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# Infantry

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# Infantry

JANUARY-MARCH 2018

Volume 107, Number 1

## FEATURES

### 21 THEIR LEADERSHIP AND OWNERSHIP: CONCEPTS FOR WARFARE BY, WITH, AND THROUGH

COL Pat Work

*In January 2017, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82nd Airborne Division deployed to bolster the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the campaign to annihilate the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and its so-called caliphate. We mixed innovative concepts and straightforward tactics to attack ISIS by, with, and through the ISF, yet the entire effort always centered on our partners' leadership and ownership of exceptionally nasty ground combat operations. Several of our candid and contextualized perspectives on organization, mindset, and skill set offer useful examples and angles for leaders to ponder as we consider future excursions with this style of high-intensity security force assistance.*



### 36 PER UNITATEM FORTITUDO (STRENGTH THROUGH UNITY): MISSION COMMAND IN A MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

COL Curtis A. Buzzard  
LTC Patrick L. Bryan  
LTC Kevin C. Saatkamp



*Today's operational environment is dynamic and complex. Potential adversaries are capable of interconnecting multiple dimensions of warfare simultaneously, including cyber and information, conventional and unconventional, and regular and irregular. Nobody can counter these alone. As one surveys the different theaters of operation, it is apparent that a combined approach is essential. We've seen this recently in conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it has been*

*an enduring requirement in the European theater. To prevail against these threats, forces must be able to integrate into a multinational force capable of operating across the range of military operations and do so at every level of command.*

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# OTHER DEPARTMENTS

## COMMANDANT'S NOTE

- 1 LETHALITY FOR THE FUTURE... AND THE FUTURE IS NOW**  
BG Christopher T. Donahue

## INFANTRY NEWS

- 2 ARMY RESEARCHERS ADVANCE 'THIRD ARM' PROJECT**  
Joe Lacdan
- 3 ARMY DRAWS 'MAP' FOR THE MULTIDOMAIN MEGACITY**  
Dr. Robert E. David  
Dr. Kevin R. Slocum  
Dr. Tad T. Brunye  
Dr. Aaron L. Gardony

## PROFESSIONAL FORUM

- 5 IN SUPPORT OF COISTS**  
LTC Jake Larkowich  
CPT Gregory Bassett  
CPT Brigid Calhoun
- 9 THE NEED FOR AN IBCT (COIN): MAINTAINING FOCUS ON AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN MISSION**  
CPT Ryan P. Hovatter
- 13 UTILIZING FORWARD OBSERVERS IN THE MOUNTED FIGHT: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**  
1LT Tyler Greenawalt  
1LT Creighton Monson  
1LT Zach Sostak  
1LT Weston Turner  
1LT Joseph Wade
- 15 ATTACKING IN A CITY: THE RUSSIAN MOTORIZED RIFLE BATTALION APPROACH**  
LTC (Retired) Lester W. Grau

## TRAINING NOTES

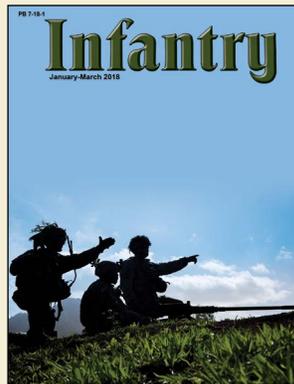
- 43 BATTALION SUSTAINMENT OPERATIONS IN DECISIVE ACTION: A LOST ART**  
CPT Paul A. Corcoran  
CPT Angel L. Caraballo Jr.
- 48 AMERICAN LEADERSHIP: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS**  
LTC (Retired) Bob Brescia

## LESSONS FROM THE PAST

- 50 COLD REGIONS: ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON MILITARY OPERATIONS, PART I**  
BG Peter W. Clegg  
COL Robert H. Clegg
- 56 REASONS FOR INSTABILITY IN BOSNIA**  
CPT Robert Perez-Aleman

## BOOK REVIEWS

- 60 SCALES ON WAR: THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S MILITARY AT RISK**  
By MG (Retired) Bob Scales  
**CASSANDRA IN OZ: COUNTERINSURGENCY AND FUTURE WAR**  
By Conrad Crane  
Reviewed by LTC (Retired) Rick Baillergeon
- 61 AGAINST THE TOMMIES: HISTORY OF THE 26 RESERVE DIVISION, 1914-1918**  
By David Bilton  
Reviewed by Maj Timothy Heck, USMC

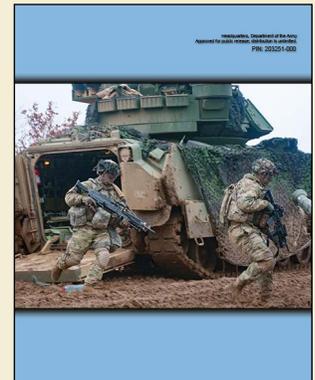


### ON THE COVER:

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division participate in a combined arms live-fire exercise on Schofield Barracks, HI, on 6 December 2017. (Photo by SSG David N. Beckstrom)

### BACK COVER:

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS, dismount a M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle during platoon live-fire qualifications on 18 December 2017, at the Novo Selo Training Area, in Mokren, Bulgaria. (Photo by PFC Shelton Smith)



# Commandant's Note

BG CHRISTOPHER T. DONAHUE

## Lethality for the Future... and the Future is Now

Lethality is one of the most critical aspects of the Infantry. The Infantry Soldier's ultimate mission — to close with and destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver, demands lethality to win this close combat fight. Precision marksmanship is the key to lethality. Our existing qualification standards fail to accurately reflect the basic tactical employment skills, leader commands, and the requisite sense of urgency essential during reloading, changing positions, or fighting from cover on today's battlefield.

We must improve our marksmanship training to increase Soldier lethality. The new rifle marksmanship course of fire — still with 40 rounds — includes: prone unsupported (10 rounds); prone supported (10 rounds); kneeling supported (10 rounds); and standing supported (10 rounds). These four firing positions more accurately replicate combat conditions. Under fire, they can be readily assumed whenever the Soldier receives enemy contact and finds it necessary to deliver aimed fire on an enemy. Each firing position provides a stable platform and body position that maximize cover and concealment from enemy fire.

Our new rifle marksmanship training strategy is tied to an improved integrated weapons training strategy that is designed to evolve with technological enhancements but maintains a train-as-we-fight philosophy. The success of this concept is dependent on six principles, broken down into the following six tables:

**Table I — Preliminary Marksmanship Instruction and Evaluation:** The foundation upon which the Soldier builds the skill sets to sustain him through becoming a successful and proficient marksman. During this phase, his first line leader instructs and tests him on the basic knowledge, skills, tasks, and actions that govern the use and employment of his weapon system.

**Table II — Pre-Live Fire Simulations (Engagement Skills Trainer/Soldier Virtual Trainer):** The Soldier learns basic and advanced engagement techniques in a virtual environment using iron sights and some magnified optics. This includes both CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear) and night-fire qualification requirements as well.

**Table III — Drills:** Hands-on training of critical tactical employment skills required of all Soldiers. Also used for

concurrent training during live-fire events.

**Table IV — Basic Grouping and Zero:** Grouping exercises for the primary optic, built upon the skills trained during previous training events. Zeroing exercise includes confirmation at distance using new zero target.

**Table V — Practice:** Live-fire tactical engagements that include all firing positions, target presentations, and sequences that are more difficult than the test.

**Table VI — Qualification:** Army-standard demonstration of performance of basic tactical employment of the weapon system using the primary optic.

The changes to qualification standards replicate a course of fire based on combat criteria and are designed to increase Soldier lethality. The number of target exposures (40) remains constant (thus requiring no additional ammunition resources), but the qualification ratings and target exposures change slightly. The qualification ratings are:

- Qualified (23-27)
- Marksman (28-31)
- Sharpshooter (32-35)
- Expert (36-40)

To increase lethality and test Soldiers' improved marksmanship skills, target exposures increased from four to six exposures at 250 meters and from four to five exposures at 300 meters. The employment of four firing positions using four 10-round magazines requires Soldiers to identify and conduct three magazine and firing position changes to better replicate combat conditions. This firing sequence reduces qualification firing times by an average of three to six minutes per iteration over the old qualification course of fire. This provides significant time savings for leaders to utilize in their training schedules.

This new and improved marksmanship training increases Soldier lethality and enhances Soldiers' ability to fight, win, and survive on the battlefield.





## Army Researchers Advance ‘Third Arm’ Project

JOE LACDAN

Soldiers may be asked to carry heavier, more lethal weapons in the near future, but they soon might have a “third arm” to improve their accuracy and reduce fatigue.

Using a mechanical apparatus that resembles something out of a sci-fi movie, the lightweight device will help redistribute some of the burden Soldiers carry in their arms and shoulders to their abdomen. Engineers at the Army Research Lab (ARL) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, have been developing a mechanical third arm that attaches to a user’s back hip.

The project, unveiled last year at a conference, is scheduled to be tested again sometime this spring with a minimum of 15 Soldiers.

“Right now we have a prototype that’s essentially a research platform that we’re using to investigate different types of materials — how materials and structures can stabilize a weapon or a shield, reduce fatigue on the Soldiers’ arms, but also improve accuracy,” said mechanical engineer Dan Baechle.

The project is currently on its second prototype model with improvements based on Soldier feedback. Some of the improvements include an extendable hinge plate so that a single plate can fit Soldiers of different sizes and body types. Baechle said further research must be completed before the device can be fielded. The current prototype at 3.5 pounds can now support weapons such as the M249 light machine gun that weighs about 27 pounds.

The project not only helps stabilize weapons but can aid Soldiers for defensive purposes while carrying 20-pound shields. The project team developed a custom mount to help alleviate muscle fatigue.

Concept development began in late 2015 when ARL engineers brainstormed ideas on how to make a dismounted Soldier more lethal. Engineers began building the first



Photo by Joe Lacdan

**Army Research Lab engineer Dan Baechle demonstrates how to strap on a mechanical device designed to improve Soldiers’ accuracy and reduce fatigue.**

prototypes in 2016. The focus of the project centered on providing stability for dismounted Soldiers.

“We started out with just trying to think of a way to help improve the lethality for the dismounted Soldier,” Baechle said. “Generally that means stabilizing the weapon or giving the Soldier a more powerful weapon. Can we stabilize that weapon to improve accuracy? But also if we’re stabilizing the weapon and taking the load off of the Soldiers’ arms, does that improve the Soldier’s readiness? Does it also improve the Soldier’s accuracy with the weapon?”

Read more about the new device at [https://www.army.mil/article/201229/army\\_researchers\\_advance\\_third\\_arm\\_project\\_to\\_next\\_testing\\_phase](https://www.army.mil/article/201229/army_researchers_advance_third_arm_project_to_next_testing_phase).

(Joe Lacdan writes for the Army News Service.)

# Army Draws ‘Map’ for the Multidomain Megacity

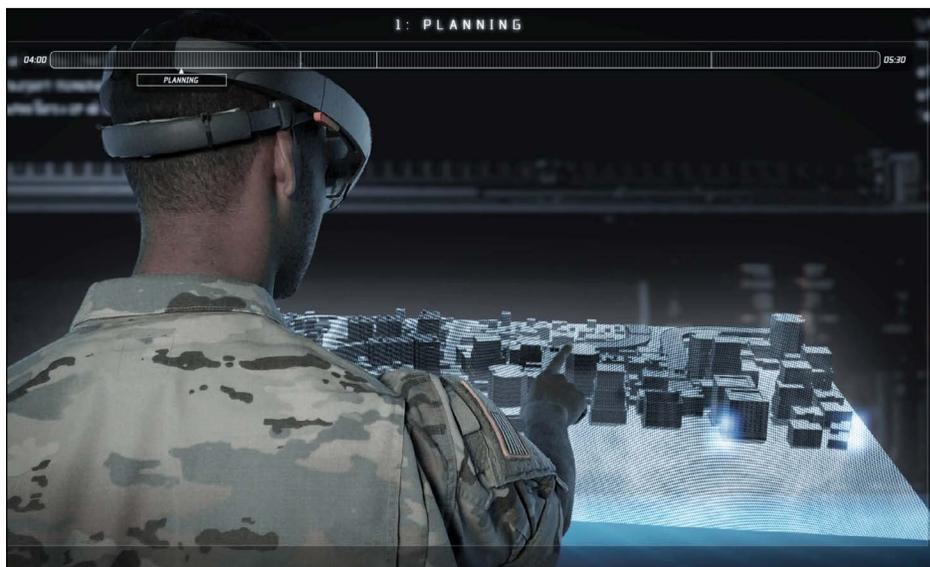
DR. ROBERT E. DAVIS  
DR. KEVIN R. SLOCUM  
DR. TAD T. BRUNYE  
DR. AARON L. GARDONY

Today’s Army leaders consider it inevitable that U.S. ground forces will engage in combat in dense urban environments, including building interiors and subterranean spaces. These settings eliminate or severely degrade many of the technological advantages that U.S. forces and their global (near-) peers have developed over several decades, and they also may provide sanctuary to friend or foe. Dense urban environments also heighten broader risks of unintended consequences in combat.

A broad spectrum of existing and emerging research topic areas has shown the potential to develop significant capability for providing small disaggregated mounted and dismounted teams the ability to act independently, to out-think and to outmaneuver the enemy in close combat despite limited and intermittent access to higher-echelon command and control. Most of the promising science and technology (S&T) development focuses on major advances in situational awareness in urban settings and how they can lead to better decisions faster, presenting dilemmas to an adversary.

The Army S&T community has adopted the premise that urban combat, considered as a flowing series of tactical unit decisions and actions, will greatly benefit from rich and intuitive space and event and trend context. Accordingly, near-term and emerging research areas at the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL), and the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center (NSRDEC) include investigations into the design and formulation of new urban terrain data models, frameworks, and cognitive display approaches. The goal is to identify solutions compact enough that many Soldiers and every vehicle can carry them along for sharing and analysis, while meeting a variety of needs for display on different equipment. Research interest across the ERDC and the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command also has focused on characterizing, moving, and communicating within the confined space of building interiors and subterranean infrastructure.

Results of this research will shape design and development



*Data-rich 3-D maps would let Soldiers spend time viewing terrain from a variety of perspectives to gain an intuitive sense of the battlespace before operations begin. That basic understanding of the physical environment and how to navigate it improves spatial memory.*

of techniques for much more rapid data generation, tailored dissemination, change analyses, and visualization. In other words, Soldiers will learn as they go and retain this spatial knowledge. This new direction, in most cases, markedly departs from the commonplace use of flat maps.

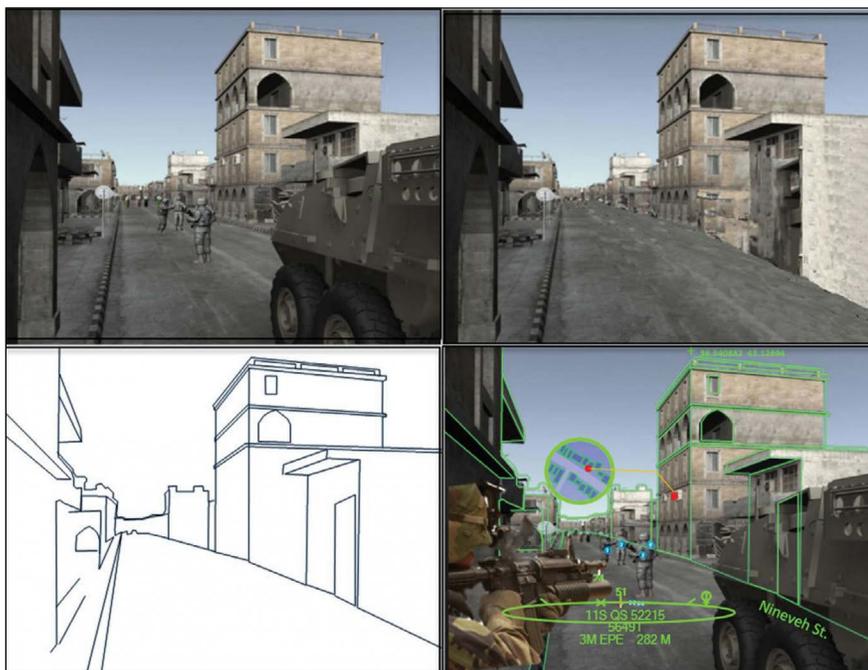
## The 3-D Urban “Map”

The goal of Army geospatial research is to design, develop, and test a new, multidimensional 3-D “map” of urban infrastructure geometries, materials, and functions. This capability would provide the context and baseline for a variety of Army operations. Current research efforts focus on some key attributes that such a map — really an information architecture — would include:

- Available on demand to Soldiers and their applications, particularly in its small units;
- Measurable and supporting a variety of automated analyses;
- Updatable as conditions change; and
- Intuitive displays for more rapid decision making.

Let’s consider a requirement for 3-D urban terrain data available to the Soldier before deployment. First, by the time Soldiers deploy, the standard urban geospatial load may not have the most up-to-date geometries and other relatively static conditions in the area of operations. Second, units may need to know what has changed during the course of combat operations. Accordingly, we must consider the need for an organic capability to rapidly generate new 3-D data to upgrade gaps or other uncertainties in the standard geospatial load. This same function also becomes a change detection capability when comparing new data with existing information.

These two key considerations support sequential, in-stride rehearsal, movement and maneuver, targeting and battle damage assessment; navigation, targeting, and other sensing systems can “see” the real urban environment and compare



*These are some of the views possible with an enriched, 3-D visualization of a given area. Clockwise from upper left, a high-resolution representation; a version that filters out ephemeral objects such as passing cars; augmented reality view with edges and corners georegistered and attributed; and extracted edges and corners.*

that, in real time, with urban information on board to move, learn, and assess. Think of three tiers in an open modular architecture for 3-D enriched urban terrain information, two of which involve inspecting the operational environment while the third deals with improving support for decision making and execution by analyzing data in hand.

### Form, Fit, and Function

The prospect of 3-D enriched, high-resolution urban terrain with near real-time updated tactical overlays does not necessarily constitute operational improvement and leap-ahead advantage. We can observe in the world every day the distraction and operational slowing caused by visual displays, personal and otherwise, as well as our dependence on them. To integrate and distill sufficient situational context — mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations (METT-TC) — so that leaders of small units can make better decisions faster, a relatively new body of research is looking into the form, fit, and function of visualization to catalyze a strengthening of intuitive understanding. From training to rehearsal to operational use, visualization requirements differ. With immersive training and research toward a fully synthetic training environment, and with mission planning at brigade and above, research challenges — near-term and enduring — appear well defined.

For close-quarter combat in complex and especially dense urban environments, questions about what, when, and how to visualize the data products described above become paramount. For example, the ability to move at will in dense urban environments and simultaneously force dilemmas on an adversary, as well as to manage risk, may

depend on very short-lived multisensory (i.e., audio, visual, tactile) cues that bolster the retrieval and application of spatial memory. Can we train, rehearse, and cue a Soldier to navigate in the city as effectively as the native city dweller?

Recent Army research at NSRDEC has demonstrated important trade-offs among the timing and type of information conveyed to a user, the attentional demands of the information, and outcomes for individual and small unit performance. If, during mission planning and preparation, Soldiers visualize the intended operating area in 3-D from multiple perspectives and orientations, their spatial memory can improve; this increases their ability to move effectively through complex environments with constantly changing situations and demands on their attention.

### Not a Silver Bullet

Army research has demonstrated that during combat operations, standard navigational displays can induce complacency, divide attention, and disengage navigators from their environment. This can impair the development of flexible spatial memories Soldiers must rely on during times of heightened stress. These and other research outcomes present a challenging focal point for developing next-generation visualization technologies, such as chest-, helmet-, eyewear- and torso-mounted information systems that provide timely and relevant information without compromising the ability to think and act quickly and effectively. The Army's geospatial, training, and Soldier S&T communities are working collaboratively on this challenge, including developing scenario-based virtual test beds to predict and quantify performance outcomes of future systems, the development and application of which span from the near to the far term.

### Conclusion

With our current technology and doctrine, we can level the playing field in complex and congested environments — including dense urban and megacity domains — by degrading standoff and other advantages. Integrating capabilities like next-generation autonomous networked sensor platforms, heads-up situational awareness for small units and enhanced fusion and targeting has the potential to restore U.S. tactical advantage. Providing rich, detailed, and actionable place and event context through analysis and visualization has great promise to give options to tactical commanders among integrated and available capabilities to make our adversaries' intentions unattainable.

*(This article was excerpted from a longer article that originally appeared in the January-March 2018 issue of Army AL&T magazine. Read the entire article [www.army.mil/article/200594](http://www.army.mil/article/200594).)*



## In Support of CoISTs

LTC JAKE LARKOWICH  
CPT GREGORY BASSETT  
CPT BRIGID CALHOUN

In 1994, a lieutenant colonel reflecting on friction points from his first of two Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) rotations identified his battalion staff's inability to receive critical information from subordinate units as an item he had to address before reentering "the box." To address this deficiency he simplified the unit's priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) and designated "white teams" consisting of a couple members of the battalion's headquarters company and essential communication equipment and attached them to each rifle company.<sup>1</sup> This allowed subordinate leaders to focus on fighting their organizations while designated personnel reported critical information, particularly critical intelligence, to the battalion staff to allow the commander to rapidly bring resources to bear or make decisions in real time.

In the 20 years since then-LTC Dan Bolger penned his treatise on fighting at JRTC, driven by ad hoc practice in Iraq and Afghanistan by many companies and battalions, the Army incorporated company intelligence support teams (CoISTs) into the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) for maneuver units. Generally consisting of two to three intelligence analysts or designated infantry or armor Soldiers, the team proved of great value during a counterinsurgency (COIN) fight as they allowed for intelligence analysis at the lowest possible tactical level. These CoISTs remained on the organizational tables as the Army began training in earnest for a decisive action environment again, but many units struggle to effectively employ the teams when operating without a secure forward operating base, computers and software specifically designed to assist with analysis, and an evolving enemy situation.

### The Problem

CoISTs remain on maneuver unit MTOEs but are often not employed. While training programs of instruction are catching up with the operating environment, if maneuver commanders don't believe in the efficacy of the teams and employ them, the best trained teams will go unused. When units employ their CoISTs, no two units do it the same way. Starting as an ad hoc innovation to provide analysis at a lower echelon than we were organized for, codified in MTOEs and then optimized for a COIN fight, CoISTs went from incredibly relevant to extra baggage as the Army has transitioned back to a decisive action focus. What went wrong?

*"The Army has identified that maneuver companies require an intelligence capability to support bottom-up intelligence refinement during long term or extended operations. Establishing a CoIST has proven effective to the intelligence cycle and commander's situational awareness."*

— Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-21.21,  
Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) Infantry Battalion

Our observations at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) have led us to conclude that there are two challenges associated with effective CoIST employment. First, battalions do not have a codified system for training, equipping, and allocating CoISTs to their aligned units. The second order effect of not standardizing CoIST employment is that the teams do not have credibility with company-level leadership, resulting in underemployment of the asset.

Not covered in this article but worthy of further examination is where CoIST analysts should reside within a brigade's MTOE. Currently assigned to the military intelligence (MI) companies (MICOs) in the brigade engineer battalions, many units seem unaware they still have CoISTs. While the artillery community has proven that habitually attaching forward observer teams to maneuver battalions and companies is an incredible force multiplier, doing so is not without challenges. The Army's recent reestablishment of division artillery (DIVARTY) headquarters (and the vigorous debate as to whether the artillery battalions should be assigned to maneuver brigades or the DIVARTY) is indicative of this complexity. A similar debate and examination of who our analysts are assigned to and when they are attached elsewhere would benefit maneuver formations.

### Observations of Units

Over the past 12 months of rotations, only two battalions observed at JMRC have employed their CoISTs. One battalion manned the CoISTs with analysts from the battalion intelligence section, and the other received its habitually attached analysts from the brigade's MICO. Consistent with the theme of different practices in different units, one battalion had neither a formal



Photo courtesy of authors

*A CoIST analyst confers with multinational allies during Saber Junction 16 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Germany.*

standard operating procedure (SOP) nor a deliberate system for information sharing or analysis leveraging the CoISTs, and company commanders employed the analysts to varying degrees. The other battalion had a formalized SOP both for training and during operations and used CoISTs to great success.

### **Are They Value Added?**

When properly trained with their responsibilities formally delineated and leveraged by the battalion intelligence officer and company commanders, the answer is a resounding “Yes!” Prior to observing a battalion effectively employ CoISTs, however, our observer-coach-trainers (OCTs) would have said CoISTs had some value during COIN operations but little to none in a decisive action fight. After seeing a forward-leaning battalion intelligence officer establish an effective training program and employ the CoISTs with support from the battalion and company commanders, we would advocate all maneuver units mirror this battalion’s best practices. Proper implementation of CoISTs yields value for the company commanders and battalion commander while also benefiting the unit’s intelligence enterprise. During execution, they are the company commander’s liaison to the battalion intelligence section, not the intelligence section’s liaison to the company commander.

A useful way to envision the capabilities the CoIST can bring to a company is to compare them to fire support teams (FISTs). Maneuver commanders inherently understand what a

FIST team brings in terms of training, capabilities, and access to enablers. Commanders employ their FISTs because they allow a unit to affect the terrain and enemy either beyond the range of organic weapons systems or with more destructive effects, particularly when combined with other organic and external assets. A CoIST can do with collection assets and analysis tools what a FIST can with indirect fire, attack aviation, and close air support. Employed together, a well-trained CoIST and company FIST truly enhance the lethality of a rifle, Stryker, mechanized, or tank company.

### **Best Practices**

What follows are best practices for training, equipping, and allocating CoIST teams to companies and observations of effective employment during a Decisive Action Training Environment – Europe Combat Training Center rotation. The systems and units described were able to provide common operational picture clarity at both the company and battalion level, facilitate synchronization of fires with maneuver enabled by timely intelligence, and allow company leadership more time for course of action development by completing friendly and enemy situation analysis during troop leading procedures (TLPs). Illustrative of the utility of timely intelligence to the lowest tactical level, the battalion was the only unit observed in the previous two years that expended not only their own basic load of 120mm mortar ammunition, but all additional 120mm mortar ammunition that the brigade support battalion (BSB) held during the nine-day exercise.

A good portion of effective intelligence at the tactical level is based on the credibility and early integration of the intelligence Soldier. This means that the battalion intelligence officer needs to choose the best-suited Soldiers as CoIST candidates and actively develop the company-CoIST analyst relationship in garrison. The Soldier should be tactically sound, able to brief confidently, mentally agile, and physically capable of completing every task in the company. CoIST analysts also require an understanding of techniques and procedures for intelligence synthesis and dissemination appropriate to the echelon they're operating at.

Battalion intelligence officers should clearly establish expectations and requirements for their CoISTs during planning and execution. By defining what products and bottom-up refinement are required during intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB), CoISTs can facilitate parallel planning and free up the commander to focus on the friendly maneuver plan during TLPs. CoISTs present at the battalion's mission analysis brief can begin to conduct the company-level IPB and Paragraph 1 of the operation order (OPORD). They effectively perform a staff function at an echelon without a formal staff.

During execution, CoIST analysts can transmit all contact reports to battalion over the battalion operation and intelligence (O/I) or command nets, both ensuring the battalion intelligence section and operations sections are receiving critical information. Further details as contact develops can be relayed over the O/I net as well. This decreases the delay in reports, frees up the battalion command net for crosstalk between the commanders, and allows commanders to focus down on contact as they develop the situation. In order to accomplish this, CoISTs must be properly equipped for their job.

*"Early formation allows opportunities to practice and refine SOPs prior to deployment."*

— **Field Manual (FM) 2-0, Intelligence Operations**

One of the best practices that we observed here at JMRC is a memorandum for record that established the support relationship and responsibilities for the battalion intelligence section, the company, and the CoIST analyst. This memorandum was signed by the battalion intelligence officer, the CoIST analyst, and the company commander, establishing agreed-upon standards for all parties. Critical components of that agreement included expected garrison and field support, sustainment requirements, and a methodology for developing a habitual relationship between CoISTs and their supported companies. To balance MOS-specific training and relationship building, CoIST analysts would remain with the battalion intelligence section in a general support role during normal garrison activities; however, they would attend company training meetings and execute weekly physical training (PT) with their aligned company. CoIST analysts were also available for additional training with the companies, provided there was prior coordination. Upon activation for a field problem, the CoIST analysts would be task organized to the companies in direct support.

The battalion intelligence officer's responsibilities included

### **CoIST Analyst Equipment List**

- Everything the rifleman or crewman carries
- Dedicated communication platform
- Pre-cut acetate sheets (size per battalion SOP)
- Laminated IPB and OPORD shells
- Laminated report shells
- Enemy smartbook/ID guide
- Enemy prisoner of war (EPW) processing documentation
- Relevant battalion OPORD products (PIR, decision support matrix, synchronization matrix, IPB, etc.)

providing T-T+4 training schedules in order to inform companies when the CoIST would be available; rating, training and developing the CoIST analysts; and ensuring quality assurance/quality control of CoIST products. The company was responsible for providing focus and priorities to the analysts, a RT-1523 radio dedicated to the CoIST analyst, and life support. The CoIST analyst was responsible for providing enemy situation templates (SITTEMPs), grid reference guides/graphics (GRGs), maps, imagery, support to the FIST, and other requested intelligence products to their assigned companies. The CoISTs were also responsible for providing their products to the battalion intelligence section as bottom-up refinement in order to create shared understanding across the entire battalion.

*"Communications requirements for the CoIST require consideration by the battalion and company commanders and staff."*

— **FM 2-0, Intelligence Operations**

The most critical piece of equipment to ensure the effectiveness of a CoIST is an adequate means of communication with the battalion headquarters. The system will vary based off of the unit's MTOE, but the CoIST needs a reliable way to routinely update the intelligence section with contact reports and assessments. During a recent exercise, we observed an airborne infantry unit that invested communications equipment into their company CoIST analysts. Each CoIST carried a dismounted manpack primarily operating on the battalion O/I net. This enabled the CoIST analyst to maintain continuous communication with the battalion intelligence officer, adjacent CoISTs, low-level voice intercept (LLVI) teams, human intelligence collection teams, and the battalion's scout platoon without hampering the commander's ability to control the fight on the command and fires nets. The ability to receive real-time information from attached and external collection assets allowed the CoISTs to provide true value to their company commanders.

### **Battle Drill Cards and Briefing Formats**

To steal a real estate cliché — "location matters." Who supervises the analysts attached to companies and where those analysts physically locate themselves on the battlefield

matters. First, the analyst should be assigned to an NCO for administrative reporting and control. Either the company operations NCO or fire support NCO can fulfill these roles. The physical location of the CoIST will vary by unit type. For light or airborne infantry companies we have seen the greatest success when the CoIST is attached at the hip to the company commander. Within vehicular companies, the CoIST could ride in a commander's fighting vehicle or collocate with another command post node. Possible locations for the CoIST include inside the company command post tent or in the executive officer's or FIST's vehicles. This structure works best when the battalion invests in an O/I net to facilitate the constant flow of information without congesting the command or administrative and logistics nets.

Ultimately, the job of CoISTs is to help paint the enemy picture for commanders. As such, intelligence sections need to have established battle rhythms with clearly defined inputs and outputs to achieve this goal. That battle rhythm should include periodic radio synchronization meetings run by the battalion intelligence officer with all of the CoISTs. A recently observed technique entailed the intelligence officer beginning with a quick summary of the battalion's current assessment. Then, each CoIST would provide a summary of the contact in their area of operations (AO) as well as their assessment of where the enemy was in time and space. Finally, the intelligence officer would recap with any changes to the battalion assessment. All assigned or attached collection assets, such as the battalion's scouts and attached LLVI teams, were included in these meetings. These touch points created shared understanding across the entire battalion intelligence warfighting function and fed into the battalion operations/intelligence updates. This enabled the intelligence officer to accurately describe the enemy in time and space to the battalion and company commanders, enabling them to make timely and informed decisions.

