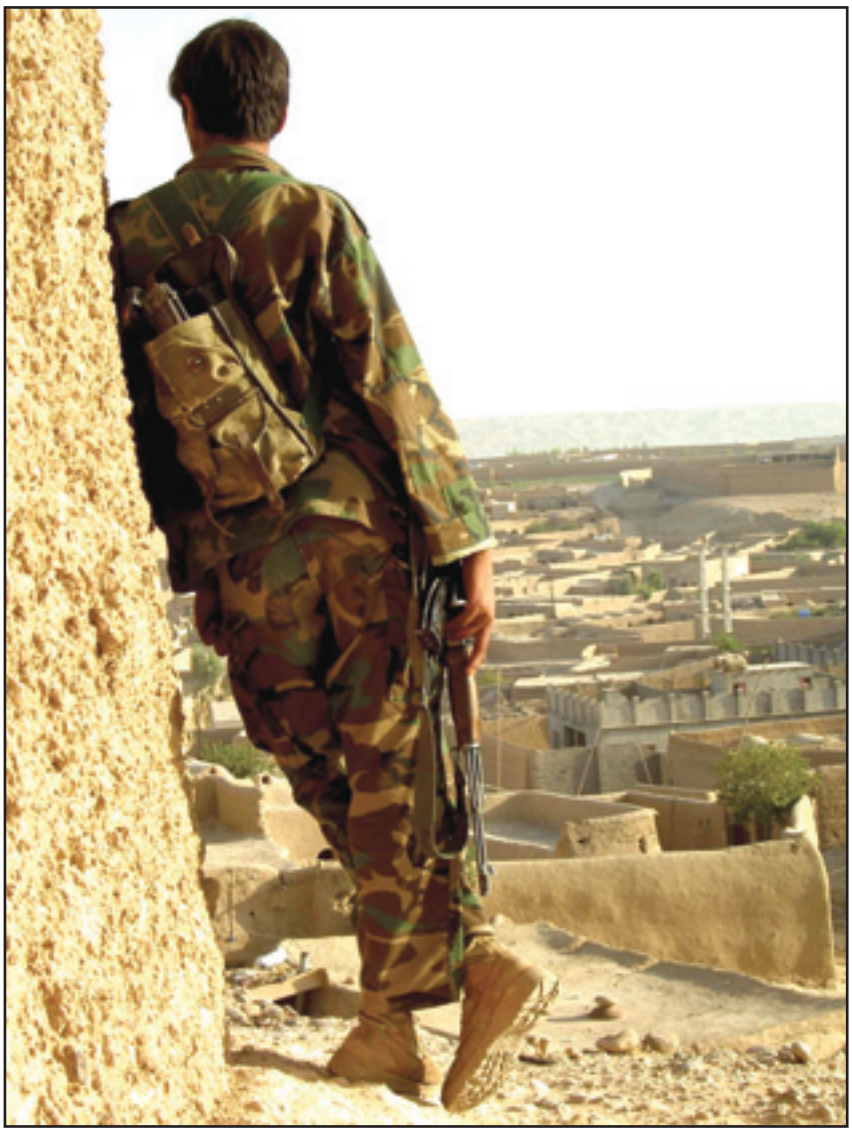
Contents

Contents



Afghan Soldier (Alexander Allen)

THE BRITISH ARMY REVIEW

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We have all got a lot to learn and we have all got something, which, out of own experience and study, we can teach. This magazine is to enable us to share the results of that experience and that study.

From the Foreword to the first issue (as the British Army Journal), January 1949 by Field Marshal The Viscount Slim, Chief of the Imperial General Staff

Editorial

Afghanistan

Over the last few months there has been much comment on the nature and conduct of the campaign in Afghanistan. The criticism started with the advisability of intervening at all. Although the advice on that decision was a matter for the chiefs of staff, we will all have our views. We are helped to form those views by the Chilcot Enquiry into the Iraq war which is being televised now, because it gives us the opportunity to see and hear those who gave the advice on that occasion. Some witnesses, like Major General Tim Cross, have written on the subject in **BAR**. Others will be less known to **BAR** readers but all are fascinating in their own way – revealing more about themselves than they had, perhaps, realised.

Part of the significance of the Chilcot Enquiry is that the decision-making process for Afghanistan was likely to have been very similar to that used to go into Iraq, which gives us a good insight into the origins of Op HERRICK. The one clear similarity which we need to dwell on is that we got off on the wrong foot on both occasions. That we did so was due to over-optimistic assessments of the situation. In the last issue (147), we carried articles analysing Op TELIC and we continue that exercise in this issue. This is not done as a theoretical exercise; it is to help us get Op HERRICK right - indeed, on 6 and & 7 January, the most senior officers in the Army assembled at the Land Warfare Centre to analyse Op TELIC with that express aim.

We know, too, of the considerable counter IED effort that is building up in theatre. That effort is part of a larger programme to put the Army onto a full war footing – Op ENTIRETY. For example, COs from HERRICK regularly comment on the time that has to be devoted in pre-operational training to those special skills which are not part of our adaptive foundation (general training). So, basic counter-IED skills, amongst others, will feature in recruit training. Such a move will allow time for more advanced collective training prior to deployment.

More importantly, this programme represents a major change in attitude. No longer are operations like HERRICK and TELIC regarded as aberrations; they are the norm. The implications for such a change are huge and are not without risk. Quite properly the Army has taken the view that the morally correct thing to do is to get the current operation right, if necessary at the expense of the response to a future but unknown threat. Hence the understandable concern of the Royal Navy and the RAF.

This is not the time to take counsel of our fears; it is the time for controlled boldness[1]. We have lost over 240 servicemen, mainly soldiers and marines, in Afghanistan – but we cannot use the argument that their sacrifice would otherwise be in vain. The big arguments are to do with stopping international terrorism from harming Britain, securing Afghanistan for peace and NATO credibility – the national interest arguments. Our more down to earth argument is that having been told to go there and do the best we can, we have educated ourselves in a way that we have not previously done and are slowly getting it right.

There is a real desire to put right the mistakes. And we can see that from *JDP 3-40 – Security and Stabilisation – The Military Contribution*. JDP 3-40 builds on the good bits from past UK COIN doctrine and the US Army's FM 3-24. It also takes guidance from many current writers foremost amongst them General Sir Rupert Smith (*The Utility of Force*). It puts COIN doctrine into the context of stabilisation operations. We can see today that we have barely moved out of the kinetic phase in Helmand Province, but, at last, with the aid of the thoughts that guided 3-40, we can see a way ahead. And that is what this major shift in the British Army's approach is about. We have built useful experience from bitter battles, now we can expect to put that experience more fully into use. We should be demanding in every area: good equipment (well underway); good training (post operational reports are largely complimentary in this area with some exceptions which are being addressed); good conditions of service (see next section); good leadership – improvements needed in strategic thinking (see Chilcot testimony), sound tactical leadership – probably never been higher across the board; and brought together by carefully planned and coordinated operations – much improvement needed in cross-agency practice.

Rewarding the Goal-Scorers

Junior soldiers, especially junior infantrymen, bear the brunt of the casualties and hardship on operations. In 2008/9, 38% of soldiers who left the Army left between the ages of 20 and 25 (*DASA - Table 9 - Outflow of Male Other Ranks from UK Regular Forces by Age and Service*). So, those that get hurt most are also those who receive the poorest reward – a recent Parliamentary answer showed that up to 20%[2] of soldiers in infantry battalions were unable to deploy for various reasons. Now, of course, like many organisations we reward on a seniority scale – those that stay longest are deemed to be the better ones and are better rewarded for their loyalty. Yet, should we not find a way of also better rewarding those 38% who do the difficult bit on operations and do not stay to reap the reward of the higher pay of long service and pension?

Not all organisations reward hierarchically. City traders get more than city bosses – they burn out earlier and get the bonus to compensate. Their bosses get lower but longer term reward, and status. Footballers get pay which is closely linked to performance. Club officials get much less - officials don't score goals. Reliable goal scorers in the Premier Division can almost name their price. As an army we need goal scorers – those who give tactical success. Without the players on the pitch (young infantrymen) the officials (most officers) would not get tactical success. We give our lowest rewards to the players. Just like football clubs did 50 years ago when players arrived at the ground on the same corporation bus as the fans.

