted. My experiences as an instructor at the MCCC brought me to realize that the plethora of short pre-employment courses our officers attend provide focused and succinct training; however, they lack the time to create a real adult learning opportunity. This can only be achieved by running longer and wider ranging courses where students interact and learn from one another, as opposed to solely from the instructor.

**Company phase.** During the company phase, students study Combined Arms Center-directed common core subjects,

troop leading procedures and company-level tactics.<sup>2</sup> Practical exercises (PEs) involve students employing various configurations of a company team, such as light infantry, mechanized infantry, tank, and Stryker, in different operating environments across the full spectrum of conflict. Some of the PEs are set in fictitious Madera (Kentucky); however, a number are set in actual areas where captains have served or might find themselves operating in the future. Particular effort is made to ensure PEs include all elements of the spectrum — offensive, defensive, and stability operations. During this phase, students are constantly assessed on their ability to deliver multiple 1-hour operations order (OPORD) briefings, their contribution to classroom discussions, and performance on tactical exercises without troops (TEWTs) and quizzes held after each module. Recently, more and more emphasis has been placed on the actual application of knowledge, which means executing PEs using simulations. At the 10-week point, captains take a mid-term exam and a graded hands-on practical test. Depending on their results, students are either recycled back to the beginning





*"What is enlightening, and contradictory to what one might expect of such a course, is how much latitude SGI are allowed in developing their instruction methods. For instance, one of the MCCC modules entails studying the targeting process (decide-detect-deliver-assess). The PE is conducted as a command post exercise, and for 5 days, the task force staff pieces together a jigsaw based on information from its companies."*

of the course or they progress on to the battalion phase.

**Battalion phase.** During the second part of the course, captains learn the military decisionmaking process (MDMP) and perform duties of a battalion staff, which range from the executive officer to the S6. Again, the PEs are set in different theaters, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea, and also use various types of maneuver task forces. The students conduct four MDMP exercises, with the SGI in the role of commander. However, the most noteworthy part of this phase is when a battalion commander (select) from the pre-command course (PCC) takes on the role of task force commander.<sup>3</sup>

During the second phase, the pressure on students is reduced (assessments tend to be conducted as a group and much of the key learning was covered in the first part of the course); however, significant additional pressures do exist, particularly during the writing and critical-thinking programs.<sup>4</sup> Captains are required to submit a decision memo, which addresses a soldier discipline issue, and write a battle analysis paper, as well as an in-depth cultural awareness paper. Many students will submit a thesis, which will be considered for publication in one of many professional military journals.

The second phase also allows captains a number of opportunities to practice command and address the multitude of command issues they may encounter both in

garrison and in theater. The students conduct media training with local journalists; spend time in ethical and moral classes with the chaplain; address discipline issues they are likely to face at the company level; learn about officer and non-commissioned officer report writing and subordinate counseling; plan company and battalion training programs; and are exposed to equipment accounting and company logistics, to name but a few. Also, as an opportunity for leader development, the course pushes students out to visit Reserve Officer Training Corps programs at regional universities and encourages them to plan and conduct a Civil War battle staff ride.

As we know, no U.S. Army course overview would be complete without discussing physical training (PT). Compulsory PT is conducted, by small group, 5 days per week at 0600 hours, and organized team sports are played at least once a week. The final PT test results make up 15 percent of the student's overall performance grade.

However, the opportunities provided to practice command are the most impressive. During the Armor Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC), also located at Fort Knox, captains assist in training lieutenants, which they will likely lead in the future. This training ranges from preparing lieutenants for Ranger School to running informal officer professional-development forums. Another noteworthy com-

mand practice is that captains have the opportunity to command lieutenants in a field environment during the BOLC's urban operations exercise and the final field training exercise, known as full-spectrum operations "Gauntlet." During these exercises, captains command companies from receipt of mission through to execution, and at end of mission, they lead the company after-action review.

**Simulations.** As mentioned above, student assessments are strongly weighted against the quality of their OPORDs, but as new simulation systems become available, there exists a steady shift to make time in the program to actually *evaluate* student plans to determine their functionality. The MCCC makes use of all on-site assets, such as the close combat tactical trainer (CCTT), equivalent to the British army's combined arms tactical trainer; the joint conflict and tactical simulation (JCATS); and the virtual battle simulator 2 (VBS2), which is played on the student's own laptops. Clearly, winning counts and students are given qualitative after-action reviews, but the second-order effect of this training exposes captains to a range of simulation systems they will undoubtedly use in the future (whether directed to do so, or of their own volition) when conducting their company training.

**The small group.** Although the style of instruction is nearly identical to that of the British army, the MCCC conducts far

fewer central lectures than I expected. Around 95 percent of teaching is delivered in a small group setting. Adhering to the experiential learning model, the SGI facilitates learning and, in an ideal world, should be able to extract all knowledge from the student body. However, U.S. captains differ little from British captains, so if students come unprepared (which in fairness is not that often), then the SGI must endeavor to be the subject-matter expert (SME). While it is impossible to be an SME in all areas of the course (the number of U.S. Army Field Manuals is overwhelming alone), this U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)-directed model serves as a very effective method of adult learning, partially due to the fact that is impossible to fall asleep in a class of 15.

What is enlightening, and contradictory to what one might expect of such a course, is how much latitude SGIs are allowed in developing their instruction methods. For instance, one of the MCCC modules entails studying the targeting process (decide-detect-deliver-assess). The PE is conducted as a command post exercise, and for 5 days, the task force staff pieces together a jigsaw based on information from its companies. The goal is to eliminate chief protagonists from the task force's area of operations. To visualize this process, one SGI made contact with the local police department and his students were invited to observe the criminal investigations branch during its effort to target local criminal gangs. Another good example of creative instruction methods involved media awareness training. I was fortunate enough to meet some local network TV journalists through one of my students. As a result of this relationship, we conducted televised interviews, and the journalists and Fort Knox press officer provided invaluable debriefs on student techniques. Of course, the U.S. Army is in an enviable position. In states, such as Kentucky, the Army is well respected, thus training assistance from civilian organizations and government departments is plentiful, as well as cost free.

**Lessons for the British army.** There is no doubt that the British army can glean lessons from the U.S. Army Armor School's MCCC and its junior officer education process. However, if a study solely focused on course material were conducted, it would reveal a stark similarity between the courses taught at the MCCC and the various long and short courses junior British officers are currently attending at British military schools, the Land

Warfare Centre, and in army education centers. I depart the MCCC with two primary lessons learned: the benefit of integrating platoon, company, and battalion individual courses; and creating the right environment for adult learning.

**Multiecheloned training.** One of the most striking differences between my experiences as a student in British army professional-development schools and my time as an SGI at the MCCC is the highly praised overlapping and integration of platoon, company, and battalion command courses, which include BOLC, MCCC, and PCC. While it is not TRADOC mandated to train these three courses together, this Armor School initiative is consistently rated by MCCC students as the highlight of the course. Not only does it allow lieutenant colonels (LTCs) and captains (CPTs) to practice with actual subordinates, but during training, LTCs and CPTs collectively echo the same learning points, thereby adding credibility to the teachings of their occasionally maligned cadre of SGIs who clearly do not know what it is like in the real world.

**Collegiate setting.** During my tenure as a SGI, I also realized the benefit of running a longer, wider ranged residential course versus the British army's very specific pre-employment training courses. The British army held the Junior Command and Staff Course (JCSC) roughly at the same time during a captain's career. Its purpose was near identical to that of the MCCC, yet it was hugely unpopular and drove some very good quality officers out of the army. However, times and attitudes have changed, and with the right leaders, course design, work-life balance, and healthy instructor-student relationships, the British army would benefit from bringing back together some of the critical elements of the old JCSC. The MCCC supports a permanent change of station (PCS) move for students, with the majority bringing families, which the British army should have to support its families. The end state of such a course is that the junior officer leaves refreshed, but also genuinely, professionally developed.