### Way Forward

CoISTs proved their worth in countless company headquarters over the past 16 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the Army transitions its focus back to decisive action, we cannot fail to capitalize on positive lessons learned from over a decade and a half of experience. Intelligence personnel remain on our MTOE, and leaders with knowledge of best practices discovered

through trial and error in contact remain in our force. Units should continue to experiment with employing this invaluable resource and learn from one another to retain our CoISTs.

While CoISTs were developed to fulfill the information collection, processing, and dissemination requirements within a decentralized battalion formation operating in a COIN environment, they remain a viable solution to company-level requirements in a decisive action environment. However, in order to be effective units need to invest in dedicated communications equipment, the right people, and effective training. They also need to invest in creating clear, written expectations and requirements with roles and responsibilities established between the CoIST analyst, the battalion intelligence section, and the company leadership. With the proper investment, CoISTs can provide timely intelligence to company-level leadership so that commanders can make educated decisions and exercise mission command in a communications-degraded environment, ever more important as our adversaries invest in techniques and equipment designed to degrade the U.S. Army's technical overmatch capabilities.

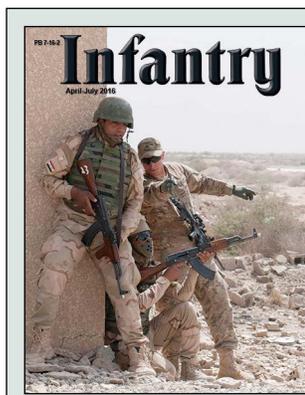
### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Daniel P. Bolger, *The Battle for Hunger Hill: The 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment at the Joint Readiness Training Center* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1997), 290.

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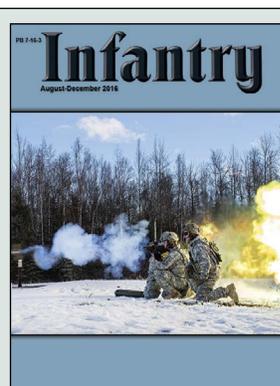


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# The Need for an IBCT (COIN)

## Maintaining Focus on an Almost Forgotten Mission

CPT RYAN P. HOVATTER

*“Contrary to popular belief, the military history of the United States is one characterized by stability operations, interrupted by distinct episodes of major combat.”*

— Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*<sup>1</sup>

The Army must maintain a focus on counterinsurgency (COIN) and stability operations. Lately, the Army is refocusing its training efforts on combat against a near peer — with particular attention given to armored and Stryker brigade combat teams (ABCTs/SBCTs). This shift brings about a virtual purge of COIN lessons as leaders scramble to be among the vanguard in the focus against the reformed old threats: Russia, North Korea, and other aggressive nation-states. Even as the Army was bogged down in a COIN campaign in Iraq and counterterror/insurgency operations in Afghanistan (and while still conducting stability operations around the world), the Army seems to have been intent on getting away from COIN and stability operations. In professional discussions amongst ourselves, we’ve heard that Field Artillery is not as good as it was before the wars, that our maneuver capability has suffered because of the focus on COIN, and that units have not experienced the big fights of Cold War-era National Training Center (NTC) rotations. We’ve got to get back to basics, many say. This attitude from leaders echoes in the hearts of many of our officers and NCOs who grew up during the last 16 years of the COIN fight, many of whom fought in Iraq and Afghanistan and have memories of successes, failures, and absolute failures.

The purpose of this article is not to counter those marching orders to train to fight a more traditional nation-state but to offer a differing perspective and possible solutions to maintaining and bettering our tactics and techniques to operate against insurgency in an unstable environment. While the Army refocuses the majority of our combat power on training to fight near-peer adversaries, we must concurrently build upon our collective knowledge of COIN operations by concentrating certain units on COIN training. Now is the time to emphasize COIN — to

think, theorize, rehearse, train, and rethink COIN. Now is the time to develop experts in COIN warfare — before the next insurgency fight.

COIN tactics grew popular in the Army and the American public for a short time with GEN David Petraeus as its chief proponent and including many intellectuals and authors like H.R. McMaster, David Kilcullen, and John Nagl to name a few. Still, while COIN became a catch phrase, set of instructions, and additional readings, it could never overcome the prestige of force-on-force training. Many leaders simply didn’t believe in it. COIN doesn’t produce a Grant, a Patton, or a Schwarzkopf. COIN strategy is anticlimactic, unlike the preferred “American way of war” in which overwhelming manpower and resources are applied in full to destroy an enemy’s forces and economy, leading to unconditional surrender.<sup>2</sup>

COIN doctrine pushed protection of the population over protection of yourself. To be successful in COIN, one must be unselfish, and in many ways, more daring. It is certainly riskier, and risk is something our modern military may be reluctant to accept.



Photos by Patrick Ponder

*The author, CPT Ryan Hovatter, meets with village leaders during training at Fort Bliss, TX, in August 2015. At the time, CPT Hovatter was serving as commander of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Florida National Guard, which was preparing for an upcoming deployment to Djibouti.*

Perhaps some of the best American practitioners of COIN prior to the recent war on terrorism can be seen in the U.S. Marine Corps' combined action platoon (CAP) concept from the Vietnam War, where a squad of eight to 16 Marines lived, trained, and fought with a platoon of about 40 Vietnamese. They didn't live on large bases with protective walls and checkpoints; they lived on small outposts nestled within or on the outskirts of villages. The Vietnamese soldiers in the CAP were from the area and knew it well. They had the highest stake in the game, being villagers themselves. Success was based on mutual trust amongst the Marines, Vietnamese soldiers, and the village population. The Marines had to sacrifice protection measures, an often unpopular choice with commanders and the American public. Eventually the village would shut off resources, supplies, and recruits to the Viet Cong, which could not survive without this support. It's said that the best defense is an offense. Well, in COIN the offense is engagement with the population. By building trusting relationships and knowing the terrain, the CAP created more safety and stability than any HESCO barriers could. More importantly, it worked toward accomplishing a strategy of ending insurgency. The Marines were not passive. They patrolled at night and established ambushes. It wasn't easy back then either. It was dangerous and there were setbacks in villages, but on the whole, the program was succeeding. The tragedy of the Marine CAP program is that it was never bought on the whole across Vietnam. GEN William Westmoreland regarded the strategy as ineffective and wrote in his 1976 autobiography that to put a squad in every village would have been fragmenting resources and exposing them to defeat in detail.<sup>3</sup> Even his special assistant for COIN (later General) William DePuy had little faith in the Marine CAPs or in any American forces conducting COIN, writing that American forces "didn't know how to do COIN very well" and that America's main problem in the war was that "we didn't stick to fighting the enemy's main force."<sup>4</sup>

In all of my Army officer training, I have never trained on anything close to what the Marine CAPs practiced. My COIN training was always based out of a base camp conducting patrols, key leader engagements, convoys, raids, and cordon and searches. The training never allowed small units to live among a population, partially because there were never enough dedicated role players but also because it wasn't acceptable to do so. COIN training should be as intense as the training of the Combat Training Centers (CTCs) but with scenarios that provide more opportunities to focus on population control, emphasizing culture and language, balancing offensive, defensive, and stability operations in the same area, and "conducting armed social work."<sup>5</sup> Even the writers of FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, noted a previous lack of training, writing in the preface that:

*"Achieving this balance is not easy. It requires leaders at all levels to adjust their approach constantly. They must ensure that their Soldiers and Marines are ready to be greeted with either a handshake or a hand grenade while taking on missions only infrequently practiced until recently at our combat training centers."*

***The term "hearts and minds" is further misunderstood. It's not about making the population love you and feel good that you're there protecting them... To win their hearts and minds is to get them to believe that they are more secure under the COIN forces, that security will be in place for the long run, and that the population can rest assured that basic human needs will be met.***

The need for designated COIN forces is illustrated by the many detractors and misunderstandings of COIN. Some of the negative attributes of COIN are that it is too prescriptive, static, and about people's feelings — none of which are true, much less effective in COIN. COL Harry Tunnell, commander of 5/2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team during its 2009-2010 Afghanistan deployment, wrote that "COIN has become such a restrictive dogma that it cannot be questioned."<sup>6</sup> Critics like retired COL Gian Gentile have lamented that military thinkers were obsessed with COIN tactics, and that new officers were told they needed to be better at building trusting relationships with communities. Gentile argued this was at a cost to training new leaders in their basic branch skills, and that the military needed to focus on combined arms competencies.<sup>7</sup> The problem with his argument, made just after the Iraq drawdown, is that the U.S. military didn't struggle fighting the fifth most powerful army in the world in 1991.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. military didn't struggle toppling Iraq's army again in 2003, which was still arguably the most powerful military in the Middle East.<sup>9</sup> What the U.S. military struggled with was the aftermath of toppled regimes and dysfunctional governments in Iraq and Afghanistan — we struggled with COIN.

These sentiments may be shared by many as we turn back to the basics of force-on-force fighting. The term "hearts and minds" is further misunderstood. It's not about making the population love you and feel good that you're there protecting them. Hearts and minds is about making people believe that their safety is your priority. To win their hearts and minds is to get them to believe that they are more secure under the COIN forces, that security will be in place for the long run, and that the population can rest assured that basic human needs will be met. It is to convince the population that their government is legal and legit — that their government will not collapse. You've won their minds when you convince them of this. You win their hearts when they turn in the insurgents, when they put their lives at risk by offering information and aid to security forces. The war to win hearts and minds is still war, but there comes a time when there is less shooting, less killing. Kilcullen describes hearts and minds as building trusted networks:

*"This is the true meaning of the phrase 'hearts and minds,' which comprises of two separate components.*

*'Hearts' means persuading people their best interests are served by your success; 'minds' means convincing them that you can protect them, and that resisting you is pointless. Note that neither concept has to do with whether people like you.'*<sup>10</sup>

The Army must foster a COIN community, one in which COIN tactics and operations can continue to be advanced. Even when nested within a higher strategic vision, units have a hard time changing their culture. BCTs preparing for a rotation at NTC to fight the Krasnovians have naturally developed an aggressive attack-focused mindset. How does this BCT shift focus from attack and defend to COIN? Imagine a commander's guidance, "Anytime you fight — anytime you fight — you always kill the other son of a b—! You are the hunter, the predator; you are looking for the prey." This real standing order came from COL Michael Steele while his brigade was assigned to conduct COIN in Iraq in 2006.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps these mantras are needed to hype up an invasion force, to give Soldiers a will to win, something to overcome fear, but this attitude is the exact opposite of the thinking needed in a COIN fight or stability operations. It cannot be overstated that COIN still requires offensive action and destroying an enemy will sometimes be an operational objective, but killing the enemy is never the strategic objective. COIN operations should be environment-centric or population-centric — not focused on the enemy. If the Army does not develop units with a COIN mindset, it will rarely find one when it's needed.

The Army's newly announced security force assistance brigades (SFABs) could prove to be a valuable asset in getting the Army in the right mindset that insurgencies cannot be ignored. While these units will provide an invaluable necessity to COIN, they may find difficulty in bridging the gap between initial response and fostering sustainable security. Advise and assist units are needed in conjunction with infantry battalions on the ground. In failed states, there may not be organized armies, police, or security forces to advise and assist. As seen in post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan, security forces took years to build or rebuild. American infantry units were needed on the ground immediately to fill the security vacuum and continued to be needed while local security forces were organized, trained, and fielded.

What's needed is a unit, not much different from the invasion forces of Infantry BCTs, ABCTs, and SBCTs, but one that has a different culture. One that can fight hard in offensive operations, but that is more focused on the aftermath of a crumbled regime, insurgency, or instability than the basic needs of populations. Organizational culture is the fundamental difference in these necessary units.



**A Soldier from 2-124 IN listens to villagers during training at Fort Bliss in August 2015.**

This role could go to some of the National Guard's 20 IBCTs. Guardsmen could even be considered more "qualified" for COIN and stability operations than Regular Army Soldiers because they are more attuned with civilian matters, since they still live in communities and the majority have jobs and careers throughout the array of civilian possibilities. This stands in contrast to Regular Army Soldiers who often live on bases, with their own infrastructure, segregated from civilian communities and often many miles from a city. While able to conduct the full spectrum of assigned operations, Guardsmen only bring their distinct skill sets to value in COIN and stability operations, where their diverse perspectives can help with innovative, often non-military, solutions.

Guardsmen also have a unique role in civil support operations in their states under control of their governors, often working for or with local governments and law enforcement. These unique Guard experiences and qualifications combined with Guard IBCTs' knowledge and training in direct action create a perfect baseline to build on a COIN focus and culture. Whether the COIN BCT is in the National Guard or Active component, it should be motorized infantry in nature. The culture would be similar to active component IBCTs but with far more focus on COIN and stability operations. COIN still takes an aggressive mindset, but a "kill the other son of a b—" maxim will absolutely not work in these types of missions.

Shifting the Guard's IBCT focus more toward stability operations and COIN, also makes sense in that it takes most

Guard units more time to mobilize and deploy than their active counterparts. By the time most Guard units got into Iraq, the big tank war was over and the long difficult road of stability operations had begun, where uncertainty, lawlessness, and a power vacuum descended into intense insurgency and eventually into civil war.

The COIN BCT modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) would have to change. Artillery is important but should be reorganized to better meet COIN-specific needs. More intelligence support, even down to the company level, should be added. Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) units should align with COIN BCTs and fall under the same training/availability cycle. These COIN BCTs should have a large civil-military cell in the brigade headquarters with specialists in city management, power, sewage, water, and trash. This cell should be led by a senior field grade officer in order to give weight to the civil nature of the brigade. This may be achieved by attaching a civil affairs company to the BCT. In order to have well-informed, culturally astute leaders, as the COIN field manual states as a goal, the COIN BCT would focus attention on cultural and language training, perhaps even creating and using additional skill identifiers to manage personnel. These could be in addition to normal IBCT requirements, but in no difference to airborne IBCTs requiring additional schools such as airborne and master parachutist.

Some will say that training for COIN should merely remain a task of the BCTs. While it should remain part of the standardized mission essential tasks (MET) of all BCTs, many units will take the risk of not training COIN/stability operations while focusing on other areas. Just as an infantry company has under its standard MET area reconnaissance and screen, they often do not focus on these missions. In this respect, a COIN-focused task organization is no different than a reconnaissance-focused cavalry squadron made of up of infantry and armor personnel. In that same regard, a COIN BCT is little different from a BCT focused on airborne, air assault, or mountain operations. Each of those BCTs have slight differences in MTOE but major differences in culture that give them an edge in certain environments.

The differences in MTOE would only enable the COIN BCT to better perform its mission, but the key difference is in its approach. While it is not difficult to change mentality among capable leaders, it is difficult to change an organizational culture. For example, it is difficult to change a unit's approach from concentration to dispersion or fragmentation of forces. Dispersion is essential in COIN, yet higher commands historically object to this since it is at odds with one of the principles of war: mass. GEN Westmoreland thought the Marines' approach to CAP was foolish and preferred battalion and larger Army attacks. David Galula, the well-known COIN theorist and practitioner, faced a similar criticism from his command when he dispersed his company into detachments of 15-20 Soldiers and stationed them in Algerian villages that had been pacified.<sup>12</sup>

As the Army shifts its focus away from COIN, much as the

post-Vietnam Army did, the knowledge we've learned and haven't learned will be lost. Already the newest crop of Army captains have spent their last four years in an Army that by and large wants to forget Iraq and Afghanistan. Deploying as a combat arms officer to a stability operation is far less prestigious than having CTC rotations under one's belt. If we lose COIN focus, there could be another 20-25 years before we dust off the old FM and frantically update it while already overwhelmed in fighting an insurgency, as the Army and Marine Corps did in 2006 at the height of violence in Iraq. Despite our wishes, COIN and stability operations are and will continue to be the predominant missions.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> FM 3-07, *Stability Operations* (6 October 2008), 1-1.

<sup>2</sup> Russell F. Weigley, "How Americans Wage War: The Evolution of National Strategy" in *Major Problems in American Military History*, John Whiteclay Chambers II and G. Kurt Pielher (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 2-6.

<sup>3</sup> William Childs Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 166.

<sup>4</sup> William E. DePuy, "Excerpt from An Oral History of Americans in Vietnam, 1945-1975" from *Selected Papers of General William E. Depuy*, compiled by COL Richard M. Swain (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1994), 439-440.

<sup>5</sup> David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency," Edition 1 (Washington, D.C., March 2006), 8.

<sup>6</sup> COL Harry D. Tunnell IV, "Open Door Policy — Report from a Tactical Commander," letter to John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, Department of the Army, Headquarters 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, 20 August 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Gian P. Gentile, "The Death of the Armor Corps," *Small Wars Journal*, 2010; Gian P. Gentile, "COIN is Dead: U.S. Army Must Put Strategy Over Tactics," *Small Wars Journal*, 22 November 2011.

<sup>8</sup> John M. Broder and Douglas Jehl, "Iraqi Army: World's 5th Largest but Full of Vital Weaknesses," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 August 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Sharon Otterman, "Iraq: Iraq's Prewar Military Capabilities," Council on Foreign Relations, modified 3 February 2005. Assessed on 22 May 2017 from <https://www.cfr.org/background/iraq-iraqs-prewar-military-capabilities>.

<sup>10</sup> Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles," 5.

<sup>11</sup> Greg Jaffe and David Cloud, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army* (NY: Three Rivers Press, 2009), 225.

<sup>12</sup> David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria: 1956-1958* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2006).

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# Utilizing FOs in the Mounted Fight: *Lessons Learned and Recommendations*

1LT TYLER GREENAWALT  
1LT CREIGHTON MONSON  
1LT ZACH SOSTAK  
1LT WESTON TURNER  
1LT JOSEPH WADE

**E**mploying forward observers (FOs) in a mounted heavy weapons company at first appears no different than employing them in a standard light infantry company. Conducting an offensive gunnery lane, however, will quickly reveal many difficulties in planning fires and incorporating the FO. The unique struggles found in offensive operations also apply to defensive operations.

Before we address the main issues encountered while training in Grafenwoehr, Germany, it is important to understand the role of a heavy weapons company within a light infantry battalion. The company's role is to provide dismounts with enough fire power to destroy enemy up-armored vehicles while maintaining freedom of maneuver through large volumes of fire.

From the fire support side, the company organically has a fire support team (FIST) that has far fewer members than a standard line company. The FIST is responsible for running the company FIST headquarters (HQ), which leaves a shortage of FOs for the platoons to utilize.

The FIST organization leads to the largest challenge when incorporating FOs in the mounted fight, which is that there simply are not enough dedicated platoon FOs to fully support the platoons. Additionally, the mission could force some FOs to operate outside of the company.

Another difficulty when incorporating FOs is the ability to emplace them effectively. In the offense, it is not practical to establish an FO on an observation post (OP) because the mounted unit moves faster and farther than a traditional unit. This creates communications issues and limits the platoon leader's (PL's) ability to quickly and effectively incorporate fires.

In the defense, it is also not always practical to establish an OP because a mounted unit's engagement area relies on incorporating and massing all available assets. When the FO is separated from the PL, this becomes difficult. Also, it becomes difficult to quickly pick up and break contact if the FO is on an OP away from the PL's vehicle.

It is our goal in this article to identify effective solutions for incorporating fires in the mounted fight. We will also identify two courses of action for future consideration that will increase a FIST's ability to provide rapid fires.

An immediate solution we are working towards is to train the truck commanders (TCs) of each heavy weapons crew to be proficient in calling for and controlling fires. The intent behind

this course of action is to give the FIST HQ more options when planning and assigning pre-planned targets for operations.

While the standard call for fire is a basic soldier skill, the training goal for TCs is to give them the confidence to use fires in the absence of an FO. This way if an FO is not available for a platoon's operation, the TC will have the capability to utilize pre-planned targets and call for fire on opportune targets.

Also, when the FO is with the platoon and located in the PL's vehicle during an offensive operation, the FO is no longer limited because of a lack of visibility due to sitting in a vehicle. The TC's advanced targeting equipment can gather and feed targeting data to the attached FO. This allows the FO to use the incoming data to advise the PL and also use the TCs as observers to help manage multiple missions and assets at once. Essentially, this allows the FO to act as a platoon-level FIST HQ.

The increased observation of this method effectively gives the unit a large increase in fires capability. It also allows the company FISTs to better incorporate fires into the maneuver plan and allows the FO to manage multiple targeting sensors through the TCs, versus sitting in the backseat where they have limited capability.

Although training the TCs to act as FOs when needed is effective in the short term, there are multiple long-term solutions that address the issue of utilizing FOs in a mounted company. One solution is to equip the PL with a vehicle that has a targeting sensor mounted on the turret. This would allow FOs to act as command vehicle gunners, give them better visibility of the area of operations, and allow them to quickly gather targeting data.

Additionally, the PL can easily maneuver his vehicle to the best vantage point for providing fires that support his maneuver plan. In the defense for instance, instead of establishing an OP with only the equipment the FO can carry, he can utilize the targeting system on the PL's vehicle to observe the engagement area. This is done with the FO near the PL, which increases the ability to effectively manage the fires plan and mass fires.

Another long-term solution is to equip the FIST HQ with a fire support vehicle with the capabilities necessary to support a mounted company. Armor companies do this as their FIST operates its own Bradley fire support vehicle which is equipped with advanced targeting systems. In mounted infantry companies, however, the FIST lacks this equipment and vehicle

platform. This prevents them from properly moving and effectively providing fires to support maneuver operations.

Rather than being an immediate asset to the heavy weapons company, the company ends up needing to help the FIST before it can support the company. Instead, we recommend equipping the heavy weapons FIST with a fire support vehicle and mounted targeting equipment. This would allow the FIST to travel with the main effort, rapidly employ fires using better targeting equipment, increase communications effectiveness, and maintain better command and control. This solution increases the number of assets the FIST can control simultaneously and ultimately provides better support to the company.

In closing, the training we have conducted as a company opened our eyes to many struggles when it comes to effectively incorporating FOs into mounted operations. One struggle was learning how to utilize an FO in offensive operations. Because they are required to be in the backseat of a vehicle, they cannot visualize the battlefield, and when they dismount to establish an OP, it ultimately slows down the tempo of the platoon. Additionally, the small size of the heavy weapons FIST restricts its ability to effectively support a company.

In response to these issues, an immediate step we have taken is training each crew's TC with the ability to feed targeting data to the FO. This allows the FO to communicate what the battlefield looks like to the PL, control multiple fire missions, and control multiple assets. This solution should not be a permanent fix because it takes TCs away from their main task; however, until a better system is in place, this allows each platoon to have an increased fires capability and greatly increases the amount of simultaneous fires a single FO can provide.

A future solution to consider is equipping the PL with a vehicle that has a mounted targeting system so the FO can better observe the battlespace and fires during operations. Also, the increased ability to view the battlespace could allow the FO to better advise the PL on incorporating fires.

Finally, providing the FIST with a fire support vehicle with targeting sensors — similar to that of an armored company FIST — would greatly increase the FIST's ability to provide and integrate fires into platoon and company operations. We believe this is the best long-term solution because it maximizes the capabilities of a small FIST by increasing communications and therefore command and control of fires assets. This solution ensures the FIST can either maneuver with the commander or to an ideal observation point. The added communications and mobility of the FIST greatly increases the level of fire support provided in offensive and defensive operations.

Although quite different from providing fire support to the standard light infantry company, by employing an effective method and SOP for utilizing FOs in a heavy weapons company, maximum fire power through integration of assets is provided at every point in the battle.

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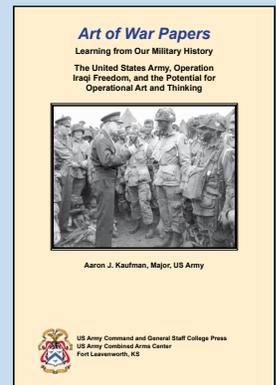
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Kaufman

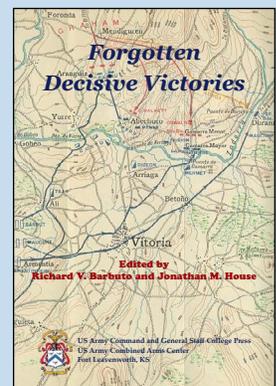
The author examines how the U.S. Army was successful in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He notes that some tactical organizations, companies included, learned and adapted, whereas others accomplished little and made the environment worse. The interviews conducted and personal reflections confirmed that a deeper and more historical understanding is required. He concludes that OIF demonstrated the need for operational art and thinking, particularly in commanders of relatively junior rank.



### *Forgotten Decisive Victories*

Edited by Richard  
V. Barbuto and  
Jonathan M. House

This anthology is a collection of essays on forgotten decisive battles in history, each of which examines a battle that, in its time, altered the strategic balance between the belligerents in a lasting way. Although many of the battles described are less well known today even among scholars, their impact on the lives of the people, armies, and states involved ranged from significant (the Somme) to existential (Pusan Perimeter). The factors influencing the sequence and outcome of each battle are of course unique to each circumstance. It is applicable equally to the military professional, the interested layman, and the student of humanity. All seek to better understand the drivers of human conflict.



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# Attacking in a City:

## *The Russian Motorized Rifle Battalion Approach*

LTC (RETIRED) LESTER W. GRAU

**F**ighting large-scale conventional maneuver war in Europe will inevitably involve fighting in built-up areas and cities. Urban sprawl, transportation networks, geography, enemy occupation, and economic and political considerations often make bypassing built-up areas unrealistic. Yet, urban fighting is the antithesis of high-tempo sweeping advances, accurate intelligence, and responsive logistics. Russia and previously the Soviet Union have a great deal of experience in offensive urban operations: the good (Stalingrad 1943-1944, Minsk 1944, Vienna 1945, Prague 1968, Kabul 1979, Herat 1984, Baku 1988-1989, Grozny 1999-2000, Simferopol 2014); the bad (Kiev 1943, Warsaw 1944, Budapest 1944-1945, Berlin 1945, East Berlin 1953, Aleppo 2017); and the ugly (Budapest 1956, Grozny 1994-1995 and twice in 1996). In all cases, except for the 1996 battles for Grozny, they won the city fight.

The Russians prefer to take a city “on the bounce” (or “from the march” as they would put it). Grab a lodgment in the suburbs, move quickly into the city, seize the key parts before the enemy has a chance to establish a coordinated defense, establish local order and a garrison, and move on. Warfare does not always permit preferred scenarios. Often, the attacker will face a determined defense and will have to smash his way through block-by-block leaving smoking rubble in his wake. Resolving this artillery-intensive, time-intensive, logistics-intensive approach to urban combat does not come cheaply or easily. Local government, city services, emergency services, and law and order disappear. Disease and predation increase. Water and electrical power are sporadic. Food and gasoline distribution networks are out of commission. The civilians that remain demand food, medical attention, drinkable water, protection, and restitution for damages. The economy is in collapse. The military is expected to make everything right again, but it is the wrong instrument for the job. No wonder that an attack from the march is the preferred method.

Russia’s recent conflicts have been against bordering states for limited objectives or against guerrilla and local combatants. Yet, Russia emphasizes training for conventional maneuver war against a peer or near-peer adversary under nuclear-threatened conditions. Russia does not consider this as its most likely future conflict, but it is the most dangerous one as it threatens national integrity and even national survival. Russia would prefer not to fight in cities, but that option may not always be available. The January 2017 issue of *Army Digest* published the following article on urban combat at the motorized rifle [mechanized infantry] battalion level. It emphasizes taking the

city from the march but being prepared to revert to deliberate block-by-block combat if necessary.

### **Urban Assault — A Subtle Affair<sup>1</sup>**

As a rule, according to tactical precepts, seizing cities and other populated areas is conducted from the march. It begins with the destruction of the enemy in the outlying areas before entering the city. Then the motorized rifle battalion burrows its way into the city and advances without pause into its depths. If the attempt to seize the populated area from the march does not succeed, the senior commander may decide to conduct its encirclement or blockade. Then, following thorough preparation, begins the assault and seizes it by force.

In most instances, the motorized rifle battalion (MRB) will advance as part of a brigade (or regiment) along one or two main streets lined with adjacent city blocks with an area of responsibility of one-to-two kilometers of width. Each of its companies will be responsible for a street or the interior of a block. The MRB combat mission will be divided into an immediate mission and a further mission. The immediate mission will be to destroy enemy company strongpoints and often, to seize one or two city blocks. The further mission is to seize and hold an important objective within the depths of the city’s defenses.

As a rule, the MRB combat formation will be in two echelons. Storm groups will be formed to seize buildings that have been prepared for a defense and important objectives. Reinforced companies (and sometimes platoons) form storm groups. Furthermore, combat in subterranean passages may require specialized storm subgroups composed of reinforced platoons or squads.

During urban missions, the bulk of the attacking companies will be reinforced with fires from the grenade launcher and anti-tank platoons, the mortar battery, an artillery battalion (or batteries), tanks, and the flame thrower company. Anti-tank squads and a flamethrower platoon may be attached to companies. Tank movement is designed to cover advancing motorized rifle subunits.

Developing a successful advance in a city depends to a large extent on the reserve’s ability to accomplish the following missions: attack the enemy from another direction; assist the actions of the storm group; carry out the destruction of remaining enemy in positions bypassed by the storm groups; secure flanks; participate in securing the rear area; and perform other missions as needed.

Artillery plays a decisive role in seizing a city. It participates in the fire accompaniment of first echelon subunits, conducting suppressive and annihilation fires on enemy strong points on the approaches to the city and its outskirts. The tactical maneuver of artillery gun crews along with the subunits attacking in the city allows the consecutive shifting of fires against buildings and surroundings in the depth of the city and preventing the arrival of enemy reserves at areas under attack.

During the seizure of the outskirts of the city, which motorized rifle subunits accomplish under conditions of limited visibility (at night or under the cover of smoke and aerosols), and most often from the march, the MRB establishes a lodgment area in which to concentrate its forces and equipment designated to storm the city (populated area). Each platoon within a motorized rifle company is given a specific mission. Thus, "the leading motorized rifle platoon must seize this street to a depth of one city block (150-200

meters) and secure it. Further movement along it depends on the orders of the company commander depending on the developing situation and orders from higher. The second motorized rifle platoon will follow the lead platoon at a distance of 200-400 meters and, upon command, close up to it. Then pass through the first platoon and complete seizing the first block with the possibility of continuing on to seize the second."

There are two variants for how the third motorized platoon may move. First, trail the second platoon at a fairly close distance in order to destroy any remaining enemy and secure the route between the two lead platoons and the rear. Second, move together with the first platoon and, upon getting within direct fire range of the inhabited area (500-1,000 meters), stop and provide fire support to the first and second platoons.