If we try to re-structure the pay system we are likely to create distortions and meet our old chum – unintended consequence. Any conventional reform would face so many challenges that it would never get beyond the first circulation of the paper. There is one remedy – operational pay. The scale of the danger and discomfort and general disruption to normal life of service in Iraq, and even more so Afghanistan, justify a re-think on our traditional opposition to an operational reward. On Herrick 11, battlegroups were significantly reduced by enemy action and injuries – a company from 3 PARA on Herrick 1 was down to under 40 men at one stage. £100 per day does not sound too much for these men, recalling that the FCO staff in Basra each received on average about £32,000 as extra reward for the year.

However, and it is a big however, the nation cannot afford extra money – so what we face is re-distribution. Not all soldiers go to Afghanistan, and of those who do, not all face the rigours of the FOB. So, we have to draw some lines:

> *The sharp distinction between those who risk their lives in actual battle with the enemy and those who do not must not be blurred*[3].

Now FM Montgomery meant something when he wrote those words. They were to be acted upon. Life in Camp Bastion can be unpleasant but not as nasty as a FOB, so operational pay for them will be much less – and less again for those in Kandahar and Kabul. That's what we mean by drawing a distinction. It may not be simple to find the rules to make this work – but we should be able as an army to agree the basic principles of this one. There will be unfairness – and we have to live with it. We need a culture which sneers and jeers at those who try to obtain a reward that they should not get.

The other part of the 'However' is that we have still to find the money. All soldiers get the 'X-factor' every day but we know that not everyone earns it quite as harshly and justly as those in FOBs. A reduction in the 'X-factor' across the board is the fair solution – *the sharp distinction* – to fund this operational pay.

Post operational reports and other commentaries invariably reflect on the courage and commitment of young soldiers – 'humbling' is the usual description of the effect that these young soldiers have on the reporter. The words are good to hear but they are still only words – deeds matter more. Here is an opportunity to put good thoughts into practice. Over a career, officers are likely to lose out; young soldiers will undoubtedly gain, which is the object of the exercise: rewarding the goal-scorers.

Why Do Only Officers Get Honours?

There were 53 awards to soldiers in the New Year's Honours List. 45 went to officers, 6 to warrant officers, 1 to a staff sergeant and 1 to a sergeant. To corporals and below – zero. The non-operational awards system is broken because it sees no merit in anyone below the rank of warrant officer. Yet the operational reporting from Afghanistan constantly praises in the highest terms the performance of junior ranks. Are they so different in barracks that they are never worthy of an award? Surely not. For in the 1980 New Year's Honour List, Her Majesty The Queen was graciously pleased to approve the award of the British Empire Medal to 62 soldiers, of whom 14 were corporals or below. This year she was asked to approve honours to just 2 soldiers who would, under the old rules, have qualified for a BEM. **BAR** has been commenting on this oversight for years, it really is time that this was corrected. And we can correct it; it merely takes some interest and a little time by commanders to agree a quota for ranks below warrant officer. If we judge that expenditure as unworthy, then let us abandon the system for it is wrong to honour officers only. Morally what is the difference between officers decorating each other and those MPs who granted themselves undeserved allowances?

1 The founder of this journal, FM Slim gives, as ever, good advice: *It Pays To Be Bold* was reprinted in **BAR 134**.

2 11.5% were unable to deploy for various reasons (medical, discipline, pending discharge, welfare and under 18) and then a further 9% had limited deployability.

3 *Morale In Battle*, BAOR, April 1946 – for the full context see the reprint of this pamphlet in **BAR 145**.

New Editor Needed for BAR

The current editor, Colonel John Wilson, will leave the job in Spring 2010 after 8 enjoyable years in post.
The post will be formally advertised in time but anyone interested is welcome to contact him to discuss the nature of the job:
01985 223050; 94381 3050; armyreview@armymail.mod.uk; CGS-BAR-Editor
or Colonel Rupert Wieloch – Defence Studies (Army):
rwieloch.dds@defenceacademy.mod.uk; 01793 314845.

Articles

At Last. Obama's Vision Offers Hope for all Sides

Clare Lockhart

This article first appeared in The Times December 3, 2009 and is reprinted here by kind permission of the Editor and Clare Lockhart.

Now the emphasis is away from fighting, Afghanistan can start raising billions of its own revenue and educating its youth.

President Obama has got it right. After taking his time to wrestle with the enormous challenge of defining the US national interest in Afghanistan and its region, he has provided a credible vision of ending the war, stabilising the country and handing over responsibility to Afghan self-rule. His move away from fighting, endorsing General Stanley McChrystal's analysis, will protect the population and provide a security bridge while Afghan forces are trained.

No country can be run by an army alone. Lasting security in Afghanistan will be provided when Afghans can govern themselves. Mr Obama's speech balances nurturing Afghan governance at all levels with a tough stance on accountability.

This provides a framework for restoring Afghan self-rule. It learns the lesson that bypassing Afghan institutions and spending billions of dollars on a parallel set of organisations run by UN agencies, NGOs and contractors that leach capacity away from core Afghan frontline services does not work.

In my years on the ground in Afghanistan, I witnessed the catastrophic under-resourcing of civilian rule. In 2001, there were 240,000 civil servants in place in Afghanistan, staffing schools, clinics, irrigation departments and ministries across Afghanistan's provinces. The decision taken in 2002 was to ignore these public servants and the services they ran, by putting only $20 million in the Afghan Government's first-year budget.

This barely paid fuel costs for a month, let alone salaries of $50 per month or the costs of schools and clinics. Instead, billions went into a parallel aid system and into supporting warlords to run militias that daily undermined the rule of law. The net result was to dismantle functioning Afghan institutions; teachers and nurses left their jobs in droves to become drivers, assistants and translators. I had the privilege to work inside the Afghan Government with a group of dedicated Afghan ministers and their teams; daily they struggled to build up services to provide for a population traumatised by decades of war.

The key conundrum now is that an effective counter-insurgency strategy requires a legitimate government.

In the 2001 to 2005 period, a broad measure of trust was created between the Afghan citizens and their Government. This initial stability was created through a political framework that consulted the people, and through a series of national programmes: the health programme provided a basic package of health services in every province; the National Army's first unit graduated six months after the Service was created; block grants of $20,000 or more were provided to each village, now in 28,000 villages; a public works programme provided jobs to young men, and a microfinance programme provided small loans. These programmes should be expanded and new ones established.

The key conundrum now is that an effective counter-insurgency strategy requires a legitimate government. In recent years, the Afghan Government has lost the trust of both the international community and its own citizens. Requiring a set of strict accountability standards is an important way to restore integrity. Rather than proclaim the existing Government as legitimate, a better approach is to recognise that legitimacy is earned. Trust should be restored through deeds, not words.

Change needs to come not only from the Afghans, but the way that international actors operate. The aid system requires a thorough revamping, so that it no longer undermines the very institutions it claims to support. This will require measures such as limiting the wages paid to Afghan staff working in the aid system to the same level they would earn in Afghan ministries.

It will also require choices about which Afghans the international actors choose to consort with. A senior Afghan official described to me with dismay how, at an important national meeting, three significant figures walked straight past legitimate representatives who had been sent from their districts, and made a beeline for three warlords standing in the corner. This casual slight was deeply symbolic; the representatives left the meeting crestfallen.

There are three steps that remain: first,

Afghanistan needs a peace-building framework. There is already a reconciliation effort under way, aimed at bringing insurgents back within the political fold. A broader approach would seek to build on the broad consensus within Afghan society already expressed through the series of Loya Jirga (tribal councils) and the recent public discussions on the need for a restoration of rule of law and just governance.

Second, the fastest and cheapest way to create stability is to engage Afghanistan's youth with the skills they need to manage their own futures. There is a lost generation of Afghans, whose education was sacrificed to 20 years of jihad against the Soviet Union and civil war. The new generation — the 60 per cent of Afghans under 25 — fare no better.

Leaving school under-educated at 11, poor pre-teens make rich pickings for madrassas, the Taleban and the opium economy. The most cost-effective way to stabilise Afghanistan would be to invest in the secondary and advanced education and training of the next generation and find out how many medics, teachers, engineers, accountants, lawyers, construction workers and farming specialists are needed.

Third, Afghanistan can and should pay for its own nation-building. The rich potential of the Afghan economy offers not only the basis for millions of jobs for Afghans, but the means for it to collect the revenue to pay its own bills. The recent US Geological Survey report shows that Afghanistan has hundreds of billions of dollars of mineral wealth. It has significant agricultural potential and a thriving textiles and construction industry. It could also collect several billion dollars a year in revenue from trade passing through as well as taxes on business and land. Instead, this money is being collected illegally, furnishing the insurgents' and warlords' coffers instead.

Yet the most inspiring aspect of President Obama's speech is his picture of America maintaining its moral authority in the world through the way that it ends wars and prevents conflict. He speaks of an America seeking not to claim another nation's resources or target other peoples, but one that is heir to a noble struggle for freedom. And this offers hope to American citizens, their allies and the Afghan people.