In my opinion, this is almost wholly achieved by spending sufficient time in one school, in an environment where relationships become so strong that virtually every student's and SGI's previous operational experiences; tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP); and battle-winning ideas have been shared and debated among the student body or tested using simulations. Coupled with this, the tempo at Fort Knox is set at a pace

that reflects the professional needs of the U.S. Army, but also pays particular attention to the personal and family needs of the oft battle-exhausted students and their appendages.<sup>5</sup>

Undeniably, operational tempo, greater needs of the field army, budget constraints, and perhaps even a consensus that current training systems are adequate, outweigh my recommendations. However, during my 2 years at Fort Knox, it became abundantly clear that we must not further modularize army officer education. The collegiate setting works, which is evidenced by our centuries-old universities. Distance and computer-based learning may be an efficient way to conduct some technical aspects of military training; however, adult learning environments, such as the MCCC, are creating a cohort of well-educated, well-motivated, fit, and robust officers, who are ready to assume key staff appointments and company commands throughout the U.S. Army.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup>There is also a British Exchange warrant officer at Fort Knox who currently teaches on the Basic Officer Leader Course.

<sup>2</sup>Many of these are extracted from the Intermediate-Level Education Course (equivalent to ICSC (L)), Fort Leavenworth, and range from "dealing with listening barriers" to "introduction to U.S. Army doctrine."

<sup>3</sup>All armor and cavalry PCC lieutenant colonels spend 2 weeks at Fort Knox. Those selected to play task force commander generally attend a mission analysis brief, deliver their commander's guidance, listen to a course of action (COA) development brief, select a COA, lead delivery of the OPORD, and attend the combined arms rehearsal.

<sup>4</sup>Interestingly, many of the students rate this as their least favorite part of the course. The general consensus is that as university graduates, they already know how to write. While I do not profess to be a great writer, this article being case in point, this is not so.

<sup>5</sup>Of the student body of my three courses, only one captain had not deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. Of the remaining 42, at least 30 percent had been on two 1-year tours.

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# LEADER ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

by Major Darrin Theriault

*“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”*

— Leo Tolstoy

Junior armor leaders are the tip of the spear in today’s operating environment. They lead small units and exercise levels of leadership, decisionmaking, and relationship building that were unimaginable for most junior leaders just 10 short years ago. They are developing into incredible leaders now, and as future leaders of the Army, it is essential that they continue to grow into better and more effective leaders. The lifeblood of the armor force is high-caliber leadership. Armor units have consistently depended on adaptive, agile, and well-rounded leaders at all levels. Junior leaders, at all levels, from platoon leader to staff sergeant, must understand and apply the principles of leader assessment and development.

Learning leader assessment and development, and then applying the principles, enables significant leadership growth. An additional benefit is that leaders who understand and apply the leader assessment and development process will inevitably become better teachers, coaches, and mentors to the soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers they will lead in the future. There are two key aspects of improving leadership skills: self-assessment and self-development. Leaders must first assess their own strengths and weaknesses, and then create and follow a self-development program, which will enable them to take their leadership abilities to new and higher levels.

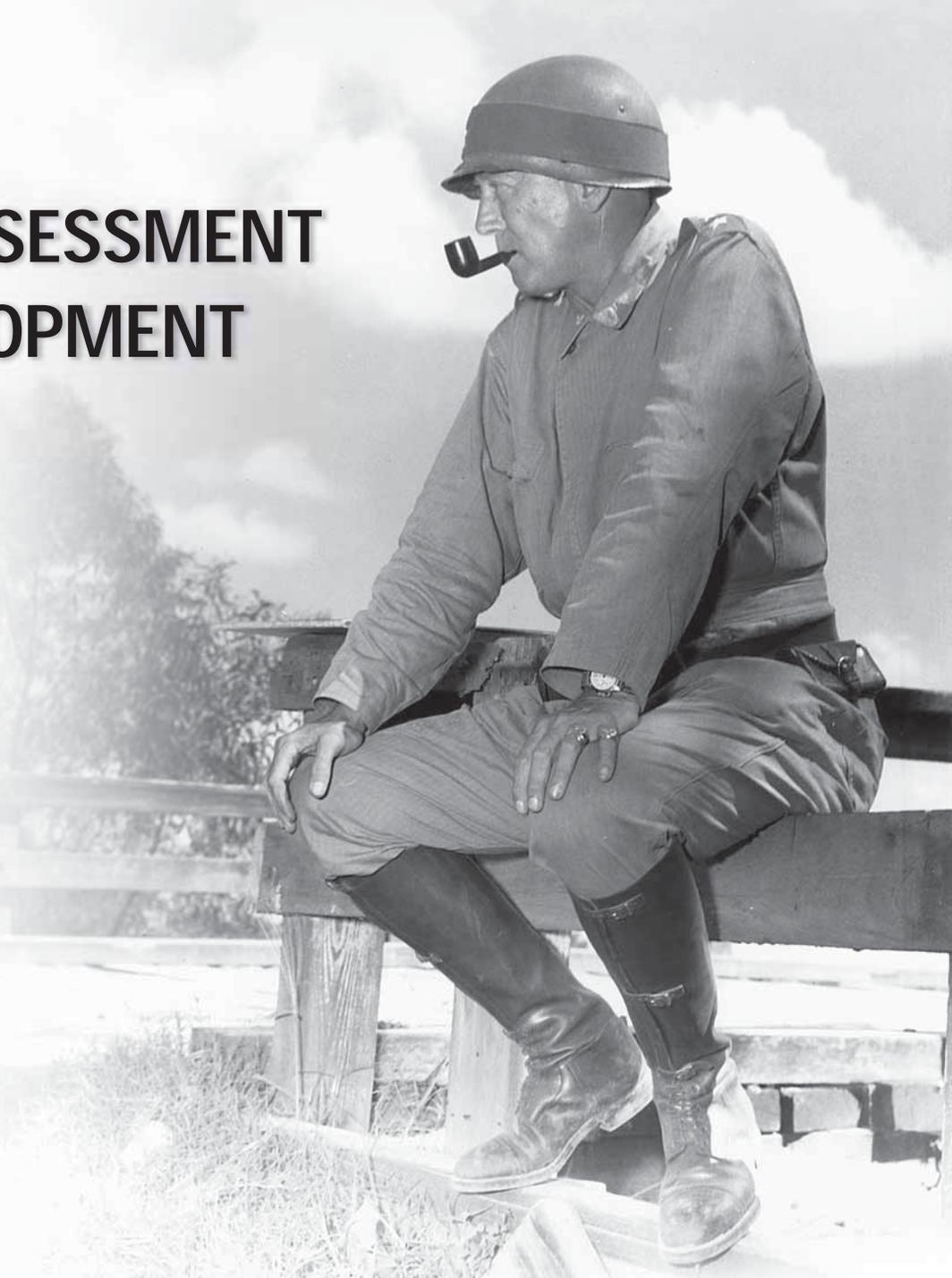
An ancient Chinese proverb states, “The longest journey begins with the first step.” This proverb is an excellent way to describe the first step a leader must take in the lifelong journey of self-improvement through self-assessment or self-awareness. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, defines self-awareness as “being aware of oneself, including one’s traits, feelings, and behaviors.”<sup>1</sup> Self-awareness enables leaders to identi-

fy strengths and more importantly, weaknesses. Although identifying strengths is an important component to leader development, identifying weaknesses creates a greater catalyst for personal growth and self-improvement. There are three main methods available to leaders to conduct a thorough self-assessment, which include self-assessment tools, mentorship, and peer and subordinate feedback. When applied collectively, these methods provide holistic insight into a leader’s strengths and weaknesses.

To assist with self-assessment, the Army provides several tools to present leaders with an objective look at one’s traits, feelings, and behaviors as described in FM 6-22.<sup>2</sup> Two of these tools include the Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI) and the

learning style inventory (LSI). The MBTI is a measurement tool that provides leader feedback on the type of personality traits that are most prominent. The feedback from the MBTI is not a hard-line expression of what an individual will do in every situation; rather, its intent is to provide general personality preferences across a range of situations. The ability to understand personality types is invaluable when building relationships with others and dealing with difficult, complex problems.

The LSI helps individuals discover which methods of instruction are best suited for the individual’s particular learning style. Some learn best by doing hands-on tasks, while others learn best from classroom lectures or studying theories and



models. Understanding the most effective learning method is especially important when leaders move from self-assessment to self-development, because it helps determine how leaders establish self-development plans.

Self-assessment tools, such as the MBTI and LSI, provide important personal insight to leaders; however, without intrapersonal feedback from others, a leader's self-improvement journey is cold and robotic. Limited to a series of tests, a leader would merely take the tests differently to obtain the desired outcome, and leader development would become an exercise in test manipulation. One of the human elements of leader development and self-assessment feedback is the interaction between the leader and mentor.