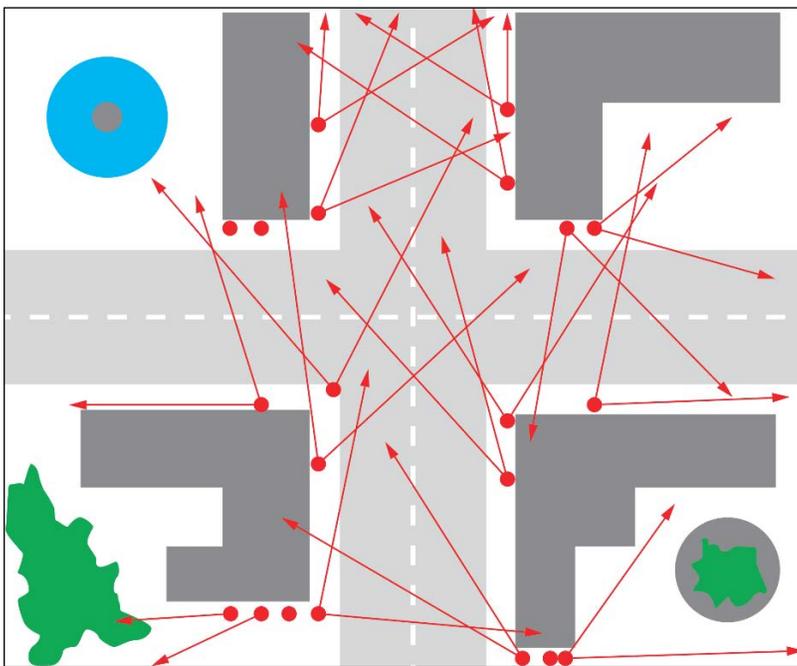
In the event that tanks are employed, move them at the maximum possible speed, firing on the move at those enemy firing points that are discovered — usually in building basements or within the buildings.

When seizing the outskirts of a large inhabited area, it is expedient to do so simultaneously on a wide front, best of all, from three directions. This will aid in the seizure of several streets.

Depending on the situation, an enemy strongpoint may be taken by several approaches. One approach is to bypass a house that has been converted into a strongpoint and blockade it with motorized rifle personnel. Another approach is to destroy the house with artillery and engineers, and then a storm detachment or storm group will seize the house and clear it.

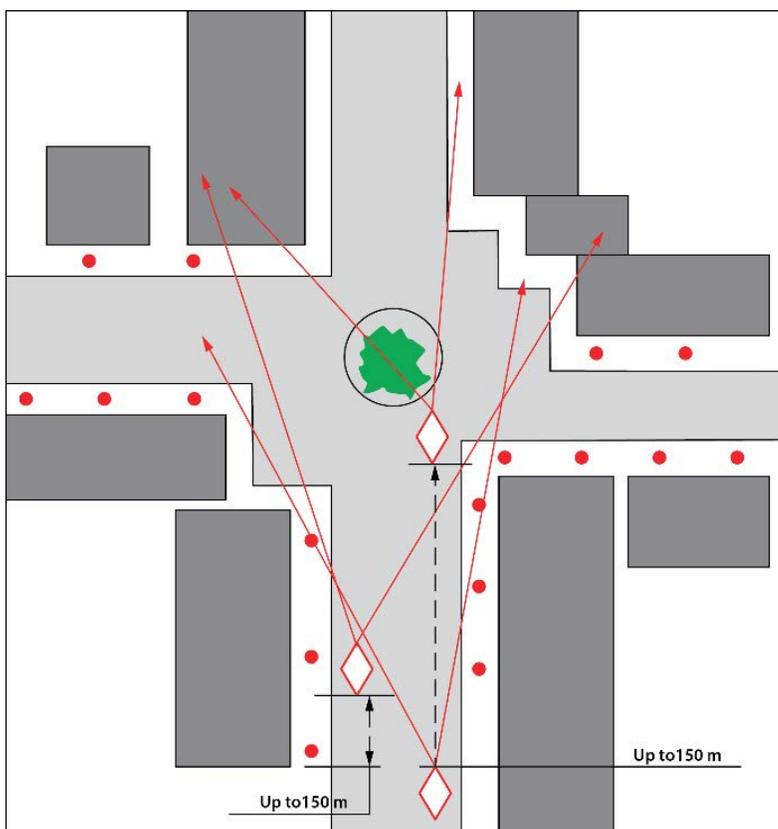
As a rule, supporting tanks moving along a street are echeloned in depth. Their formation varies and is a function of the situation. For example, on a street that is 50-60 meters wide, two or three tanks may move abreast, trailing 40-50 meters behind the tank ahead. They move in close coordination with their accompanying motorized rifle subunits which will destroy enemy firing points and personnel. Their priority target is enemy anti-tank gunners. One of the tank crews will conduct fire at the upper stories of buildings. Tanks coordinate with motorized rifle subunits through visual signals and marking fire. Radio communications are limited. The tanks begin an attack only after the motorized riflemen seize and hold the enemy anti-tank firing points.

In order to insure sufficient visibility for the tank crews, the tank subgroup leader fires at the upper floors of buildings and (when there are no fewer than two tanks in the first group) moves down the street, providing mutual support to each other. Figure 2 shows how a tank platoon observes and fires during street movement. The red dots are dismounted motorized riflemen securing the intersection and its corner



**Figure 1 — Motorized Rifle Platoon on the Offense in Urban Area**

This figure shows how a dismounted motorized rifle platoon may move through an urban area to seize a road intersection. Follow-on forces will clear the buildings if the enemy offers no apparent resistance. One squad moves along the left side of the street and the other moves along the right side. They hug the sides of the buildings and fire straight ahead and at the opposite sides of the street. The maneuver portion of the squad precedes the fire support portion. At the intersection, the maneuver portions of the lead squads move across the intersection and secure the intersection facings of their corner buildings. Their fire support portions secure their near side corner building facings. The third squad, with the platoon leader, moves behind the first two squads, split on both sides of the street. Once the lead squads seize the road intersection, the third squad secures the rear buildings' facings. This platoon has six-man dismounted squads with a platoon leader and senior sergeant (the vehicle driver and gunner/commander stay with the vehicle). Depending on its vehicles, it may have as many as nine-man dismounted squads. The platoon's infantry fighting vehicles or carriers may be in a follow and support role or part of a company bronnegrappa (mobile armored reserve).



**Figure 2 — Tank Platoon on the Offense in the Urban Area**

buildings. The right tank fires forward and to the left. The left tank fires forward and to the right. [The platoon leader is in the rear tank].

Tanks cannot be used abreast when a street is narrower and the width of the passage is 7-15 meters wide. In this case, the lead tank platoon advances echeloned. The lead tank drives down the middle of the street and its crew only observes and fires forward. The second tank follows 20-30 meters behind, moving along the right side of the street. Its crew observes and fires at the upper stories of the buildings on the left side of the street. The third tank follows at about the same distance from the second moving along the left side of the street and fires at the upper stories of the buildings on the right side of the street.

In order to provide effective coordination and mutual fire support, the distance between the tanks and motorized riflemen must not exceed 50 meters. Dismounted combatants follow one-to-two meters behind and to the side of combat vehicles when it is necessary to work closely with them.

When advancing along the streets, tanks move behind motorized rifle subunits at a distance that guarantees their main gun and machine gun support (100-200 meters). The bulk of this force, when advancing with tanks along a street with a width of 50-60 meters and lined with large multi-storied buildings, conducts observation and fire against the upper stories from the opposite side of the street. The subunit does not move without checking its sides, particularly the

upper stories of buildings. Two or three soldiers in every motorized rifle squad have the job to observe the upper stories, basement entries, and other places where the enemy could have an ambush.

In those instances where the width of the street or boulevard exceeds 50-60 meters, observation and small arms fire is conducted on the same side of the street the motorized riflemen are advancing on.

In a populated area, the lead tanks move slowly, attacking one target and then another. The crews usually conduct stationary fire or come to a quick stop. Main gun fire is used against enemy positions on the ground and first floors of buildings.

Prior to combat in a city or population center, expedient preplanned missions are distributed among the tank platoons in a tank company. Thus, the lead tank platoon, together with motorized riflemen and sappers, will clear the street, tearing down barricades and other obstacles, destroying any forces covering the obstacles, and suppressing enemy firing points on both sides of the street. The following tank platoons, together with motorized rifle subunits, will destroy the remaining fragments of resistance.

In the event that one of the enemy firing points is located in a building that cannot be suppressed by tank main gun fire, the motorized riflemen will bypass the building, go through the courtyard passage, and make a hole in the wall to attack the enemy from the rear. Usually they will employ hand grenades in the process.

The third tank platoon follows the second, prepared to support the lead or second platoon by fire. If necessary, it will replace one of these platoons (due to serious losses or expenditure of onboard ammunition).

In a large populated area where the enemy is putting up a stubborn resistance, the attacking side will have to seize streets in stages — block by block — then fortifying them for its own use. In a lightly populated area, the attack will be conducted without a pause to seize the enemy outskirts.

When planning for an attack in a city, it is necessary to consider that the enemy will attempt to lure part of our [the Russian] tank force into a cul-de-sac or narrow passageway where he will have organized a fire sac and mine trap. Therefore, a reliable and knowledgeable local guide plays a significant role when working with the leading subunits.

In the course of forming up for a fight in a populated area, the tanks move to the line held by the motorized riflemen. There, they initiate a brief, aimed engagement of enemy firing positions and then withdraw out of the zone of return artillery and anti-tank grenade launcher fire. The tank crews observe the enemy fire and use intersection and data furnished by the motorized rifle subunit commander to pinpoint enemy firing points. Frequent fires from likely enemy

firing points are noted. In order to preclude an ambush, reconnaissance should also be directed against those city blocks and streets from where there has been no apparent resistance.

When moving into the outskirts of a populated area, the leading subunits will fortify their positions in order to defeat a possible enemy counterattack. Reconnaissance should be dispatched along the direction of the enemy withdrawal and the likely avenue of approach for his reserve.

Enemy defending a city block may make wide use of underground passages, and motorized rifle subunits must be ready to interdict these to prevent surprise sorties and counterattacks. Therefore, it is important to quickly secure the structures behind and on the flanks of our advancing force. Frequently during a high-tempo advance, these structures can be mined or blocked with obstacles.

There are several peculiarities involved in seizing a city square. The enemy may rapidly equip and fortify firing positions in the corner buildings from which he can conduct deadly crossfires against our forces. In this instance, if the rear area of our advancing force has not been cleared of the enemy, it is not prudent to conduct a massive attack against the central square of the city.<sup>2</sup> Instead, it is necessary to sequentially deploy separate groups to force the enemy from the corner buildings on one or both sides of the corner. Only after this can motorized rifle storm groups slowly advance and destroy the enemy located on the opposite side and along the entire perimeter of the square.

If the city square is not too large, the size of the force and resources needed to seize and liberate it from the enemy are reduced so that the advancing forces do not interfere with each other.

If the city square is good-sized, advance simultaneously on combat vehicles along several streets to the corner buildings under artillery and mortar fire and storm the buildings. After destroying the centers of resistance in these buildings and clearing obstructions, the tanks may depart on a new road.

When fighting in smaller towns and hamlets, it is expedient to use a more advantageous form of maneuver-flanking or surrounding successive enemy blockades. In this event, the subunits combat formation is designed to continue the attack into the depths of the enemy defenses — from one outskirt to the other.

When using a frontal attack in a small town, tanks envelop enemy defensive points from the flanks, taking advantage of courtyards and gardens. Constitute a two-to-three tank reserve when confronted with a barricade that the enemy has built to block the road. These tanks will fire from a stationary position to break the defense and allow the main force of the attacking group to pass over it.

When in an enemy-held city, the MRB commander should constitute a covering force (or guard posts) to cover his flanks and turn back enemy counterattacks. It can also be

used to seal off a single fortified building, permitting his main force to continue the offensive.

In the event that the MRB is designated as a storm detachment, it is reinforced with tanks, artillery, mortars, flamethrowers, sappers, and NBC troops. This battalion must be supported with demolition charges, aerosol [smoke and thermobaric], and flame weapons. A forward air controller may be attached to the command post.

As a rule, when organizing an advance into a city, use the following guide when forming a storm detachment [reinforced motorized rifle battalion]: two-to-three storm groups [reinforced companies], reserve, covering force, fire support group, an obstacle removal group, a demolition group, a command group, a consolidation group, a convoy group, a specialized group, and an air-assault group. Recommend that this grouping be further organized into subgroups: seizure (storm), support (fire), consolidation, reserve, an observation subgroup, and specialized subgroups.

Depending on the complexity of movement in restricted spaces, basements, and underground passages, the commander may constitute specialized subgroups for subsurface reconnaissance, capture of basement factories, depots, storehouses, and other facilities. Often, such specialized subgroups, using subterranean passages, could move into the enemy rear and attack him from the flank and rear. Further, the activities of such specialized subgroups could be directed to seize an important objective in the path of the main body. Depending on the mission, the subgroups' composition may incorporate various military specialties.

Storm groups are formed to seize buildings (the objective of the attack) or parts of buildings. They are constituted from reinforced motorized rifle companies or occasionally motorized rifle platoons.

The reinforcement of the storm groups or of the covering force is at the expense of the reserve. The reserve's mission is to develop success and also to fulfill other unexpected missions that arise. The reserve for a storm detachment [motorized rifle battalion] is up to a motorized rifle platoon.

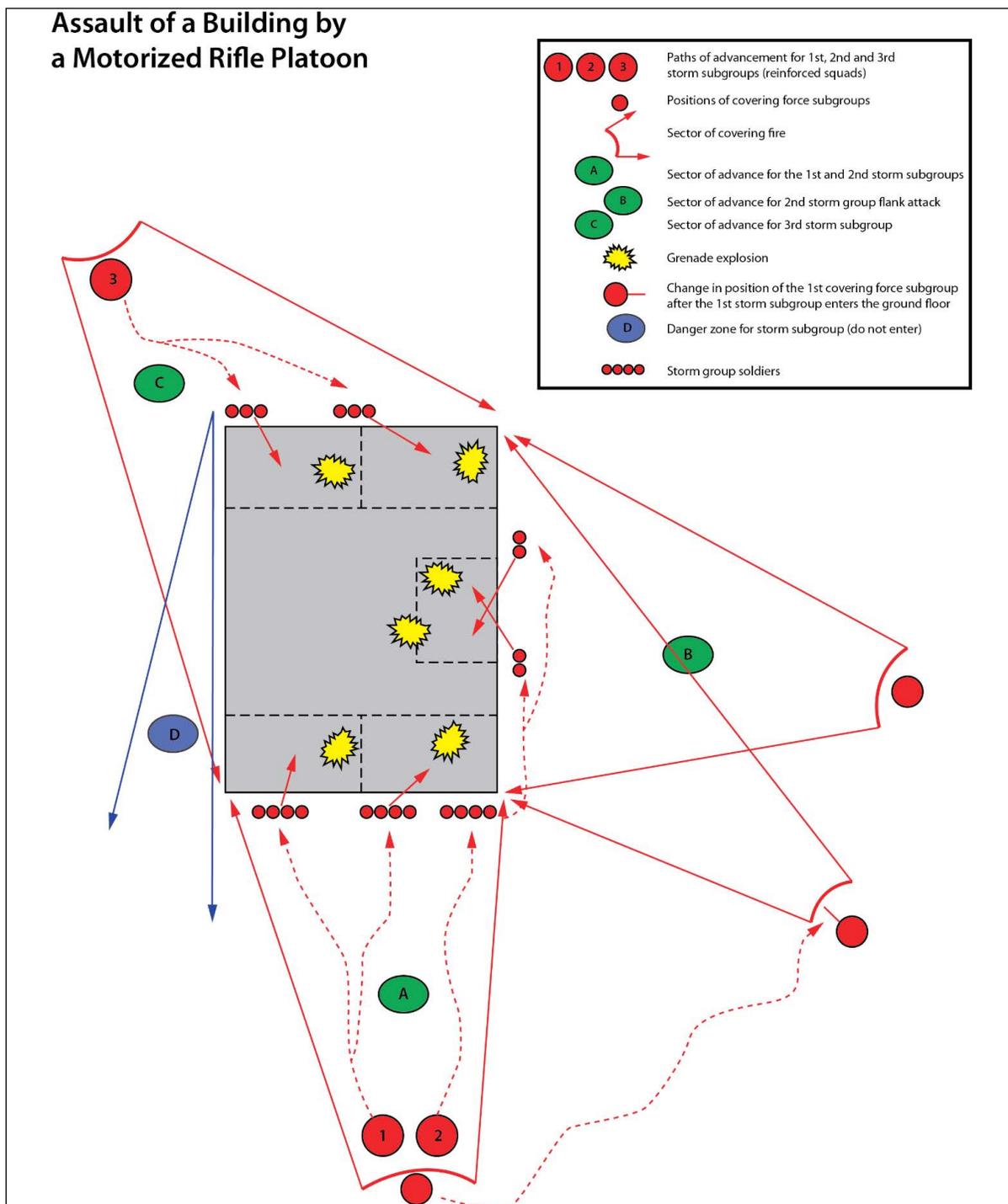
The covering force enables the advancing force to consolidate on the objective.

The fire support group uses its weapons to secure the movement of the storm group [motorized rifle company - MRC].

The obstacle removal group has the mission of opening passages through minefields, clearing obstacles in front of enemy positions, creating gaps in walls that protect the assault's objective, demining buildings and other points in the attack zone, and fulfilling other missions as assigned. The engineer-sapper subunit is included in its composition.

The seizure subgroup, as a rule, is usually a motorized rifle platoon or squad. Its mission is to destroy the enemy at the objective and seize the building. Flamethrower gunners may be included in this subgroup.

## Assault of a Building by a Motorized Rifle Platoon



**Figure 3 — Assault of a Building by a Motorized Rifle Platoon**

Figure 3 shows a dismounted motorized rifle platoon's takedown of an enemy-occupied building. The platoon leader initially deploys two covering force groups to provide fire against the eastern front of the building and its southern flank. The covering force may include attached AGS-17 automatic grenade launchers, RPO flame thrower gunners with thermobaric rounds, and organic BMP IFVs with their 100mm gun, 30mm automatic cannon, and 7.62mm machine guns. The 1st and 2nd motorized rifle squads occupy assault positions on the southern approach to the building. The 3rd squad has moved behind the building (hopefully unobserved) and taken up an assault position facing the northwest corner of the building (green oval C). The 3rd squad provides its own covering force out of hide.

The 1st and 2nd motorized rifle squads initiate an assault against the southern flank shown by green oval A. When reaching the building, the squads throw grenades into the windows and the first squad climbs through the windows to take the ground floor rooms. The 3rd squad advances against the northern flank of the building, throws grenades through the windows, and enters the northern facing rooms.

As soon as the 1st squad enters the southern rooms, its covering force deploys to a position where it can add to the fire of the eastern covering force in green oval C. Under their combined fires, the 2nd squad moves along the building eastern facing, take sides beside the door, throws in grenades, and enters the building. Inside the building, the platoon systematically clears the basement and upper floors, usually marking its progress by hanging colored panels outside the windows.

The command subgroup coordinates the movement of the seizure subgroup and other elements (subunits) of the combat formation.

The subgroups of the fire support group participate in suppressing enemy weapons and personnel while supporting the storm groups' [MRCs] rapid advances. The subgroups include subunits of tanks, BMPs (BTRs), artillery, mortars, automatic grenade launchers, anti-tank, and flame throwers.

Recommend that the storm group detachment [MRB] include a command group, a consolidation group, a convoy group, a specialized group, and an air assault group.

The command group consists of the MRB command group and signal platoon, plus representatives of the various branches and services reinforcing the storm group.

The consolidation group establishes control of the buildings and objectives, checking documents and preventing penetration through doors, porches, attics, cellars, and underground passages by the opposition.

The convoy group conveys detained enemy soldiers and local inhabitants to the filtration camps where their identity and possible connections with the enemy will be determined.

Fire support is prepared in accordance with the plan of the senior commander for combat in the city or populated area.

The storm groups [MRCs] are provided an increased amount of ammunition, hand and illumination grenades, smoke, incendiary, and signal devices and other gear suited for overcoming obstacles and storming buildings.

The movement of a storm detachment [MRB] begins at the designated time from an assembly area which was selected as close as possible to the attack objective. Upon the given signal, the fire support groups begin to fire to destroy the enemy in the objective building and its neighboring buildings. The attack groups move to their objectives through holes in the walls and passageways. Moving under the cover of fire support groups and an aerosol screen [thermobaric strikes or smoke], the groups burst onto their objectives. The attack develops quickly as the attack groups increase their rates of fire to maximum against the enemy, then throw hand grenades. After the grenades explode, they resume full automatic fire, then move forward under the covering fire of their comrades, and again throw hand grenades...

In the ideal situation, the reserve will already be moving into a nearby building that was just cleared.

Once the battalion has met its immediate mission, it continues against the next buildings and blocks. The covering force and reserve mop up the remaining points of resistance and small groups of enemy. Captured buildings and street intersections are controlled by the covering force. Exits from subterranean passages are secured or destroyed.

In modern times, the attack in a city remains one of the most complex missions. It demands thorough preparation

for combat and skillful leadership of the attacking forces against an enemy defending in a populated area.

### Conclusion

*Russian urban combat tactics have changed since the days of the Soviet Union. Now infantry precedes tanks down the street by some 100-200 meters to protect the tanks from anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) fire. If tanks move forward to fight alongside the infantry, the distance between the tanks and motorized riflemen does not exceed 50 meters. Then dismounted infantry follow one-to-two meters behind and to the side of combat vehicles when it is necessary to work closely with them. There is a much greater emphasis on subterranean combat, and the Russians have created a new subterranean training facility at their Ryazan training area.*

*There is now a greater emphasis on organizing groups and subgroups within the storm detachment (reinforced motorized rifle battalion) and storm group (reinforced motorized rifle company) before the engagement. Artillery and flame has always played a key role, but the Russian introduction of thermobaric multiple rocket launcher systems and shoulder-fired thermobaric "bunker-busters" have added a powerful dimension to urban fire support. Improved load-bearing equipment and body armor enhance the dismounted soldiers' ability and survivability. Refueling tanks and Infantry fighting vehicles forward during a prolonged urban fight remains a problem, as does resupply and casualty evacuation using wheeled vehicles. Radio communications are problematic and much is still done through hand and arm signals and surface wire. FM communications within an urban fight often require supplemental retransmission systems. Internet may be one of the first casualties during a city fight. No one wants to fight in a city, but the infantryman does not often get a choice. Russia is not neglecting to prepare its force for the city fight.*

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> D. Epifanov, "Штурм города - Дело тонкое" [Urban assault – a subtle affair], Армейский сборник [Army Digest], January 2017, 25-30.

<sup>2</sup> Older European and Russian cities have a large central square that is flanked by key government, religious, civic and commercial buildings. The city square is the physical and cultural center of the city. During the initial battle for Grozny, the Russian Army fought to seize the Central Square and Presidential Palace from 31 December 1994 to 19 January 1995. After weeks of heavy artillery fire and ground assaults, precision-guided nine-ton bunker buster bombs demolished the palace and decided the issue.

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**LTC (Retired) Lester W. Grau, PhD**, is a retired Infantryman who earned his Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) in South Vietnam and is a long-time contributor to *Infantry Magazine*. He served as an Infantryman and Soviet Foreign Area Officer with four tours in Europe, a posting in Moscow, and a tour in South Korea. His first published article was "MOUT and the Soviet Motorized Rifle Battalion" published in *Infantry* in January-February 1985. The first Russian book he read from cover-to-cover was *The Combat Actions of a Motorized Rifle Battalion in the City*. He has since published some 200 articles including 21 on urban combat. He also has 14 books to his credit. Thanks to Chuck Bartles for redoing the illustrations for this article.

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# Their Leadership and Ownership: Concepts for Warfare By, With, and Through

COL PAT WORK

In January 2017, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82nd Airborne Division deployed to bolster the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the campaign to annihilate the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and its so-called caliphate. Task Force (TF) Falcon joined the coalition advise and assist (A&A) effort with two weeks remaining during the 100-day offensive to retake east Mosul, and for the next eight months, we wrestled a complex environment with a simple framework: help the ISF and hurt ISIS every day. Naturally, we had missteps, but our team also served ISF and coalition commanders well on some terribly uncertain days.

We mixed innovative concepts and straightforward tactics to attack ISIS by, with, and through the ISF, yet the entire effort always centered on our partners' leadership and ownership of exceptionally nasty ground combat operations. Several of our candid and contextualized perspectives on organization, mindset, and skill set offer useful examples and angles for leaders to ponder as we consider future excursions with this style of high-intensity security force assistance.<sup>1</sup>

## Organizing Principles: Mindset for Warfare By, With, and Through the ISF

Our mission under Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) proved infinitely different than the exhausting, firsthand combat that many of us experienced in Iraq from 2003 to 2008. For instance, a typical American Soldier's experience during Operation Iraqi Freedom's (OIF's) "troop surge," whether battling Shia militias or the Salafist forebears of ISIS, was that Americans did the deadliest work as Iraqis observed. Moreover, the ISF that we supported were also not the same broken groups that collapsed during the ISIS rampage of 2014. Our OIR journey was dramatically different than both of these circumstances.

Admittedly, the term "ISF" may carelessly over-homogenize our partners' capabilities; each of the three cohorts had its own distinct personality, and our account will bring some of this to life. This collection of host nation troops often demonstrated tremendous willpower and assumed the lion's share of the physical risk no matter which uniform they wore: Iraqi Army (IA), Federal Police (FEDPOL), or Counterterrorism Services (CTS). Still, warfare by, with, and through the ISF was hard work that highlighted three interrelated principles that can help inform how joint leaders think about, resource, and lead A&A operations:

- Advisers do not get to choose their partners;
- Advisers do not control their partners; and
- Advisers must put their partners first.



First, coalition combat advisers did not get to choose their partners. Each of our A&A teams had cause for frustration at times, but some partnerships were clearly more challenging than others. Indeed, some ISF were reluctant at times. Some of their commanders demonstrated inconsistent levels of know-how, and, on occasion, the cohorts' agendas were more competitive than cooperative. On the other hand, we found that ISIS rallied around cunning jihadists who exploited Iraq's sectarian politics and commanded an intoxicating Salafist narrative of martyrdom. In the end, despite being vastly outgunned, organized ISIS small units continued fighting through the Battle of Mosul's final days in mid-July. Our mission statement reflected our pursuit of Combined Joint Task Force-OIR's (CJTF-OIR) interests but also how we worked to steady the episodic imbalance of determination between our partners and the enemy:

*TF Falcon — by, with, and through ISF in everything it does — advises, assists, and empowers our partners to defeat ISIS militarily in order to help the Government of Iraq (GOI) establish sufficient local security and set conditions that contribute to broader regional stability.*

A key was remaining goal oriented when it was hard — our job was simply to help the partners that we had dominate ISIS.

Along these lines, our combat advisers had little control over partner decision making, preparation for combat, or execution of operations. Importantly, our commanders embraced being advisers first, accepting that most meaningful decisions and moves were clearly in the hands of the GOI. Indeed, senior ISF commanders required vast support and encouragement at times, but they generally took full responsibility for their operations. Our A&A teams, logisticians, and artillery troops proved infinitely flexible; advisers could never fall in love with ISF plans because they changed so frequently. Moreover, our two-star and three-star commanders' flagship concepts saturated our approach. LTG Steve Townsend of CJTF-OIR was clear that we were to help the ISF fight. Stated another way, our A&A teams did not close with, nor take the ground from ISIS, but instead navigated a fascinating quest of influencing ISF without any authority over ISF. Additionally, MG Joe Martin of Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command-OIR (CJFLCC-OIR) championed "nested, multi-echelon engagement" to help the coalition optimize its influence with our partners. Like any coalition warfare, the host nation force came first; however, our approach to fighting by, with, and through amplified our Iraqi partners' leadership and ownership.

Thus, TF Falcon upheld the ISF as the preeminent member of the coalition against ISIS in Iraq; we measured our success only through our partners' success. This mindset is worth emphasizing because, frankly, superbly capable teammates can lose sight of the partners' centrality at times. To condition our team to always consider the ISF's goals first, our leaders openly discussed the importance of empathy, humility, and patience throughout the formation. We certainly defeated ISIS in Ninewah Province together, but the fact remains that ISF troops bore the weight of the violence on some astonishingly brutal days. The human costs to the GOI's security forces were massive over Mosul's nine-month struggle to defeat our nations' common enemy. I sensed our "by, with, and through ethos" was on track once our teams began to consistently speak with terms like them, they, and their rather than us, we, and our.

Our language mattered because how we spoke reflected how we thought about our partners' leadership and ownership of operations. Accomplishing our mission was obviously central, but it was not more important than how we accomplished our mission.

### **"Lethal OCT Network:" An Imperfect Analogy**

Anyone who has experienced a combat training center (CTC) rotation has a useful model for comprehending TF Falcon's core organizational and operational concepts. Fundamentally, the CTC's observer-controller-trainer (OCT) network wraps itself around a rotational unit with a parallel structure connected by dependable communications and disciplined information flows. The OCT network's goal is to help unit commanders improve their warfighting craft, largely by helping them see the opposing force (OPFOR), see the ill-structured environment, and see themselves. The OCT network may even feel intrusive at times as its nodes maintain contact with the rotational unit at every echelon. Finally, assuming competence is the OCT network's anchor point, many of the same traits that make A&A teams effective also distinguish the most useful OCTs. Empathy, humility, and patience truly matter.

Perhaps most importantly, the OCT network is not embroiled in "fighting" the OPFOR nor the burden of external evaluation. Therefore, OCTs routinely achieve a level of shared understanding that outstrips the rotational units. Of course, they are not all-knowing; plenty of conversations occur without OCT oversight, and they periodically misread events, personalities,



Photo by SSG Jason Hull

*CPT Mark G. Zwirgzdas from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division discusses operations with 9th Iraqi Army Division leaders near Al Tarab, Iraq, on 19 March 2017.*

or trends. Still, the OCT network is well-postured to provide vertically aligned insights, perspectives, and ideas that help the rotational unit advance against the OPFOR in an uncertain environment. An imperfect analogy, for sure, but thus far we have only discussed similarities that attend to the "advise" side of A&A operations.

As for the "assist" aspects of A&A, start by picturing the same OCTs armed with enormous amounts of secure bandwidth, intelligence capacity, and strike capabilities. Moreover, imagine this lethal OCT network's mission, or moral obligation, also includes attacking the OPFOR relentlessly to ensure the rotational unit wins. Now visualize this lethal OCT network as only one among equals in an aggressive ecosystem that includes special operations, joint, and other coalition stake holders who are also united in their desire to thrash the OPFOR. As inadequate as this comparison may be, we all reason by analogy: TF Falcon operated like this fictional, lethal OCT network, only the stakes were infinitely more deadly and complex. Our field grade commanders wore two hats, advising ISF corps or division commanders in addition to their traditional responsibilities. Likewise, our company grade commanders advised IA or FEDPOL brigades. Combat advising at these echelons maintained a natural distance between our teams and the savagery of close combat, and this space probably reinforced our focus on helping our partners see the enemy, the environment, and themselves rather than doing the fighting for them.

### **Align Around the Big Ideas, Then Get Out of the Way**

In addition to TF Falcon's seven organic battalion-level

headquarters and internal enablers, we integrated an eighth battalion-level adviser team, a 155mm Paladin battery, and several other formal attachments or informal partners. Our operational profile was as geospatially decentralized as it was dynamic — we had at least one platoon that operated from 14 different bases over the nine-month mission.

Moreover, our A&A operations were also functionally diverse, spanning divestitures of military equipment and supplies for vetted partners, fires and counterfire, civil-military advice, and the deadly work of helping ISF liberate the people of Ninewah.

Steering our decentralized, dynamic, and diverse A&A enterprise called for an enduring set of guideposts that lined up our decision-making and risk evaluation processes. As we entered the A&A fray of Mosul in January, TF Falcon organized around five big ideas:

- Protect ourselves and our partners;
- ISF are always the main effort;<sup>2</sup>
- Attack ISIS;
- Shared understanding; and
- Agility: ISF should never have to wait for us.<sup>3</sup>

We pounded this enduring azimuth consistently for nearly nine months and reevaluated its relevance on several occasions as the campaign advanced in time and space.