Clare Lockhart is director of the Institute for State Effectiveness and co-author of Fixing Failed States. She served as an adviser to the UN and the Afghan Government from 2001 to 2005. ☐

Rhodesian Guerrillas holding AK 47s, December 1979 (RAF)

Pointing The Way Out: The Utility of Force and The Basra Narrative January – August 2007

Colonel I N A Thomas OBE
COS MND (SE) (Jan – Aug 07)

"There is no period so remote as the recent past".
Alan Bennett, The History Boys.

The Narrative

All of the inquiries into the conduct of, and lessons from, Operation TELIC (Op TELIC) will need to study the evolving context during the campaign and then the resulting narrative before coming to judgements. The danger of the series of articles begun in the last British Army Review (BAR) is that they encourage readers to leap to conclusions with neither the context nor the narrative properly understood. This article sets the context, as understood by those present in Basra at the time, and explains the narrative for a critical period of the campaign, from Jan – Aug 07, a period characterised by just shy of a quarter of the total UK campaign deaths, Op ZENITH (the reposturing from Basra), and the so called "deal".

In January 2007, Iraqi, UK and US narratives were running on divergent lines. Cohering them fell to the divisional HQ in Basra. The major task facing the HQ was to understand these narratives and drive a divisional course of action that kept within the tolerances of each.

Iraq in 2007 was still rebuilding itself after the destruction of its official organs of state by Saddam and then the Coalition. It was re-building itself bottom up, consistent with the Arab cultural dynamics of loyalty, whereby loyalty is to blood not institutions; it goes from the inside out and official/state allegiances attract the weakest loyalty. In this context, militias were potentially a cohering force in society, being a primary source of loyalty, a form of urban tribe, in an otherwise incoherent society. Every militia had its political party (more than vice versa) and also its violent wing, forming a three layered polity of the state institutions (the official state), and the militias split between their social organisations (the shadow state) and their violent henchmen (the dark state).

Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki greets Col. Philip Battaglia, commander of the 4th BCT (US Army)

The Shia-dominated Government of Iraq (GoI) was in permanent internal competition between factions, with Prime Minister Maliki at that time weak, constantly juggling allegiances and cutting deals to stay in power, and hence unable to stand up to the powerful militias, the Jaiysh al Mehdi (JAM) and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Republic of Iraq (SCIRI). This had particular relevance for Multinational Division (South East) (MND (SE)) with an essentially Shia area of operations (AO); the internal GoI power politics were played out on a daily basis here unlike anywhere else in Iraq. In simple terms, whilst the GoI was clear that the job of the Coalition was to solve the security problems, it could not always agree who posed the problems. In the US AO, the security problem was clear: the existential threat was (Sunni) Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQ-I). The problem in MND (SE) was that the Shia polity was not coherent enough to agree who the security problems were amongst the Shia militia; and even if authorisation for eg. a strike operation was gained in advance, whether the GoI stuck to this agreement after the event depended upon the local political reaction. The GoI wanted the Coalition out of the Shia south as soon as it judged it could contain the situation on its own; and yet nervousness about their ability to do this created an uneasy dependence they resented and which hampered everything the Division did in the south.

By January 2007, two provinces in Iraq had achieved Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC),[1] both in MND (SE). Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar represented polities dominated by an alliance between the SCIRI militia, the rural tribes and the local ISF whose personnel came from these tribes and militias. External/official/state loyalties were based on coherent internal/blood loyalties. This accommodation dominated local power, worked to the intent of the GoI and suppressed JAM activity. This 'deal' with local militias, based on them acting in accord with GoI intent, was recognised and accepted at General Petraeus' first Multinational Force Iraq (MNF-I) conference in February 07.

A QRL patrol heads towards one of the many border forts which are dotted along the Iraq Iran border (Cpl Ian Forsyth)

This pragmatism was eventually extended to Maysan in May 2007. Maysan was, as

it had historically been, a sparsely populated open flank that was out of GoI/Coalition control. The troop requirement to seal the border and cut suspected supply lines of explosively-formed projectile, improvised explosive devices (EFP IEDs) and other warlike materiel from Iran was beyond the Coalition, even after the surge. The border had no relevance to those who lived there, a 1920s British line on a map they did not recognise, cutting across their ancient tribal and communication links to their fellow Arabs and co-religionists in what the rest of the world labelled SW Iran (Arabistan). Without local Iraqi active participation, Maysan would remain untreatable. The pragmatic judgement made by MNF-I about Maysan was that granting it PIC would still allow surgical strike ops to take place as agreed by MNF-I and GoI but put the onus of governance on GoI. PIC was granted in May 07 and the last UK BG withdrew.

Basra

Basra represented the major obstacle to progress in MND (SE). Its shattered polity, reflecting the disparate sources of its population, provided no leadership to its people and the provincial council refused official contact with MND (SE) HQ following the destruction of the Jamee'at[2] over Christmas 06 (agreement to this destruction having been given by the Basra Provincial Council security chiefs in advance but reneged on afterwards in the light of the local, JAM-orchestrated, uproar). Every local Baswari source of influence was represented in the GoI in Baghdad, making every military strike conducted by MND (SE) a political hazard, thus limiting what could be achieved by military means. This divided loyalty characterised and permeated the Basra Iraqi Security Forces (ISF); as General Jalil, the Police chief, said in May 07, "[the problem] is not about training or equipment, it's about loyalty – and MNF can't touch that". Loyalty remained something only the Shia polity, in Baghdad as much as in Basra, could resolve.

Meanwhile, January 2007 saw MND(SE) hand over primacy to the ISF; henceforth, MND(SE) theoretically operated in support of the 10 Iraqi Army (IA) Div. Yet this same force was, by its own admission, riddled with sympathisers from every militia faction that might need to be confronted; some of the 10 IA Div 'jundi' were drawn from the same communities as the militias and were their kith and kin. Sharing of intelligence was impossible, detention operations were curtailed and the ISF was reluctant, and sometimes refused, to have joint Coalition/ISF patrols on the streets of Basra City. The Coalition presence drew fire onto the ISF; and the image of the ISF as the puppets of the 'Occupying' Coalition undermined their attempts to be seen as the legitimate expression of Iraqi/GoI nationalism. In this context, the presence of the MNF on the streets of Basra City was seen as working against the long term ISF goal of gaining the loyalty of the people. (In contrast, UK troops did embed successfully with 10 IA Div battalions when they deployed to Baghdad: the Sunni opposition clarified Shia loyalties and allowed UK mentors to be seen as welcome allies against a common foe.) Having said that, the evident popularity of the work of Operation SINBAD in cleaning up areas and injecting money into Basra seemed to have earned some political credit with the politicians; but the popular approval of Coalition activity seen on the ground did not always translate into political support and progress. What it seemed to buy in early 2007 was a relative freedom to conduct strike ops at an unprecedented tempo and scale for 19 Brigade amid ever rising attacks by improvised explosive device (IED), indirect fire (rockets/mortars) (IDF) and casualty rates on all sides.

UK Support for Op Telic Reduces

For the UK, domestic support for Operation TELIC had reduced rapidly since the 19 Sep 05 kidnap and rescue of the two British Servicemen in Basra had laid bare the extent of JAM and other militia infiltration of the ISF and Basra polity; and revealed the scant control of MND(SE) over Basra. The view from Basra was that by then, UK had already committed to Afghanistan, and UK political opinion and resource prioritisation increasingly favoured Afghanistan. We understood that an increase in force levels in one theatre necessitated a reduction in the other; a key consideration. Seen from Basra, it seemed that by 2007 there was a national convergence between declining political support for the Iraq operation and rising political appetite for the Afghan operation. The UK could not do both. In addition, as explained already, it was not clear that increased Coalition troops were necessarily the answer to a problem rooted deep within the Shia polity. Furthermore, the UK had deployed its reserve (the Theatre Reserve Battalion from Cyprus) in support of Op SINBAD (intended to be a "clear–hold-build" operation for Basra), and the sense was that UK had showed the Iraqis how to do it and now it was time for the Iraqis to show the will to do it for themselves.

> ...Op ZENITH was conceived with a moral forcing function, to leave a security gap the ISF would have to fill..... by forcing them to confront their internal political and hence security issues.