Mentors play a critical role in developing leaders. U.S. Army Regulation (AR) 600-100, *Army Leadership*, defines mentorship as, "the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect." The regulation further states that leaders are "responsible for mentoring subordinates to the greatest extent possible."<sup>3</sup> One of a mentor's responsibilities is providing candid and honest observations concerning the mentee's strengths and weaknesses.

Although mentors provide leaders with valuable feedback, the mentor's perspective is from senior to junior; if a leader develops a holistic baseline to assess his or her leadership skills, he or she must gather feedback from peers and subordinates. Peers and subordinates provide informal feedback to leaders through daily interaction or formally through the multi-source assessment and feedback tool, which is available on Army Knowledge Online.

Once a leader has collected peer/subordinate feedback from self-assessment tools, mentorship, and peer and subordinate feedback, this information is then used to reflect deeply on his/her strengths and weaknesses. Identifying weaknesses is difficult — it is much easier and more satisfying to reflect on one's strengths. However, to experience personal growth and development as a leader, targeting weaknesses achieves the most meaningful results.

Leader development is the method leaders use to improve on identified weaknesses. Field Manual 6-22, *Army Leadership*, defines leader development as, "a deliberate, continuous, sequential, and

progressive process grounded in the Army Values."<sup>4</sup> Another excellent tool available to assist leaders in leader development is the individual development plan (IDP). The IDP is a plan created by a leader to assist in identifying long-term (5-20 years), mid-term (2-5 years), and short-term (0-2 years) self-development goals; done correctly and completely, the IDP accounts for professional, personal, and family goals.

In addition to plotting and following the IDP, leaders also develop themselves in various other ways. Institutional assignments expose leaders to incredible learning experiences while simultaneously offering opportunities to coach, teach, and mentor students. Operational assignments provide leaders invaluable leader experience in the field and during deployments. Aside from military education and operational experiences, leaders are also encouraged to grow through civilian education opportunities. Finally, leaders develop themselves by maintaining an aggressive professional reading program. For example, much like a medical doctor, who is expected to stay current on the latest medical procedures, military professionals are expected to do the same and this is largely accomplished through professional reading.

It is important to understand that our junior leaders will soon be senior leaders,

which is why understanding and applying leader assessment and development *now* is critical to career progression over the next 5 to 10 years of service.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership, Competent, Confident, and Agile*, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC, 2006, p. 8-8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>HQDA, Army Regulation (AR) 600-100, *Army Leadership*, GPO, Washington, DC, 2007, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>4</sup>FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, p. 8-9.

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*"Although mentors provide leaders with valuable feedback, the mentor's perspective is from senior to junior; if a leader develops a holistic baseline to assess his or her leadership skills, he or she must gather feedback from peers and subordinates. Peers and subordinates provide informal feedback to leaders through daily interaction..."*

# Sword/Vernon Interchange: A Crossroads in Combating IEDs

by Captain Dustin M. Navarro, Captain Clint T. Edwards, and Captain David M. Williams

*While deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 08-09, conventional U.S. Armed Forces continued to work toward sustaining local security and developing civil capacity in a post-“surge” environment. As these operations progressed, U.S. forces reduced their forward presence, as the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces became effectual.*

The 2007-2008 surge in Iraq allowed U.S. and Iraqi forces to clear and hold Baghdad, but current units must continue to build on past successes by employing assets other than boots-on-the-ground as the forward footprint of coalition forces declines. Since 2004, the intersection of Alternate Supply Route (ASR) Sword and Vernon in Western Baghdad has been a consistent improvised explosive device (IED) engagement area where attacks directly impact the local populace, logistics movements, and coalition forces attempting to maneuver throughout the battlespace.

By employing enablers available across the brigade combat team (BCT) and Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B) organizations, combined with the support of Iraqi public works directorates, Comanche Troop, 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment (5-4 Cavalry) executed engagement area development to allow the Iraqi army to effectively target enemy forces while ensuring key terrain in Baghdad remained secure. The doctrinal steps of engagement area development still apply in the contemporary environment; however, the continuous mission and existing threats necessitate an out-of-sequence execution to allow the Iraqi army to protect the terrain while the environment is shaped as assets become available.

## The Intersection

*Visualize how the enemy might attack.*

The local populace's freedom of movement in northwestern Baghdad depended heavily on ASRs Sword (locally known as highway 97 or highway Abu Ghuraib) and Vernon (locally known

as the Khalid Bin al-Waleed highway). Likewise, these ASRs were vital to coalition forces executing resupply operations throughout Iraq. Coalition forces, logistics convoys, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), and thousands of local nationals use these routes daily to bypass congestion inside the city, which is caused by ISF checkpoints. Numerous insurgent groups employed IEDs at this intersection due to a constant flow of coalition force sustainment convoys, multiple on and off ramps, and convenient natural cover.

ASR Vernon runs off of Main Supply Route (MSR) Tampa, just north of Baghdad, and extends south through Baghdad's western Hayys (Shulla, Ghazaliya, Adl, Jamia, and Khadra) to MSR Irish. The route served as a vital supply line for moving supplies north on MSR Tampa from Kuwait. ASR Vernon allowed lengthy coalition force logistics convoys to bypass the congestion in the city, theoretically creating a faster and safer route. It further supported the sustainment operations of multiple forward operating bases (FOBs). Likewise, ASR Sword supported operations west of Baghdad, allowing support to FOBs throughout Fallujah and Ramadi. Furthermore, within Comanche Troop's area of operations, the two ASRs facilitated support from FOBs to a multitude of joint security stations (JSSs) in northwest Baghdad. Given the sheer volume of daily traffic, this intersection was a natural hotbed for IEDs.

## History

*Visualize how the enemy might attack.*

The intersection of ASR Sword and ASR Vernon was a known hotspot for IED activity. The disruption of coalition forces' freedom of maneuver through these crossroads represented tactical success for enemy forces and a sustained information operations defeat for coalition forces. Since October 2004, more than 350 significant activities (SIGACTS) occurred in the im-



*“...the intersection of Alternate Supply Route (ASR) Sword and Vernon in Western Baghdad has been a consistent improvised explosive device (IED) engagement area where attacks directly impact the local populace, logistics movements, and coalition forces attempting to maneuver throughout the battlespace.”*

mediate vicinity of this intersection; by and large, the majority has been IED related. Prior to the 2007 surge, the intersection averaged more than three attacks per month on coalition forces and ISF. The surge allowed coalition forces to effectively reduce the number of attacks and reestablish freedom of maneuver along the two major supply routes.

Combat logistics patrols also used the intersection, which provided predictable, easy targets for anti-coalition force IED cells. While very few of the attacks produced coalition force fatalities, insurgents were successful in damaging and destroying vehicles. IEDs remained the weapon of choice to exploit coalition force and ISF weaknesses in an attempt for local insurgent networks to delegitimize coalition and Iraqi security forces.

Enemy forces primarily launched attacks out of Khadra (southwest of the intersection) or Ghazaliya (northwest of the intersection) where they maintained freedom of maneuver. Due to stealthy IED emplacement under the cover of darkness, engaging responsible insurgents was challenging. From 2004-2006, very few SIGACTs report any enemy battle damage assessments; however, other information sources indicate otherwise. Nonetheless, enemy freedom of maneuver made the intersection of ASR Sword and Vernon a high-risk engagement area.

As a result of the surge during the spring of 2007, an additional 20,000 soldiers deployed to Iraq, which dramatically decreased the number of IED attacks at the intersection. During the first half of 2005, the intersection averaged 2 to 3 attacks a month; likewise, during the height of sectarian violence in 2006, the intersection saw approximately three attacks every month. However, in late 2007, following the surge, the number of attacks dropped to less than one attack every month.