When I was a student at the Marine Corps War College, preparation for a guest lecture by retired Marine LtGen Paul Van Riper introduced me to a mission command-styled concept that he dubbed “In Command and Out of Control.”<sup>4</sup> Along these lines, I envisioned commanding TF Falcon from the center, an intellectual schema blending the organizational strengths of hierarchies and webs that I had observed during prior combat tours with joint special operations TFs. The chain of command certainly remained intact (particularly our commanders’ responsibility to help the CJFLCC manage risk), but we knew the brigade headquarters would get in the way of our teams unless we stayed “up-and-out.” Also, our traditional roles in a typical brigade hierarchy were far less notable than our A&A-specific responsibilities to empower combat advisers at the tactical edge. Any leader’s control over people and events naturally loosens at each higher echelon of command; I tried to command our A&A network, never to control it.

### **Relationships: Coin of the A&A Realm**

In its essence, TF Falcon was not made up of people — it was people. And, our people did not advise ISF institutions — they advised other people. The fight to liberate Mosul was a decidedly human story of grit and willpower, and the key ISF characters in the story had their own personal relationships, tensions, motivations, and fears. Uncomfortable discussions were the natural order of things, and sturdy relationships with our partners helped us get past them. Rule #1 for us was profoundly unassuming: “Listen.” And, Rule #2 was nearly as simple: “Maintain contact.” Only by staying with key ISF commanders much of the time, and listening to them all of the time, did our A&A network begin to understand how our partners saw ISIS, the environment, and themselves. This informs Rule #3: “Be realistic.” The Battle of Mosul was exhausting for both sides. Even as poorly trained and resourced as ISIS may have

***The fight to liberate Mosul was a decidedly human story of grit and willpower, and the key ISF characters in the story had their own personal relationships, tensions, motivations, and fears. Uncomfortable discussions were the natural order of things, and sturdy relationships with our partners helped us get past them.***

been at times, its leaders demonstrated remarkable conviction, an inequality that helped extend their murderous resistance. Expressed differently, by listening during carefully orchestrated contact with the ISF, our team remained realistic about the advice we gave as well as our own limitations in influencing the ISF’s fighting path and pace.

We probably only saw the tip of the iceberg, but our A&A network would have never had a chance of understanding Mosul’s unfolding story unless we all committed to our relationships. LTC Jim Browning, adviser to 9th IA Division and commander of the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), went so far as to fast with his partners through Ramadan. As long as we answered the CJFLCC commander’s information requirements (IRs), we also allowed the ISF commanders’ biorhythms, specifically cultural habits like afternoon naps and late meals, to drive our TF-level battle rhythm. Indeed, teams at every echelon were sensors for relevant atmospheric and answers to higher headquarters’ IRs. By living and breathing the ISF leaders’ biorhythm, we underscored, directly and indirectly, the ISF’s primacy in the fight.

In particular, our A&A efforts with Staff Lieutenant General Abdul Amir Yarallah al-Lami (sLTG A3), the GOI’s overall joint forces commander, framed and re-framed a lively puzzle for senior, subordinate, and peer special operations commanders. sLTG A3 was a serious man who evoked Eisenhower for his own ISF-internal coalition, and as his combat adviser, I was physically with him most days and nights. I listened a lot during our 150-day battle to liberate west Mosul, and we had several uncomfortable but candid discussions. After spending the day with sLTG A3, I would typically report insights to the CJFLCC commander using a limited flag officer email distribution in order to help inform our nested, multi-echelon engagement across the team of teams.

After hitting send on these brief messages, we often followed up with phone conversations several nights a week. Later in the evenings, we frequently hosted secure video teleconferences (VTC) to connect sLTG A3 in northern Iraq with his partners, MG Martin and later MG Pat White, in Baghdad. Meanwhile, I often pumped similar, contextualized updates down-and-into our network of field and company grade teams who were also listening, maintaining contact, and pursuing realistic pieces to the ever-morphing puzzle. Consistent dialogue throughout the breadth and depth of our A&A network contributed to shared understanding and advanced our ability to help ISF and hurt ISIS.

Still, it took more than energy and big ears to earn our partners' trust. ISF commanders were pragmatic when evaluating risk: they fought knowing the GOI may not be sending replacement troops, combat systems, or ammunition any time soon. This gave our relationships, no matter how cozy, a transactional quality. Expressed very simply, Rule #4 was: "Assist in order to advise." The ISF senior commanders we dealt with were well-educated, had seen extensive combat beginning with the Iran-Iraq War decades earlier, and had watched senior American advisers come and go for years during OIF and Operation New Dawn. Importantly, they also stood on the business end of American military dominance twice between 1991 and 2003, so they had little patience when they were tested by inexpensive, off-the-shelf ISIS drones or when coalition strike cells developed the situation before directing precision fires. In fact, our predecessors from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) wisely coached us to prepare for this "assist in order to advise" paradigm. "Money talks" in combat advising, too. The 9th IA Division leaders appreciated LTC Browning's symbolic show of friendship during Ramadan, but what they really wanted was for him and CSM Curt Donaldson to keep striking ISIS on the final days of close combat in Mosul and Tal Afar.

A common sense feature of relationships was probably the most significant to our mission: strong relationships encouraged accountability in the partnership. Notably, coalition advisers joined FEDPOL senior leadership for the first time as the ISF's counterattack on Mosul began. Obviously, there was some interest mapping for both sides to do, and occasionally the stress and slaughter of the FEDPOL's attack in west Mosul caused passionate reactions: the FEDPOL's three-star commander "fired" our A&A team at least a couple of times. Even so, the team that LTC John Hawbaker and CSM Brian

Knight led remained remarkably goal oriented. Their best military advice — delivered with empathy, humility, and patience — as well as their punishing strikes against ISIS, set them up to push back when coalition interests were ignored. This brings us to Rule #5: "Never lose sight of your own interests and use your leverage."

To be clear, ours was never a carrots and sticks-type of relationship. It was much more of an equal partnership — their success was our success. Yet at times, we had to dial our types and amounts of combat support up or down, promote or expose ISF commanders' reputations with key GOI influencers, or shift priorities to exploit aggressive ISF action elsewhere. Again, CJTF-OIR had interests, too.

More so than any other experience in my 22 years of commissioned service, TF Falcon's fight by, with, and through the ISF epitomized central concepts underpinning the Army doctrine of mission command. We were empowered for dramatically decentralized operations because we kept the CJTF and CJFLCC commanders' intents front of mind always, using the aforementioned five ideas to guide our decision making and activities. Like all senior-subordinate relationships, ours were stressed on occasion, but I genuinely trusted all eight of our field grade commanders. Also, our role was critical in informing a unified coalition view, so we tirelessly and transparently over-communicated with our higher headquarters to help them understand the campaign from the ground up. Our commanders also expected everyone in our A&A network to do their jobs, no matter their distance from the combat action: there were no extra Soldiers on our team. More directly, there were no extra minds. Our leaders and Soldiers at every echelon had to continuously solve emerging problems across the warfighting functions. Finally, we organized the art and science of mission

command to get the right information to the right leader at the right time so that he or she could make useful decisions in an ever-changing environment.

### All "Six A's" of A&A Operations

Through the "Lethal OCT Network" analogy, we introduced a handful of the concepts inherent to A&A operations. Advise, assist, accompany, and enable (A3E) entered the coalition lexicon before TF Falcon arrived to Iraq.

*Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division fire mortars in support of 9th Iraqi Army Division during the offensive to liberate west Mosul from ISIS.*

Photo by SSG Jason Hull





Photo by CPL Rachel Diehm

**LTC John Hawbaker, commander of 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, listens during an operational brief with Iraqi Federal Police at a patrol base in Mosul, Iraq, on 29 June 2017.**

The third A of A3E — accompany — ostensibly delineated the riskier forward posturing of combat advisers to help accelerate the counter-ISIS campaign. For TF Falcon, we never knew the difference — there was no before and after accompany perspective for us to have.

Because we transitioned while the ISF were still fighting in east Mosul, our combat advisers had to cultivate relations with ISF generals while “in contact.” Thus, close proximity to ISF commanders on the battlefield was always a signature component of our mission, so we may have intuitively leaned toward a handful of A’s other than advise, assist, and accompany as we honed our A&A mindset and skill set in Mosul’s cauldron of violence.

All “Six A’s” — and the nuanced concepts and challenges they represent — are security force assistance lessons that we learned fighting by, with, and through the ISF.

• **Advise:** Our teams helped ISF commanders think through their tactical and logistics problems with an eye toward exploiting opportunities, assessing risk, and making sober decisions on how to apply their finite resources. Through nested multi-echelon engagement, TF Falcon pressed consistent messages at every echelon. In fact, we frequently helped the CJTF or CJFLCC commanders be our “finishers.” Both of them were key drivers of coalition combat advising as they engaged at the executive levels to influence ISF activities, all the while reinforcing our nested message from the top-down.

• **Assist:** Our partners rarely used the “red pen” before designing a scheme of maneuver. Therefore, some of our most important assistance to them was coaching intelligence-driven operations. First, our A&A network shared intelligence information and products to the extent that we were allowed. As we helped the ISF prepare to attack Tal Afar in August 2017, we actually arranged the entire brigade intelligence enterprise to help them understand which attack axes exploited ISIS’s most vulnerable defenses. The value of our advice was found in their execution: our partners dominated ISIS in a 12-day blitz to retake the city. More on military intelligence (MI) later, but I often employed our talented S2, MAJ Kevin Ryan, as a finisher for our best military advice: sLTG A3 always had time for MAJ Ryan’s insights. Even more telling, the FEDPOL corps commander, a three-star in charge of more than 60,000 troops, frequently sought 2LT Dave Moehling’s perspectives on ISIS. 2LT Moehling — the assistant S2 for the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment and a tremendous MI mind — always gave informed advice. This consistent, intelligence-driven A&A gave our teams a sharper, more credible edge.

Assist’s lethal expression was obviously precision fires. After ISIS conquered Mosul, it prepared a formidable defense for more than two years before the ISF launched the counterattack in October 2016. The defense involved a monstrous mortar capacity, a legion of suicide car bombers whose high payoff target list was topped by ISF tanks and engineering assets, and droves of ISIS infantry. The ISF stubbornly moved through

this medley of violence for nine months, reinforced by coalition strikes from artillery, attack helicopters, jets, and bombers. Meeting the ISF requirement for responsive and precise fires, more so than other forms of assistance, gave our partners confidence on the hardest days. We will share more on fires later, but our targeteers, cannoneers, and radar specialists of the 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment (AFAR), led by LTC Dan Gibson and CSM Omari Ballou, helped devastate ISIS's centrally controlled batteries in Mosul and Tal Afar. Our company and troop commanders, backed by an Air Force joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) and sufficient bandwidth, frequently observed and directed these attacks from within ISF command posts.

- **Accompany:** As discussed previously, our TF was operating forward with ISF brigade, division, and corps commanders upon arrival in January. Predictable and persistent contact with ISF commanders was crucial to building relationships of trust and accountability, but accompanying them also fed our efforts to assure, anticipate, and be agile. Accompanying the ISF gave our combat advisers a fingertip's sense for the combat's direction and intensity. This helped our "Lethal OCT Network" provide timely and useful assistance at the point of decision while also pumping perspective to promote shared understanding and unity of effort.

- **Assure:** During my last battlefield circulation with MG Martin before he departed in July, I offered my observation that the "third A" in A3E should stand for assure, not accompany. We have countless examples of how our physical presence, ideas, or fires — or a confluence of these inputs — gave ISF commanders the confidence to keep attacking. In fact, I now have a new paradigm for what non-lethal contact can mean. In OIR, when I was not with sLTG A3, we maintained contact. For the very reason of assurance, quality translators mattered

immensely to us. During frequent times of crisis, we encouraged all of our advisers to continually remind the ISF that they could count on us and that their success was our success.

As Mosul's ferocious drama neared its end in July, ISIS attempted to break out of a troubled triangle called the Hawijah Pocket when it seized the historically vulnerable village of Imam Gharbi along the Tigris River. The Battle of Mosul churned, but we quickly repositioned a platoon of M777 howitzers and deployed CPT Mike Beum's A&A team from A Company, 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment (AIR). We also put our artillery battalion XO, MAJ Steve Ackerson, in charge of a JTAC-enabled strike cell at the Salah ad Din Operations Command's (SADOC) forward command post. After witnessing the following demonstration of coalition leverage, CPT Zach Beecher, one of 407th Brigade Support Battalion's (BSB) most cerebral leaders, coined the phrase "targeted assurance."

Targeted assurance described an adviser's subtle choice between competing ISF partners or agendas, always keeping CJFLCC's and sLTG A3's goals front of mind. During the ISIS incursion to Imam Gharbi, I chose to publicly critique an IA general who was underperforming and embolden the SADOC commander who was serious about attacking. It worked. Together, the SADOC's ad hoc team of Ministry of Interior forces, supported by a small TF Falcon strike cell, took charge of the unraveling situation and applied an A&A mainstay: "stimulate and exploit." Our A&A network's commitment of less than 50 coalition troops, a 24-hour orbit of unblinking full motion video (FMV) collection with solid analytics, and some vicious precision fires were enough to help the ISF retake the village from the desperate enemy just five days after the targeted assurance episode.

- **Anticipate:** As previously discussed, I mentioned my proposal for a more relevant "third A," but there is more to the story. MG Martin actually countered with another insightful candidate — anticipate. To be clear, the ISF we enabled during OIR did not issue combat orders nor rehearse operations. In fact, senior commanders normally returned from Baghdad just in time for the start of another bloody phase of the attack. When our partners departed northern Iraq during the transitions, we continued to over-communicate and maintain a disciplined battle rhythm to ensure our A&A network's shared understanding in spite of lapsed Iraqi communications. In fact, during these periods, our partners only occasionally felt compelled to call us with essential updates, so we relied heavily on the CJFLCC commander and senior staff in Baghdad to help us posture our A&A capabilities.

Even as we transitioned the A&A mission to the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, the ISF plan was evolving daily as the start of the Hawijah offensive



Photo by SSG Jason Hull

*Paratroopers from Task Force Falcon meet their Iraqi Security Force partners in a recently liberated neighborhood in west Mosul on 2 July 2017.*



Photo by SSG Alex Manne

**A Soldier with the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment emplaces concertina wire at an undisclosed location in Iraq on 26 February 2017.**

approached. As we departed, CJFLCC was organizing a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) architecture without absolute certainty of ISF intentions. The incoming team was arranging its fires architecture and basing posture with an eye toward maximum flexibility in order to absorb late change. Nothing was first order in Iraq's political-military environment. As stated previously, TF Falcon could never fall in love with a plan, and we continuously challenged our own assumptions. Our A&A network had to always listen, maintain contact with our counterparts, and apply the fundamentals of mission command in order to make the best decisions we could. However, when we sensed increased risk, the commanding general or I would direct clarifying questions to sLTG A3, discussing resource trade-offs with him in a very transparent manner.

- **Agility:** One of TF Falcon's guiding ideas was that ISF should never have to wait for us. Our commanders and teams nimbly changed directions in response to updated GOI decisions or emergent opportunities to damage ISIS. In fact, 2-325 AIR's support to the 15th IA Division near Badush is a superbly illustrative example. While the Battle of Mosul still raged, sLTG A3 decided to press the ISIS disruption zone to the east of Tal Afar. He shared his thinking with us during a routine key leader engagement (KLE) on a Monday evening, and by Friday morning, TF White Falcon, led by LTC James Downing and CSM Santos Cavazos, was on the move. In a matter of four days, we synchronized logistics as LTC Downing's team met its new partner, displaced nearly 30 kilometers, began building a new assembly area, and integrated a battery of 155mm howitzers that were previously based with our cavalry squadron. We kept it simple during these frequent jumps: there were no "routine" patrols, and teams lived out of rucksacks initially. The priorities were always establishing the defense and long range communications.

### **Organization: An A&A Network's "Pacing Items"**

Our field grade-level commanders and key staff did some remarkable work with the CJFLCC team to arrange and re-

arrange our TF as we pondered fresh concepts that required new analysis on time, space, force, and risk. Many observers cite airborne reconnaissance assets or coalition jets when debating the biggest contributors to victory in the Battle of Mosul, but such thinking may be a bit too surface level. First, the ISF were the centerpiece — they did the deadly work against ISIS during weeks of claustrophobic close combat. Second, our logisticians of 407th BSB, led by LTC Liz Curtis and 1SG Greg Bristley, worked some sustainment gems with the CJFLCC in order to maintain our agility. It is undeniable that all of these efforts and assets helped the coalition provide ISF with tactical overmatch against ISIS. For TF Falcon, however, the "A&A pacing items" — the most important components of our network that we centrally tracked — were security platoons, secure voice and data communications suites, as well as sufficient power generation to energize our aggressive A&A network.

For this A&A mission, we actually managed infantry and cavalry platoons at the brigade level even though these small units never once attacked an ISIS target themselves. We were constantly adjusting a useful matrix that allowed commanders to keep track of our fluid footprint and task organization as we moved platoons, the core building blocks, in order to accomplish the "Six A's." Indeed, operational agility depended on our anticipation of ISF requirements or our responsive massing of strike effects. However, it also depended on our capacity to secure mobile A&A teams, defend a key fixed-wing-capable staging base, or protect sites for our devastating artillery. At times, the platoons certainly felt like they were battling monotony more so than ISIS, but we could never have done it without the protection they provided. In fact, the 37th Brigade Engineer Battalion (BEB), led by LTC Sebastian Pastor and CSM Augustin Cruz, provided not only mobility and construction capacity, but their engineers also provided much of our mobile security for logistics moves in order to preserve maneuver platoons for base defense or mobile security for A&A teams. This security calculus has to inform senior leaders' thinking and organization any time we consider a similar brand of fighting by, with, and through in a violent, contested environment.

Our distributed network of artillery positions, advisers, and strike cells — based with several ISF units across northern Iraq — required a substantial security overhead to enable relatively few teams in the field. However, we also had to connect it all. Like all warfighting, we had to get the right information to the right leader at the right time in order to make decisions. I began promoting bandwidth as the "#1 class of supply" for A&A operations once I understood how ISIS and the ISF actually fought each other in west Mosul. Simply put, the ISF needed us to strike accurately and often, and a sophisticated communications network connected our precision kill chain; arguably, no security coalition has ever fought as accurately with fires in complex urban terrain as CJFLCC-OIR. Still, much like our finite number of security platoons, communications linkages could also constrain this intricate network of command

posts, unmanned systems, strike aircraft, and howitzers. Consider the integrating processes of targeting and intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB); distances that spanned northern Iraq would have unhinged our A&A network if we could not facilitate decision making at the same pace as our perpetually shifting partners.

Our signaleers were the unsung heroes of TF Falcon, and MAJ Evan Kelly, our exceptionally competent brigade signal officer, always had a seat at the table with our intelligence and operations officers. As importantly, recall COL Brett Sylvia's "assist in order to advise" angle as we transitioned in January; he knew that ISF commanders occasionally needed to personally view coalition FMV feeds in order to trust that we were attacking ISIS car bombs and sniper positions. One of our many bright junior MI officers, 1LT Alexandra Brammer, described FMV as "A&A commander currency, buying small amounts of trust and good will." The ISF commanders' personal witness to responsive and precise coalition strikes was the practical lifeblood of assurance. These television feeds in ISF command posts proved to them that we were supporting their operations. 1LT Meghan Mitchiner of our BCT S2 section claimed they had to "observe the overmatch" taking place. For this very reason, power generation may be the second most important "class of supply" for A&A operations. We learned to never underestimate how much juice a decentralized and digitized A&A network requires in order to be effective.

*Paratroopers deployed in support of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve and assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division walk outside of an Iraqi Federal Police patrol base in Mosul, Iraq, on 4 July 2017.*

Photo by CPL Rachel Diehm

## A Day in a Disciplined A&A Battle Rhythm

Over time, strict adherence to a disciplined A&A battle rhythm was central to our capacity for providing timely and effective advice, assistance, and assurance to the ISF. As discussed previously, our decentralized, dynamic, and diverse network of like-minded warriors had to connect with a predictable frequency built around the right forcing functions, disciplined reporting, and fixed agendas. This framework also helped us reinforce MG Martin's fundamental vision for nested, multi-echelon engagement in real time. Over eight months, we had to shift our internal A&A events around several times: ISIS, ISF, and fickle transportation patterns all had a say in our schedules.

Despite these external variables, however, we may have cancelled any one of our chief one-hour battle rhythm events a total of seven times or less during the marathon fight. By staying organized, we answered chaos with composure. Our battle rhythm was a steadying influence of some very difficult days; indeed, we began our flagship battle rhythm event — the operations, intelligence, fires, adviser (OFIA) VTC — within two hours of TF Falcon's first very serious casualty.

• **Commander's Update Assessments (CUAs):** The first event of our typical morning was the CJFLCC CUA. Each of these daily meetings included a functional area deep dive, and I was particularly interested in Monday's intelligence CUA and Saturday's A&A CUA because these two were built around robust commanders' dialogue. Even though I talked with the commanding general regularly, we still always strove to be insightful in these classified forums because of the broad coalition reach our ideas or perspectives might have. We viewed these settings as opportunities to plant seeds up and outside of the TF, and as appropriate, do some subtle



influencing of other coalition teammates' thinking from beside or below.

- **Battlefield Circulation (BFC):** Our A&A team commanders stayed with their ISF counterparts nearly every fighting day. I found most ISF generals not only wanted us present, but they demonstrated exceptional physical courage while insisting on our relative security. These nuances — our presence and their courage — were central to their command presence and credibility. For me, this meant a consuming but essential regimen of BFC with sLTG A3: always listening, maintaining contact, and investing in our relationship. We went almost everywhere with him, frequently stopping at a final covered position as he went all the way into the main battle zone much like we might expect our battalion commanders to do for a main effort attack. Daily contact with our partners made us more responsive, more aware, and more lethal. Our A&A team commanders frequently shot concise notes to each other or the CJFLCC commander after splitting from ISF leaders in the late afternoon. We also typically hosted the CJFLCC commander in northern Iraq for BFC at least once a week and the CJTF commander every other week, integrating them closely into the A&A operation and connecting them with sLTG A3.

- **OFIA VTC:** We inherited this evening forum from our predecessors, and it was our TF's centerpiece event — we lived off of it. ISF very rarely operated at night, consigning the coalition to disrupt ISIS until direct ground combat kicked off again in the morning. While our partners rested in the early evening, our advisers, key staff, and current operations teams — TF Falcon's whole network — plugged in for 60 minutes. All of our advisers had just spent the day attacking ISIS by, with, and through our partners. The OFIA VTC provided each of our field grade commanders, staffs, and key liaisons a platform to provide updates, insights, and perspectives to each other, our command sergeant major (CSM), and me. It allowed us to synthesize bottom-up inputs and stitch together the shifting story, but it also helped me push my intent, frame sLTG A3's directions to ISF commanders, and convey the commanding generals' positions to our team.

- **Evening KLE:** Nearly every evening, our A&A team commanders typically visited our partners for individual KLEs. Thus, our team of teams could typically have five or more KLEs going simultaneously each night. It was common for the FEDPOL to begin these meetings at 2100 or later each night. In training, we could have never adequately replicated the stress on host nation security forces nor the humanity inherent to warfare by, with, and through a brave but bleeding partner. ISF commanders used these meetings to organize, inspire, or chastise their charges. At times, our ISF

counterparts used these venues to vent to us also. Combat in Mosul was bruising, and predictably, ISF leaders were not always satisfied with our support. Still, we stayed committed to a formula of empathy, humility, and patience because the mission required it. For example, our eighth battalion adviser team, rotating teams led by LTC Stu James (of the 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment), LTC Andy Kiser (of the 2nd Squadron, 12th Cavalry Regiment), or LTC Brian McCarthy (of the 3rd Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment), memorably stayed above frustration despite a revolving leadership door of 16th IA Division's commander, deputy commanders, and senior staff. At one point in July, LTC Kiser's A&A team helped 16th Division secure east Mosul, attack ISIS in west Mosul, and counterattack to retake control of Imam Gharbi — all at once.

Healthy relationships were critical to achieving an equilibrium between the uncomfortable conversations of accountability and essential doses of empathy. The evening KLEs also allowed our advisers, uploaded with context following the OFIA, to provide intelligence updates, advice, and encouragement. Significantly as well, our advisers guarded against being the ISF's messengers of operational details to other ISF: our modus operandi was to always let Iraqis inform Iraqis. This buttressed the ISF leadership and ownership inherent to the coalition's by, with, and through campaign. The advisers' outputs from evening KLEs were reports that included a brief summary of atmospheric, logistics concerns, activities, and intentions. I typically read up to 10 reports each night after 2200 and could respond with another brief round of feedback to our commanders via email or phone calls.

- **Evening Update:** The A&A teams' inputs and our evening KLE with sLTG A3 also informed my evening update to the CJFLCC commander. We inherited this system from 2/101st Airborne Division, but it was a byproduct of allowing the partners' biorhythm to drive our battle rhythm: the ISF commanders liked to coordinate the next day's action at night. Our email update



Photo by SSG Heidi McClintock

*During a key leader engagement near Mosul on 10 April 2017, Iraqi Federal Police leaders meet with MG Joseph Martin, commanding general of Combined Joint Force Land Component Command; BG John Richardson, deputy commanding general-Erbil of Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command; and COL Pat Work, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.*

had a vast Cc line of coalition players who were based far from the action, and I tried to hit send on this report by 0130 every night. Our goal was that CJFLCC commander, senior staff, and special operations stake holders could review our inputs first thing each morning, a tactic to inform and influence the fight up and outside of our TF. MG Martin frequently explored themes from our update during morning CUAs, and MG White often “replied to all” with his guidance, inquiries, and ideas.

The ISF’s efforts were the unambiguous catalyst for success, but we could have never assisted them well enough without our predictable pulse that supported timely problem solving at all echelons. Our design with the battle rhythm was to always keep the team connected with a multi-echelon commanders’ dialogue no matter how busy or emergent the situation appeared. We wanted to share critical inputs from the ground up and then allow our CSMs (initially Mitch Rucker and later Randy Delapena) and I to provide feedback to our team.

None of this was cosmic or novel. Like most units, we also had a predictable cadence extended over a weekly or monthly timeframe for integrating systems like targeting and IPB or programs such as command maintenance, command supply discipline, future home-station training, and budget execution.

### **Fights at Echelon: Skill Sets for Warfare By, With, and Through the ISF**

Supporting ISF decisive action required TF Falcon to synchronize effects across the warfighting functions in order to create advantageous situations for their ground combat operations. Thus, I viewed our headquarters’ chief responsibility as organizing the key capabilities resident in the brigade’s artillery, support, and engineer battalions — the half of the BCT that does not ordinarily maneuver against the enemy. In addition to our usual obligations to prioritize, resource, synchronize, inform, empower, and manage risk, the TF Falcon staff and I also had “four fights” to continually synchronize: sustainment, intelligence-driven A&A, lethal targeting with precision fires and counterfire, and as always, risk management.

Therefore, another way to look at fighting by, with, and through in this context is that we did for ISF commanders what we should normally do for our own maneuver battalions. We synchronized materiel, intelligence collection and analysis, and strike support around the ISF’s attack against its own near-peer competitor — ISIS. Not only did the ISF commanders embrace their spearhead roles in the fight, but their maneuver drove the virtuous circle of “stimulate and exploit” moves that ultimately allowed them to advance, seize ground, and liberate their countrymen. Most missions that we prepared for in training were transferable to this OIR context. Rather than synchronizing the combat potential of the BCT to provide our battalions with tactical overmatch, we massed effects for ISF brigades. Thus, our training doctrine — an approach that builds trust through realistic mission essential task list-driven work and prepares BCTs for decisive action wartime requirements — also developed the essential skill sets needed for this muscular style of security force assistance.

**Sustainment:** Logistics was a balancing act of trade-offs for us. Our unambiguous priority was to help the ISF win, but

more than half of our logistics specialists and 90 percent of our property did not deploy. Clearly, much of our A&A network’s agility depended on our flexible and tireless logisticians. Also, key CJFLCC-OIR logistics planners, contracting officers, and the deputy commanders were decidedly committed to the fight in Ninewah despite living in Baghdad. Together, the coalition logisticians — another team that believed ISF should never have to wait for us — thought fast and fought fast to keep pace with the battle’s relentless dynamism. Even though we had a limited organic ground distribution capacity to meet the mission’s decentralized and simultaneous logistics requirements, LTC Curtis and her team worked closely with logisticians at every echelon to generate distribution options through a combination of host nation contracting and our own finite assets. Most moves required security, and some also called for deliberate route clearance.

Perhaps self-evident, but our density of deployed supply specialists, food service Soldiers, and maintenance technicians really mattered. First, one can imagine the supply expertise necessary to steer accountability of organizational and theater-provided equipment (TPE), routine supply transactions, numerous change-of-command inventories, and budget execution. Keep in mind that we only deployed about half of our team overall, so there were similar requirements across our brigade at Fort Bragg as well. Specifically, we divided the BCT’s already-stretched property book office for about two-thirds of our nine-month deployment because of the split responsibilities. An obvious implication of deploying so little of our organic property was a vast dependence on TPE. Meanwhile, the Army’s automated system of record, Global Combat Support System-Army, also updated during the Mosul operation, increasing churn. All of these activities or programs required command emphasis and consistent supervision.

We also depended heavily on contracting of equipment and materiel to move and sustain the distributed artillery positions and A&A nodes. A critical aspect of this was certainly the need for anticipation and agility in our decision making; we were comfortable being uncomfortable and could never wait too long to commit. As previously mentioned, one of our foundational attitudes was that we had no extra Soldiers, and many of our leaders made memorable contributions while filling nontraditional roles. The host of junior officers who catalyzed our vital contracting enterprise was a sterling example of this. In fact, our BCT food service tech, CW3 Jason Page, masterfully managed these contracting officer representatives (CORs), particularly LTC Pastor’s CORs from 37th BEB who bounced all over northern Iraq coordinating scopes of work for contractors, protection requirements, and other engineer targets.

Change was the norm as TF Falcon fed adviser teams and artillery specialists who operated from numerous austere and temporary patrol bases while ISF operations progressed. On a couple of occasions, all it took was an accurate enemy mortar round or two to force teams to move their patrol bases twice in a week. Additionally, our combat vehicle fleet swelled during our first 60 days in Iraq, so on top of the other untried TPE, our team’s maintenance enterprise depended on field service representatives (FSRs) for everything from essential ground

mobility platforms to counter-unmanned aerial system (C-UAS) technologies. Therefore, our team was never truly self-sufficient with key communications, protection, and mobility systems, and we carefully managed a throng of FSRs to meet both programmed and emergent maintenance requirements.

Finally, we had to maintain our people. This required preventative and reactive capacity in addition to the CJFLCC's supporting cast. We managed a small pool of chaplains, environmental health professionals, and behavioral health specialists centrally. Eventually, we also included a dentist to round out our arrangement of medical doctors from the Army's Professional Filler System. We were aware that our TF's distributed forces and the human dimension of our Soldiers in a hazardous environment came with risk, so we strove to maintain our counseling, integration, and health promotion practices in Iraq and at home station. Every loss is a loss, and we needed to keep every Soldier in the fight.

**Intelligence-driven A&A:** When people have asked me what the hardest aspect of our A&A mission was, I have never hesitated nor overthought my response: it was ISIS. As stated previously, the ISF very rarely ran intel-driven operations of their own, so we drove a regime of intel-driven A&A. The partners certainly understood ISIS tactics, the broad anti-government and sectarian underpinnings of ISIS, etc. They also proved to be capable collectors. For example, much of the 92nd Brigade, 15th IA Division was comprised of Tal Afar natives who were also based at Tal Afar airfield as the ISF attack approached in August 2017. Many of the ISF's tips and atmospheric were immediately helpful, but they struggled with assessment.