Accordingly, Op ZENITH was created in November 2006 to execute the re-posturing from Basra to the Contingency Operating Base (COB) at the Basra Air Station. It must be noted that the operation was endorsed by headquarters of the Multinational Corps- Iraq (HQ MNC-I) and its execution was substantially underwritten by Corps resources. In part, Op ZENITH was conceived with a moral forcing function, to leave a security gap the ISF would have to fill, so reducing Iraqi dependence by forcing them to confront their internal political and hence security issues. The UK necessity was to demonstrate sufficient success in Iraq to keep the domestic political support sufficient to sustain the UK commitment to Op TELIC and the US Coalition. Op ZENITH was to be the metric of success; and it was imperative that it should succeed. It would have to be (and,

importantly, be portrayed as such in information operations (IO) terms) a relief in place with the ISF, not a withdrawal in contact. The HQ was tasked to work within US tolerances but reduce to certain force levels by certain times, in accordance with Op ZENITH. These orders remained extant throughout the build up in 2006 and into pre-deployment briefings in January 2007.

The Surge

The US, meanwhile, had changed tack. 2006 had been dominated by a rising sectarian conflict in the US AO and decreasing US political support for the war. This culminated in the cross-party Iraqi Study Group report (which included consultation with Coalition, including UK, allies) that recommended in autumn 2006 an accelerated transition to Iraqi control across Iraq. Yet over Christmas 06/07, the President opted for a surge instead, to prevent the total collapse of Iraq and the defeat of US hard power in its attempt to create political change in the Middle East. The US not only planned to inject more troops into Iraq, but also declared they would stay there until the job was done.

On arrival in January 2007, the HQ found itself trying to cohere what appeared to be three diverging and incompatible strategies working to three different clocks (to use Gen Petraeus' memorable term); on each of the components of strategy, the GoI, US and UK were incoherent.

Policy. US policy was to stay as long as it took; UK policy was to transition to the ISF as fast as could be agreed; GoI policy was to get rid of the UK from the south - but only when it could survive without it.

Resources. UK had already "surged". US and GoI were focussed on the intense sectarian conflict centred around Baghdad with the 'minor irritant' of JAM (to quote a Corps' operation order (OpO) low on the priorities for Corps, ISF or MNSTC-I[3] assets. No 'surge' was on the cards for MND (SE).

Reality. The violence in the Shia Basra AO differed significantly from that in the sectarianly-divided US AO. US troops were a valid response to a war between opposed peoples. The target of the violence there was largely the opposing sectarian population; so there was a population to protect. It was not clear from the evidence in Basra that this logic applied there: 90% of the violence was against MNF, with residual violence based on financial motives; flares of violence between competing Shia entities were centred on control of resources, not motivated by nihilism (the energy infrastructure remained largely undamaged through the period). The conclusion drawn was that inter-Shia violence was self-limiting: fear of Sunni revival united all Shia leaders in limiting the amount of damage each faction would do to the other; the competing factions in Basra wanted a bigger slice of the economic cake, not to destroy the cake itself; the goal was for an Iraqi end state, no matter that Iranian sponsorship was accepted pragmatically as a means to an end in the short term. Unlike further north, the dynamics in the south appeared fundamentally constructive, if only the polity could be brought to recognise it. Basra's problems appeared deeply culturally engrained and it did not seem clear that foreign, Christian troops, with all the distorting influence these had on Iraqi loyalties, were the answer to Basra's problems. In any case, as explained, a surge was not an option; another way had to be found to deliver a course of action each country could validly claim was 'success'.

Military Goals

In January 2007, the HQ saw Basra as a fundamentally political challenge (foreshadowing General Petraeus' oft repeated comment that summer, "It's all about the politics!") and influence was identified as the primary objective; with kinetics in a supporting role. Intelligence efforts were re-tasked to prioritise politics over target acquisition. The application of force only had meaning in so far as it contributed to progress towards the political end state – an Iraqi self-reliant polity in Basra; this became the governing rationale for strike operations. Military goals were set as: reducing the influence of forces (broadly defined) working against the Basra political process, countering malign Iranian influence, training the ISF, executing Op ZENITH; with force protection recognised as being an enabling function, necessary to create the freedom of action to carry out activity essential to achieve the mission. Notwithstanding the constraints of the Shia polity, it was the absence of any political process that gave 19 Light Brigade (19 Lt Bde) such freedom to strike during their tour; but that resulted in UK forces having the highest per capita casualty rate in the Corps with consequent rising political concerns domestically. UK troops were most certainly up for the fight; the challenge was to give it purpose.

At one level, success was being achieved: Op ZENITH's reliefs in place were proceeding well. 19 Lt Bde's high intensity of strike operations paid dividends and appeared to be achieving the desired effects of: disrupting JAM; and demonstrating that MNF held the initiative and was reposturing from Basra at its own volition and not being "bombed out". This effort was capped by the killing in May of the commander of JAM in Basra, Wissam Abu Qadir. This spectacular success against a charismatic and extremely security-aware leader shocked and palpably hurt JAM, affecting its morale and throwing the organisation into some turmoil, diminishing its ability to launch coordinated attacks against MNF. After a brief, but intense and

General Sir Richard Dannatt (then Chief of the General Staff) speaks to General Mohan a whilst on a visit to Basra in 2008 (Cpl Martin Coleman RAF)

ultimately futile, spasm of retaliatory violence, which was absorbed and defeated by both the outgoing 19 Lt Bde and the newly arrived 1 Mech Bde, JAM entered a month long period of mourning and wrangling over who should succeed Wissam. This gave the movement much to think about, created room for manoeuvre and contributed to the energisation of the political process set out below. Furthermore, lessons had been learnt from the sacking of Camp Abu Naji in 2006 by JAM shortly after its vacation by UK troops and its handover to the ISF. MND (SE) plans, underwritten and resourced by the US Corps and closely integrated with the ISF, allowed the transition to the ISF of the Shaat al Arab Hotel, the Old State Building and Shaibah Logistic Base without a shot being fired, a credit to 19 Lt Bde, 1 Mechanised Brigade and 102 then 101 Logistic Brigades. Meanwhile, Maysan had been granted PIC in April 07 amid much Iraqi fanfare and MNF sucking of teeth but acceptance of reality. Progress could be said to be taking place, apart from within the Basra polity. It was only in May 07 that a Basra political process began and the means to assist it appeared: Mohan and the deal.

General Mohan was appointed in May 07 as Maliki's security supremo in Basra, taking charge of all agencies of the ISF. He was also charged with resolving the unhelpful status of Governor Wahili as a governor of marginal legitimacy, without the support of the people or even that of his own council. Furthermore, the GoI denied his legal status as Governor yet did nothing to remove him, thereby creating a political impasse with an embattled figure primarily concerned with his own enrichment and political survival. He was thus emblematic of Shia political ineptitude and inability to tackle its shadow and dark states, in which Wahili had considerable 'wasta'. General Mohan began a process of political engagement across the official and shadow states, inevitably - but unadmittedly - dealing also with the dark state. His goal, which was shared by the Division HQ, was to cohere the factions around the unifying draws of Basra's latent wealth, its fear of Iran, its desire for self-government and its fear of a Sunni revival. In the absence of clear political guidance from Maliki to the contrary, he chose to attempt to include all parties in an accommodation, the classic 'big tent' approach common to Arab tribal customs. In this context, he recognised that the presence of MNF in Basra not only provoked violence but was used to justify it: it distorted local loyalties by allowing the militias to mobilise popular support under the banner of resistance to the MNF "occupation". So Mohan endorsed Op ZENITH and was keen to see Basra Palace vacated. Yet he recognised the Coalition's worth as the ultimate big stick, so necessary in the Iraqi political tradition to be called on in extremis, a big stick he knew the ISF at that time could not be trusted to supply. The move of MNF to the COB would retain this big stick but, equally importantly, it was expected to reduce the level of violence on the streets of Basra to levels Mohan felt the ISF could handle. His target date for his schemes was the promised but unscheduled provincial elections.

> The move of MNF to the COB would retain this big stick

This gave a political context and purpose to the operations of the newly arrived 1 Mech Bde. MNF operations had to be consistent with this new-found political process. Operations began to be cleared through Mohan to ensure consistency. This remained subject to MNF judgement not Mohan's veto; but the Iraqi political fall-out, and rebukes from the Corps, from previous contraventions of Iraqi political sensitivities, gave weight to Mohan's preferences. Mohan recognised that some sort of confrontation with JAM would be needed, and this would be best done by the ISF rather than MNF, but he recognised the current shortcomings of the ISF. So he wished to buy time and space to build up ISF capability; this provided the focus for MND(SE) activity – training and mentoring the ISF.