In conjunction with the surge, the movement of U.S. forces to Baghdad, where they would operate from a JSS, further reduced the number of attacks at the intersection. MND-B selected the

Adl Mall as an FOB, and later as a JSS, because its location provided direct overwatch to key terrain and the capability to rapidly deploy forces as part of the clear, hold, and build strategy. The Adl rapid aerostat initial deployment (RAID) tower, which facilitated 24-hour surveillance of the intersection, allowed coalition forces to rapidly intercept attempts to emplace IEDs and provide rapid response to attacks. The five-story building was guarded by five observation posts (three of which provided direct observation of the intersection) and included two long-range scout surveillance systems (LRAS3), which provided excellent coverage of the intersection. Likewise, the 80-foot RAID tower, posted on the roof, also permitted continuous and detailed observation of the intersection. The 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry (4-10 Cavalry), landowners of JSS Adl, conducted extensive research of enemy activities and methods at the intersection, and effectively placed its observation assets on the intersection at historic enemy activity timelines. The benefit of JSS Adl's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets, and a battalion of U.S. forces within 2km of the intersection, was evident by the complete absence of attacks during the first half of 2008, while July 2008 to January 2009 averaged less than one attack per month.

The presence of JSS Adl and its tremendous force protection assets forced a lull in the enemy's operational tempo at the interchange. However, the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) drafted near the end of 2008 and the redeployment of surge forces called for a drawdown of troops in Iraq's cities. As part of the drawdown, MND-B was forced to make a decision as to which JSS would close.

With the growing Sunni rejectionist employment of RKG-3 antitank hand grenades throughout northwest Baghdad, 4-10 Cavalry's redeployment, and 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry's expanded area of operations, the decision was made to close JSS Adl in late January 2009. The transfer of JSS Adl resulted in a direct loss of continuous coalition force observation of the intersection and

also increased reaction time to IED attacks and suspected emplacements. Before long, the enemy realized the absence of coalition forces at JSS Adl and quickly returned to emplacing IEDs throughout the intersection; almost immediately, attacks spiked.

In February 2009, there were four attacks or attempted IED attacks at the intersection. The new landowner of the intersection, Comanche Troop, decided to incorporate a combination of disrupting obstacles designed to impact the enemy's planning and execution cycle and thus his ability to emplace IEDs in and around the intersection, while implementing long-term efforts to shape the terrain to deny the enemy access to the area.

### Comanche's Concept

*Visualize how the enemy might attack. Select where and determine how to kill the enemy.*

As Comanche Troop began its transition in early February 2009, to control the intersection, an increased number of IED attacks on coalition force logistics convoys and ISF security patrols made it apparent that great emphasis would have to be placed on securing the intersection. Moreover, reports from the combined explosives exploitation cell (CEXC) confirmed that Sunni rejectionist groups were experimenting with explosively formed projectile (EFP) emplacement at the



*"The Adl rapid aerostat initial deployment (RAID) tower, which facilitated 24-hour surveillance of the intersection, allowed coalition forces to rapidly intercept attempts to emplace IEDs and provide rapid response to attacks. The five-story building was guarded by five observation posts (three of which provided direct observation of the intersection) and included two long-range scout surveillance systems (LRAS3), which provided excellent coverage of the intersection."*

*“Comanche Troop recognized the tactical, operational, and strategic importance of securing the intersection and began shaping the terrain through combined intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) with its partnered IA battalion. They also began engagement area (EA) development through ISF, coalition, and local government interaction to combat the growing number of attacks and secure coalition force and ISF movements, as well as the local populace.”*



intersection where Shia extremists previously held exclusive control of this weapon. Comanche Troop recognized the tactical, operational, and strategic importance of securing the intersection and began shaping the terrain through combined intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) with its partnered IA battalion. They also began engagement area (EA) development through ISF, coalition, and local government interaction to combat the growing number of attacks and secure coalition force and ISF movements, as well as the local populace.

Prior to 4-10 Cavalry closing JSS Adl, intelligence analysts and landowners realized that insurgents were stopping their vehicles, along routes, under the guise of maintenance problems to cover their IED emplacements. After reviewing reports and after-action reviews, it was apparent that a greater understanding of enemy techniques was required. Comanche Troop successfully identified insurgent techniques and developed countermeasures, as shown in the examples below:

- Tall grass in marshes underneath overpasses provided the enemy excellent concealment to cache IED components; removing weeds was a necessary countermeasure.
- The enemy used the intersection's construction/maintenance tunnels as infiltration and exfiltration routes to run command wire and emplace IEDs/EFPs. Similar to Vietnam, it was necessary to deny the enemy access to this terrain.
- Sporadic and broken T-walls “isolating” the nearby population were inadequate; a new wall was necessary to effectively segregate the intersection from the nearby population.

The SOFA further altered the strategic and operational framework of MND-B and further complicated Comanche's ability to conduct unilateral security missions. With the burden of security being transferred to ISF, it was apparent that C Troop would have to “sell” its ideas for engagement area development to the Iraqi army landowner, the partnered 3d Battalion, 54th Brigade, 6th IA Division (3/54/6 IA). While C Troop could provide most of the legwork and various combat enablers, it would truly be

up to the IA to maintain security. With that requirement, their input into security improvements would be invaluable. Moreover, support from the local government would be necessary. Comanche's leaders faced the daunting task of selling the project as a benefit to the population's security, quality of life, and a further return to normalcy. With support from the populace, Comanche gained contact to local agencies, which proved to be vital multipliers. Likewise, backing from local support councils and neighborhood advisory councils (NAC) would generate overall support from the local populace, who would be heavily affected by a large-scale operation.

With Comanche moving through troop leading procedures, attacks were still on an uptick. In February 2009, as Comanche Troop assumed joint ownership of the intersection with 3/54/6 IA, three more IEDs were detonated at the intersection and an additional IED was found and cleared by a route-clearance element. While it was readily apparent that the “final” security solution would take time to implement, Comanche knew that they had to impact the enemy's planning and execution cycle in the short term. In an all-night, troop-level mission, Comanche executed a traditional scout mission and emplaced a deliberate 110m triple-strand concertina wire (c-wire) obstacle along the most IED-prone portion of ASR Sword. This temporarily halted potential enemy foot traffic from the adjoining swampland. While this measure was never meant to be permanent, it was the first in a series of disrupting actions, which would strive to eliminate IEDs as the primary threat at the intersection.

### **Establishing Eyes-on**

*Select where and determine how to kill the enemy. Position forces to kill the enemy with direct fires. Plan indirect fires [floodlights] to support direct fires and obstacles.*

From day one in sector, Comanche Troop knew that Sword/Vernon interchange was a key enemy engagement area where the last Shia and Sunni rejectionists could effectively place IEDs targeting against coalition and Iraq security forces. The intersec-

***“From day one in sector, Comanche Troop knew that Sword/Vernon interchange was a key enemy engagement area where the last Shia and Sunni rejectionists could effectively place IEDs targeting against coalition and Iraq security forces. The intersection also represented key terrain not only for the troop, but for the squadron, brigade, and division. It was apparent that the lack of continuous ISR assets in the area would require Comanche to dedicate additional manpower to physically patrol and secure the area.”***

tion also represented key terrain not only for the troop, but for the squadron, brigade, and division. It was apparent that the lack of continuous ISR assets in the area would require Comanche to dedicate additional manpower to physically patrol and secure the area. The initial step was to coordinate with the partnered IA battalion to conduct joint area security patrols and dismounted observation posts (OPs) focused on templated emplacement and attack windows. This began with a series of leader recons executed by Comanche Troop and 3/54/6 IA's battalion commander. These recons would focus on solidifying a combined plan to emplace Iraqi army OPs and attack positions to more effectively overwatch the terrain surrounding the intersection.

The squadron commander of 5-4 Cavalry confirmed that the intersection represented key terrain and began allocating support and prioritization for key enablers at echelons above troop. On completion of these engagements, the IA battalion commander moved two redundant traffic control points (TCPs), which were not in position to check vehicles on the busy highway, to an elevated position on a closed off-ramp. This new position allowed the IA to observe enemy infiltration routes rather than sit on an ineffective TCP. The IA would endure the brunt of the 24/7 positions, but Comanche Troop supported with patrols during key hours to provide additional overwatch and combat enablers. Moreover, Comanche continued to conduct joint mounted patrols of the interchange that supported the OP overwatch. Using split HMMWV pairs, patrols established mounted attack positions at differing positions around the intersection, and used LRAS3 to establish additional eyes-on templated engagement areas. While observation improved, Comanche faced another problem.

The intersection marked an IA brigade boundary between 22d Brigade and 54th Brigade; units from both brigades refused to conduct patrols in the other's area of operation. The intersection was technically in 3/54/6 IA's area of operation, but they could not effectively provide overwatch without operating in Ghazaliya, which belonged to 4th Battalion, 22d IA Brigade (4/22 IA). Because 5-4 Cavalry partnered with both 4/22 IA and 3/54/6 IA, the squadron commander leveraged his relationships with the two IA battalion commanders and facilitated a cross-boundary coordination. This coordination proved to be the key in successfully integrating overwatch along an IA boundary traditionally exploited by enemy forces.