By March 2017, we had seen enough in Mosul to begin arranging a useful threat model for ISIS's complex and layered defense. The model generally held for Tal Afar as well. It became apparent that ISIS's defense depended on four critical factors:

- 1) Suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (SVBIEDs);
- 2) Scores of five-man infantry fighting squads;
- 3) Centralized command and control (C2); and
- 4) ISF inactivity.

Our understanding of how ISIS fought also reveals insights to our contextualized targeting process; because of the "stimulate and exploit" interplay of current operations in Mosul, a majority portion of our collection and analytic capacities focused on finding and fixing ISIS within several city blocks of the ISF forward line of troops (FLOT). Dynamic targeting to



Photo by SSG Jason Hull

*An ISIS unmanned aerial vehicle captured by Iraqi Federal Police rests on a table at an intelligence-sharing meeting at the Joint Operations Center at Qayyarah West Airfield.*

protect ISF units against ISIS SVBIEDs, infantry ambushes, or mortar batteries along the FLOT was crucial for assistance and assurance. On the other hand, as the ISF transitioned from Mosul to Tal Afar in July, we adjusted the TF's reconnaissance and thinking to feed a deliberate targeting process. We also pursued a methodical IPB unlike anything we could have achieved in Mosul's ever-shifting slugfest.

ISIS tactics typically came to life in a disruption zone marked by loosely coordinated indirect fires (IDF); roads pocked with dirt berm, ditch, derelict vehicle, or static VBIED obstacles; and limited commercial off-the-shelf UAS reconnaissance. The battle zone may have been organized into multiple defensive belts or sub-battle zones where ISIS infantry units shouldered a heavy burden, producing "sniper-like effects" even if they were poorly skilled. ISIS also learned to compress its exposure to coalition detection, shrinking the distance from SVBIED staging bases to strike zones, an innovation that Les Grau and Timothy Thomas referred to as "hugging" in their analysis of Chechen fighters during Grozny 1.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, fighting in support zones could be vicious. ISIS senior commanders clearly inspired their charges with their physical presence as evidenced by the ISF's month-long brawl to take al Juhmuri Medical Complex, the "ISIS Pentagon" of Mosul.

In its military prime during the Battle of Mosul, SVBIEDs intimidated even the fastest and nastiest of the ISF fighters, the CTS. ISIS appeared to pursue a high payoff target list topped by ISF tanks and engineer blade assets with furious agility. ISIS commanders also frequently guided their SVBIEDs with small UAS, another manifestation of centralized C2. By tunneling through the internal walls of large structures, ISIS was able to make a handful of trained or untrained fighters appear as "snipers everywhere," a somewhat common report by the ISF on the most violent days. In July's closing days in west Mosul,

we had to attack ISIS infantry small units with the same intensity as we had previously unleashed against SVBIEDs.

Furthermore, ISIS was more or less an Arab-styled army like our partners; it fought with remarkably centralized C2 at times. Along these lines, when senior commanders were present on the battlefield, they made a difference. ISIS mortar battery commanders also seemed to exercise strict control over target selection as well as ammunition breaks. Finally, ISIS took full advantage when the ISF did not press the attack. sLTG A3 agreed that after fighting each other for several months, ISIS knew every signal that ISF troops were inadvertently sending when their attacks had stalled.

Our contributions to coalition IPB were important, but not because our analysis was exact or we had an innate understanding of ISIS's military capabilities, capacity, or intentions. In fact, there was always much more that we did not know than we did know. During the fight for west Mosul, every 25-30 days we released a classified one-page set of intelligence judgments that described how we evaluated ISIS tactics, capabilities, capacity, and intentions in the changing environment. My hidden agenda with these projects was training while we fought, specifically pressing our talented analysts to report evidence-based arguments concisely and precisely. These IPB efforts spurred coalition dialogue — it helped get commanders and staffs talking. If we put our assessment out there, at least it caused other coalition stake holders to critique it. These stake holders included the ISF. Our IPB stirred their “red pen,” too.

We periodically used a method that we dubbed “intel armageddon” to energize our thinking. This approach played to our battalions' inherent competitive nature, and the brigade intelligence support element (BISE) was always one of the contestants. Intel armageddon was simple: when our analytics had lost altitude or needed a jump start, I sought three independent assessments of the same tactical problem. For instance, as we began our focused IPB of Tal Afar while the fighting in Mosul wound down, we had two of the battalions and the BISE compete. We actually invited MG White to participate in this session, and these three assessments fed our overall TF IPB that we shared up-and-out, particularly with the ISF.

Our parent division at Fort Bragg also ensured our tactical UAS (TUAS) platoon's full manning with operators, and CJFLCC-OIR weighted the ISF fight in Ninewah Province with plenty of unarmed FMV capability. Foremost, we did not spend energy lamenting gaps in FMV coverage but, rather, focused on avoiding redundancies and fusing the available intelligence overlays that we had. For perspective, these FMV assets provide commanders and analysts with a “soda straw” perspective of the battlefield. They are not magic. They do not find the enemy — humans do. The most critical aspects of FMV collection are the thinking behind where and when to place a sensor in order to increase odds of detection as well as an analyst's ability to recognize the signatures that answer IRs. In fact, these airborne military robots can create a counterproductive illusion of understanding, so we always drove to emphasize the analyst over the asset.

***Our message was “hurry to think, not to plan” as we considered how to optimize and prioritize our finite collection assets. We never accepted the harmful egalitarianism of the proverbial “peanut butter spread” when prioritizing sensors, connectors, and analysts.***

Over the course of nine months, we generated more than 5,000 hours of TUAS FMV collection for the counterfire fight, dynamic and deliberate targeting, IPB, and ISF security operations to consolidate gains. With so much information coming in, we obviously had to meticulously prioritize analytic efforts to discern the answers to IRs. Because of the brutality along the FLOT, dynamic targeting consumed over half of our FMV collection and analytics during the Battle of Mosul, and I typically approved our BCT S3's proposal or gave direction for the next day's intelligence collection plan as late as our evening OFIA VTCs. For dynamic targeting, TUAS was typically our “fixing tool,” cross-queued off of another intelligence source, whether an ISF unit in contact, a radar acquisition, or an ISF human intelligence tip. Moreover, we already discussed how crucial TF Falcon's signaleers were in connecting this intricate network, but so were a bevy of other players. Behind the scenes, a host of mechanics, logisticians, engineers, and tactical controllers fought to keep precious TUAS sorties in the fight.

We actually employed multiple government and contracted sensors based from several locations, allocating FMV reconnaissance to A&A teams by using hours as our unit of measure. Our message was “hurry to think, not to plan” as we considered how to optimize and prioritize our finite collection assets. We never accepted the harmful egalitarianism of the proverbial “peanut butter spread” when prioritizing sensors, connectors, and analysts. sLTG A3's main effort attack axis always mattered because “stimulate and exploit” was the backbone of dynamic targeting during current operations. Philosophically, we also erred on the side of driving an aggressive strike tempo, directing sensors and analytics toward ISIS patterns that we could take advantage of in order to maximize the lethal return on our investment. Whenever practical, our targeting also integrated our TF's persistent threat detection system (PTDS) based at the coalition's largest base in Ninewah. The 37th BEB once memorably used the PTDS to find and fix an ISIS small unit crossing the Tigris River, setting up LTC Pastor to approve a fixed-wing strike that finished the startled enemy.

TUAS collection and analytics also contributed hugely to deliberate targeting. For example, our TF targeteers developed 30 deliberate strike nominations leading up to the ISF attack on Tal Afar alone. Unlike our dynamic process, the TUAS served more as the “finishing tool” for our deliberate targeting, confirming or denying our assumptions about civilian presence prior to coalition strikes on ISIS sanctuaries, lines of communication, C2 nodes, or caches. Our deliberate process



Photo by SSG Jason Hull

**A Soldier from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division launches a Puma unmanned aerial vehicle during ISF's offensive to liberate west Mosul on 19 March 2017.**

complemented the special operations and CJFLCC-OIR efforts, and perhaps predictably, the coalition's intelligence sharing and shared understanding improved as we transitioned from Mosul's dynamism to the deliberate isolation of Tal Afar.

Across the TF, A&A teams thickened the larger collection plan with their own organic fleets of small UAS, and the IA did similarly with off-the-shelf quadcopter drones. For example, 2-325 AIR's layered FMV reconnaissance for the ISF attack on Tal Afar was a framework employed similarly by all of our field grade A&A teams during the operation. First, company-level advisers used Raven and Puma small systems, complemented by IA quadcopters and queued by IA human intelligence, to protect 15th IA's units from close-in threats. Meanwhile, Shadow TUAS helped TF White Falcon's analysts identify ISIS fighting positions, obstacles, and engagement areas near south Tal Afar's outer crust. Finally, the advisers may have also had operational control of long dwell, armed assets in order to hunt ISIS SVBIEDs staged within several blocks of the city's outer obstacle belts. All the while, signal bandwidth and power generation were in high demand.

LTC Sean McGee and CSM Scott Brinson, the team that led 1-325 AIR, may have contributed on an even greater scale than the rest of us. TF Red Falcon served under the operational control of CJFLCC-OIR and helped the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) protect the capital by hunting down ISIS threats before they materialized in Baghdad. Perhaps most importantly, this A&A team helped the BOC implement a

monthly G2 conference, a forum for ISF intelligence officials to share information with each other. Prior to implementing the rhythmic G2 conference, disparate IA commands funneled their reports back to the Ministry of Defense, a remarkably hierarchical approach that stymied timely decision making and exasperated gaps and seams along the figurative and physical boundaries. With MG Martin's support, LTC McGee's team capitalized on GOI concerns about Ramadan threat streams to persuade sLTG A3 to support the first conference in May 2017. CPT Tom Seagroatt, a uniquely gifted MI Soldier, also did a lot more than crank out releasable products for our partners. These advisers wielded outsized influence with BOC influencers, helping the ISF fuse intelligence in depth across the country as the coalition also added its intelligence overlay.

As we departed, the ISF certainly had a great deal of work to do to hone processes that promote unity of effort and shared understanding, but TF Red Falcon helped prod an initial paradigm shift in how ISF commanders shared and communicated among themselves. Their intellectual fingerprints on partner decision making should not be taken lightly, and the proof was evident in the ISF's performance. During almost nine months of LTC McGee's A&A partnership with the BOC, ISIS only struck Baghdad nine times total. The ISF's determined security was impressive, particularly as ISIS increased attempted attacks by 300 percent following the fall of Mosul in July.

Two of our goals were to keep every MI Soldier and every sensor in the fight. As I stated previously, our BCT S2, like several of his battalion-level counterparts, was also a valued finisher with military advice for us. Moreover, we have already described several examples of how we rolled our intelligence enterprise into multi-echelon engagement. Across the TF, we expected young MI talent to simplify the complex, communicate with clarity, and give potent advice to highly educated and experienced generals... all through an Arabic translator.

**Lethal Targeting with Precision Fires and Counterfire:** Coalition targeting devastated the enemy's IDF capacity in northern Iraq while maintaining strict standards that protected civilians and critical infrastructure. Unsurprisingly, surface-to-surface lethality also depended on superb long-range communications and sound ammunition supply practices. As importantly, our IPB was entirely contextual. For example, Mosul required dynamic IPB, targeting, and decision-making processes suited to the violent slog in dense urban terrain. ISIS seemingly turned most homes, schools, and religious sites into fighting positions or caches and perniciously coerced civilians into action as human shields. It was a grinding, 150-day test of wills and uncomfortably close combat. On the other hand, the ISF attack on Tal Afar offered the coalition more than 30 days to focus IPB on identifying most obstacle belts, conduct precision shaping and preparatory fires, and reposition assets that helped whittle down the ISIS disruption zone well before the ground attack began on 20 August 2017.

**Implications of Urban Terrain:** With years to prepare the defense of Mosul, ISIS commonly buttressed its cover and concealment by using firing positions in sensitive sites or the upper stories of tall structures. As just one prominent example,

days before ISIS regrettably destroyed the al-Nuri Grand Mosque in the Old City district, it began firing mortars from the grounds' courtyard. Such recklessness was the norm for ISIS, so our team relied on precision munitions and high-angle attacks that could overcome Mosul's jumble of intervening urban crests. Also, TF Falcon leaned on sensible weapons solutions such as Excalibur, fired at very high angles and set to delay, or M1156 precision-guided kits for urban counterfire missions. In retrospect however, we consistently struggled to adequately arrange our sensors to exploit strikes, and assessing battle damage in complex urban terrain was always a challenge as ISIS continually adjusted its tactics.

**Counterfire:** The fires fight in Mosul taught us that Q-53 radar acquisitions provide a critical overlay. ISIS fought its mortar platoons in a remarkably centralized manner, noticeably changing priorities or shifting ammunition around as the fight progressed. Over time, radar acquisitions fed our running estimates of ISIS's eroding capabilities and morphing intentions. We also saw patterns that we could exploit. Still, our radar acquisitions provided just one overlay, and we only detected a fraction of the shots fired in Mosul's dense urban terrain. Finally, ISIS was a thinking enemy, bent on survival; it adjusted its tactics frequently.

Our counterfire fight aimed to assure the partner. This challenge required us to threat model ISIS artillery and mortar teams, burning a number of intellectual calories to understand how they moved, commanded, and supplied their teams. We used Q-53 radar acquisitions as a baseline overlay but added ISF reporting, FMV analysis, and the Q-50 radars that our A&A teams often employed. Additionally, we frequently fought multiple FMV assets simultaneously under the TF counterfire

cell. Integrated and predictive analysis set us up to focus the team's FMV "soda straws" — the handful of fixed-wing reconnaissance robots we controlled — in predicted positions of advantage to find and fix the enemy's IDF assets.

Meanwhile, we used everything from coalition jets to rockets to attack ISIS as we worked with and through the one-star airspace and strike coordination teams at combined joint operations centers in Erbil and Baghdad. Indeed, we even counterfired with M142 high mobility artillery rocket systems at times.

**Artillery Fire Support to ISF Operations:** As revealed previously, senior ISF commanders did not do detailed planning, and there were no ISF combined arms rehearsals of any sort. Going back to the "Six A's," we assured them with our detailed fires planning, anticipated their schemes of maneuver by leveraging the "Lethal OC Network" and our A&A battle rhythm, and we remained agile by shifting artillery and radar positions and priorities on imperfect information. I suspect that only very senior ISF generals ever really had a surface-level understanding of our fires plans, and they never shared these details "down and in." However, sLTG A3 was counting on LTC Gibson's Black Falcons to synchronize the French contingent's 155mm Caesar cannons, other coalition strike assets, and American howitzers through exhaustive coalition rehearsals. Moreover, there was always some level of assist in order to advise as we previously discussed. sLTG

*Paratroopers with the 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment engage ISIS militants with precise and strategically placed artillery fire in support of Iraqi and Peshmerga fighters in Mosul in July 2017.*

Photo by SGT Christopher Bigelow



A3 valued LTC Gibson's detailed briefings, making our BCT fire support coordinator another prominent finisher at times. In fact, we used "pre-assault" artillery fires to suppress enemy fighting positions, but because the ISF rarely started attacks at planned times, we learned to use another round of "with assault fires" that were synchronized with the ISF's actual crossing of the line of departure. We applied similar thinking for the employment of rotary wing, rocket, and fixed-wing assets.

### **In Their Own Way: The Essence of Warfare By, With, and Through**

It was a privilege to represent our Army and our storied division with the coalition during OIR. We are also honored to have served under two tremendous divisions during the drive to help the ISF dominate our nations' shared enemy. We could not have been prouder of our partners as we departed Iraq in September; the ISF had liberated well over four million people and 40,000 kilometers of terrain, and more than a quarter million people had returned to their homes in Mosul. Perhaps the most heartening aspect was that sLTG A3 and the ISF accelerated the campaign against ISIS following their victorious Battle of Mosul.

In our mission to help ISF and hurt ISIS every day, we never lost sight of the coalition's interests. We kept a consistent azimuth guided by five big ideas and a disciplined battle rhythm. We had to produce results to retain the ISF's trust, and CSM Delapena and I are immensely proud of our teams for balancing grit with empathy, humility, and patience. There was always much more to serving the ISF and coalition well than merely advising and assisting. A learning organization, TF Falcon tinkered with our approach over time, eventually interpreting a formula that practiced all "Six A's" of A&A: advise, assist, accompany, assure, anticipate, and agility. Still, the campaign was incurably human, and naturally, relationships mattered. Solid relationships kept everyone goal oriented on frustrating days, and our connections introduced a deeper accountability to the partnership.

By breaking down ISIS in their own way, the ISF's leadership and ownership of the Battle of Mosul embodied the essence of warfare by, with, and through a partner whose success was the very measure of our success. I still clearly remember the day I sensed the ISF's mass was finally toppling the enemy's Juhmuri hospital fortress in west Mosul. It was the visible beginning of the end for ISIS, and our partners were still leading the day's deadly work. They continue to do so today.

#### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Joint Publication 3-20, *Security Cooperation*, dated 23 May 2017, cites Department of Defense Instruction 5000.68 while describing Security Force Assistance: "With, through, and by." Describes the process of interaction

with Foreign Security Forces (FSF) that initially involves training and assisting... The next step in the process is advising which may include advising in combat situations (acting "through" the forces)."

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps not as self-evident as it may appear, we lifted this central theme from LTG Townsend's seminal Tactical Directive #1, his command direction that arguably unlocked unrealized coalition potential for responsive, precision lethality. His message to advisers was: "Don't make yourself the main effort."

<sup>3</sup> This is also a direct lift from MG Martin's overarching guidance to anticipate ISF actions and posture nimbly. I first recall MG Martin emphasizing the necessity of anticipation during the CJFLCC-OIR Commanders Conference at Camp Union III in Baghdad in January 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Van Riper, "How to be in Command and Out of Control by Paul Van Riper 2," YouTube video, 23 September 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhzRQfhOITA>. During his presentation, he offers an alternative title for his thoughts that underscores the complexity of guiding any large, information age institution: "Decision Making in Modern Organizations."

<sup>5</sup> Timothy L. Thomas and Lester W. Grau, "Russian Lessons Learned from the Battles for Grozny," *Marine Corps Gazette* 84, no. 4 (April 2000). Accessed from <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2000/04/russian-lessons-learned-battles-grozny>.

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**COL James "Pat" Work** currently commands the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC. He was commissioned and graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, in 1995. He initially served as a rifle platoon leader and heavy weapons platoon leader in the 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), before serving as a rifle platoon leader and headquarters and headquarters company executive officer (XO) in the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. He commanded Company B, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, as well as Company C, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. COL Work served as the operations officer and XO of 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. From 2008-2009, he also served as Aide de Camp to the 20th Secretary of the Army before serving with the U.S. Special Operations Command. In 2011, COL Work assumed command of 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and in 2013 began service as a staff officer in the Operations Directorate of the Joint Staff. COL Work earned a Master of Public Policy Degree from Georgetown University in 2010 and is also a graduate of the Marine Corps War College.

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Photo by SSG Jason Hull

**Members of the 9th Iraqi Army Division, supported by Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve, fire a heavy machine gun at ISIS fighter positions near Al Tarab, Iraq, on 17 March 2017.**

# Mission Command in a Multinational Environment

COL CURTIS A. BUZZARD  
LTC PATRICK L. BRYAN  
LTC KEVIN C. SAATKAMP

*“There is at least one thing worse than fighting with allies — and that is to fight without them.”*

— Sir Winston S. Churchill<sup>1</sup>

Today’s operational environment is dynamic and complex. Potential adversaries are capable of interconnecting multiple dimensions of warfare simultaneously, including cyber and information, conventional and unconventional, and regular and irregular. Nobody can counter these alone. As one surveys the different theaters of operation, it is apparent that a combined approach is essential. We’ve seen this recently in conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it has been an enduring requirement in the European theater. To prevail against these threats, forces must be able to integrate into a multinational force capable of operating across the range of military operations and do so at every level of command. More importantly, they have to be able to do it quickly — there must be a unified speed of recognition (of the threat), speed of decision, and speed of assembly, an ethos LTG Ben Hodges, commander of U.S. Army Europe, has described as “fight tonight.”<sup>2</sup>

In order to fight tonight, multinational forces must have a common purpose and vision unified through the exercise of mission command. Due to its central European location and its geographical proximity to likely coalition and alliance partners, the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany, is uniquely suited to train and reinforce these multinational mission command principles. This article discusses the importance of the mission command philosophy within a multinational task force environment and demonstrates some best practices to reinforce and generate functional multinational mission command.

## Multinational Mission Command

Mission command places a premium on command responsibility. It recognizes the challenges associated with a dynamic operational environment and therefore empowers subordinate commanders with great independence and latitude to accomplish the mission. According to joint doctrine:

*“[M]ission command... enables military operations through decentralized execution based on mission-type orders. Mission command is built on subordinate leaders*

### Mission Command Philosophy

Exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.

*Guided by the principles of...*

- Build cohesive teams through mutual trust
- Create shared understanding
- Provide a clear commander’s intent
- Exercise disciplined initiative
- Use mission orders
- Accept prudent risk

*The principles of mission command assist commanders and staff in blending the art of command with the science of control.*

Figure 1 — Principles of Mission Command<sup>4</sup>

*at all echelons who exercise disciplined initiative and act aggressively and independently to accomplish the mission.”<sup>3</sup>*

In organic units, it is still challenging to have mission command permeate an organization. The best commanders foster disciplined individual and group initiative throughout their careers. They are approachable, take the time to know their subordinate leaders, give clear and concise commander’s intent, ensure a common understanding through collaborative dialogue, encourage disciplined initiative, and underwrite risk. Throughout, they build trust and mutual confidence. This leads to great units and great accomplishments, no matter what the mission. But imagine leading a multinational task force composed of 10 or more different countries — what’s your approach? Can you achieve the same level of trust, or are you doomed to failure?

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) foundational doctrine for planning, execution, and support of allied joint operations — Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 01 (D) — acknowledges commanders’ responsibilities to enable freedom of action, initiative, and decision making. But it also acknowledges the differences in mission command style among the different services and nations and therefore defines the following mission command prerequisites necessary for multinational formations:

- “Commanders and staffs should concern themselves

primarily with joint operational matters, taking account of component issues only as necessary. (Unified and fully integrated and interoperable command)

- The subordinate commander must understand fully the operational commander's intentions and what he is required to achieve, and be free to exercise initiatives based on that understanding, within a minimal level of control imposed from the higher level of command. (Decentralized control)

- There should be an active involvement in the doctrine development process by the nations and a common understanding of the operational doctrine governing the employment of forces. The latter is achieved through education, training, and exercises. (Education, training, and exercises)

- Trust (total confidence in the integrity, ability, and good character of another) is one of the most important ingredients in building strong teams. Trust expands the commander's options and enhances flexibility, agility, and the freedom to take the initiative when conditions warrant. Trust is based on the mutual confidence that results from the demonstrated competence of each member of the team. The opportunity to observe each member's capabilities in training builds trust and confidence in a Joint Force.”<sup>5</sup> (Trust)

This last principle — trust — is probably the most important as it drives and enables the other three. As GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower once observed, “mutual confidence [is the] one basic thing that will make allied commands work.”<sup>6</sup>

### Training Multinational Mission Command

JMRC trains and reinforces these principles using a variety of different types of exercises, each with a different purpose (but always multinational, theater-specific) and with an emphasis on interoperability. During a recent rotation, COL Phil Brooks, commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, pointed out, “JMRC provided the RAF [Regionally Aligned Force] an opportunity to work with multinational allies in a complex environment each day.”<sup>7</sup> It does so by immersing (task-organized) multinational units into realistic, high-intensity, demanding training environments against a world class

opposing force (OPFOR) capable of replicating real-world challenges. The result is a fully trained and interoperable coalition capable of not only countering threats but defeating them soundly.

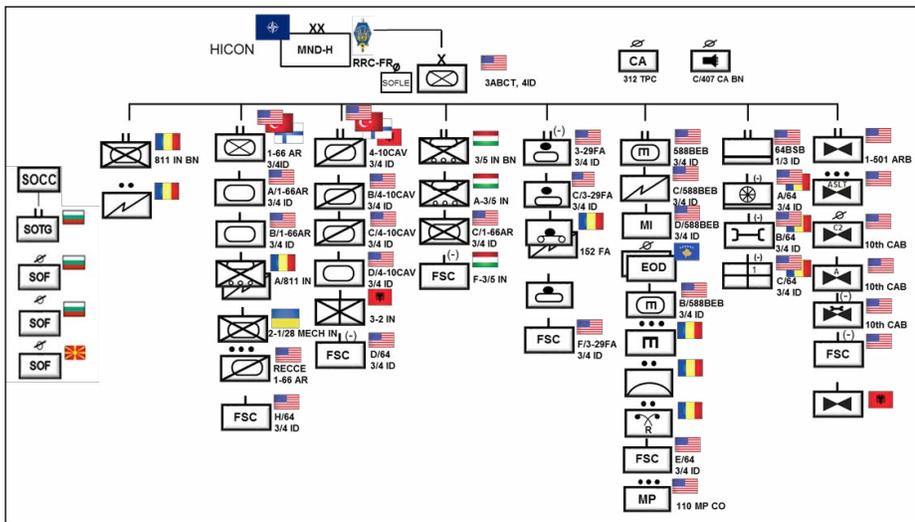
Some exercises are focused on our enhanced forward presence (eFP) partners in the Baltics; others may be focused on multinational airborne units that are their nations' crisis response forces, U.S. Army Europe's rotational armor brigade combat team (ABCT) with NATO high response ground forces, or assigned and rotational U.S. forces. Regardless of the construct, all exercises are necessarily multinational because of the operational reality — that is how we'll fight should a crisis arise. Further, they are designed to reflect what might actually occur in a European contingency operation, including the pairing of most-likely partner forces into a multinational task force. Because every exercise is composed of different nations, with distinct capabilities, expertise, national interests, etc., no two exercises are ever the same. Therefore, each exercise will be designed with different considerations in mind. Because they can become quite nuanced in their complexity, JMRC multinational exercise design relies on a Joint Exercise Life Cycle (JELC).

### JELC

The JELC provides the framework for every exercise. Fundamentally, it is a 440-day operations process with heavy emphasis on Army Design Methodology wherein JMRC and participating partner nation leadership drive conceptual and detailed planning necessary to execute a complex multinational capstone exercise. The cycle itself is a milestone-based process but remains adaptive given the dynamic nature of the theater. It culminates in producing a world-class, demanding rotational exercise in a training environment that replicates the theater.

Success in this challenging environment begins with the multinational task force commander and the overall ability of the organization to achieve mission command. The JELC provides a platform for the commander to build his team and establish meaningful personal relationships with his staff and his subordinate commanders and their respective staffs. A

Figure 2 — Sample Multinational Task Organization



popular refrain among senior leaders acknowledges, “[w]hen faced with a difficult problem, it’s best to put five friends in the room. They’ve got trust and will assume risk. If you want to fail, put together five strangers.”<sup>8</sup> By design, the JELC seeks to develop the camaraderie necessary to succeed.

During the JELC, planners and staffs routinely meet one another at the variety of planning conferences and start building the team and the operational environment from the bottom up. Ideally, the multinational task force commander starts dialogues with the subordinate unit commanders as the JELC cycle matures. Shortly before the final planning conference, JMRC facilitates a conditions check during which

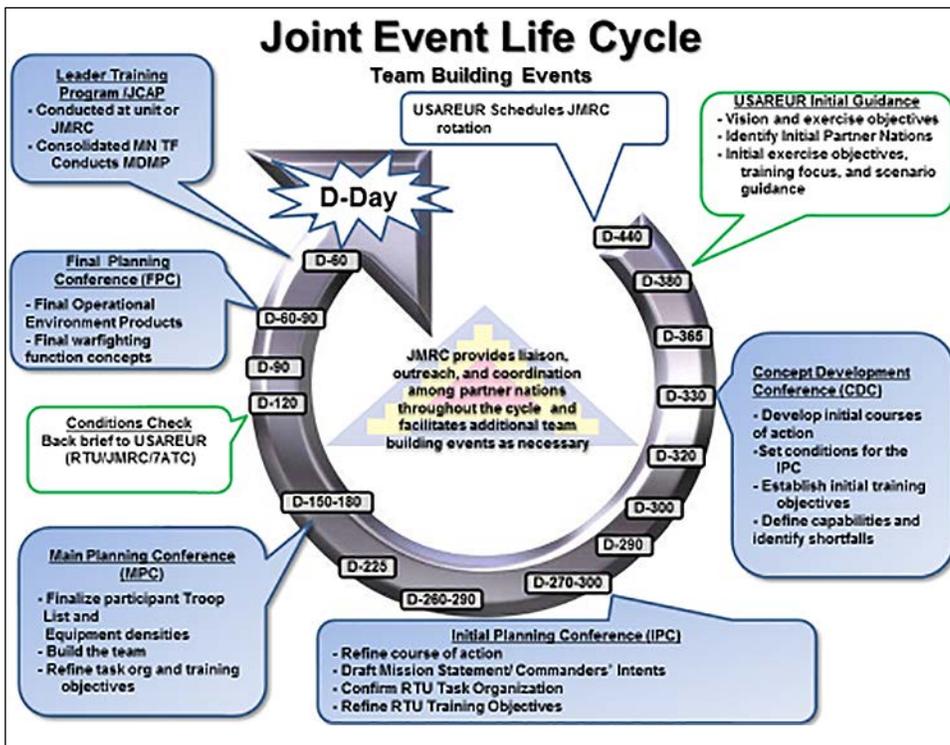


Figure 3 — U.S. Army Europe Joint Event Life Cycle Model

the brigade and battalion commanders in the multinational task force brief the U.S. Army Europe deputy commanding general. They brief their training objectives, training path, an assessment of their units' abilities to execute mission essential tasks, and any issues or concerns. This helps to provide a common visualization of the conduct of the rotation and level of preparedness.

### Joint and Combined Academics Program

During the JELC, leadership and observer-coach-trainers (OCTs) facilitate a week-long unit development session, known as the Joint and Combined Academics Program (JCAP). It is purposely tailorable and scalable to the exercise and the units' training objectives. During JCAP, the OCTs review trends and lessons learned; facilitate detailed back briefs from all units on their capabilities; teach classes targeted to the units' requirements and specific to the rotation; facilitate working groups and planning rehearsals; issue a detailed warning order that drives initial planning and a deployment order that drives reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI); and most importantly, they include team building and commander visualization events to drive confidence building. Throughout JCAP, the OCTs reinforce the importance of interoperability across the human, procedural, and technical domains and share best practices.

Ideally, representatives from all exercise partners participate in the JCAP. As mentioned above, facilitators issue a warning order to the training unit during JCAP, thereby allowing units the ability to conduct mission analysis on the various/multiple capabilities of the multinational

formation. Often, they will do this through a unit capabilities brief. In this regard, JCAP provides an opportunity to build commander understanding and visualization and staff situational understanding. Further, it begins the process of earning trust among partners who will soon be task organized in order to counter the threat defined in JMRC's signature Decisive Action Training Environment-Europe (DATE-E).