Dealing with JAM

Coincident upon Mohan's arrival, an interlocutor in JAM was found who offered to contribute to GoI, UK and hence US goals, by taking the majority of the violent opposition to MNF out of the fight. This created the possibility of

buying Mohan's political machinations time and space. The interlocutor and many of his followers were in the COB detention centre; that gave the Division 'hard power' over him. More importantly for the long term, and the Iraqi end-state, was the 'soft power' of attraction. He was a known anti-Iranian with a strong following within JAM, who appeared to share the same aspirations for Basra as the MNF and GoI – increased development, prosperity, education, religious moderation, and Iraqi control. His motivation for attacking the MNF was that they were "the Occupiers"; the counter argument was that the MNF would leave when Maliki ordered them to - the Iranians wouldn't. The objective was a cessation of violence between the MNF and his members on the basis that they undertook to support the political process and development in Basra, oppose Iranian influence – especially the Iranian backed JAM Special Groups (terrorist cells who accounted for a significant number of lethal attacks against coalition forces) - and, on meeting those conditions, gain release.

Major Hancock, The Royal Anglian Regiment commander of the UK MITT Group attached to 50 Bde, Iraqi Army during Operation Charge of the Knights-14 in Basrah City, 18-19th June, 2008. Op TELIC 12 (Cpl Rob Knight)

It is important to note that it was not the intent that MNF operations should in any way be circumscribed by, or beholden to, the interests of the JAM interlocutor. Any concessions made were on the strict conditionality that he delivered his side of the bargain; otherwise, his group was subject to MNF action as before. The package was negotiated by MND (SE), agreed by GoI representatives including Mohan, authorised by the US chain of command, and cleared through Her Majesty's Government (HMG). It was agreed in mid-August 07.

British Mastiff armoured vehicles on patrol during Operation Charge of the Knights-14 in Basrah City with the UK Military Transition Team (MITT) Group attached to 50 Brigade, Iraqi Army in June 2008.

Others must pick up the narrative from then on. From UK, it appeared that the violence fell off, MNF were successfully relieved in place in Basra Palace in September, development improved and PIC was granted to Basra in December 2007, a US/GoI endorsement of improvements in conditions in Basra; as one Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) observer was heard to say, "At the start of 2007, we couldn't wait to get out; now we're wondering how long we can stay." Critically, the UK political support for Op TELIC was sustained and the Coalition continued. UK, US and GoI narratives seemed to have been aligned. Neither the radicalisation that took place in early 2008 in Basra, nor the Charge of the Knights (CotKs) was foreseen in August 2007. But both would have been considered within the likely parameters of any Iraqi resolution of internal Shia divisions. Basra, of all places in Iraq, was never seen as having an extreme religious bias; indeed, its fleshpot history from the 1950s suggested quite otherwise. It seems possible, if not likely, that the taste of radicalisation lost the radicals the hearts and minds of the population. This will undoubtedly have been played into the Shia polity within the GoI and it would be consistent with the 2007 analysis to suggest that this provided Maliki with the unifying focus for Shia elements within the GoI to give him the mandate to identify what they were all against. As Saint-Just said in 1791 in the context of exporting the French Revolution, "If you want to create an **Us**, [first] create a **Them!**" From afar, it appeared that the CotKs succeeded due to a clear decision by the GoI as to what Basra's problems were, a firm commitment to resolve them, and the support of the population for the ISF who themselves were not drawn from Basra and were therefore not compromised by diffuse local loyalties. For Iraq and the Iraqi end state, and indeed for the Coalition end state of a self-reliant Iraq, the results of CotKs were unequivocally good – a Basra that appears to be flourishing and with violence containable by its own security apparatus. The GoI had finally addressed its own Shia demons, as only it could.

The complexity of factors depicted in this narrative show that counter insurgency (COIN) is not a discrete military activity; it is a pan-, and inter-government, objective that requires the whole of government to succeed. The inquiries will need to look beyond just the military tactical level if they are to understand and improve the way UK does its business. The recent criticisms by Professor Hew Strachan and Sir Christopher Meyer and the precepts of the earlier analysis of "War amongst the People" by General Sir Rupert Smith need to be seriously addressed. Similar comments were made after the Boer war 100 years ago, in fear of a future calamity nearer to home. Now, the lessons that must be learnt from Iraq have immediate relevance to our current departmental main effort (ME), the campaign in Afghanistan. □

1 Handing over responsibility for the security of a province to the Iraqis with the MNF acting in support of the ISF.
2 The HQ of the Iraqi Serious Crimes Unit (SCU) – ironically named since some of its members were suspected of committing, rather than solving, serious crimes.
3 The organisation responsible for training, organising and equipping the ISF.

Talking To The "Enemy" – Informal Conflict Termination In Iraq

(This piece was written as Brigadier Storrie's dissertation whilst at RCDS in 2009)

Brigadier Sandy Storrie
Commander 7 Armoured Brigade, 2007-2009

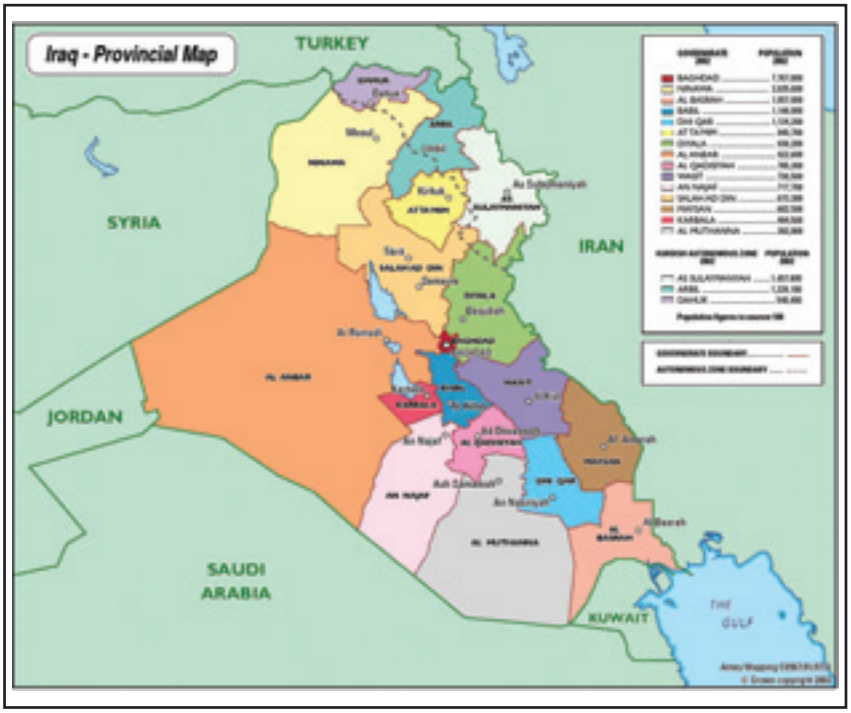
"The single clenched fist lifted and ready /Or the open asking hand held out and waiting / Choose: / For we meet by one or the other." [1]

Introduction

In the wealth of literature on war in its various forms, surprisingly little attention is given to the complex problems of conflict termination. Counter-insurgency (COIN) in particular presents difficulties. With few exceptions COIN campaigns are drawn-out, confused and ambiguous; decisive military victory is elusive, and other means of conflict termination come into play. Military commanders can find themselves in unexpected roles, influencing and even driving national strategy through their actions at the operational and higher tactical levels.

This paper considers two such instances in Iraq. In 2006 a series of local agreements between US Marine Corps (USMC) commanders and Sunni sheikhs produced the Anbar Awakening (AA), a switch in tribal alignment which turned the COIN campaign in the West decisively against al-Qa'eda in Iraq (AQI). Over the following year, this model was extended to other parts of Iraq as the Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) programme, with equally spectacular results.[2] And in Basra, a separate deal between British commanders and the Sadrist Jaish al Mehdi (JAM) enabled UK to cut casualties, reposition its forces, and transfer security responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), in return for a structured programme of detainee releases. The first of these deals been widely lauded, the second widely criticised. But both judgments may be incorrect, or at least premature.

This paper considers these informal deals and their implications. It first reviews some relevant academic thinking, and then examines and compares the deals, assessing their effectiveness as tools for conflict termination and resolution in Iraq. It concludes that current judgments are misleading: that the much-maligned Basra deal has already proved to be a sound foundation for long-term conflict resolution, while the tribal strategy contains elements that may yet prove antithetical to Iraq's future as a unitary state. Finally, it suggests some generic guidelines for military officers engaged in informal conflict termination, and draws some wider conclusions on COIN from the Coalition experience in Iraq.



Map Iraq Provinces

Conflict Resolution or Victory?