While 4/22 IA manned a guard tower on ASR Vernon, it was too far north to effectively overwatch the intersection. Through extensive coordination, Comanche assisted the IA in conducting cross-boundary coordination with 4/22 IA's battalion commander and developed a plan that provided eyes-on the northwestern portion of the intersection from Ghazaliya. Much like 3/54/6's observation posts and attack positions, 4/22 would occupy a guard tower that provided a better line of sight on much of the dead space located under the intersection's overpasses. Moreover, high-powered floodlights provided additional illumination in the dark areas under the overpasses and





helped mask the tower's occupants. More importantly, the tower provided an overt demonstration of the security of the intersection. The conditions were now set for Comanche Troop and 3/54/6 IA to begin its physical engagement area development.

### **Operation All Nighter**

*Position obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

*Plan indirect fires to support direct fires and obstacles.*

As mentioned earlier, with observation posts effectively covering the intersection and Comanche still in its planning/coordinating phase, it was necessary to emplace temporary, yet effective, obstacles to prevent dismounted traffic from using the swampy, tall grass under the overpasses as cover to emplace IEDs. In the short term, Comanche emplaced a deliberate triple strand of c-wire over 110m of the most IED-prone portion of ASR Sword's southern shoulder. Unlike most of the c-wire strewn throughout the AO as a haphazard and "fix-all" solution to channel enemy movement, the c-wire obstacle emplaced along ASR Sword was deliberately emplaced in a 9-hour, limited-visibility, troop-level mission. While a section provided cordon/security, two sections of troopers pounded metal fence posts and tied together individual strands of c-wire and barbed-wire, as the troop's maintenance section cleared the route of tons of garbage and construction debris with an M88 recovery vehicle. This debris was used to conceal IED emplacement in previous attacks. During this operation, Comanche emplaced mock security cameras and large warning signs along key avenues of approach as a psychological operations (PSYOP) effort to reinforce terrain denial efforts and create the perception that coalition forces maintained continuous overwatch of the intersection. In the end, Comanche had successfully conducted the first phase in an operation that would end up spanning 3 months and involving support from various combat and combat service and support units.

### **NAC Cooperation — Beladiyah Trash Pick-up**

*Position [remove] obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

As the long-term plan for the intersection continued to solidify, Comanche leaders, with the help of the civil affairs (CA) team from the 403d CA Battalion, continued to coordinate with the local government for help. Crucial to the success of the operation would be the Beladiyah's help in keeping the intersection clear of trash and debris that could be used to help disguise IEDs. After initially refusing, Beladiyah's director general of trash began to see the worthiness of assisting coalition forces since the project provided a direct security benefit to the populace by reducing the number of IEDs. Through additional coordination, Comanche Troop and the Khadra Provincial works substation (PWSS), which provided trucks, developed a schedule that allowed for routine trash pick-up throughout the intersection. Over a series of council meetings, Comanche leaders coordinated with the neighborhood advisory council representative for Khadra to assist with the project by establishing an ongoing community service effort in which local citizens would assist Beladiyah with trash removal. With the

debris cleared, Comanche could now focus on the meat of the operation, barrier and terrain manipulation.

### Operation Tunnel Rat

*Position obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

While Comanche continued its necessary coordination, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, Special Troops Battalion (STB), spearheaded a significant effort to secure the intersection with the support of 46th Engineer Battalion. The intersection's construction/maintenance tunnels, and damage from years of IED explosions, allowed the enemy freedom of maneuver to emplace IEDs and run command wire beneath the on and off ramps at the interchange. The counter-IED cell specifically identified that the tunnels and existing damage to the bridge structures posed significant risk to intersection traffic. Through a series of leader recons, engineers developed a thorough understanding of the "tunnel network" and devised a plan for constructing terrain-denial measures.

The concept was simple, 731st Explosive Ordnance Detachment would clear the tunnels of any explosive hazards, which would allow the engineer battalion to effectively seal off all tunnel entrances. Enemy forces previously exploited these entranc-

es to place EFP devices beneath the road's surface. These entrances included drainage ports and detonation craters, as well as typical entry ways, which the engineers blocked with steel plates bolted into the structural concrete. All potential entry ways into these tunnels were then solidly obstructed with steel and concrete. With this terrain successfully denied to the enemy, Comanche could now shift its focus to the swampy, grassy, marshland under the intersection.

### Operation Scabbard I

*Position obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

Operation Scabbard was to be the main effort to combat the intersection's IED problems. Originally a two-phased operation, it evolved into a three-phase operation involving, in some aspect or another, every troop in the squadron, as well as attachments from the 299th Brigade Support Battalion (299 BSB), 225th Engineer Brigade, and the 46th Engineer Battalion. Operation Scabbard I did not involve the intersection, but set conditions for its future security success. In fact, although Scabbard I occurred about 2km west of the intersection, the operation secured exfiltration and infiltration routes for the heavy number of coalition force movements, which were severely restricted to one



*"While Comanche continued its necessary coordination, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, Special Troops Battalion (STB), spearheaded a significant effort to secure the intersection with the support of 46th Engineer Battalion. The intersection's construction/maintenance tunnels, and damage from years of IED explosions, allowed the enemy freedom of maneuver to emplace IEDs and run command wire beneath the on and off ramps at the interchange. The counter-IED cell specifically identified that the tunnels and existing damage to the bridge structures posed significant risk to intersection traffic. Through a series of leader recons, engineers developed a thorough understanding of the 'tunnel network' and devised a plan for constructing terrain-denial measures."*

or two routes in the area of operations, due to the heavy equipment, such as palletized loading systems with trailers, flatbeds, engineer equipment, and cranes, necessary for the mission.

Due to the threat of RKG-3 and IED attacks in the area, coupled with the majority of movement being conducted during traditional attack windows, it was necessary to construct force protection barriers along critical portions of ASR Sword to deny insurgent cells operating out of Ghazaliya and Khadra freedom of maneuver along canalized routes. In conjunction with A Company, 299 BSB, and a contracted Turkish crane contractor (providing two cranes), Comanche Troop replaced approximately 50 “Jersey” barriers with taller “Alaska” barriers to effectively hinder the enemy’s ability to conduct attacks on slow-moving and vulnerable convoys, which would be necessary throughout the duration of the mission. The stage was officially set to allow Comanche to physically attack the intersection and its enemy-friendly terrain.

### Operation Scabbard II

The existing barriers in north Khadra, hastily emplaced as make-shift vehicle obstacles during the 2007-2008 surge, effectively controlled vehicle access, but were ineffective in controlling dismounted access to the intersection out of Khadra. Previous c-wire emplacements further disrupted access but were not a 100-percent solution. Scabbard II targeted enemy dismounted infiltration and exfiltration routes in and out of Khadra. As proven by the enemy, it was extremely easy to find cracks in the crude wall, squeeze through, and stealthily maneuver through the tall grass and swamp to cache and emplace IEDs and/or components along the ASRs. Again, Comanche was supported by Apache, Blackfoot, and Delta Troops, as well as patrols from 7th Field Artillery, 299 BSB, and the Turkish crane contractor. The mission’s decisive point was to move 7-ton T-wall barriers from the recently vacated JSS Ghazaliya in north Ghazaliya, down the RKG-3 prone Ghazaliya Main, and link up with Comanche in north Khadra. Once downloaded, Comanche carefully emplaced the recycled T-walls along Khadra’s northernmost and easternmost routes. In the end, Comanche emplaced nearly 300 T-walls covering more than 800m of routes. In addition, Comanche conducted thorough searches of the area with military working dogs prior to all movements to ensure the enemy did not take advantage of the large-scale static mission by emplacing IEDs within the work zone. Meanwhile, with the interior “Khadra wall” complete, Comanche disposed of the old barriers. While most were damaged beyond use, barriers still intact were re-allocated to the south Adl wall, inhibiting enemy engagement areas in the vicinity of IA command posts on the north side of the intersection. To finish up the operation, the Beladiyah continued to follow through on its end of the operation and executed a thorough cleanup of remaining trash and debris.