### Replicating the Threat — DATE-E

Units are organized to support operations under the rubric of DATE-E, which is built upon the same foundation as the familiar Atropian/Arianian-based DATE 2.2 scenario. However, it is aligned/nested with the strategic NATO Skolkan exercise scenario so that it fits within the broader NATO context of operations. It is built upon the NATO Article 5 principle of collective defense — an attack against one NATO member

is an attack against all.<sup>9</sup>

The fictitious Skolkan scenario occurs in Europe, where forces end up in conflict against a near-peer competitor and hybrid threats in an operating environment that replicates tremendous complexity across a range of military operations and all aspects of PMESII-PT (physical, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure - physical environment, time). Colonel Mindaugas Steponavicius, commander of the Lithuanian Iron Wolf Brigade, called the combat environment "intense and most importantly — realistic."<sup>10</sup>

Finally, the DATE-E scenario incorporates enduring and emerging doctrine, including tactics, techniques, and procedures seen recently in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict. For example, JMRC replicates multi-layered enemy

Figure 4 — Sample Unit Capabilities Brief Agenda



intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR); well-synchronized and overpowering fires capabilities; increased use of electronic and cyber warfare; and enemy “gray zone” activities — those actions below the level of conventional warfare but still offensive in nature.

### **Replicating the Joint Task Force, Adjacent Units, and Unified Action Partners (UAPs)**

Multinational task forces rarely — if ever — operate in autonomous environments. They most often work for a higher headquarters and likely in coordination with adjacent units and unified action partners. While the task force commander is the primary driver of mission command within his unit, he is also a participant in his higher commander’s efforts — it is unavoidably a 360-degree effort throughout. As AJP 1-0 (D) recognizes:

*“All military planning should be coherent with other non-military and potentially multinational and non-governmental initiatives intended to stabilise and create a self-sustaining secure environment. A NATO military response must therefore be integrated into a wider overall framework or a comprehensive approach. In taking these and other security factors into account, there is no fundamental difference in the planning and execution of any operation across the full range of NATO’s military capabilities.”<sup>11</sup>*

This reality is replicated at JMRC through a blended training environment that includes live, constructive, and virtual components. There is always a higher headquarters as the higher control (HICON) that represents a NATO Rapid Deployment Corps Headquarters. In some cases, that headquarters is a real division or corps-level joint task force, such as the Rapid Reaction Corps – France. During most rotations, there is also at least one live, multinational brigade headquarters in a command post exercise, serving as an adjacent or forward unit.<sup>12</sup> This allows for realistic command and staff coordination events with higher and adjacent units, including back briefs, updates, command visits to the unit in the field, etc. The unit in the “box” fighting force-on-force is able to leverage the effects of the HICON, primarily with respect to intelligence fusion, targeting, and effects on the virtual deep fight. Similarly, how well a unit screening in front of an adjacent unit operates can affect the unit in the box.

JMRC incorporates these units in a way that presents the multinational task force commander and staff with a more complete and holistic multinational operating environment. This is all done through a blended training environment of live, constructive, and virtual effects so the HICON deep fight in simulation is as real to the brigade as the fight against the live OPFOR. Further, JMRC populates up to five cities with 150 (contracted) civilians on the battlefield. As a result, the commander does not just “see himself” from an internal perspective but also within the larger context. He must inform those other echelons in a way that builds a common visualization, mutual confidence, and disciplined initiative within his stated intent. In short, he must execute mission command.

Finally, the scenario fully integrates an array of UAPs, including actual interagency members, government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, and police.

It also includes media and a replicated internet with Twitter and multiple news media websites. All of these resources provide substantial depth to the operational environment. UAPs support the unit’s overall situational understanding and are absolutely fundamental in supporting a number of tasks, especially stability tasks early in the operation.

### **RSOI**

Upon arrival at JMRC, units are immersed in activities to replicate RSOI tasks (NATO: RSOM - reception, staging and onward movement). The Albertshof cantonment area replicates a tactical assembly area (TAA) wherein units plan, build combat power, confirm capabilities, back brief the HICON on progress and issues, draw classes of supply, validate mission command and fires systems, review procedures, plan, and rehearse. Units also designate and embed liaison teams and associated equipment in higher and subordinate units. Most often, these liaison teams act in an “advise and assist” capacity rather than just observing and reporting. Depending on the situation and capabilities, units may also embed small teams with operational, fires, and intelligence expertise; Joint Capabilities Release (JCR) systems; One System Remote Video Terminals (OSRVT); and full digital command post nodes (CPN) internet protocols.

To the extent it has not already been accomplished prior to arrival, RSOI provides multinational units the opportunity to determine specifics of their consolidated capabilities, national authorities, and policies. Often, units take the time to execute a static display of weapons and capabilities (“petting zoo”) where they co-locate critical assets to demonstrate capabilities. This serves the further purpose of overall situational understanding among the members of the coalition, which in turn builds trust, prevents fratricide, etc. Units often realize that they have tremendous assets or capabilities that they had not previously fully appreciated. For example, during one recent rotation, a brigade task force task organized a Belgian intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance (ISTAR) company as part of the task force reserve. Later, the brigade discovered that the Belgian company had significant technical capabilities (such as cameras and digital/voice communication equipment) that were not being leveraged. Once discovered, the task force significantly adjusted the Belgian company’s mission and tasks to account for that capability. In another rotation, a brigade discovered that it had a Romanian platoon whose sole purpose was to lay and mark both persistent and non-persistent minefields. This freed up engineer and artillery assets and allowed for greater engagement area development.

The goal of RSOI at JMRC is not just to build combat power; it is also for commanders to develop better understanding so that they can visualize, describe, and direct their new formations accordingly and so that staffs build and maintain their own situational understanding. In turn, this will help to drive the operations process during the exercise.

### **The Operations Process**

As discussed throughout, units use planning activities to build situational understanding. They optimize the steps of their respective operational planning processes (such as the military

decision-making process, the British Army Combat Estimate, the NATO Operational Level Planning Process, etc.) in order to resolve the challenges associated with multinational interoperability.<sup>13</sup>

Most of the characteristics of a multinational operational planning process are similar to any other national/organic operational planning process. However, during multinational operations, the planning process must be more deliberate. A multinational task force's complexity is significantly more nuanced due to language, culture, law, national policy, etc. As the primary participant in — and the driving force of — the operations process, commanders must first recognize these nuances in order to gain complete situational understanding of the operational environment. The brigade commander requires more robust confirmation briefs from subordinate commanders that include not just higher and subordinate units' respective tasks and purposes but also matters regarding capabilities, resources, etc. As a result, before subordinate units publish orders, the multinational commander convenes a course of action back brief to ensure all are operating within his intent and appropriately coordinated with adjacent units.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the multinational operations process is the incredible importance of rehearsals. During rehearsals, commanders and key staff continue to reinforce a common situational understanding to ensure a common approach to the operation. Commanders and their respective staffs focus on identifying and fixing issues rather than following a set script. Afterwards, commanders huddle to discuss final adjustments.

The task force commander and key staff then visit subordinate units to build and reinforce a collaborative approach. Throughout the fight, the battle rhythm and routine —

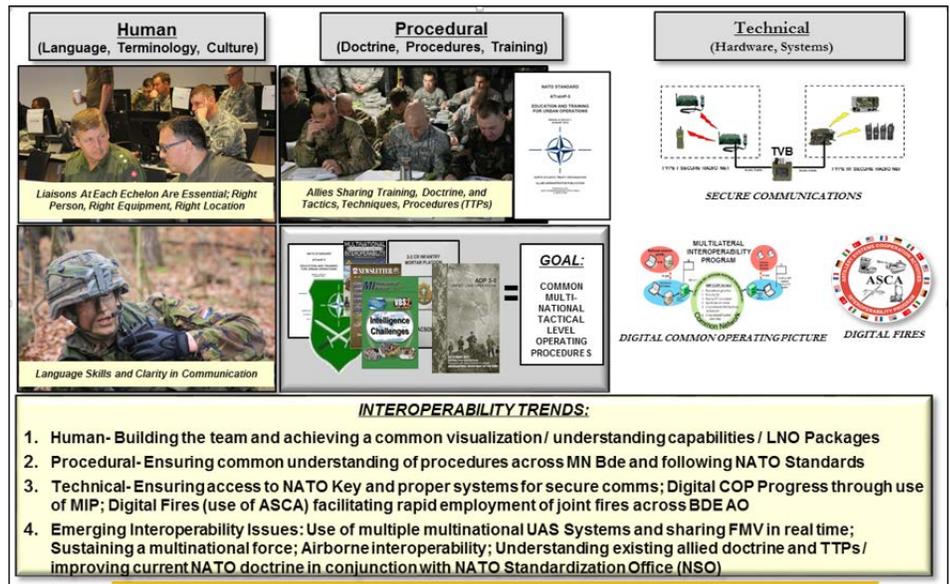


Figure 6 — Essential Elements of Interoperability

combined with focused commanders' updates and conference calls — further reinforce unity of effort. When mission command is a focus and executed comprehensively, the results are astounding.

### Interoperability

Interoperability among nations and across the human, procedural, and technical domains is heavily emphasized in the European theater and a priority for NATO. In response to Russian aggression in Crimea, NATO agreed at the Warsaw Summit to an eFP of four multinational battalion battle groups, composed of forces from 16 different countries, in the Baltic States and Poland.<sup>14</sup> The post-summit communiqué further stated, "Interoperability of our armed forces is fundamental to our success and an important added value of our alliance."<sup>15</sup> Interoperability reinforces the "fight tonight" ethos and NATO's credibility to reassure allies; it is also fundamental to deterrence. Interoperability also acknowledges that members of the coalition are reinforcing and complementary, if not necessarily the same in terms of doctrine, organization, etc.



Photo courtesy of authors

Multinational soldiers conduct a combined arms rehearsal at JMRC.

Success in interoperability generally correlates directly to achieving functional mission command. Therefore, in every endeavor, training multinational mission command requires a strong emphasis on interoperability. According to AJP 01(D), "the effectiveness of Allied forces in peace, crisis or in conflict, depends on the ability of the forces provided to operate together coherently, effectively, and efficiently." Interoperability necessarily includes three dimensions — human, procedural, and technical — and their importance in "the ability of a joint force to achieve its commander's objectives."<sup>16</sup>

To track progress, OCTs emphasize, monitor, and assess interoperability

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES																	
UNIT	Secure Comms (Type 1 encryption) Have capability Y/N? Did they bring to exercise Y/N?	Digital Fires Transmission Devices (i.e. U. S. Army AFATDS) Have capability Y/N? Did they bring to exercise Y/N?	Digital COP Have capability Y/N? Did they bring to exercise Y/N?														
BDE	NA	N/Y* HQ augmented with DEU Fires cell to enable ASCA digital link	Y/Y														
BDE	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y														
BN	Y/Y	Y/Y	NA														
BN	Y/Y	Y/Y	NA														
BN	Y/Y	Y/Y	NA														
BN	#	TASK (Ref. TC 3-90.6, 16JUN11)	INITIAL	Rehearsals		DELAY				DEFEND				ATTACK			
				E1	E2	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12
BN	1	Execute the Operations Process (71-8-5100)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	
	2	Display a Common Operational Picture (71-8-5316)	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	5	5	5			
	3	TTPs for Offensive Air Support (STANAG 7103)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0				
	4	Conduct a Movement to Contact (07-6-1072)	3	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	3	5	5			
	5	Conduct an Attack (07-6-1052)	4	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	4	4				
	6	Conduct a Defense (07-6-1028)	4	0	0	3	3	3	4	5	0	0	0				
POSITIVE TRENDS / STRENGTHS				COACHING FOCUS													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehearsals to refine BN TACSOP and TOC Battle Drills</li> <li>Companies proficient in use of AT weapons</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Mission Command</li> <li>Displacement Criteria</li> <li>Use of Fires to enable displacement</li> <li>Air Assault Planning (AMB vs AMCM)</li> </ul>													
<small>           0 TASK NOT OBSERVED            1 TASK NOT EXECUTED            2-5 TASK EXECUTED - MAJOR DEFICIENCIES; UNLIKELY MISSION SUCCESS            6 TASK EXECUTED TO AIRM STANDARD; MISSION SUCCESS LIKELY            7-9 TASK EXECUTED TO A HIGH STANDARD; MISSION SUCCESS EXPECTED            10 UNIT DEMONSTRATED MASTERY OF SYSTEMS INTEGRATION &amp; TASK EXECUTION         </small>																	

Figure 7 — JMRC Interoperability Scorecard

efforts throughout the planning and execution of the rotation. A “scorecard” is updated daily, and the issues are discussed at every brigade and battalion after action review (AAR) so that any interoperability issues are identified and resolved.

Allied joint operations should be prepared for, planned, and conducted in a manner that makes the best use of the relative strengths and capabilities of the forces which members dedicate to an operation. Interoperability has three dimensions: technical (e.g., hardware, systems), procedural (e.g., doctrines, procedures), and human (e.g., language, terminology, and training) which are discussed briefly below.<sup>17</sup>

**Human** — The human dimension centers on building relationships and includes the need to overcome language and cultural barriers. It’s also about the personal efforts to build mutual confidence. Building this dimension, especially trust and confidence among commanders, occurs from initiation of planning for the exercise through force-on-force execution in simulated combat.

**Procedural** — The procedural domain primarily revolves around ensuring key procedures (such as battle rhythm, clearance of fires, airspace coordination, etc.) are commonly understood. These will never be entirely common across formations, but those most critical to the fight need to be. JMRC is partnered with the NATO Standardization Office (NSO), which is the keeper on NATO standards, and the goal is to apply NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGs) and other relevant NATO doctrine, such as Allied Land Command’s training and evaluation outlines (T&EOs), during rotations. These are reviewed and

agreed to during the planning cycle and exercised during the force on force. Feedback is then provided to refine the doctrine.

**Technical** — Finally, there is a technical component to interoperability, the focus of which is normally on achieving secure FM communications, a digital common operating picture, and digital fires, especially via the Artillery Systems Cooperation Activity (ASCA) that allows the sharing of digital fires. This is perhaps the easiest of the dimensions for multinational units to address, as it deals with tangible, material items rather than the more ephemeral aspects of people and systems. However, that is not to say that operating in a degraded, or even analog, environment is not important. On the contrary, in those very likely situations given our adversaries’ capabilities, the unit must rely even more heavily on the trust and confidence gained in the human and procedural domains.

## Conclusion

According to former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Martin Dempsey, there are three key attributes of mission command — understanding, intent, and trust.<sup>18</sup> The three necessarily work in concert. In describing how important understanding is to mission command, GEN Dempsey references Carl von Clausewitz’ concept of “coup d’oeil” — the “inner eye” of the commander.

“When all is said and done, it really is the commander’s coup d’oeil, his ability to see things simply, to identify the whole business of war completely with himself, that is the essence of good generalship. Only if the mind works in this comprehensive fashion can it achieve the freedom it needs to dominate events and not be dominated by them.”<sup>19</sup>

Developing this coup d’oeil is difficult, and doing so with multinational partners is even more difficult. GEN Dempsey states, “Leaders at every level must contribute to a common operating assessment of context, ‘co-creating it’ as operations progress and situations change.”<sup>20</sup> We must continue to



Photo by PFC Randy Wren

Multinational battalion commanders back brief Colonel Mindaugas Steponavicius (left) during Exercise Allied Spirit V at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, on 8 October 2016.

build and refine our mutual understanding of operating as a multinational force as recent history suggests that this will continue to be the environment in which we fight. Developing this multinational understanding will enable clear and concise intent, which will in turn drive trust among multinational partners.

The current and future operational environment dictates that success in war and peace requires allies. NATO's eFP initiative serves as a timely and relevant example. The U.S. Army also is now fulfilling an enduring but rotational "heel-to-toe" requirement for an ABCT and combat aviation brigade in theater to enhance U.S. forward presence and speed their ability to get to the fight. Collectively, these forces will operate across many nations and would have to quickly aggregate and operate as seamlessly as possible.

Should conflict arise, units will fight as part of multinational commands; therefore, training and exercising as such is essential. Succeeding in that type of environment requires allies and partners building common understanding of the problems, common visualization of the mission, and the mutual confidence and trust to operate together and in a way that encourages disciplined initiative within the commander's intent. JMRC is focused on this reality and therefore exclusively concentrated on training multinational mission command. Hopefully, after reading this article, you walk away with a greater appreciation for why and how units are being trained at JMRC as well as some practical tactics, techniques, and procedures for exercising mission command in a multinational environment.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Viscount Alanbrooke, diary, 1 April 1945, as quoted in Arthur Bryant, *Triumph in the West, 1943-1946* (London: Grafton Books, 1986), 445.

<sup>2</sup> LTG Ben Hodges, "U.S. Army Europe and Its Role in Deterrence," *Defense News* (5 December 2016). Accessed 12 March 2017 from <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/lt-gen-ben-hodges-us-army-europe-and-its-role-in-deterrence>.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 17 January 2017), II-2.

<sup>4</sup> Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-0 (Headquarters, Department of the Army, May 2012), 1-3. Accessed 12 March 2017 from <https://armypubs.us.army.mil/doctrine/index.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 01(D) (NATO Standardization Office, December 2010), 6-4. Accessed 12 March 2017 from [http://nso.nato.int/nso/zPublic/ap/ajp-01\(d\).pdf](http://nso.nato.int/nso/zPublic/ap/ajp-01(d).pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Joint Publication 3-16, *Multinational Operations* (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 16 July 2013), I-3, quoting from General Dwight D. Eisenhower, circa 1948. See also, Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Farewell Address to the Nation" (17 January 1961), "Down the long lane of the history yet to be written America knows that this world of ours, ever growing smaller, must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect." Accessed 12 March 2017 from <http://mcdadams.posc.mu.edu/ike.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> COL Phil Brooks, commander, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, comment during the rotational after action review. The 1/3 ID was conducting its mission as the Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) in Europe at the time.

<sup>8</sup> Unattributed.

<sup>9</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Article 5, Washington, D.C., 4 April 1949. Accessed 12 March 2017 from [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm).

<sup>10</sup> Colonel Mindaugas Steponavicius, e-mail message to LTC Kevin Saatkamp, 6 March 2017.

<sup>11</sup> AJP 01(D), xii.

<sup>12</sup> Note: However, JMRC does not allow any of the higher and adjacent

activities to drastically affect the brigade in the box because they are the primary training audience.

<sup>13</sup> For more information on planning in a multinational task force, see Joel Gleason and Patrick Bryan, "A Tool for Parallel Planning in a Combined Brigade Combat Team," *Multinational Interoperability Reference Guide* (Center for Army Lessons Learned, July 2016): Appendix C. Accessed 12 March 2017 from <http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/16-18.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Warsaw Summit Communiqué, 40, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016. Accessed 12 March 2017 from [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> AJP 01(D), 3-4.

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed discussion of multinational interoperability broken down by warfighting function, see *Multinational Interoperability Reference Guide* (Center for Army Lessons Learned, July 2016). Accessed 12 March 2017 from <http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/16-18.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> GEN Martin E. Dempsey, "Mission Command White Paper" (3 April 2012). Accessed 12 March 2017 from <http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/missioncommandwhitepaper2012.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Howard & Paret edition/translation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 578.

<sup>20</sup> Dempsey, "Mission Command White Paper."

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**LTC Patrick L. Bryan** currently serves as the deputy Staff Judge Advocate for the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and Fort Campbell, KY. He was formerly the senior legal observer-coach-trainer for the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany. His previous assignments also include serving as the group judge advocate for the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Carson, CO; chief of military justice for the U.S. Army Training Center and Fort Jackson, SC; senior defense counsel, Bamberg, Germany; defense counsel, Grafenwöhr, Germany; chief, Affirmative Claims, U.S. Army Claims Service, Europe, Mannheim, Germany; command judge advocate for the Southern European Task Force; and battery fire direction officer, combat observation and lasing team (COLT) platoon leader, and battalion fire direction officer with the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. LTC Bryan earned a bachelor's degree in history from Texas A&M University; a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law; and a Master of Laws (LL.M) degree from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's School.

**LTC Kevin C. Saatkamp** currently serves as the JMRC organizational planner. He previously served as the senior brigade trainer at JMRC. His other past assignments include serving as a rifle platoon leader and company executive officer (XO) with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment at Fort Wainwright, AK; platoon trainer and battalion S1, 4th Ranger Training Battalion at Fort Benning, GA; battalion S4, AS3, and B Company commander, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, WA; plans officer, U.S. Army Pacific, Fort Shafter, HI; battalion S3 and battalion XO, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry; and brigade XO, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA. LTC Saatkamp's most recent assignment was as the chief - Contingency Command Post, U.S. Army Africa, Caserma Ederle - Vicenza, Italy. LTC Saatkamp graduated from USMA and has a Master of Military Art and Science degree from the Command and General Staff College.

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# Training Notes



## Battalion Sustainment Operations in Decisive Action: A Lost Art

CPT PAUL A. CORCORAN  
CPT ANGEL L. CARABALLO JR

### Sustainment: Continuous Planning and Execution

Imagine a battalion deploying to an austere environment to fight a hybrid/near-peer threat, or perhaps it was simply tagged for the excitement of another Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation. Chances are the S4 either possesses a maneuver background but struggles to understand logistics or is a logistician who struggles to understand his place within maneuver. As the S4 tackles the daily grind of staff work, rarely does the opportunity present itself to open doctrine and understand how sustainment operations work in a brigade or within a larger combat environment. Unfortunately, Army manuals and their sustainment chapters only explain the theoretical steps or elements of sustainment. One must piece parts of each doctrine manual together to understand how a battalion sustainment cell continually operates, plans, and executes. Figure 1 is a diagram of how a maneuver battalion continually operates and plans sustainment.

The sustainment cell executes and plans support for the companies, but first it is necessary for those companies to provide input with timely and accurate sustainment reporting. It

is the sustainment cell's duty to develop a sustainment common operating picture (COP) in order to capture the battalion's status and accurately plan. With the accurate portrayal of the unit's status and receipt of a new mission, the S4 can then conduct logistics estimates, which will allow for accurate forecasting of logistical support and identify any shortfalls. Sustainment planning must absolutely cover resupply, recovery, and casualty evacuation (CASEVAC). If these elements of sustainment are not thoroughly planned, any unit or mission will have great difficulty during combat operations. The sustainment cell must ensure throughout planning and execution that sustainment is synchronized and integrated with other warfighting functions (WFFs) and adjacent, higher, and subordinate units. Finally, the sustainment cell must complete a detailed sustainment plan and overlay that allows for a shared understanding. The order and overlay are the output the sustainment cell owes to the companies for a successful completion of the mission.

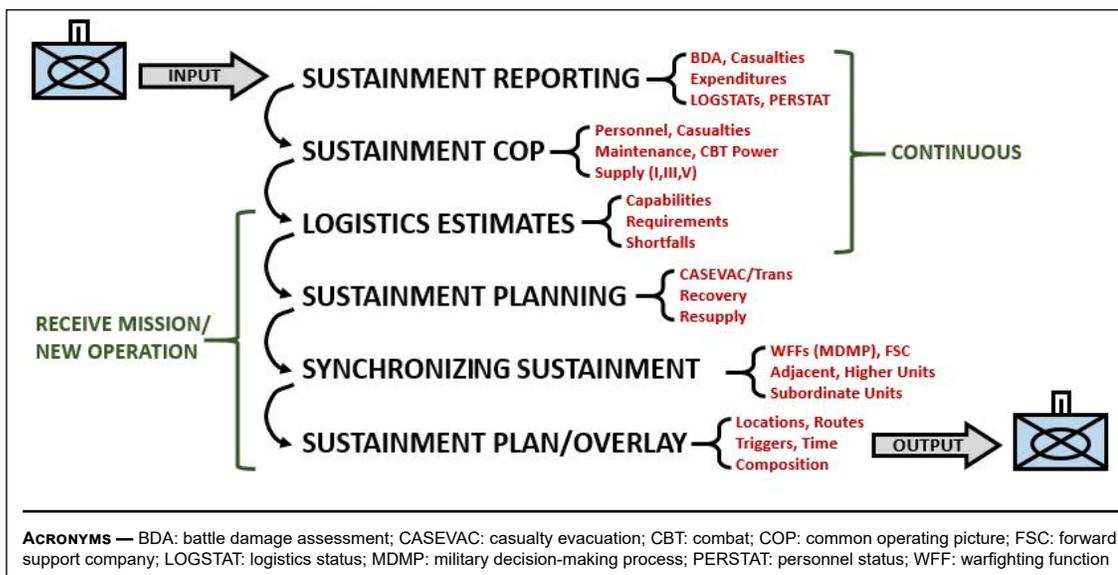
### Sustainment Reporting: It All Starts With Input

Timely and accurate reporting from subordinates is crucial to the continuous sustainment of the battalion. The more rapid

and accurate reports are, the more effective planning and support for the companies will be. The major reports that a company needs to send are logistics, personnel, casualties, battle damage, and maintenance status reports. The battalion leadership must support the battalion S4 and emphasize prioritization of mission command system capabilities of sustainment nodes.

Commonly, administrative and logistics (A/L) radio nets and

Figure 1 — Maneuver Battalion Sustainment



digital systems (i.e., Joint Capabilities Release [JCR]) are the primary means of communication for the battalion's sustainment. Battalions typically do not have enough equipment to retransmit an A/L net or dedicate JCR tactical operations center (TOC) kits to combat trains command posts (CTCPs). Therefore, units must use JCR chatrooms and analog reports at logistics release point (LRP) meetings for routine reports and the A/L FM net for immediate and emergency reporting. A battalion may use a variety of digital systems to communicate sustainment reports with brigade. However, battalions encounter difficulty resourcing secure mission command systems between the various command posts (CPs). A possible solution is to submit an operational needs statement (ONS) for equipment to acquire a diverse range of connectivity. With a wide range of communications capability, units can maintain an expanded contingency plan and provide a shared digital sustainment COP.

The CTCP is the central node controlling the communication architecture for the battalion's sustainment reporting. The headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) commander and S4 are responsible for coordinating with subordinate leaders, battalion executive officer (XO), and S6 to ensure a contingency plan is in place for redundant communication. The sustainment reports must be formatted with a common language and able to be sent with ease. Redundancy and simplified formats will provide seamless reporting from company up to brigade.

Secure tactical internet at CTCPs gives battalions extended capability. Therefore, if the TOC and tactical command post (TAC) are neutralized by enemy action, the CTCP acts as a tertiary CP. This allows the CTCP to rapidly monitor and collect reports on digital, FM, and analog systems. The added benefit of "battle tracking" maneuver/fires/intelligence reports allows the CTCP to better forecast/synchronize sustainment operations during continuous operations. The redundancy in communications will safeguard medical, supply, and recovery assets and get them where they need to be in a timely manner. The CTCP must execute the six TOC functions to receive, distribute, and analyze sustainment information for the battalion, brigade, and the support operations officer (SPO) in the brigade support activity.

**COP: Know Yourself**

Maneuver, intelligence, and fire support WFFs commonly maintain a COP to effectively track, react, and plan operations on digital and analog maps. The S4 needs to develop and maintain a sustainment COP for the same reasons. COPs required for sustainment give a shared understanding of logistics, personnel, and operations, and these must be depicted both in digital and analog systems.

The S4 supervises the development and implementation of the logistics COP, but this is only one part of all sustainment COPs. The CTCP acts as the main collection point of all sustainment-related information; therefore, it maintains the unit's sustainment COP. An analog version of the sustainment COP is commonly filled out on whiteboards that break sustainment

***Maneuver, intelligence, and fire support WFFs commonly maintain a COP to effectively track, react, and plan operations on digital and analog maps. The S4 needs to develop and maintain a sustainment COP for the same reasons.***

status into key elements: personnel, casualties, combat power (maintenance, firepower, mobility, and catastrophic), classes of supplies, and ammunition (by company, by Department of Defense identification code [DODIC]). The unit maintenance command post (UMCP) would maintain a more in-depth maintenance COP to feed the CTCP with repair status and updates to the combat power. Update the analog sustainment COP continuously and maintain it digitally for rapid analysis.

Within the CTCP, the HHC leadership tracks the maneuver fight and continually updates a maneuver COP on a map. This allows the CTCP to depict all moving sustainment assets in conjunction with effective communication with company XO's/first sergeants (1SGs), forward support company (FSC) CP, and CASEVAC (medical platoon). Depicting maneuver and sustainment allows for the sustainment cell to see the flow of support and not jeopardize its assets by exposing them to the enemy.

A digital COP provides the sustainment cell redundancy and efficient tracking of information (i.e., ammunition by type). Compiling information digitally at the CTCP with secure tactical internet enables the battalion to immediately update its status with other battalion mission command nodes and higher headquarters. At a minimum, the CTCP prints copies of these products for the S4 to bring to the TOC for planning; they can also be brought to an LRP meeting for the companies.

Both digital and analog COPs complement each other with redundancy if the combat trains is on the move. Distributing this information rapidly/real time allows for a shared understanding. Maintaining a sustainment COP and a maneuver COP allows sustainers to nest logistics planning, execution, and forecasting. It is the S4's goal to maintain a sustainment COP tracking the same information at the company CPs, battalion TOC, CTCP, field trains command post (FTCP), and brigade support area (BSA) for shared understanding.

**Logistics Estimates: How We Forecast Logistics**

The S4's input during the military decision-making program (MDMP) primarily comes from the logistics estimate. It is a continuous process that begins during mission analysis and continually updates through mission completion. The logistics estimate is the essential method for forecasting sustainment requirements 48-72 hours out. The logistics estimate does not have a doctrinal format at the brigade level; however, it must at a minimum address the following areas: requirements, capabilities, comparison, shortfalls, analysis, and solutions.

The first step in the process is to determine the logistical requirements for the mission. First, understand the mission and



***Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment assemble a casualty collection point at Fort Irwin, CA, on 10 February 2018.***

Photo by SPC Courtney Hubbard

all units involved to include organic, attached, and assigned units requiring support. Although estimates are continuous, the planning process brings on a change of requirements when a new mission is received. Compile a list of all specified and implied tasks to determine requirements for supplies, equipment, and personnel. Determine who needs support where and when it is needed; then conduct a time/distance analysis to develop triggers. Lastly, determine needs for critical and emergency resupplies required for mission success.

Automated systems such as Operational Logistics (OPLOG) Planner or the Combined Arms Support Command's (CASCOM's) logistics estimate spreadsheet program are tools to estimate requirements. Planning factors from the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Student Text (ST) 101-6 determine estimates for consumption rates and other systems. Units at all levels capture historical data to develop trends. Brigade and higher levels capture logistics estimates with these methods; however, the S4, medical officer (MEDO), and S1 may apply these tools for battalion sustainment planning.

The sustainment COP captures all of the information for real-time status. Meanwhile, logistics estimates determine the unit's capabilities and needs. Determining the unit's capabilities is not entirely complete until analysis is complete on supply capability in terms of storage, distribution, and transportation. Additionally, the battalion's capability can be determined by considering the current and projected status of each company during execution.

Take the estimated requirements and capabilities and compare them to determine the battalion's shortfalls. Shortfalls may occur in terms of supply, storage, distribution, and transportation. Shortfalls may also come from personnel,

equipment, vehicles, or maintenance. A shortfall might also arise with complex terrain, short time, or inadequate facilities. Compile all shortfalls and at what point in the operation the shortfall will likely occur.

Whether or not there are shortfalls, the analysis process must continue for all support operations. The logistics estimate nests within the battalion's courses of action (COAs) and how each COA would affect the ability to conduct sustainment operations. The S4 must determine when the operation begins, how much time there is to prepare, the purpose and priorities of support, the duration, and if it can be supported from a forward or fixed location. When identifying a shortfall, the FSC commander is likely involved with the S4 to first attempt to solve the problem/shortfall and secondly find resources within the brigade to solve it. The goal is to build internal solution before requesting higher headquarters for assistance. Never assume that higher headquarters can provide the additional capability needed to solve shortfalls. Continually work internally with the battalion to build solutions before requesting for higher support.