Already two terms have been introduced which require definition. Michael Handel describes conflict termination as *"the discontinuation of hostilities, which does not necessarily indicate positive progress to a lasting peace"*[3]: which is his definition of conflict resolution. Chris Tuck emphasises the relationships between the two, considering that *"effective conflict termination is wider, and is about ending conflicts in ways that best support the political end states set."*[4] The distinction between termination and resolution is often taken to be that between the cessation of armed hostilities and the settlement of the underlying disputes, but Tuck views the true picture as non-sequential: conflict resolution is not a distinct phase that follows conflict termination, but an umbrella term: *"…if conflict resolution describes the overall objectives sought, conflict termination is one of the ways in*

which these objectives may be achieved."[5] Conflict resolution objectives provide the end-states to which conflict termination should be directed, and it is the relationship between the two that defines the ultimate value of any military campaign.[6] For the purposes of this paper, Tuck's key point is that the conditions for a conflict's long-term resolution are affected by the way in which it is terminated: a sub-optimal termination can lead to difficulties downstream.

Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn have grappled inconclusively with the problems of understanding victory and defeat in modern wars – in particular wars between unequal opponents – and in defining the utility of force in these conflicts.[7] Duyvesteyn is sceptical of the continued relevance of the Clausewitzian idea of decisive victory,[8] while Angstrom concludes that there are now multiple understandings of victory and defeat, some of which are contradictory.[9] Johnson and Tierney use the examples of Mayaguez and Somalia to argue that popular judgments of success and failure in war are not always informed accurately by the objective outcome. Rather, public perceptions are formed instead by a number of psychological and informational biases – a phenomenon they term "match-fixing" – whereby rather than weighing up material gains and losses objectively, observers fix the results in their minds so that one side is seen to win or lose, irrespective of what actually happens on the ground.[10] Victory and defeat, the authors argue, are essentially perceptions.

In the same volume, Ivan Arreguin-Toft argues convincingly for the highly discriminate use of force in any counter-insurgency,[11] while Gil Merom considers that intervention with ground forces against markedly weaker protagonists has an inherent potential to regress into protracted insurgency, and that even an effective military COIN campaign may not deliver the political outcomes sought. He posits three broad options for Western powers engaged in such campaigns, *"none of which is thrilling"*: first to insist on total military victory at the risk of discovering that even sound battlefield performance leads nowhere politically (Algeria, Vietnam, Lebanon, the second *intifada*); second, upon realization that the military effort is politically unsustainable, cut losses and run (Somalia): and third, accept and support the least unpleasant indigenous authority without expecting that it will obediently serve Western interests. *"In essence, aim low, possibly lower."*[12]

Finally, William Zartman has considered in depth how and when internal conflicts can be resolved. He suggests that parties in conflict decide to negotiate when they perceive a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS); a deadlocked position which imposes significant but not necessarily equally pain on both. Decisive victory has proved unattainable, other possibilities have been exhausted and a high level of intensity has been reached. The MHS prompts the parties to look for a better alternative: if they then sense the possibility of a negotiated solution or Way Out a "ripe moment" is created, in which talks can begin. In summary, negotiations occur when both parties lose faith in their chances of winning and see an opportunity for cutting losses and achieving satisfaction through accommodation: they adjust their aims and settle for *"…an alternative somewhere between unattainable triumph and unlikely annihilation…rather a muddy field to play on.*[13]

This brief survey suggests that conflict termination in COIN is not likely to be black and white, but grey, and with that background in mind, the paper will now consider the deals.

The Anbar Awakening (AA)

The Anbar Awakening (AA) began in early 2005, when Sunni tribes near the Syrian border started to resent the influx of AQI to their area, and the resultant competition in their lucrative smuggling operations, and decided to resist.[14] Sensing the potential threat, AQI opened its own campaign of murder and coercion against them,[15] and the tribes turned to the Multi-National Force (MNF) for help. But the Government of Iraq (GOI) initially withheld its support, and by September the tribes had been overwhelmed. Co-operation resumed in mid-2006, centred on Ramadi, and Sheikh Sattar abu Risha of the Dulaimi federation. Although himself a relatively minor sheikh, Sattar provided a focus for tribal opposition to AQI; MNF's enthusiasm prevailed over continuing GOI reluctance, and Sattar's tribesmen were co-opted in large numbers into the Iraqi Police (IP). A blind eye was turned to his extra-legal streams of revenue generation.[16] Sattar's success in resisting, surviving and making money proved exemplary; more sheikhs brought more men, and by the end of 2007 the forces ranged against AQI had doubled in size.

The results were striking. In September 2006, a USMC intelligence officer assessed that *"AQI is the dominant organisation of influence in Al Anbar, surpassing the nationalist insurgents, the Iraqi Government and MNF in its ability to control the day-to-day life of the average Sunni."*[17] A year later the situation had been transformed. In December 2007, the Commanding General (CG) of MNF West was able to report 10 straight months of decreasing incidents and a fall in attacks of some 90 per cent, and to claim credibly that *"…we have kicked Al Qa'ida out of Anbar."* IP numbers had more than doubled, from 10,600 to 25,800: with thousands more candidates keen to join.[18] AQI strength had fallen from some 12,000 in mid 2007 to 3,500 in early 2008.[19] Sattar's eventual

Governor Maamoon Sami Rasheed al-Awani met with local tribal sheikhs and city government leaders at a U.S military outpost in Husaybah, Iraq, July 3, 2006.(US Marine Corps - Cpl Antonio Rosas).

assassination by AQI caused a temporary hiatus, but the overall momentum of AA was maintained by his brother, who inclined it further towards mainstream politics.

One of AA's first successes was to re-establish the Anbar Provincial Council (PC), and since then it has progressively strengthened its links with mainstream politics and the GOI. In the PC elections of February 2009, the AA's candidates won the most votes and the most seats, and were the power-brokers for the election of the Governor. *"The Awakening is an economic and political entity now, and our strategy is financial and economic"*,[20] said its leader Abu Risha: there are still occasional veiled threats to *"…transfer our entity from a political to a military one…"*[21] to counter opponents, but essentially the AA now has an effective working relationship with the GOI. In fact, some of its main recent difficulties have been with senior Sunni elements of that Government, who see it now as a serious political competitor.[22]

The AA was not simply an impromptu rejection by Sunnis of AQI's brutal methods and radical rule. Austin Long suggests that the switch was based on three incremental realizations by tribal sheikhs:

- first that the political process might confer more benefit than continued fighting,
- second that AQI's transnational and fundamentalist goals were at odds with their own local or national objectives,
- and third and most importantly, that AQI was competing for control of revenue sources, such as banditry and smuggling, which had previously been the exclusive province of the tribes.[23]

Reasserting Tribal Authority

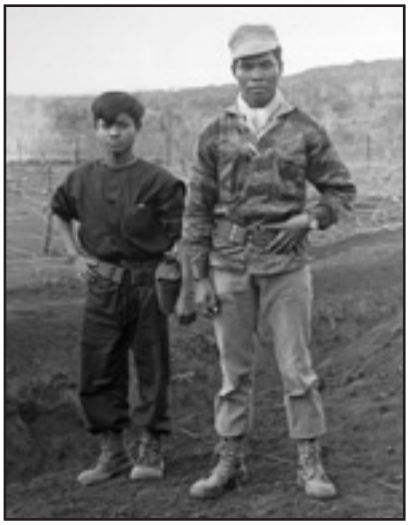
The tribes were thus essentially re-asserting their authority and business rights. AQI's insistence on intermarrying with local tribes – an imported practice from Afghanistan – also inspired deep resentment.[24] Former USMC officer Gabriel Leeden gives credit also to MNF's behaviour, seeing the AA not as a spontaneous uprising against insurgent brutality, but a response to conditions created by the USMC, by means of dynamic security operations, complex relationships with tribal leaders, and consistent moral authority.[25] British Maj Gen Paul Newton supports this view, seeing the USMC's operation as an outstanding example of mission command and risk-taking, on a scale unprecedented in Iraq.[26] So while AQI brutality undoubtedly played a part,[27] it was not the sole or even the prime driver.

Lt Gen Graeme Lamb echoes these analyses but adds other elements; the first being the increasingly precise use of force.[28] From insufficiently discriminate beginnings, MNF-I became increasingly accurate in its operations against AQI, changing the relative balance of strengths in Anbar, and emboldening and empowering the tribes to risk the extreme coercive violence levelled by AQI at any that chose to resist its rule. Adjusting Gallieni's metaphor, Lamb introduces the idea of "reverse ink-spotting" – dismembering an initially coherent insurgency by killing or capturing its mid-tier facilitators and co-ordinators to break it up into its constituent parts.