### Neighborhood Advisory Council Cooperation and Population Buy-in

*Plan indirect fires to support direct fires and obstacles.*

Iraqi citizen support was crucial to the success of the mission because Comanche executed each stage of the operation in extremely close proximity to work and living areas. The populace supported the operation based on the fact that security would improve; therefore, coalition and ISF would levy fewer accusations of insurgent support against them. However, more critical to their support were the point obstacles inside of Khadra, which were removed and opened interior traffic as the completed Khadra wall denied the populace mounted and dismounted access to the intersection. In this sense, the project actually increased freedom of movement within the Khadra muhallas and



*“...with observation posts effectively covering the intersection and Comanche still in its planning/coordination phase, it was necessary to emplace temporary, yet effective, obstacles to prevent dismounted traffic from using the swampy, tall grass under the overpasses as cover to emplace IEDs. In the short term, Comanche emplaced a deliberate triple strand of c-wire over 110m of the most IED-prone portion of ASR Sword’s southern shoulder.”*

simultaneously blocked all infiltration routes to the intersection. Likewise, neighborhood advisory and security council coordination, as well as detailed “consequence management patrols” and numerous coalition force recons, minimized the mission’s impact on the local populace. The troop kept local citizens informed of coalition force intentions and, on numerous occasions, took additional steps to ensure minimal impact, such as power-line disruption, on their lives. These efforts proved extremely beneficial as Comanche enjoyed freedom of maneuver throughout the muhallas without the traditional resistance to additional barrier emplacement.

Comanche executed key leader engagements with select stakeholders from the NAC, tribal support council, and IA, and informed them that the completed operation would allow previously closed on- and off-ramps to be reopened as the enemy was systematically denied access to the area. This effort allowed local leaders to sell the large-scale operation to constituents as a restoration of essential services and a return to normalcy, even as Comanche reshaped the terrain as part of a deliberate engagement area development.

### Contracted Vegetation Removal

*Position [remove] obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

To effectively conduct operations within the intersection, the 8-foot tall vegetation near the intersection, which previously provided enemy concealment, had to be reduced. Using field ordering officer funds, 5-4 Cavalry’s S4 coordinated with a local national vendor to use manual labor to complete the task. Within days, numerous local nationals had completed the mission using hand scythes to cut the grass. With the grass eliminated, the area was now prepared for the heavy engineer assets to break ground.

### Operation Scabbard III

*Position obstacle groups to support direct fires.*

While the Khadra wall was being constructed, 46th Engineers broke ground in the southeast quadrant of the intersection with Comanche in support and overwatch. Because this quadrant was lower than the swampy quadrant directly west, the engineers graded the quadrant and dug a borrow pit designed to accom-

*“Once measures were in place, coalition forces were significantly reduced, continuous coalition force ISR coverage stopped, and there was a considerable reduction in significant activity at the intersection. The implementing unit maintained buy-in and support from the populace, local government, and ISF throughout all phases of the operation by ensuring the operation fostered a return to normalcy while increasing security.”*

modate swamp runoff from the west. In theory, the grading, coupled with the borrow pit, would create a collection pond runoff from both quadrants, thereby preventing standing swamp water and foliage growth beneath the overpasses. This operation was the last step in denying the enemy terrain that previously provided concealment for their IED trafficking, caching, and emplacements. While the 225th Engineer Brigade considered a contracted approach to the problem set, the significant enemy threat and potential for immediate security gains provided the necessary urgency to commit engineers to this operation rather than contract the mission over a period of months.

Phase III of Scabbard III proved to be the most daunting portion of the operation. While Comanche secured the site, the engineers worked to establish the drainage system to effectively divert all standing water in the southwestern quadrant to the newly dug collection pond in the southeastern quadrant. In essence, the engineers created an earth mound in the center of the quadrant, filling in the deepest part of the swamp and creating an elevation gain, which forced water into a drainage ditch running to the collection pond. The southwestern quadrant was also graded to facilitate water runoff. Upon completion of the terrain manipulation, the engineers spread aggregate throughout both quadrants to further assist water flow.

As this phase of the project began, the engineers faced immediate problems. The swamp naturally proved to be a significant barrier to operating the heavy engineering equipment. In addition, numerous old sewer and water mains ran under the quadrants, pumping even more sewage and water as the engineers continued progress. Despite these setbacks, as a testament to their skill, discipline, and professionalism, the 46th Engineers worked extremely long days and late nights to ensure the mission was completed on schedule.

### **Civil Affairs Team Support**

*Plan indirect fires to support direct fires and obstacles.*

Meanwhile at Comanche's request, the civil affairs team continued private coordination and discussion with the ministry of electricity (MOE) representative from the district council essential services to restore approximately 15 high-powered lights to working condition. These lights were erected to provide lighting over the intersection but had been inoperative since 2003. The MOE had planned to repair the lights prior to Comanche's operations as part of an ongoing effort to restore services in Baghdad. Surprisingly, after years of inoperability, the lights were in remarkably good condition. With the assistance of the civil affairs team, the MOE secured funding to replace and/or repair a number of bulbs and transformers. Approximately 1 week after completion of the final barrier emplacement, the lights were restored, which provided very good lighting over the entire intersection and contributed to the IA's ability to observe the intersection while denying the enemy concealment.

The combination of initial disrupting operations, with a phased implementation of long-term efforts to shape the terrain and deny enemy freedom of movement, proved effective in securing both the populace and security forces in western Baghdad. Once measures were in place, coalition forces were significantly re-

duced, continuous coalition force ISR coverage stopped, and there was a considerable reduction in significant activity at the intersection. The implementing unit maintained buy-in and support from the populace, local government, and ISF throughout all phases of the operation by ensuring the operation fostered a return to normalcy while increasing security.

This operation's success relied on a number of nontraditional partnerships and engagements. Regular communications of the operation's components promoted a return to normalcy and ensured population support and buy-in. The operation also allowed coalition and IA forces to reopen seven of the interchange's eight ramps and restore local national freedom of movement in a more secure area. Truly combined IPB and engagement area development with the partnered IA battalion provided the buy-in that allowed an American troop to shape the terrain while the IA maintained support and readiness to overwatch the terrain through cross-boundary coordination. Deliberate and effective civil affairs engagements secured support from higher levels of the Iraqi government and also ensured that local public works directorates understood the desired end state and benefits to the local populace. Coalition force maneuver units, combat service support units, Iraqi Security Forces units, Iraqi public works directorates, and the populace worked together to achieve sustainable security in western Baghdad. These seemingly disparate efforts have ensured that a once dangerous enemy engagement area was reshaped and secured in a way that does not require continuous coalition force overwatch.



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# REVIEWS

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**One Hell of A Ride: Inside an Armored Cavalry Task Force in Vietnam** by Colonel Bill Haponski, BookSurge Publishing, 2009, 560 pp., \$24.00 (paperback)

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*One Hell of a Ride* is one hell of a book. Retired Colonel Bill Haponski has written an outstanding account of intense and brutal battle in Vietnam as waged by 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, which he commanded in 1969.

What makes Haponski's book outstanding is the tremendous research he undertook to make his work exceptionally accurate and factual. The author possesses an innate skill at putting into words the complexity of battle and life under harsh field conditions. He provides readers with a history of the early Indochina conflict, which began with the French involvement at the end of World War II. His collaboration with French army officers, who fought there before the United States became engaged in the struggle, enlightens the reader and sets the necessary background to better understand the events that led to U.S. involvement. He also brings to light the treatment that the Vietnamese endured under European rubber plantation owners and their subsequent attitude toward some U.S. forces.

A magnificent addition to *One Hell of a Ride* is the painstaking, in-depth research and effort the author took to obtain enemy documents and reports, which gives the reader an appreciation of the enemy's thinking and strategy. Haponski also provides detailed insight into enemy tactics and techniques used to engage his squadron on the Michelin rubber plantation, during engagements in surrounding areas, attacks on fire support bases, and ambush operations.

Referring to his detailed personal journal and notes, Haponski further enhances his book with detailed accounts of the squadron's daily battles. He also draws on notes, memories, and interviews of the officers and men he commanded and those who supported his squadron. The orchestration of all this data and information results in vivid descriptions of horrendous and intense fighting; acquiring views from others brings balance and objectivity in recounting the battles Haponski's squadron experienced — a testament to "team effort" and not just a commander's views and impressions.