### **Sustainment Planning: The Essential Needs of Resupply, Recover, and CASEVAC**

Sustainment planning is continuous in a maneuver battalion as casualties, maintenance, or supply issues can occur at any time. The FSC commander, S4, MEDO, and S1 must remain flexible and simplify plans. Having contingencies, alternate routes, locations, and emergency resupply are crucial for the unit's success. Just as maneuver staff plans different COAs, the sustainment cell needs to look at operations the same way and nest its plans. The enemy may force maneuver units to change

their operations, thus sustainment plans must be adaptive.

In wide area security or stability operations, an S4 must focus on flexibility for support in planning. Over time, trends, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and schedules will assist in planning and execution. During offensive operations in a decisive action fight, the sustainment plan must balance speed and flexibility to support forward units while ensuring that assets/supplies are protected. In the decisive action defense, construction materials become imperative for reinforcing survivability and counter-mobility obstacles. Planners should consider caching ammunition and prepositioning recovery assets with company trains forward behind battle positions. Similarly, in wide area security missions, forward operating bases and outposts can always use more supplies for defense.

The S4 should always have a thorough understanding of mission, tactical plans, commander's intent, and the brigade's sustainment plan. The sustainment planner should always think: priority of support by unit, by weapon system, and by class of supply. There are three primary elements of sustainment that take priority in sustainment planning: CASEVAC, resupply, and recovery. Sustainment leaders must methodically plan for these elements; otherwise, the battalion will fail.

### **Synchronization and Integration: Higher, Adjacent, Subordinate, and the WFFs**

The battalion XO/S4 must ensure that the sustainment plan is synchronized with the operation and assets are integrated with maneuver. The sustainment cell must avoid planning in a vacuum. Intelligence drives maneuver, maneuver drives sustainment, and sustainment dictates all. This WFF determines whether or not maneuver can be accomplished by its capability to support. Similarly, the S4 cannot conjure up any sustainment plan without the support and confirmation by the FSC commander. The S4 plans and supervises, but it is the FSC that executes the logistics/maintenance and the medical platoon that executes CASEVAC.

MDMP allows for the sustainment planners to integrate themselves and synchronize their efforts with the other WFFs. Other than maneuver, particular attention should always be made for intelligence, as the enemy situation during planning and execution affects the sustainment locations, routes, and timing.

During logistics estimates, shortfalls may occur that require higher support from brigade at the BSA. The S4 is responsible for this coordination but may have to get the battalion XO involved. It is crucial that the MEDO understands and synchronizes the CASEVAC plan with brigade. If the FSC commander is with the field trains, it is easier for him/her to engage with the SPO cell at the BSA. Maneuver leaders often overlook that the SPO will best be able to solve sustainment shortfalls; therefore, the FSC commander can best interact with the SPO.

There are times that may require a battalion S4 to support or reach out to adjacent battalions. Maintain a tactical cross-load mindset when looking at classes of supply in each of the battalions. Additionally, when units within the battalion are

detached or attached, the S4 must understand the command support relationship to ensure they are adequately supported.

Bottom-up refinement and coordination with company XO/1SGs are needed for complete plans. It is good practice to receive bottom-up refinement during logistics synchronization (LOGSYNC) meetings on the radio and LRP meetings. In both of these instances, the S4 can receive feedback on what he/she is planning rather than blindsiding companies during an order.

### **Sustainment Plan: Paragraph IV, Overlays, and Rehearsals**

The routine sustainment plan must be adjusted to the final operations plan from all the previous steps of sustainment operations. A sustainment planner should think similarly to a maneuver commander who executes with a decision support matrix. The sustainment cell develops triggers to launch emergency resupply, recovery assets, and CASEVAC assets (for example, a company down to 50-percent ammunition, three or more mobility damaged vehicles, or a mass-casualty event requiring transportation assets). The sustainment plan is the output in this process to give back to the companies for their input in reporting. There are three essential medians for information to ensure that the plan is complete: the order, the overlay, and the sustainment rehearsal.

Brief sustainment plans with as much detail as any base order. The most practical way to brief the sustainment plan during the operation order (OPORD) is to brief with graphics or on a terrain model for a common understanding. Supply, recovery, and CASEVAC situations are always evolving and non-contiguous. Sustainment planners should always describe the following in the plan by phase: supply status (by class, actual vs. predicted), plan for resupply, recovery plan, transportation plan as needed, casualty estimates, CASEVAC, mass-casualty events, decontamination, mortuary affairs, special equipment, enemy prisoner of war (EPW) collection, and captured equipment/intel handling. Some of these may be in a unit SOP, but units often neglect to remember if they do not encounter them.

The sustainment planner must graphically depict the information briefed in the OPORD. If it is a fragmentary order or short planning timeline, planners must at least be able to brief off of the map, which will allow them to ensure that locations, routes, and asset locations are feasible. With a map, the S4/MEDO must create a sustainment overlay that depicts primary/alternate/CBRNE (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives) "dirty" routes, sustainment nodes (CTCP/FTCP/forward aid station [FAS]/main aid station [MAS]/Role II), ambulance exchange points (AXPs), helicopter landing zones (HLZs), time/distance analysis, and locations of any other logistical/medical assets. A sustainment overlay on a JCR may be shared across the force and updated in real time.

The sustainment rehearsal is where the battalion S4, company XO, and FSC leadership brief their understanding of the recovery and resupply plan while the 1SGs and MEDO brief their CASEVAC plans. The S4, FSC commander, and MEDO primarily come together to cover these concepts;

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meanwhile, the battalion XO and command sergeant major (CSM) supervise and approve the concepts and scheme of support. The sustainment rehearsal typically follows the battalion rehearsal and can use the same terrain model as the battalion rehearsal. All graphics from the sustainment overlay need to be reflected on the terrain model. Contingencies for reduced capabilities, branch plans, and sustainment plans nested with alternate maneuver COAs require attention during this rehearsal. The final outcome is that all echelons are able to get the warfighters what they need at the right place and the right time, saving lives.

### **Combat Trains Vs. CTCP: The Difference**

All leaders must remember that the combat trains is made up of several elements that include the FSC and HHC. First is the unit maintenance platoon consisting of several shops and capabilities, and inside their footprint is their CP — the UMCP. The medical platoon consists of the battalion aid station (BAS) that may split with the FAS and the MAS. Recovery assets as well as an emergency resupply of water, food, fuel, and ammunition are commonly located with the combat trains. If the battalion wishes to receive hot meals, the field feeding team is best facilitated with the combat trains based on the number of logistics package rotations and refrigeration units. Lastly, a technique to provide security for the combat trains is to utilize the battalion's reserve platoon. If not, the HHC commander must find a way to maintain and resource security internally. All of these elements comprise the combat trains. It is easiest to look at it as the battalion FOB and the HHC commander as the FOB "mayor." The large footprint requires a CP to synchronize all of these assets to support the battalion; therefore, this is the CTCP.

When looking at the combat trains, location and layout are key. The combat trains should not be visible by the enemy, dispersed, and tied into the terrain for security. Terrain must not be overly restrictive since the unit maintenance platoon and the BAS require avenues of approach and flat terrain to operate. The HHC commander must select a site that maintains a balance between functionality and security. The layout of the combat trains should have the aid station closest to the main supply route with access in and out for rapid CASEVAC and treatment. Routes need to exist (or be made) with the combat trains for traffic flow, and an entry control point (ECP) can be made/manned as applicable. Combat trains and BSAs should use signs to direct units and attachments for ease of traffic flow and situational awareness. Security should constantly be adjusted with sector sketches made, casualty collection points set, fighting positions dug, C-wire laid, and amenities added. The concept of the combat trains is simple. It is the beginning of an austere battalion FOB, and as time continues the position improves until it becomes a FOB. When it moves, establishment and security start over and do not end until complete.

At the heart of the combat trains is the CTCP. It maintains several functions and it is best broken down into four elements: the base defense operations center, HHC CP, tertiary battalion TOC, and the administrative and logistics center (ALOC). The HHC commander must look at how to layout the CTCP to allow for these functions to work. Typically, it is best to break up the

CTCP in halves with one acting as the ALOC and the other covering CP and TOC operations. Manning this CP presents difficulty, and a battalion XO must look to support the HHC commander and S4. Enough manpower must be allocated to staff the CP while allowing for sustainment personnel to conduct planning and operations. The HHC commander must devote time to ensure this capability exists, rehearse set-up/tear-down, and stress the systems during field training exercises.

The key roles players of the CTCP include but are not limited to the HHC commander, HHC 1SG, S4 OIC/NCOIC, S1 OIC/NCOIC, and FSC XO. The MEDO and maintenance platoon leader are involved with administratively supporting and reporting to the CTCP along with any other leadership. The FSC commander often does not look to involve the FSC XO at the CTCP; however, the XO is crucial to support the FSC elements and improve coordination with the UMCP, FTCP, field feeding, and emergency resupply. The FSC XO advises the S4 on logistics while the HHC commander advises both on maneuver. The S4 is the supervisor for all these sustainment nodes and needs to draw in the S1, MEDO, and FSC leadership to get them all the information they need to plan and execute. The HHC 1SG focuses on security and running the combat trains while the HHC commander focuses on commanding and running the CP. The HHC commander constantly monitors the battalion situation and plans to always be prepared to assume the role of the tertiary TOC and fourth in command of the battalion.

### **S4 and the Sustainment Cell: A Crucial Team**

The heart of all battalion sustainment planning is the battalion S4. However, each leader's input solidifies the battalion's sustainment cell and plan. The leaders mentioned throughout this article hold crucial tasks and purposes, and each must have clear duties and responsibilities. Tempers flare and personalities clash in any environment, austere or garrison. Even if these personnel reside in different garrison units, this concept of sustainment planning and operations requires everyone to work together. The battalion must not let a deployment or training center rotation be the first time these leaders work together. Leaders must delegate and mentor subordinates to execute these systems. Most importantly, a battalion XO and battalion commander must assess their Soldiers' talents and manage accordingly. There is no maneuver without proper support; therefore, the S4 must be trained and mentored to execute sustainment, be prepared to establish the sustainment cell with the HHC commander, and most importantly, build a relationship with the senior logistician in the battalion — the FSC commander. The science of sustainment exists, but we must engineer it all together to create the art of sustainment and apply it to war.

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# American Leadership

## *Lessons Learned from the School of Hard Knocks*

LTC (RETIRED) BOB BRESCIA

Established leaders need to change their leadership behaviors to incorporate the needs of a fast-moving society, a highly inclusive nation, and a renaissance of Americanism. This article is not about leadership theory. If you want to study that, take a college course. This article is about leadership lessons gleaned from the school of hard knocks — at the rubber-meets-the-road level.

Established leaders have a lot of responsibility. Their role definitely includes an obligation to teach younger, aspiring leaders how most things work “out there.” This can be done in a number of different ways, but one way that usually-generally-normally-almost-all-the-time does not work is to preach, so to speak. I think we’ve all seen a variety of leadership preachers — they come in swiftly, eyes aflame with the gospel of their truth and sporting lists of what to do and what not to do. The allure is that they are entertaining and believable. The leadership snake oil that they sell is ineffective because only you can improve your own leadership skills and authenticity. Your life lessons come from your own “leadership crucibles,” not thrust on you vicariously by others. In the Army, where there is no shortage of great expressive phrases, we used to call those preaching techniques the “swoop-and-poop” method. It just doesn’t work so well because leadership is experiential in nature. You learn by doing, correcting, refining, and practicing.

We can learn leadership by listening to the stories of others and then internalizing and comparing those lessons to our own experience set. That can be a powerful leadership learning technique. When I was a young Soldier, I can remember listening to the stories that my basic combat training commander would relate to us trainees. They were all about what worked and what didn’t work when he was in Vietnam. I never felt compelled to write down any of his or my own musings about leadership or keep a diary when I was a young Army private in 1971. My desire to write things started much later in life — after having experienced a healthy dose of leadership on both the receiving (following) end and the giving (leading) side.

I recently made a new friend — someone whom we met in front of our house this year as my wife and I were greeting the many community visitors to our Christmas display. Balbir Mathur is a kind and venerable gentleman who had the great fortune to have a small group session with the Dalai Lama. Here is Balbir’s recollection of meeting the Dalai Lama:

*The central theme of the Dalai Lama’s discourse was that our world is passing through a very critical time in history. We have entered an age of shirking responsibility for our actions. This attitude has saturated our national and international leadership. We have become so focused on*

*the short term that we are losing the art of statesmanship. There is a growing crisis in leadership, which can lead to worldwide disaster.*

Like Balbir, the U.S. Army recognized the need for multi-level effective leadership many years ago and has been cultivating it ever since. The Army provided me plenty of access to achieve learning about leadership — good leadership, bad leadership, and every variation in between. I’m a graduate of the Army’s Airborne and Ranger schools as well as professional leadership officer training at the Armed Forces Staff College and the Army War College. In those schools, I was able to cross-check my leadership style with that of others in similar roles. What kind of leader was I — rough, compassionate, delegating, empowering? The thing about military schools is that they provide you a golden opportunity to learn a lot about yourself — if you are open to finding out those types of things. I wanted to know so I listened to others’ feedback and provided them with the same.

After a full career in the Army, a business career, and now a career in education, I figured it’s time to write about leadership so that others might benefit from my learnings and stories. What better approach than to go back in history to when I first engaged the cradle of leadership prowess — the U.S. Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, GA. Fort Benning is a special place for me. I used to joke that every time I went there on business it was always on the “wrong” side of post — the Ranger training area or the 44th Student Airborne Company, etc. My wife Marianne was a career Department of the Army civil servant and both her mom and dad (a chief warrant officer) are buried in the Fort Benning Post Cemetery. I’ve gladly visited that side of post to pay homage to CW4 Ira Hornbeck, a great American who served his country proudly, later going back into combat — this time fighting the cancer he contracted from exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

I should start by describing my Ranger School experience. I was in Ranger Class 11-76, which took place at Camp Darby, Fort Benning during the summer of 1976. The Ranger instructors called us the “Bicentennial Rangers” as our nation was celebrating its 200th birthday on the fourth of July that year. Our class was almost all ROTC cadets preparing to enter their senior year at college upon return (should they live through the experience).

Our Ranger instructors at that time were NCOs and officers who mostly had a solid Vietnam War experience behind them. They were stellar individuals. Here are some leadership lessons I learned in Ranger School that have served me very well in my subsequent careers.



Ranger School Class 11-76

**Bad habits are a choice.** I quickly learned that real leadership involves shedding bad habits that we thought were acceptable and then taking on new habits that are definitely better than the ones we shed. Ranger School was a platform for shedding bad habits — procrastination, self-aggrandizement, selfishness of any kind, and needless philosophizing. I learned that I could easily survive on much less sleep and I could also eat far less and still live (wish I could re-learn that one...).

Like most of the military schools with a proud history and a lifelong certification, entrants must be “reduced” to their most basic essence so that they can be remolded in the likeness of those who went before and proved their leadership under duress. Of course, I mean all of this in a figurative sense, but the idea is a good one. The reduction/elimination process is kind of a detoxification model that then allows you to assimilate great leadership behaviors that your whole person may have rejected before.

**You are your own leadership mentor.** I quickly learned that once our cars were locked up in that holding yard adjacent to the Ranger training company and we reported in to the Ranger School “reception committee,” no one there gave much attention to anything other than getting on with the training. There was no one to reach out to, no phone-a-friend, or anything else — it was all them and all you. Oh, didn’t you ask to come here? Well then, what’s with the deer-in-the-headlights look? Oh, you want to write a letter to your Congressman and tell him all about the nasty things that are happening to you? Sure, sure — here’s a pen and paper.

Of course, I had to be different and showed up sporting a nice mustache. Wrong — it was quickly removed and placed in an envelope so that if I wanted it back at the end of the training I could maybe retrieve it. I was bold and in the best physical shape of my life — we all were. I felt that I could take anything on. I learned that while physical prowess and stamina were very important, inner strength, determination, and mental drive were equally important. I learned the value of respect and service to

others in Ranger School.

**Serving others is what it’s all about.** Ranger School is the best kept secret of learning servant leadership. We had Ranger buddies and heck, every Ranger student in my class was more or less a Ranger buddy by the time we were in the middle of this nine-week course. I distinctly recall getting into an argument with another Ranger student that degenerated quickly, probably due to the lack of sleep we constantly worked under. The Ranger instructor took us both aside and threatened to deny us both of the capability to

father any more children during our natural lives (as well as the removal of other capabilities). He made it clear that if we engaged in that behavior, it didn’t matter who was right or wrong — we both would be ejected from the school. We both listened intently and I can assure you that I learned a great lesson that day — it’s not about you. Rather, it’s about everyone else.

If only we practiced that learning every day. It’s about everyone else — those who you lead, those who you follow, and others that you come into contact with. Think about that for a second — if everyone thought and acted to serve others, someone would then be taking care of you. So spend a lot less time trying to take care of yourself and more time taking care of others. Sometimes it will backfire on you — ignore those instances; they will become fewer and fewer.

I also learned that rank is just a pay-grade level — an indicator of the type of leadership role that you could possibly assume (breadth and scope) based on your time in practice and your other experiences. The best generals and the best colonels are those that serve selflessly and promote the achievements of those who work for them. Those are the ones that understand what leadership is all about. They are great Americans who practice multi-level, powerful leadership.

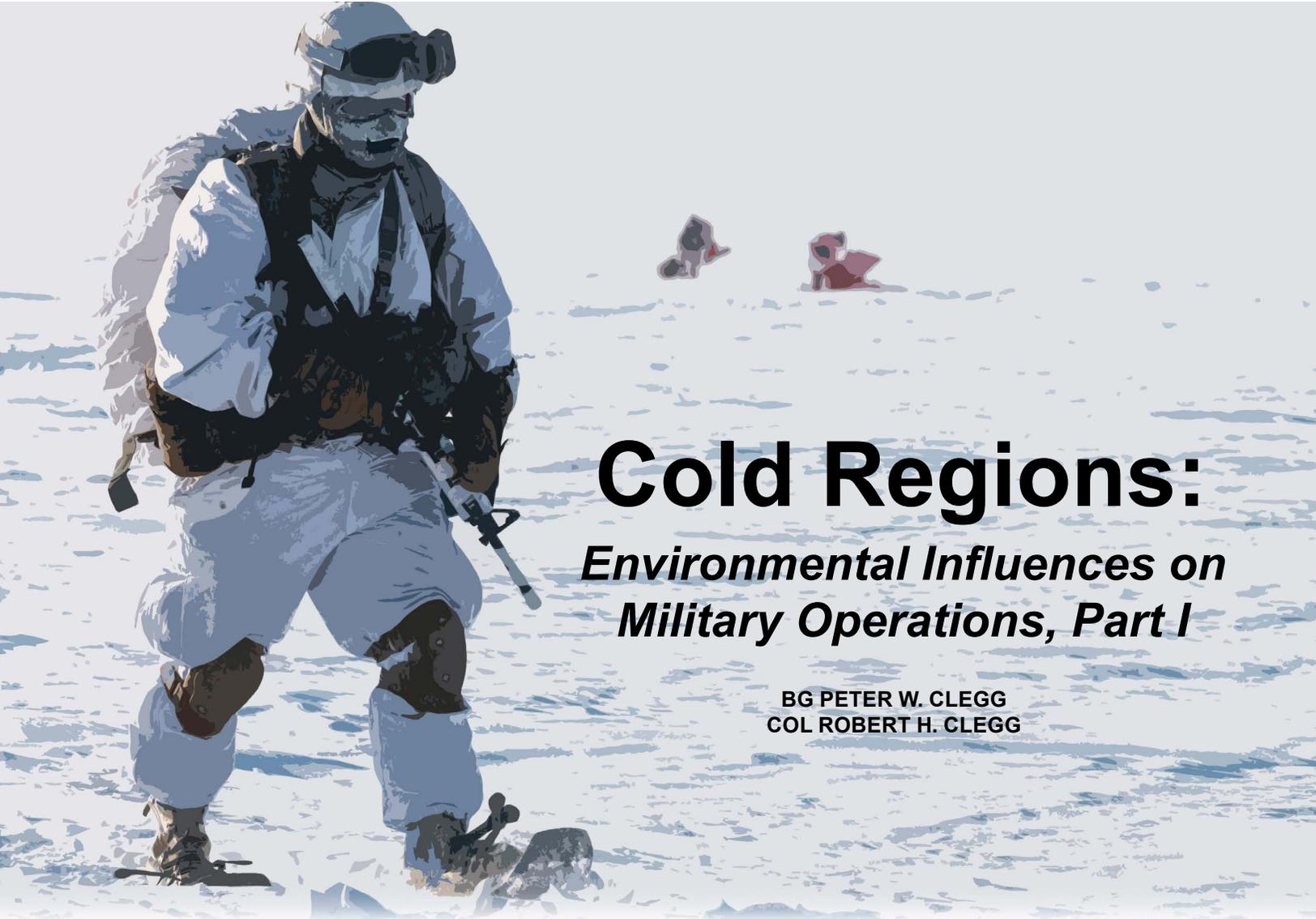
I want to keep this article short; I hate reading those long, drawn out ones, don’t you? Hang on though because the best is yet to come. The next installment of the American Leadership series will be here soon and you won’t want to miss it!

Rangers lead the way!

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# Cold Regions: *Environmental Influences on Military Operations, Part I*

BG PETER W. CLEGG  
COL ROBERT H. CLEGG

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Cold regions comprise some 45 percent of the earth's land surface. Population is sparse in most of the extreme cold regions. Some major world population centers do exist in the less cold areas, however, and these centers have considerable strategic significance for the United States for both economic and geo-political reasons.

Although fewer conflicts have occurred in cold regions than elsewhere in the world, those few conflicts have been devastating in terms of loss of life and property damage. Napoleon's "Grande Armee," for example, was reduced by 90 percent (more than 500,000 men) in the Russian heartland in 1812, primarily by the effects of weather. The Russo-Japanese War, World War I, the Russian Civil War, World War II, and the Korean War accounted for millions of fatalities. The Japanese takeover of Manchuria in 1937 also produced staggering casualties, and the Russo-Finnish War in 1939-1940 alone added 850,000 to the casualty toll.

The U.S. Army, from its very beginning, has experienced the rigors of combat in cold regions. Cold weather affected combat in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 on the Canadian frontier. The Army has engaged in cold region military operations in Iceland and northern Russia in World War I, in

the Aleutian Islands in World War II, and in Korea during the Korean War.

Today, the U.S. Army is fully trained to operate in cold regions. Such units as those assigned to U.S. Army Alaska, the 10th Mountain Division in upstate New York, and others regularly train in freezing temperatures and snow-covered terrain.

The Army also has two cold region training centers that produce hundreds of trained arctic warriors each year: The Northern Warfare Training Center at Fort Greely, AK, and the Mountain Warfare School, run by the Vermont Army National Guard.

The Army must continue to train for operations in cold environments because portions of our own country and other areas of interest lie within cold regions. Leaders must come to appreciate the effects of cold on soldiers, equipment, facilities, support, and combat operations. Before focusing on these effects in Part 2 of this series, it may be useful to look at some of the basics of weather and terrain.

## **Climatic and Meteorological Conditions**

Cold regions are those that are north of 40 degrees latitude in North America and 50 degrees latitude in Eurasia, and in Antarctica, the only cold region in the southern hemisphere.

Polar climates consist of the ice cap found in Antarctica and the interior of Greenland, and the tundra found in the coastal regions of Antarctica, Greenland, northern Iceland, and coastal land areas of the Arctic Ocean in North America and Asia.

These regions occur in response to the specific climatic controls — latitude, land-water contrast, mountain barriers, ocean currents, and altitude. These controls influence temperature and moisture and therefore atmospheric pressure and wind.

The primary control responsible for cold climates is latitude and its influence on incoming solar radiation, which determines temperature. Temperature is a product of solar intensity and duration. For regions north of latitude 23½ degrees N or south of latitude 23½ degrees S, direct sun rays are not possible because of the earth's curvature and inclination; the rays are therefore less intense. The dark winter period, combined with low solar intensity, creates a thermal deficit that the summer, when solar duration is longer and intensity a bit stronger, cannot balance.

Another factor that is responsible for cold climates is land-water contrast. Because land heats and cools faster than water, coastal areas are more moderate than continental interiors. The centers of Asia (Siberia) and North America (north of the Great Lakes area) experience bitterly cold conditions. Land-water contrast is made worse by yet another climatic control — the presence or absence of mountain barriers. For example, the northern areas of Siberia are flat, and cold air can penetrate south because nothing blocks its flow; in southern Siberia, mountains block warm air from the south and keep it from moderating temperatures to the north.

Ocean currents also contribute to the creation of cold regions, and Iceland is the prime example. The northern half of Iceland has a tundra climate, while the southern half has a much warmer “marine west coast” climate. The cold Greenland current flows south from the north pole along the coast of Greenland, bringing cold conditions to the coastal areas of northern Iceland. The warm Gulf Stream current coming up the east coast of the United States and then across the North Atlantic moderates the climate in the southern half of Iceland. (Actually, the mountain ranges channel some of the warm air north to Akureyri, Iceland's second largest town, located in the center of the north coast. Its climate is milder than that anywhere else in northern Iceland.)

Temperature, the dominant climatic element, controls moisture and pressure, which in turn determine wind. Temperatures

***Soldiers with the 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment move toward an extraction point after an airborne operation in Deadhorse, AK, on 22 February 2017. The unit's arctic capabilities were tested as temperatures with wind chill reached as low as -63 degrees Fahrenheit.***

Photo by SSG Daniel Love

in cold regions can get so low that metals become brittle, liquids become solid, and humans die. Temperatures as low as -100 degrees Fahrenheit have been recorded in the middle of Siberia.

Snow cover reduces temperature in winter. A blanket of snow can insulate and retain energy the ground has absorbed, but it can also reflect solar radiation so that the ground absorbs less than 10 percent of the available winter energy.

Temperature is also responsible for atmospheric moisture, which leads to precipitation. Higher temperatures allow for evaporation and for large quantities of moisture in the air, while lower temperatures inhibit both evaporation and the air's capacity to hold moisture. Since cold air cannot hold much moisture, even a small amount results in a high percentage; when relative humidity reaches 100 percent, condensation results in dew, fog, and clouds. With further cooling, precipitation occurs in the form of rain, sleet, hail, or snow.

In cold regions, there is little evaporation. Some precipitation does occur, however, along coastal areas and over the Arctic Ocean, and this accounts for the frequent fog and snow in these areas. (Surprisingly, cold regions get nearly the same amounts of precipitation as hot desert areas, especially polar climates where the average precipitation is less than ten inches a year.)

### **Terrain**

Three dominant types of terrain characterize cold regions — glaciated terrain; wide, flat, marshy plains; and mountains, which can be either spines of Alpine mountain ridges separated by plains, or coastal highlands (characteristically rocky with fiords and cliffs, as opposed to sandy beaches). Vegetation, drainage, and man-made features differ in each of these categories.



Glaciated terrain is terrain that was scoured at some time in the past by sheets of ice as much as a mile thick in some cases. With warmer conditions these glaciers melted and receded, leaving behind a series of unique landforms of glacial scouring and deposition. The scoured areas allowed for numerous lakes arranged in the direction of the glaciers' movement. The finger lakes of New York, the Great Lakes, and the many lakes of Minnesota are examples.

Glacial deposits include large linear mounds called moraines, up to 1,000 feet high. Long Island, NY, is a terminal moraine. Serpentine ridges (or *eskers*) and large scattered hills (*kames* and *drumlins*) litter the glacial plains. Many of the lakes have dried into marshes and now cover vast areas. Glaciated terrain is found in New York and New England, across Canada, the upper U.S. Midwest, eastern European Russia, Northern Europe, and Scandinavia.

Vast plains also characterize the topography of cold regions. Most of Canada surrounding the Hudson Bay, the U.S. Midwest directly below the Great Lakes, and the West Siberian Plain (east of the Ural Mountains) fit this description. The extreme flatness allows for marshy conditions during summer as rivers drain northward, fed by melting snow and ice in the mountains on the periphery of these plains.

Mountainous terrain includes high alpine mountain chains a thousand miles or more long with flat plains between them. In Alaska, the Brooks and Alaska chains extend east to west, bend southward in Canada, and become the Rocky Mountain and the coastal Cascade ranges of the continental United States. In Central Siberia and the Russian Far East, numerous faulted and folded mountain chains characterize the topography. Within these mountains are glaciers that carve U-shaped valleys. Lesser mountains such as the Appalachians and the southern Urals, which are more temperate areas, do not have these alpine glaciers, and their valleys tend to be V-shaped from stream cuts.

The vegetation of cold regions is varied and abundant, except in the polar regions. Off the ice cap in the tundra are short tufts of moss, muskeg, and lichens; to the south (but still in the tundra), shrubs and bushes predominate. In the warmer areas of the subarctic, the tree line begins with sparse, thin-diameter, needle-leaf trees. Moving south, the trees become denser, more varied in species, and thicker in diameter.

Thick forests of larch, tamarack, fir, and pine trees form the *taiga* or *boreal* forest (a moist subarctic coniferous forest that begins where the tundra ends). Conditions in the southern areas of the taiga allow for deciduous trees (mostly birch, alder, aspen, willows, and cottonwood), and farther south in warmer humid microthermal climates are mixed forests of evergreen and deciduous growth.

Few man-made features are found in the inhospitable climate of the really cold regions. More than 90 percent of the population is concentrated in urban areas, primarily because of the need for fuel, food, and shelter. Still, some of the world's largest networks of cities are found in the humid continental

warm-summer sub-climate, and man-made features complicate the terrain.

### Military Aspects of Terrain

In cold regions, the terrain and weather vary considerably. The constraints that polar climates impose on combat operations are markedly different from those of the more moderate humid microthermal regions.

In the far north, the lack of vegetation allows for almost unrestricted views, and relief is the restrictive element. The wide, flat plains provide ideal fields of fire and observation. The problem in these areas is finding elevations from which to observe. Thick fog also reduces visibility over the coastal tundra, especially in the spring and fall.

Farther from the poles, observation and fields of fire are inhibited only by terrain and atmospheric conditions, and vegetation becomes increasingly significant. Dense shrubs restrict ground observation. Dead space created by stream cuts and glaciated hummocky mounds must be covered by indirect fire. Once across the tree line and into the forests, observation and fields of fire are restricted, and trees may have to be removed. The lack of underbrush in the deep conifer forests helps ground observation. Cleared farmlands in the southern limits of the cold regions provide excellent observation and fields of fire. Since these areas are also urbanized, however, this advantage is often lost.

The clear, dry, stable air of winter allows for unrestricted views, but fog along coastal areas can last for several days and reduce observation to only a few feet. The numerous lakes in glaciated terrain and the marshes of the wide flat plains allow for fog in the spring and fall. At extremely low temperatures, ice fog that forms due to weapon firing and vehicle exhaust limits observation from the ground to altitudes of about 900 meters. Frontal storms throughout the year and blizzards in the more southern cold regions reduce observation temporarily.

Illumination is determined by the moon phase and the length of the day. In extreme northern areas, summer daylight is almost total, as in winter night. But a full moon reflecting the sun's light on blankets of snow provides good nighttime illumination. Clear, dry, atmospheric conditions help this regard.

Such conditions also improve the efficiency of sensors. Light-intensifying devices work well because of clear stable air, and thermal sensors are especially effective when the background is snow. One problem, though, is that the difference between the temperature of a target and the cold topography can make returns overpowering and identification tricky.

Glare is another problem in cold regions. Again, clear dry air and snow help reflect the sunlight, and glare can cause loss of vision. (Sunglasses help.) When snow blows all around (from helicopters, for example), whiteout becomes a problem. It distorts depth perception and sense of direction and results in deadly accidents for aviators.