Lamb is warm in his praise of the USMC, recalling that their behaviour led influential Sunni imams to conclude that MNF did not intend to threaten either the tribes' way of life or their religious freedom, and therefore to reject any religious obligation to continue defensive *jihad*, and to co-operate with CF to oust the interlopers of AQI. He recalls the AA not as a negotiation but a dialogue: not a grand bargain but as a discussion of a mutual problem in an attempt to find some common ground and an alignment of interests.

General Lamb stresses also the importance in achieving a solution of time and will; that, *"…certain things were possible in 2006 that would not have been possible in 2004 or 2005."* AQI had exacted severe retribution on those Sunnis who participated in the 2005 elections, and with continued coalition commitment uncertain, many tribal sheikhs were undecided over which horse to back. This can be seen as a simple Hobbesian calculation of self-preservation, which deters the general population from committing to either side during a violent insurgency.[29] Two USMC officers have described how they countered this ambivalence by telling the sheikhs *"…that we would stay as long as necessary to defeat the terrorists. That was the message they had been waiting to hear. As long as they perceived us as mere interlopers, they dared not throw in their lot with ours. When they began to think of us as reliable partners, their attitudes began to change."*[30] The USMC thus persuaded influential sheikhs that it intended to remain a significant actor in the medium term, and that they should align themselves with "the strongest tribe." The announcement in January 2007 of the intended US troop surge undoubtedly assisted this process, though its military effect was not felt until much later in the year.

But Lamb also cites a further reason for the tribes' repositioning; the historic Sunni fear of Iranian influence, and distrust of the Shi'a dominated GOI. In similar vein, is the view of a prominent imam who said that the people of Fallujah were fighting a Persian occupation: in the form of the Shi'a-dominated Iraqi Army (IA).[31] One Sunni sheikh saw it as *"… just a way to get arms, and to be a legalized security force to be able to stand against Shi'a militias and to prevent the Iraqi Army and police force from entering the areas."*[32] This demonstrates graphically the possible long-term weakness of a tribal strategy: while it has proved an admirable vehicle for the achievement of one strategic end, the defeat of AQI, it may well be antithetical to another, the creation of a stable, unified and democratic Iraq.[33] A comparison can be made with the US Army's training and equipping of Montagnard tribesmen in Vietnam, who



Montagnard Irregulars (US Army Center of Military History)

were enthusiastic in fighting the insurgents, but only slightly less hostile to the government of South Vietnam: a situation which came to a head in late 1964, when several groups of tribesmen rose in open revolt.[34] The tribal strategy is similar, with the inherent tensions between the GOI and the Sunni tribes containing the seeds of potential sectarian conflict or even the break-up of the fledgling Iraqi state. This situation would actually be more challenging than Vietnam: the Sunni tribes of Anbar are not a small rural majority like the Montagnards, which makes it harder for MNF to exert leverage over them. Whereas Saddam Hussein was generally able to exert some central or co-confessional leverage over the tribes, the current GOI may soon face a situation where powerful sheikhs carve up and control their fiefdoms like feudal lords.[35]

Concerned Local Citizens

This tension is still more apparent with the wider manifestation of the Awakening Councils, the CLC. The success of the AA sparked an understandable desire to repeat the model in the other Sunni provinces, and even to extend it to the Shi'a south, and led to a US-led programme which recruited, trained and equipped some 103,000 Iraqis, over 80% Sunni, many of whom were former insurgents. CLC manned checkpoints and conducted static guards and "neighbourhood watch" type tasks, with similar success to the AA. In Baghdad, 2007 saw a 90% reduction in murders, an 80% fall in attacks on citizens, and a 70% decline in vehicle-borne explosive devices.[36] But although many CLC groups have termed themselves Awakening Councils, they are very different in nature to the original AA. Where most AA volunteers were progressively incorporated into the IP, and thus employed by the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), the CLCs were US-funded until October 2008. And where the AA has consistently had a relationship with the GOI – albeit initially a fractious one – many of the CLC groupings remain ambivalent towards it, even hostile. In several areas, the refusal of CLC groups to recognize the legitimacy or authority of the GOI has prompted it to act against them. In March 2009, the Baghdad suburb of Rusafa saw two days of serious fighting, as the ISF and MNF pursued CLC leaders wanted by the GOI.[37]

An Iraqi soldier leads the way during a combined cordon and search of the Rusafa area of Baghdad (US Army)

The transfer of funding responsibility from MNF to the GOI has added further frictions, and bureaucratic inertia and governmental unease have meant that CLCs have been paid either late, or not at all.[38] A falling oil price has exacerbated the GOI's difficulties, as has its need to reintegrate detainees and refugees returning from abroad. There is intense suspicion on both sides, and the GOI's tolerance of all militias appears to be hardening. *"The State cannot accept the Awakening", said one leading Shi'ite MP. "When the Government attacked the Mahdi Army it sent the message to all the militias including the Awakening that their days are numbered."*[39] It therefore intends to incorporate only some 20% of CLCs into the ISF, and the future for the remainder is unclear. Violence, meanwhile, is trending upwards: from 275 civilian deaths in January, to 343 in February, 408 in March and 485 in April.[40] With CLCs funded only until the end of 2009, the GOI seems ready to let them wither away: whether it will be able to do so peacefully remains to be seen.

Responses to the tribal strategy fall into two broad camps: the sceptical and the pragmatic. The sceptics concede the benefits of the deals in terms of fighting AQI, but highlight the tensions created, and the potential longer-term problems for the Iraqi state and its institutions. The tribal strategy is a temporary alignment of interests rather than a resolving formula, and Coalition drawdown, a resurgence of AQI and/or a government shift towards Shi'ite theocracy could all lead the tribes to review their position, possibly even switching sides, like Dostum in Afghanistan. This would be a particularly bad outcome for the Coalition as it would then have helped to train, equip and sustain forces that would work counter to its interests, while for the GOI it would mean de facto partition, civil war, or both. *Using tribal power to secure a modern state is at best a stop-gap measure, and at worst, a source of eventual state failure.*[41]

The latter is hardly optimal, but optimal is no longer a luxury the United States can afford.

The pragmatists recognise many of these objections but contend that the tribal strategy was the only practical course of action at the time. The US had a choice: either to continue to press for a national and unified state, and risk allowing the insurgency to go unchallenged, or to relax ties to the state in order to counter AQI with local police forces, at the cost of formalising sectarian divisions and weakening democratization. *"The latter is hardly optimal, but optimal is no longer a luxury the United States can afford."*[42]

Lamb is also a pragmatist: whilst acutely conscious of the potential pitfalls *"…given the difficulties we were facing, the absolute inability of the Iraqis to cope themselves, and a violent insurgency that was approaching the tipping point, we really didn't feel we had much choice."*[43] The pragmatists therefore regard the tribal deals as the lesser of two strategic evils: an enforced reversion to an earlier social model in the interests of short-term stability.

This argument is compelling. If all politics is local, then so is much insurgency, and MNF's embrace of bottom-up solutions should come as no surprise. The tribal strategy has been a pragmatic stop-gap, ensuring the short-term survival of the Iraqi state in the face of a vicious insurgency, though it has in the process empowered forces which may yet threaten that state's existence in its current form. Its success will be defined by where it goes from here. The AA in particular has successfully redirected Sunni nationalist insurgents towards mainstream politics, and even the less well-structured CLCs have provided an honourable means for former insurgents to realign their loyalties without admitting defeat.[44] Their emerging relationships with the GOI could provide the foundation for longer-term stability; not least since Iraq's central government relationships with its provinces have historically been fluid.

But this is not a guaranteed outcome. Some feel that *"…all the Americans did was buy the Iraqi government some time…the fact that fewer people are dying now does not change the reality that this is a dysfunctional state that can easily slip back into civil war."*[45] To paraphrase Rupert Smith, the tribal strategy has thus created a conceptual space for diplomacy, economic incentives, political pressure and other means to create a desired political outcome of stability and if possible democracy,[46] and has given Iraqis an opportunity to determine their internal governance through discussion rather than secession and/or civil war. But it has not resolved the conflict: at least not yet.

The Basra "Accommodation"

> Senior officers including the Chief of the General Staff had started to re-define the Army's presence as part of the problem, not the solution.

The deals in Anbar and Basra are outwardly similar and there is no doubt that events in Anbar opened the eyes of CF leaders elsewhere in Iraq to the possibilities of a less kinetic approach.[47] But the "accommodation" with JAM was born of very different demographics and strategic needs, and was substantially different in its aims. Some context is therefore required.