This book is must reading for young officers and noncommissioned officers who are facing deployment to hostile zones. And for those who have never experienced combat, it is a frank and vivid portrayal of all that encompasses war and its effects on mind and body.

Haponski's account of his squadron's battles in Vietnam is an excellent primer on the coordinated employment of the combined arms team in terrain and situations ill-suited for mechanized forces. His ingenious employment and coordination of the combined arms team and supporting combat support elements serve as a model for commanders who will fight on

the asymmetric battlefield. It is an excellent example to the effectiveness of artillery and close air support, in close synchronization with ground forces engaged in face-to-face confrontation with a determined and fanatical enemy. *One Hell of a Ride* illustrates the havoc combined arms can bring to bear on enemy forces in jungle terrain, and when countering convoy ambush operations.

It was not easy for Haponski to convince brigade and division commanders to employ highly mobile forces that possess tremendous firepower in terrain and situations that his senior commanders felt were best suited to dismounted warfare. Fortunately, he proved his point and especially brigade-level commanders soon learned to appreciate the effectiveness of armor and cavalry units in a variety of roles. Captured enemy documents and interrogations reports of prisoners spelled out in his book attested to the fear and dread that mounted cavalry units imposed on the minds and morale of the enemy.

Yet, in spite of the battles his units faced daily, he fully recognizes and speaks to the importance of gaining the support and respect of the indigenous population of the battle area — a very important aspect of our current involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. During Colonel Haponski's return to Vietnam, not only did he visit former unit battle sites, but he also renewed ties with Vietnamese families his unit aided, which illustrates his genuine concern for the well-being of civilians caught in the cross fire of war.

A great account of the horrors of war, written by a truly professional and compassionate soldier, *One Hell of a Ride* is a book you will retain and consult frequently. It is an ideal reading election for our young officer and noncommissioned officer attending those service schools engaged in educating our future combat leaders.

JIM MARINI  
U.S. Army, Retired

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**The Cold War U.S. Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War** by Ingo Trauschweizer, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2008, 366 pp., \$39.95

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Ingo Trauschweizer's *The Cold War U.S. Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War* is a good examination of the challenges faced by the U.S. Army from a global perspective. The book covers a great deal of territory in terms of doctrinal and force structure changes, from the Pentomic Division to the Vietnam War, and finally the evolution of the basis for current American doctrine — AirLand battle. Ultimately, the book is about transformation in a time of unique military and social pressures for the Army.

Trauschweizer deftly examines the Army's strategic and tactical political impasse with the

Eisenhower administration's emphasis on the doctrine of "mutually assured destruction," which implied the Army had little function in the world of nuclear warfare. Army leaders were greatly worried that unless they could rationalize the need for the Army, its force structure and role would be slashed and perhaps become not more than a civil defense force. To counter this notion, the Army developed the unwieldy Pentomic Division, made up of 5 combat teams, which would fight independently on the nuclear battlefield; however, unlike a division, would provide a smaller signature or footprint for a tactical nuclear strike. The author implicitly argues that the development and existence of this division provided the political rationale that saved the Army.

The issue of battlefield nuclear weapons control at the tactical level is also addressed; although, the subject easily merits its own book. Trauschweizer casts a critical eye on the impact the Vietnam War had on the U.S. Army in Europe and associated costs, which caused the delay in fielding new and upgraded weapons systems, particularly a true infantry fighting vehicle. He also nicely encapsulates the impact of the Vietnam War on America's readiness level to meet any Soviet threat, which caused the Army in Europe to become a hollow force. The author understands that post-Vietnam War doctrine reflected the Army's understanding that its critical mission and reason for existence was the deterrence, and perhaps defeat, of the Soviet armored juggernaut.

Trauschweizer does make some contentious statements that are unsupported by fact and more in the realm of political opinion. Repeatedly throughout the book, he emphatically states, seemingly with glee, that the U.S. Army suffered a military defeat "at the hands of a poorly equipped irregular enemy." The U.S. Army often fought the regular units of the North Vietnamese army, a well-disciplined foe well equipped by the Soviet Union, which used Vietnam as a proxy war to engage American power. These errors are seemingly based on his lack of cultural awareness of America's military and the interplay of its political system; particularly, the current war-making powers that the executive branch has grasped due to the passivity of Congressional leadership.

The author also places too much emphasis on U.S. doctrine being traceable to Soviet operational art rather than the German doctrine of Auftragstaktik (mission tactics). The author also describes how the vice chief of staff of the Army, General Clyde Eddleman, was the driving force behind the critical need to reorganize the Pentomic Division structure to the Reorganization Objective Army Division (ROAD). Perhaps he understands it, but glosses over the fact that the vice chief of staff would have only made the ROAD transformation a priority if it was a mission from General Decker, then chief of staff of the Army.

Similar to other authors, Trauschweizer misses the importance of General Abrams' reorganization of the Army when he placed the majority of combat service support in the U.S.

Army Reserves, making it very difficult for the National Command Authority to fight any sustained war without a national call up, which resulted in commitment of political will and support. In a sense, a better working title would have been *The Evolution of the U.S. Army in the Cold War*.

Ultimately, the book, despite my stated exceptions, offers a good scholarly, but readable, encompassing view of the trials and tribulation of the U.S. Army in finding a workable doctrine in the post-nuclear age. Any student of military history will find something of value in this book. For anyone interested in military transformation, this is a must read.

ROBERT G. SMITH  
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**Piercing the Fog of War, Recognizing Change on the Battlefield: Lessons from Military History, 216 BC through Today** by Brian L. Steed, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, 2009, 320 pp., \$30.00 (hardcover)

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*Piercing the Fog of War*, by Major Brian Steed of the U.S. Army, is a thought-provoking book, although one can disagree with much of Steed's analysis, for instance the choice of battles he decided to highlight, such as Cannae versus Gaugamela, or German Blitzkrieg tactics as an aberrational event. Steed's book does force readers to consider such important and subtle issues as how one recognizes what Steed labels as aberrational events in warfare, "something so new in tactics, operational design, or strategy that completely overwhelms an opponent."

I enjoyed reading Steed's views on the absolute need for American forces to cultivate empathy for an area of operation, people they are protecting, and even the adversary, which, of course, is different from sympathy, and although this term is not used by Steed, he seems to be an advocate of understanding the human terrain of an area of operation. The book intellectually unpacks six transformational battles and Steed delightfully selected two battles from Islamic history, the Battle of Yarmouk and Hittin (sometimes called Hattin). He also includes two unconventional case studies, that of the suicide bomber and what he terms as the Levantine non-state actor. While not all of his cases will be covered in this review, we will examine just a few.

The Battle of Cannae, in 216 BC, saw Hannibal Barca achieve something never done in warfare even to this day, double envelopment of between 50,000 and 70,000 Roman soldiers. Steed discusses how Hannibal achieved this through empathy for Roman fighting styles, and those of his own forces, placing his weaker lines in the center, causing the Roman lines to push inward, causing the line to bow and create a double envelopment with his more powerful forces in the flanks, and cavalry engaging Ro-

man cavalry, vanquishing them and then sealing the bow into an imperfect compact circle. Why does Cannae matter? Not only for its battlefield psychology, but what is not in Steed's book — that Count Von Schlieffen of the infamous Schlieffen Plan of World War I, which was then improved on during World War II, was obsessed with recreating Cannae.

In the Battle of Yarmouk, during 636 CE, the Byzantine Christian Empire faced the Muslims, led by Khalid ibn al-Walid. Byzantium underestimated the Muslims, and thinking them ragtag, divided Arab tribes to the point that a few sharp blows would have them scatter to the winds. They did empathize with the region; part of their alliance with the Christian Ghassanid Tribal Confederation was collapsing with a sizable portion defecting to the Muslims because of Byzantine oppression. Byzantium did not count on the unifying power of Islam; the new monotheistic faith was promulgated by Muhammad only 4 years before.

Steed does a marvelous job of describing how Muslim women ferociously fought the Byzantine army that overran their camp, which so shamed retreating Muslim forces that they fought with even more vigor. The book also covers terrain, weather, composition of forces, and has excellent maps of the battles. Yarmouk matters, as true knowledge of such early Islamic battles are necessary to combat the mythologized version promulgated by militant Islamists such as al-Qaeda today.