In the isolation of the far north, any man-made feature is important and may even be key terrain. Settlements where a logistics base may be established, road junctions, river crossing



Photo by SSG Nathan Rivard

***An Army Mountain Warfare School student from the 10th Mountain Division climbs part of Smugglers' Notch in Jeffersonville, VT, on 18 February 2016.***

sites, and airfields are all important because they are so few.

The shelter provided by a village may make it key terrain. The battle for Rzhev during the winter of 1941-1942 on the Russian plain west of Moscow illustrates the importance of shelter in cold environments and how a simple peasant village can give the force that holds it a distinct advantage. A German grenadier and artillery unit occupied the wooden houses of Rzhev. Throughout the day, the Russians surrounded the town and launched repeated attacks, each growing more desperate. As dusk approached, even sheer exhaustion did not reduce the tempo of the assaults. The Russians were less intent on killing Germans than on securing the shelter of the town, but they failed and were doomed to spend the night on the flat windswept treeless plain. Temperatures fell to -63 degrees Fahrenheit, and the winds were strong. The next morning, a German patrol dispatched to search for an escape found most of the Russian soldiers frozen in the snow; those who were alive

were comatose. With the patrol's report, the German unit escaped encirclement without a shot being fired.

Mountain passes, river junctions, and dominant high ground can be key terrain, especially in the flat plains. During World War II in the battle for Attu in the Aleutians, the Japanese withdrew to the high ground on the volcanic mountains and allowed U.S. troops to land unopposed. It took U.S. units 20 days to root them out (instead of the three days they had planned), because the terrain the Japanese held dominated the flat coastal area. Soldiers of the 7th Infantry Division, pinned down in Attu's Massacre Valley, returned the fire of the Japanese snipers dug in on the fog-covered mountains, but to no avail until the battleship Nevada opened fire.

In the more moderate cold regions where the population is dense and man-made features abound, key terrain becomes more selective. A bridge, a highway junction, a tall building, a rail yard, an airport, or seaport facilities may be key.

### **Obstacles**

Cold regions have their own unique obstacles as well as those common to other regions. Using both natural and man-made obstacles, a defending force can make offensive operations extremely costly.

The terrain channels movement, and when winter weather effects are added movement can be virtually impossible. Summer creates different but equally effective obstacles. First, in the mountainous terrain where alpine glaciers have cut U-shaped valleys, the slopes are near vertical. Slopes cut by glaciers or streams (obvious obstacles in themselves) are often too steep to negotiate with vehicles or large formations.

In the flat open plains, the wide meandering rivers are also effective obstacles. During Operation Barbarossa in World War II, the Dnieper River in Ukraine and Russia was an obstacle to resupplying the German 6th Army, which was holding a front from south of Kursk to Kharkov. All the bridges had been blown, isolating the entire army. The German 88th Infantry Division impressed local labor and built an ice bridge over the river with blocks one to three feet thick. These blocks were laid on the already frozen river in temperatures of -29 degrees Fahrenheit. The weight of the additional ice caused cracks, but water that was poured in the cracks froze immediately and acted as a weld. The completed bridge was then hosed over to make it a solid four to six feet thick. When a 130-ton locomotive was driven across it, the ice structure bowed 18 inches, but it held and provided the 6th Army with a lifeline until spring.

Lakes and marshes are natural obstacles in glaciated areas and on the plains, especially in summer. In winter, however, these features freeze over and make movement easier. Although linear glacial deposits can be obstacles, they are not usually continuous and can be circumvented.

Snow more than a foot deep immobilizes wheeled vehicles, and more than three feet of snow stops tracked vehicles and foot troops. Engineers with front-loaders can create barriers from the snow. The Canadian Army's snow berm (some three meters high and 10 meters wide and iced over on the enemy side) acts not only as an obstacle but also as a fortification. One front-loader can construct such a berm 100 meters long in eight hours, with an additional four to eight hours needed to ice over the exterior. Compact snow and ice such as this can offer cover from most direct fire. A double snow berm can stop a tank. (The two berms should be three or four meters high. The berms should have 20 percent slopes for snow and 10 percent slopes for ice.)

Snow avalanches are also hazards that are unique to cold regions. These can occur naturally in 30 percent slopes, or they can be induced at the ideal time (when the enemy is below) by artillery or demolitions.

Minefields are difficult to place in snow, and their effectiveness is uncertain. If the snow is not compact enough, it may not allow enough support for pressure mines to detonate. The employment of FASCAM (family of scatterable mines) must consider this. Magnetic and tilt-rod mines work better.

Constructing minefields in the snow also takes longer because the snow must first be compacted, or sandbags and wood bracing must be used. Laying 100 meters of mines, for example, takes two platoon hours. If a tracked vehicle is used to compact the snow, this employment time can be reduced to half a platoon hour. Trip wires may be needed because enemy soldiers using skis or snowshoes may not put enough pressure on the mines to trigger them. Claymores and bouncing betty mines are the most effective.

Mines should be used with the wire entanglements; concertina wire is quite effective in retarding ski troops. When the snow is not deep, the frozen ground is usually hard enough to permit detonation, but in the warmer months, when the ground alternately freezes and thaws, the mines can be swallowed by a quagmire of mud.

The mud itself can serve as an obstacle. During Operation Barbarossa, for example, the German 24th Armored Division was totally incapacitated by mud on the East European Plain. Although thaws normally occur in the spring, in winter

(because of the lack of any land barrier) warm air from Western Europe can push the Siberian High east and temporarily thaw the black earth of Russia. Such was the case in January 1944. A three-foot thick oozing quagmire sucked up guns and soldiers' boots, sank horses to their bellies, and stopped vehicles. Almost 2,000 German vehicles were scattered across the mined route, abandoned, and later captured. The division was then ordered to road-march 200 miles north. At an average speed of one mile per hour, the lead elements finally arrived to engage and destroy three Soviet reconnaissance vehicles, the sole engagement.

Boreal and mixed forests are also obstacles. The close spacing of the trees and the thick stems prevent vehicular movement. Abatis and log barriers are ideal for reinforcing the terrain in wooded areas. In more moderate cold regions where urbanization is widespread, built-up areas become obstacles that can be reinforced by rubble.

### Cover and Concealment

In the tundra, overhead concealment is nonexistent, but ground concealment in thick bushes can be quite good. Terrain masking provides concealment in some areas. In the mountains, rocks and ridges provide cover. It was in the mountains on Attu that the Japanese soldiers found hide positions and cover, while U.S. Soldiers lay in muskeg pits filled with freezing water.

In the taiga, ground concealment may be limited because of the lack of underbrush, but the thicker trees provide good



Photo by SSG Nathan Rivard

**SGT Kyle Lebeau, a team leader with the 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment, 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain), supervises as Soldiers climb an ice wall in Jeffersonville, VT, on 5 March 2016.**

overhead cover. Farther south, mixed forests offer similar cover and concealment. The underbrush is thicker, providing better ground concealment in the summer. Where deciduous trees predominate, winter concealment is significantly reduced as the leaves fall. In moderate cold regions, much natural concealment has been stripped away for agriculture and urbanization. Urban features, of course, provide ample hide positions for soldiers and vehicles.

Camouflage in cold regions depends upon the season. White outer garments and white-painted vehicles provide outstanding concealment in winter. The Finns used white clothing to advantage in 1939 when their ski patrols surprised and destroyed Russian columns and positions. Without snow, however, this camouflage is counterproductive, and having two sets of camouflage complicates supply and transport.

Snow fortifications can provide both cover and concealment. Compacted snow and ice will stop bullets when it is thick enough. Tests at the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory have shown that walls two meters thick will stop most small arms fire at ranges as close as 100 meters.

Concealing movements is especially difficult on snow-covered ground. Tracks that are not covered by new or windblown snow lead directly to a position and set the scene for an ambush. Tracks also show on soft exposed soil and tundra vegetation, and tank "rooster tails" of exhaust smoke are readily visible for great distances. Noise and light discipline are also critical in the cold still air.

Avenues of approach are more clearly defined in colder regions. The glaciated and mountainous terrain channels movement, and the wide, marshy plains stop movement because of excess moisture in the summer and deep snow in the winter. Glacial features are linear in arrangement, and the terrain channels the movement of large forces in the direction of the glacial flow. In the scoured areas, lakes and marshes limit access routes. Mountains are usually in chains and bands separated by plains. The rugged, alpine mountains of the north preclude speedy movement. Movement is therefore confined to the plains between mountains, perhaps 100 miles across. Within a mountain chain, significant movements are channeled in the valleys. In glaciated and mountainous areas, it is clear that whoever controls the high ground controls the avenues of approach and makes offensive operations costly.

In the flat, open plains of the far north, the best avenues of approach are often frozen rivers. In summer, the rivers may still offer the easiest approach, but movements in any season are difficult to conceal. Hard-top roads are always key terrain.

Deep snow hinders trafficability by covering the terrain and hiding obstacles, ditches, rocks, stumps, and the like. Once the snow is compacted, ice makes movement treacherous.



Photo by Alejandro Pena

**Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, prepare for live-fire gunnery training at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK, on 16 February 2018.**

In fact, many U.S. Soldiers have lost their lives in training accidents involving ice. The first tank that drives over snow often compresses it to form ice, which endangers the following vehicles. A tank that slides on an embankment can easily overturn.

Wars that have been fought in cold regions have been among the most brutal in history. The force that adapts best to cold regions by knowing what to expect from those regions and using the various environmental influences to its own advantage will stand a good chance of winning.

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# Reasons for Instability in Bosnia

CPT ROBERT PEREZ-ALEMANY

In May 2015, I received the opportunity to travel to Bosnia as a cadre member with the U.S. Army Cadet Command's Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) Program. My mission was simple: be a team leader for eight cadets and help them immerse themselves in Bosnia's customs, culture, language, and community. The primary goal of the program was to teach future U.S. leaders to gain a better appreciation and understanding of other cultures in order to avoid the types of cultural biases and misunderstandings that continue to spur regional conflicts even today.

At the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the lack of understanding U.S. forces had for Iraqi culture and history meant leaders were unable to focus on key issues that could build stability in that region. When I arrived in country, I soon learned that Bosnia was not an exception to this concept since its history — just as Iraq's — is very much intertwined with its own current situation. There are certainly instability issues inherent within Bosnia — conflicts that have been hundreds of years in the making — that hinder the country's progress.

While in Bosnia, the cadets and I could see firsthand various issues we had only read about during our research. Bosnian society is divided between ethnic groups, and the political system is often bogged down in a stalemate. It is an unfair system, but in truth, what we see on the surface is only the consequence of actions rooted in the distant past. I am focusing this article on these underlying issues and possible solutions that could help bring resolution — or at least a measure of stability — to these areas.

If we are to have any positive impact in Bosnia, future U.S. leaders need to understand there are two important factors that hinder stability in the country: one social and one political. There are social factors that have roots seated in the well-known ethnic, economic, religious, and cultural considerations that divide its diverse population; and the political factors have arisen due to the unreasonably complex government structure laid down by the terms of the Dayton Accords. With these two variables in mind, leaders will have a better sense of how to help stabilize the country and hence bring hope to its people.

Bosnia's social issues are rooted in the past and stem from conflict between different empires and cultures. Its history is very complicated and a sensitive point to Bosnians, and it requires a brief overview to make its social issues more apparent. The Romans, Byzantines, and Ottomans have influenced the country at different periods over the past 2,000 years. Today, the remnants of these empires still live together.<sup>1</sup> Today's Bosnian wants to live peacefully with his neighbors, but the intentions of those individuals are immediately marred by long-standing ethnic tensions existing throughout society.

To better understand those tensions, let us consider the

three main ethnic cultures in Bosnia:

- The Bosnian Muslims (known at the Bosniaks) make up half the country's population and can trace their lineage back to the Turkish rule of the Ottoman Empire;
- The Croatians, who are mostly Catholic, have migrated southward into Bosnia over generations and centuries; and
- The Serbians, who were influenced greatly by the Byzantine Empire and are mostly Christian Orthodox.<sup>2</sup>

Today, some Bosnians still identify themselves first as Croatians or Serbians, even if their families have lived in Bosnia for generations. They tend to ally themselves more with the needs of their own motherland (i.e., their ancestors' homeland) than with those of the country they live in. Consequently, this causes tensions with the other ethnic groups. For example, Bosnia has received the attention of its neighbors throughout the years due to its wealth of natural resources. Croatia and Serbia, especially, have each wanted the country for themselves. At one point, at the beginning of the Yugoslavian War, the factions considered dividing the country in half. Indeed, Croatia and Serbia's desire to split Bosnia brought conflict within its borders.<sup>3</sup> While Bosnian Serbs wanted the country to align with Serbia, many Bosnian Croats preferred that it align with Croatia, while the Bosniak Muslims wanted the country simply because they had no other country to turn to.

The longest peace known in Bosnia came after World War II when Croatian military leader Josip Broz Tito became Yugoslavian head of state for a conglomerate of nations which included Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Kosovo. Yugoslavia was already established in 1929, but some of the countries had a hard time supporting mutual goals without taking Bosnia off the map. It was only after World War II when all members of this alliance were relatively weak that Tito took advantage and established social norms and maintained a relative peace that was to last until his death in 1980. Tito did not align with Soviet Russia's version of communism and allowed religious practice in the privacy of people's homes, but he also used execution and imprisonment to quell nationalistic fervor.<sup>4</sup> Those actions, though certainly expedient, came to haunt Tito's legacy soon after his death. Nevertheless, during Tito's tenure people had jobs and an efficient public health care system. Bosnia's economy was doing better than ever. To this day, one thing many Bosnians have in common is their love for Tito, which was evident when I spoke with many of the citizens still longing for the old communist regime. Unfortunately for them, Tito's death in 1980 marked the rise of nationalistic fervor, something Tito had sought to control since the early days of his office in 1945.

Rising Serb politicians began scaring constituents into believing Croatians and Bosnian Muslims were plotting a coup to take over Yugoslavia. Serb politicians then presented a



Central Intelligence Agency, 2002

vision of uniting all Yugoslavian countries, taking away their borders and turning it into just one nation. This vision later became known by the infamous term “Greater Serbia,” which evolved into an “either them or us” mentality.<sup>5</sup> In response to this vision and since the capital of Yugoslavia was in Belgrade, which was in Serbia and hence Serb-controlled, the nations of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia began seceding in the hopes of avoiding nasty entanglements and regaining their sovereignty. However, Bosnia’s secession backfired. The country did suffer (and still suffers) from an identity crisis. Consequently, when war broke out among the Yugoslavian nations in 1991, Bosnian Serbs, believing in their politicians’ rhetoric, also began a local war with their neighbors.<sup>6</sup>

Almost instantly, the war in Bosnia took a turn for the worse. Neighbors forced each other out of their homes; commanders and soldiers from different sides conducted genocide which was to cost thousands of lives; and massive destruction rained on villages and cities. The fight between states changed to its most rudimentary form: a people’s fight to protect their homes. A new and chilling course of action — ethnic cleansing — reared its head and evoked memories of German armies’ excesses in the Balkans during World War II. It was not until 1995 when the

United Nations finally intervened that the war finally stopped, but the damage had already been done and the trust Tito had sought to build between all ethnic groups had been destroyed. Because of the consequences of that war, Bosnia’s ethnic divisions and intra-state mistrust are more pronounced today than ever before.<sup>7</sup>

The Dayton Accords, the UN treaty that stopped the war, did little to dispense ethnic divisions. Twenty years have passed since its implementation, and Bosnians still find the accords a sore subject because it is part of their social problems.<sup>8</sup> The creators of the accords created two separate states inside Bosnia’s borders: the Federation of Bosnians and Croats and the Republic of Srpska.<sup>9</sup> As the title implies, most Bosniaks and Croats live in the former while most Bosnian Serbs live in the latter. Bosnia’s biggest social issue is an identity crisis, and dividing them between states only points out the issue further. Each state has its own separate flag, identity symbol, language, vocabulary, and even holidays.<sup>10</sup> The differences are so stark that when I was there with my team, we traveled between the two states and felt as if we were in two completely separate countries. Bosnia’s education system does little to support social stability and also divides children in their respective ethnic

groups and teaches them according to that group's perspective. For example, if a child is of Croatian descent, he will receive an education based on Croatians' perspective of Bosnia's history. The child will only see one perspective of history and grow biased against others.<sup>11</sup> This biased perspective is one of the reasons the war started in the first place. Bosnia's social problems have come full circle, and these problems have marred every level of its government as well.

Bosnia's politics is a byproduct of its social issues, and the Dayton Accords set the stage for a government currently in disarray. For more than 40 years, a communist regime ran Yugoslavia, but then the war abruptly stopped it from functioning. The architects of the Dayton Accords established an immediate removal of the old political system.<sup>12</sup> Unlike the Soviet Union, where the nation made a peaceful transition towards democracy, Bosnia had a rapid overhaul of its political system. There was no period of transition, not even to let its people adjust. Bosnia literally went from communism to democracy in a matter of days. To make matters worse, the architects of the accord split the powers of the government between all ethnic groups. That meant that although Bosniaks made up more than half of the country's population, they can only control as much of the government as the Bosnian Serbians and Croatians. The decision at the time made sense. Each ethnic group was afraid of the other, and no group wanted the other to have an advantage. The problem is that today we see as a consequence a decentralized government that does very little for its people because each ethnic group is only looking after its own interests.

Let us look at the executive branch of government as an example of the complications Bosnia suffers in its political system. To begin with, there are usually three presidents in charge of Bosnia, with equal power and representing either Bosniaks, Croatians, or Serbians, but there has to be one from each of the major ethnic groups. The concept trickles down to all levels of the national government. Everything is attempted to be split in three, and each group attempts to hamper the others' progress. They have different visions when it comes to state building. For Bosniak politicians, their goal is to move away from a more decentralized government. A centralized government would mean the executive power will focus only on one president, and it will be harder for government officials to block decisions. It is no surprise then that the other ethnic groups mistrust this idea. Bosniaks make up more than half the population and could potentially take over the whole government. Bosnian Serbian politicians, unlike the Bosniaks, favor a decentralized government. Since they are a minority, it helps them maintain sovereignty over their state, the Republic of Srpska, and keep the other ethnic groups from having a stronger influence in the government. Croatian politicians mostly fight to have a separate entity from the federation. They only find it fair since the Bosniaks have most control over the federation's government and the Serbians have their own state. All of their goals are not aligning and with no president willing to step back to make progress, a political stalemate results.<sup>13</sup>

As a whole, Bosnia's politics are much more problematic at

the state level. The Dayton Accords created an ethnic quota policy, very similar to affirmative action, with various faults and loopholes. In the Republic of Srpska, local government positions are occupied by more Bosnian Serbs than any other ethnic group. In the federation, Bosniaks are the ones taking the majority of the positions. Ethnic groups do not make decisions in a consensus. Rather, each state favors the dominant ethnic group in the region, thus creating friction instead of unity. The key element for the policy is to ensure that no group has advantage over the others, but where it fails is in its implementation. Instead of making a government organization where there are an equal amount of positions for all ethnic groups yet still working together, the accord's architects decided instead to not only have ethnic quotas but to also separate the groups. The result is a complete division of culture, one that we can see clearly between the republic and the federation.<sup>14</sup> When the cadets and I traveled from Sarajevo (federation) to Banja Luka (republic), we felt as if we had traveled to a completely different country. The attitudes were different. The alphabets were different; Banja Luka used the Cyrillic alphabet, while Sarajevo used the Latin alphabet. Even the language, which is supposed to be the same around the region, has its differences. It is like listening to differences between people from England and the United States. The ethnic quota policies just hamper the possibilities for change. The divisions are there, unfortunately, and they are more visible because of the issues we see today in the political system.

The social and political instability in Bosnia no doubt grows overwhelming for many of its citizens. The issues are more extensive and convoluted than what meets the eye. Bosnians either keep reminiscing about Tito's regime or they will not let go of the horrific memories from the Yugoslavian War. Though recent wounds may hold this current generation of Bosnians from moving forward, youth leaders still hope to positively influence future generations. Throughout our trip to Bosnia, my team and I visited two youth education centers, one in Travnik and the other in Orasje. What we saw was a definite spark of hope: young teenagers, all from different backgrounds, helping each other and their communities. They all acted like best friends, enjoying life and singing American pop songs. We were definitely surprised and humbled by the experience.

One of the youth leaders in Travnik, Amela Mrakic, expressed the importance of having these young citizens be active participants in their communities. From helping remodel children's playgrounds to organizing projects for teaching children how to cross streets, the values these teenagers develop will help them be better servants for their communities and aspire to make positive change in their society. I did notice, however, that these centers have rarely interacted with Americans before. Yet, we were already heavily invested to their cause within a few days of being there. In Orasje, we helped build a new playground open for anyone or everyone. In Travnik, we helped remodel three playgrounds that were also open to everyone. Which begs the question: Why don't we do this more often? The U.S. Embassy does not have to wait for U.S. cadets to visit every summer to support these youth centers. It can

potentially create a program to bring college students from the U.S. and help support the local youth centers in their various endeavors. It can also bring various secondary outcomes. It may slowly repair any U.S. and Bosnian misperceptions at the individual level, and most importantly, these students can share values of equality, peace, and the importance of tolerance — values that make democratic nations great. The embassy may also open the opportunity for Bosnian students to travel to the U.S. as interns. The possibilities are limitless. As allies of Bosnia, the U.S. through its embassy should give more support to these youth centers since we, as Americans, can also have a positive influence in children and slowly build a deeper relationship not necessarily with the government, but where it matters most — with its people.

Bosnia's social and political stability issues are important for U.S. leaders to understand. The ethnic divisions in this country are very much real and have become part of Bosnia's culture. As we learned from recent conflicts, it will be very hard to refocus people away from that mentality. It does not help that there is political instability, due in part to the Dayton Accords which do little to improve unity. The accords could potentially go away one day, but unless all ethnic groups start working together with each other, they will not. Moving beyond the

Dayton Accords is something only Bosnians can achieve. The Bosnians of this generation may be mired in their old ways, but these teenagers my team and I met gave me hope.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Moll, "Fragmented Memories in a Fragmented Country: Memory Competition and Political Identity-Building in Today's Bosnia and Herzegovina," *Nationalities Papers* 41, no.6 (November 2013), 917-922, Sociological Collection, EBSCOhost (accessed 6 August 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 917-930.

<sup>3</sup> Jasmin Mujanović, "Reclaiming the Political in Bosnia: A Critique of the Legal-Rational Nightmare of Contemporary Bosnian Statehood," *Theory in Action* 6, no.2 (April 2013), 118, Social Sciences Full Text (H.W. Wilson), EBSCOhost (accessed 6 August 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Anto Knezevic, "Childhood Traumas and Wars: The Case of Bosnia," *Journal of Psychohistory* 36, no.3 (Winter 2009), 265, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed 14 September 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Mujanović, "Reclaiming the Political in Bosnia," 125.

<sup>6</sup> Alex N. Dragnich, "Dayton Accords: Symbol of Great-Power Failings," *Mediterranean Quarterly* no.2 (2006), 51, Project MUSE, EBSCOhost (accessed 13 September 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Zoltan Barany, "Building National Armies after Civil War: Lessons From Bosnia, El Salvador, and Lebanon," *Political Science Quarterly* (Wiley-Blackwell) 129, no. 2 (June 2014), 211-238, MasterFILE, Elite, EBSCOhost (accessed 6 August 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Outi Keranen, "International Statebuilding as Contentious Politics: The Case of Post Conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina," *Nationalities Papers* 41, no.3 (May 2013), 358, Sociological Collection, EBSCOhost (accessed 6 August 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 356.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 365.

<sup>11</sup> Mujanović, "Reclaiming the Political in Bosnia," 126.

<sup>12</sup> William Hunt, Ferida Duraković, and Zvonimir Radeljković, "Bosnia Today: Despair, Hope, and History," *Dissent* no. 3 (2013): 23, Project MUSE, EBSCOhost (accessed 6 August 2015).

<sup>13</sup> Keranen, "International Statebuilding as Contentious Politics," 356.

<sup>14</sup> Moll, "Fragmented Memories in a Fragmented Country," 917-930.



Photo courtesy of the author

Cadets participating in the CULP program help build a playground in Orasje, Bosnia.

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# Book Reviews



***Scales on War: The Future of America's Military at Risk***  
By MG (Retired) Bob Scales  
Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2016, 248 pages

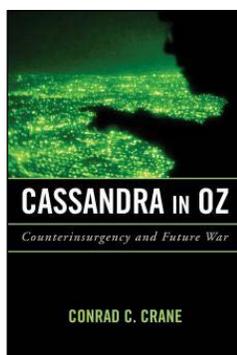
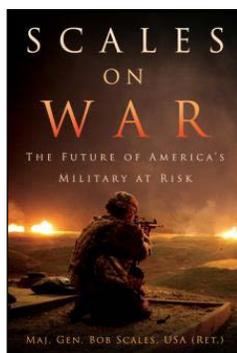
***Cassandra in Oz: Counterinsurgency and Future War***  
By Conrad Crane  
Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2016, 328 pages

Reviewed by LTC (Retired)  
Rick Baillergeon

For many years, Bob Scales and Conrad Crane have thought critically about matters pertaining to the U.S. military. They have analyzed the past and offered feasible recommendations regarding the near and far term future of the military. Along the way, they have dissected many aspects of the military including organization, strategy, leadership, and warfighting. Each have clearly established sterling reputations in and outside the military and in particular within the U.S. Army. These reputations will continue to grow as each has recently crafted volumes which are excellent.

Before I address the commonality between the two volumes, let me discuss the scope of each. The Scales volume is entitled *Scales on War: The Future of America's Military at Risk*. He utilizes the volume to provide readers with more than 20 chapter essays. These are a body of work the author has written in the past and they explore an assortment of topics. These include areas such as the draft, women in the Infantry, adaptive enemies, and forecasting the future of war. Readers will find many of these chapters extremely thought provoking and all are clearly relevant.

As the title alludes, Scales has crafted a book which does not paint an optimistic picture for the future of the U.S. military, Army, and the Infantry. Throughout the volume, he emphasizes two reasons, tied to one another, which he believes have chiefly contributed to this. First, the United States has an affinity for technology and that attraction has led senior leaders (both military and civilian) to believe technology alone is the answer to fight wars. Second, because of this reliance on technology, the importance of the Soldier — particularly the Infantryman — has dramatically diminished. As the author states in his concluding paragraph, "When the infantry loses its edge, America loses its ability to win its wars. And, very



sadly, that day is just around the corner."

While the Scales volume touches many areas, Conrad Crane has written a book which is a bit more focused and personal. Within *Cassandra in Oz: Counterinsurgency and Future War*, he keys on the counterinsurgency wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In particular, he focuses on the development and subsequent implementation of Field Manual 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, during the wars. Crane is clearly well qualified to address the subject since he served as editor and lead author for the doctrinal manual.

In his discussion, Crane addresses numerous topics related to the manual. The author initially discusses why the manual was developed and then the interesting process which took ideas to doctrine. Once Crane completes this, he then keys on the implementation of the doctrine in the field. Readers will find he does not sugarcoat his thoughts on how the manual was applied (or in many cases, not applied) in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Although the volumes vary in overall scope, they share several superb characteristics. First, both Scales and Crane write in very conversant styles. It is a style which is perfect in assisting authors in achieving their objectives. Additionally, the style makes these volumes extremely readable and engaging.

Second, both authors offer recommendations regarding the future of the military. In the case of Scales, he provides these throughout the volume. As highlighted earlier, the author is emphatic that the U.S. must make changes now in several areas or face perhaps catastrophic consequences. For those familiar with Scales' books, you are well-aware that he does not simply state a problem without providing a possible solution. This is true once again in *Scales on War*.

Crane is a bit more traditional in how he organizes his recommendations. He utilizes his final chapter, "Final Musings," to share his thoughts and observations on the future. As expected, the author addresses numerous subjects tied to counterinsurgency. However, he also delves into a wide variety of other areas. These include conflict termination, targeting, special operations, cyber, media, and military and Army reorganization. In total, Crane has crafted a superb conclusion for readers.

Finally, Scales and Crane have crafted books which invite readers to think. This is achieved primarily because of the two characteristics addressed above — readability and author thoughts/observations. The conversant writing styles and the provocative subject material are tailor-made for debate. Readers may not agree with everything Scales and Crane recommend or opine. However, in those cases, readers

are likely to develop their own solutions to the problems the authors examine.

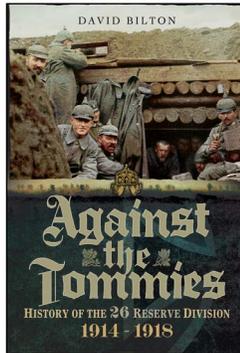
In conclusion, these volumes are extremely engaging, highly relevant, and incredibly thought provoking. Each of these books is a valuable read. However, I believe they truly complement one another. Consequently, I recommend carving out some extra time and reading them together. Once you have completed them both, you will have a far better perspective of the recent past and present of our military. Additionally, you will be enticed to think critically regarding the future of the military and in particular, the U.S. Army.

***Against the Tommies: History of the 26 Reserve Division, 1914-1918***

**By David Bilton**

**Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2016, 176 pages**

Reviewed by Maj Timothy Heck,  
USMC Reserve



**W**ith *Against the Tommies*, David Bilton edited and republished *Die 26. Reserve-Division im Weltkrieg 1914-1918*, a

German unit history originally published by the staff officers of the 26th (Württemberg) Reserve Division in 1920. The book is divided into a preface and two parts (1914-1916 and 1917-1918). As Bilton notes in the preface, the German army was under far fewer censorship restrictions than the Allies. As a result, “this permitted the production of accounts... that reflect what the German soldier saw and experienced, warts and all, in every theatre.” Some were published during the war while others, like the original text, were published after the war, drawing extensively on primary material. Due to the German’s relative lack of censorship, *Against the Tommies* contains a wide breadth of images capturing the daily existence on the Western Front for the men of the 26th Reserve Division through the war.

The photos contained in *Against the Tommies* are chronologically organized. As a result, similar images appear in both sections, allowing readers to see the evolution in equipment, the battlefield, and the men. The photos present life both in the trenches and in the rear. While a disproportionate number are of the division staff, the common soldier and NCO are readily prevalent. The enlisted soldiers are rarely named except for decorated patrol or squad leaders. Just as impressive are the photos documenting the increasing destruction of towns like Miraumont and Thiepval.

The book’s primary shortcoming is its lack of analysis. Bilton remarks in the preface that “the narrative is a mixture of translation... reduction and addition.” Given that there are only 12 pages of text and a bibliography consisting of two sources (neither of which is *Die 26. Reserve-Division im Weltkrieg 1914-1918*), it is hard to identify what is added. While the book is not designed to be a full history of the unit’s battles, it was surprising to see the entirety of the Somme Offensive, where the division fought against “at least six English (sic) divisions,” given only three paragraphs. The Battle of Arras only has two paragraphs, neither of which delve into the role of the division as an Eingreifdivision (counter-attack division) or how German tactics had changed by 1917.

There were multiple missed opportunities to expand the original text and provide a fuller understanding of the actions, men, and equipment of the 26th Reserve Division. As an example, Part One begins with a brief sentence saying 26th Reserve Division has an active component sister division but does not explain the parallel nature of the German Army nor the nature of reserve service in pre-war Germany. Such an explanation would help flesh out the context the men of the 26th Reserve Division encountered at war’s outbreak.

Bilton has opened up the visual history of 26th Reserve Division to an English-language audience with *Against the Tommies*. For those looking for more understanding of the men in the photos, it would be illuminating to read books like Peter Doyle and Robin Schäfer’s *Fritz and Tommy: Across the Barbed Wire* that explains the circumstances behind the images.

**Have you read a book lately that you think would be of interest to the Infantry community and want to submit a review? Or are you interested in being a book reviewer for *INFANTRY*?**

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