Steed's chapter on the 1995 Battle of Grozny is excellent. The Russians thinking that a force of about 40,000 mechanized troops, such as Czechoslovakia in 1968, would get the Chechens to capitulate. The initial push into Grozny by Russian forces exposed the Chechen concept of the ever-moving battlefield. The Chechens did not defend fixed positions, but instead allowed Russian armored and mechanized units to channel and divide into Grozny's city streets, and then pounce on them with teams of eight or less then moving on — Russian forces were the object. In one case, an armored battalion would almost face annihilation in Grozny's train station; arriving parade style, and ordering sandwiches, they had fallen into a massive kill zone. The Russians did not understand the Chechen language, culture, or people, and while many of the Chechens had served the Russian and even Soviet army, they learned valuable lessons in the Soviet-Afghan War by surviving Mujahideen insurgent tactics. Some of these fighters would become al-Qaeda affiliates.

The book ends with a delightful analysis of non-state conflict and discusses Palestinian Hamas, and Lebanese Hezbollah's new tactics against Israeli Defense Forces. It is easy to get mired in the details of the tactics and strategy, but be mindful about the central thesis of this volume, which is seeing possibilities where others do not. This is what makes Steed's book ultimately a worthwhile read.

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**To the Gates of Stalingrad: Soviet-German Combat Operations, April-August, 1942** by David M. Glantz, assisted by Jonathan M. House, University Press of Kansas, 2009, 678 pp. (with photographs and maps), \$39.95 (hardcover)

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David Glantz, perhaps the leading American authority on the Russian Front during World War II, has made another significant contribution to understanding the massive conflict with Volume 1 of his Stalingrad Trilogy. Assisted by Jonathan M. House, another noted World War II historian, Glantz has produced a massive tactical and operational study of the first few months of the great German Summer Offensive of 1942. Employing a truly staggering amount of research into the official records of both German and Soviet general staffs, Glantz and House provide a meticulously detailed account of the daily tactical maneuvers on both sides. As in Glantz's previous works, one also finds complete orders of battle, strength reports, and assigned commanders of divisions, corps, and armies on each side. This is no work for the casual reader or light summer read. There are no interesting anecdotes or vignettes describing exciting combat actions. But if you want to learn about which divisions and corps maneuvered where and when, and what decisions the operational commanders made, this book is for you.

Of note, however, the book convincingly revises much of the generally accepted historical verdict of the first phase of the campaign that culminated at Stalingrad. Most previous works accepted that the Soviet army retreated before the German summer advance, denying the Germans the great encirclement victories that they had achieved in summer 1941. In this way, so the previously accepted narratives argue, the Soviets set the stage for their great winter victory. Glantz demolishes this explanation, demonstrating that the Soviets fought viciously, counter-attacking at every opportunity, which resulted in the Germans virtually destroying two Soviet Fronts, but took serious casualties doing so. Glantz also demonstrates that, in the end, the Germans simply did not have enough troops to accomplish the tasks assigned them against such a determined foe.

*To the Gates of Stalingrad*, however, suffers from one serious flaw — understanding the complex maneuvers described in the text requires maps. Although the book is full of very detailed maps, many of them actual situation maps from German sources, they are very poor quality and difficult to read. Despite this problem, I strongly recommend this book to serious World War II students; it certainly provides readers with a far greater understanding of this phase of history's greatest land war. One cannot help but be awed at the tactical brilliance of German forces and the ruthless and heroic determination of the Russians.

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# Old School Scout Trackers on Today's Battlefield

by Sergeant First Class Brian E. Lackey

When we hear the term “tracker,” most of us think back to the days of John Wayne and the 7th Cavalry, conjuring up images of the tracker dismounting his horse, observing the ground, and quickly relaying fascinating information from a single track. What most would consider “only in the movies” is very close to reality and is currently employed as a viable skill set in numerous low-intensity conflicts in more relevant and modern times. These skills have been used in Borneo, Malaya, Kenya, Rhodesia, Vietnam, South-West Africa, and currently on a limited scale in Afghanistan and Iraq. Countless reports of successful operations in these areas have been associated or accredited, either directly or indirectly, to intelligence gathered by trackers due to their enhanced observations and awareness skills.

Throughout history, commanders have taken advantage of these skills by gathering vital intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) to better understand the battlefield. Whether on an active track or simple patrol, tracker-trained soldiers possess a keen sense of detail and quickly recognize what is out of place or missing from the surrounding environment. Early tracking was primarily based on micro-tracking (tracking from print to print), but quickly took on a different role when implemented into the small team concept of combat tracker teams.

With the need for teams to provide their own security, and rapidly track or develop a situation, they moved toward a very aggressive method called “macro-tracking,” which, when done correctly, can incorporate the entire team and quickly cover ground, decreasing the time and distance interval of their quarry. This aggressive style of tracking was revolutionized by David Scott-Donelane, formerly of the Rhodesian Selous Scouts, which are considered the most effective unit to ever fight an insurgency.

Primitive tracking skills can be employed throughout the operational continuum, but are ideal for counterinsurgency operations. One of the major problems facing U.S. forces during counterinsurgency operations is tracking insurgents after con-

tact is made and they disperse among the population. Only by vigorously pursuing the insurgent, wherever he is located, will it be possible for the military to dominate an area and reduce insurgent activities. To accomplish this effort, soldiers trained in tracking skills must learn to watch for clues or signs of passage inconsistent with normal patterns or an environmental baseline. Forced as they are to move on foot, it is impossible for insurgents to avoid leaving traces of passage through an area. It is these traces that the tracker uses to reveal valuable information, such as number of insurgents in group; direction of travel; time and distance gap between tracker and insurgent; and through deductive reasoning develop, determine, or confirm tactical intelligence.

Trackers are capable of quickly multiplying squadron or battalion capabilities. Battalion scouts often assume the quick reaction force (QRF)/explosive ordnance detachment (EOD) role for their organizations; versatile and flexible units of this nature greatly benefit from this skill set. We have all experienced the frustration felt following an improvised explosive device (IED) attack and more times than not, we end the day reading a storyboard compiled by law enforcement personnel (LEP), EOD, or weapons intelligence team (WIT), outlining the basic information of type and employment method. Integrating trackers with these contracted agencies could deliver intelligence from blast radios to the insurgent's door step. Effective tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) would place LEP/EOD/WIT 100 meters in to investigate the blast radius.

Scout trackers, while providing 300-meter cordon, would complete 360-degree command post operations, identifying all incoming and outgoing traffic, as well as movement direction. The combat tracker team could easily move into an active-track mode, leading to vehicles, villages, houses, caches, and initiating points, virtually doubling its chances of apprehending the enemy. Today's trackers have battlefield enablers, such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), rotary wing, camera towers, and blimps, which can quickly aid in apprehension. During our last deploy-

ment, our squadron immediately opened a target information center (TIC) following an IED strike, and we had rotary wing and UAV on site. However, due to a lack of ground information, the rotary wing spent much of its time providing security rather than hunting down the enemy. With a tracker, we could quickly relay vital information, which helped direct air assets to the correct area. We also established a time distance interval, reducing a 360-degree 3km area to a 30-degree cone, which greatly increased additional blocking or cordon possibilities.

The Tactical Training Operations School (TTOS) currently offers a 100-hour mobile training team (MTT) combat tracker course, which is designed to complement any unit's operating procedures. TTOS guides scouts through a well-designed program, moving soldiers from basic to advance tracking skills, and incorporates training into daily excursions. When I attended the course, we executed nearly 6 hours of field time, putting to use skills we had just learned, to every 2 hours of class time. My team, on several occasions, tracked individuals up to 6kms over the diverse terrain of Fort Irwin, California, maintaining both security and forward movement, which are two key ingredients to apprehension of the quarry/enemy. General operations provide an overwhelming amount of intelligence to today's commanders in any environment. Simplistic in theory and in action, scout trackers belong in our units... without question.



Sergeant First Class Brian E. Lackey is currently serving as an observer controller, scout platoon trainer, Tarantula Team, Operations Group, Fort Irwin, CA. His military education includes Airborne School, Air Assault School, Tactical Tracking Operations School, Rappel Master Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, and Warrior Leaders Course. He has served in various leader and staff positions, to include platoon sergeant and senior scout, C Troop, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry (6-8 Cavalry), Fort Stewart, GA, and Iraq; operations noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 6-8 Cavalry, Fort Stewart; and instructor, 1st Squadron, 16th Cavalry, Fort Knox, KY.

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