Members of C company 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (1 Yorks) who are part the the 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's (2 Lancs) Battlegroup conducting a arrest and search operation within the Al Jameat district of Basra (Cpl Russ Nolan)

In late 2006 there was an increasing sense that British military presence in Southern Iraq had run its course. UK troops were fighting bravely and innovatively but the situation was deteriorating. Senior officers including the Chief of the General Staff had started to re-define the Army's presence as part of the problem, not the solution.[48] A final, under-resourced effort to "win" Basra through conventional COIN techniques had ended inconclusively: Basra did not want to be won.[49] Instead, from early 2007 on the Army became increasingly embroiled in a self-fuelling cycle of violence with the JAM. In the first six months of the year, UK lost 29 killed and nearly 160 injured. The incoming brigade commander in May 2007 recalls; *"We walked into a war."*[50]

These difficulties were partly due to critical weaknesses in governance, both national and local. Basra has a history of detachment from Baghdad, based on its distinct economy, demography and geography, and a record of autonomous and even secessionist ambitions.[51] The results of the 2005 PC elections were unhelpful: the Sadrists declined to stand (and thereby excluded themselves indefinitely from mainstream politics), and the victorious Islamic coalition failed to agree on a Governor, allowing the election by default of Muhammad al-Wa'ili, whose Fadhila party had gained only 13 of the 41 seats. For the next four years, Wa'ili deftly circumvented all political and legal attempts to unseat him, consolidating his position at the heart of a black economy based on oil-smuggling, overseen by his militia within the Facilities Protection Service.[52] Other militias - notably the JAM - carved out similar fiefdoms in electricity generation and the ports. A weak GOI could do little to stop them: preoccupied with the plethora of more serious threats to its existence, it showed little sustained interest in Basra until early 2008. The effect was to turn the deep south into a kleptocracy, where well-armed political–criminal Mafiosi were able to lock both the central government and the people out of power.[53]

> None of the militias wanted to bring the South to the point of collapse: they simply wanted as large a slice of the cake as possible.

The conflict in Basra was therefore fundamentally different to that in Anbar. The AQI-inspired violence in the central belt was essentially nihilistic: escalation was open-ended, with total collapse an acceptable, even desirable end-state for AQI. The Shi'a South, on the other hand, was absolutely not nihilistic. Even at the height of the violence in 2006/07 the oil and energy infrastructure remained largely undisturbed, though its key nodes had long been identified as critical vulnerabilities by MNF. None of the militias wanted to bring the South to

the point of collapse: they simply wanted as large a slice of the cake as possible. So the British Army increasingly found itself as a *de facto* actor in an intra-Shi'a power-struggle: through its obligation to support a legitimately-elected but corrupt and unpopular Governor, it was slowly but inexorably drawn into confrontation with the JAM.

By early 2007 the Army's legitimacy had expired.

By early 2007 the Army's legitimacy had expired. It faced MNF's ubiquitous problem of *"…finding a way to create a sustainable security architecture that does not require the 'coalition in the loop', thereby allowing Iraq to stabilise and the Coalition to withdraw in favourable strategic circumstances."*[54] UK therefore sought to change the conditions of the campaign through early transition to Iraqi leadership: to hand off its Forward Operating Base (FOB) at Basra Palace (BP) to the ISF, consolidate forces at the airport Common Operating Base (COB), transfer security responsibilities to the ISF under Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC), and then draw down and release resources for Afghanistan. If this sounds like an abrogation of responsibility, it was not: more a recognition of lost and irrecoverable legitimacy, and an active effort to empower the ISF as a more appropriate force. The General Officer Commanding (GOC) charged with implementing this strategy was Maj Gen Jonathan Shaw.[55]

Shaw viewed Basra as *"Palermo, rather than Beirut"*

Shaw viewed Basra as *"Palermo, rather than Beirut"*: a violent but essentially self-limiting competition for power and resources rather than an ideological struggle. He saw the militias as a potentially useful vehicle of social cohesion in a fragmented society where central government authority was weak: a primary form of organising force, a sort of urban tribe. Their power was not dangerous *per se*: it could be harmful if misapplied, but if harnessed correctly, he felt that it could be productively employed. This chimed with the views of the competent and determined new Iraqi security chief, Maj Gen Mohan, who had arrived to head up the Basra Operations Command (BaOC). Mohan assessed that the UK presence in the city was distorting normal politics and prompting nationalist Basrawis to fight simply to be free of occupation: early PIC would therefore help to clarify their loyalties and undercut public support for the JAM.

General Mohan (Cpl Martin Coleman RAF)

Shaw therefore hit on a twin-track approach: increasing the tempo of strike operations to ramp up the pressure on JAM, whilst simultaneously beginning a search for effective interlocutors; essential to both was a less monolithic understanding of JAM. The first track led to the killing or capture of several leading figures in Basra JAM, amongst them Wissam Abu Qadir, its then leader. The second led to a series of discussions with high-ranking JAM member Sheikh Ahmed al-Fartusi, who had been in detention since 2005. In these discussions, Shaw sought to re-channel Fartusi's intense sense of Iraqi nationalism for productive ends, away from attacks on MNF and towards countering malign Iranian influence in the city. Shaw felt that *"…he and I wanted the same things for Basra – prosperity, self-rule, religious* moderation, *education etc…"* and sought to persuade him that *"…he should co-operate with redevelopment instead of attacking it."*[56] These were ambitious aims. Where the AA sought to restore security by reverting to an earlier social model, the Basra deal sought to promote a more inclusive politics at a supra-tribal level. Shaw's successor Graham Binns hoped to *"…get to the point where the main Sadrist strain will support the Iraqi security forces – that's the goal."*[57] No political solution to Basra could ignore the Sadrists, and the Northern Irish peace process had demonstrated the value of an inclusive approach. Just as the AA had countered AQI in the West, malign Iranian influence in Basra might perhaps be offset by the JAM.

Quitting Basra Palace for the COB (Cpl Ian Fellows)

Shaw's discussions with Fartusi led to a provisional "accommodation" between the two parties.[58] JAM would cease attacks on the Army and facilitate its extraction from BP; the Army would suspend its strike operations and progressively release 120 internees, including, late in the process, Fartusi himself. (All were likely to have been released anyway on the expiry of UNSCR 1723, then scheduled for the end of the year). And although not explicitly stated, there appears to have been an underlying understanding that UK forces, once redeployed outside the city, would have little reason routinely to return: security responsibilities within the city would be discharged by the ISF. In this respect the deal was a conscious effort to empower Mohan and the IA.

The benefits of this deal were felt immediately, mainly by the British but not exclusively so. Indirect fire (IDF) attacks dropped from a campaign peak in the preceding months to minimal levels, total attacks on UK forces fell by some 90%, and there were no further UK

deaths from IDF in 2007. The Army was able to hand BP to the ISF and relocate to the COB – potentially a highly complex and hazardous operation - without a shot being fired, and refocus its efforts on training the IA. With IDF attacks sharply down, re-development work at the airport was able to resume, paving the way for its handover to the Iraqi authorities, and local politicians were content to resume their visits to the COB to engage with British consular staff. The building of the Basra Children's Hospital – suspended over access difficulties for Coalition staff and contractors – was able to resume, and with British forces no longer in the city, Baswaris were less likely to be caught up in any crossfire. As one sheikh told Binns in the autumn of 2007, *"Things are bad – but they're a lot better than they were."*[59] Critically, the fall in violence in the city satisfied MNF that the conditions for transition had been met, and Basra went to PIC on 16 Dec 07: the last of Multinational Division SE's four provinces to do so.

...in the three months prior to PIC, some 40 women were killed in Basra for wearing make-up, not veiling, or otherwise failing to observe the narrow rulings of the repressive local militias.

Yet the accommodation was not an unqualified boon. The ISF proved unable to impose itself on the city with any authority (although Mohan came to value the accommodation both as a means of buying time to build up his combat power, and as a useful channel of communication with the JAM, which he was subsequently able to use to his own advantage),[60] and therefore the unintended consequence was to consolidate JAM control over much of the city. The extent of their depredations is difficult to judge objectively, but there is some anecdotal evidence that they ranged from widespread dress restrictions, through the forced closure of alcohol outlets and music shops, to ethnic cleansing, brutality and murder.[61] All had featured pre-deal, of course, but British withdrawal removed the one real

IA troops giving aid (UK rations) and Info Ops leaflets to Basrawi citizens at a VCP during Op COTK (HQ 4 Armd Bde)

Militia activity during Op COTK (HQ 4 Armd Bde)

remaining constraint. Basra IP chief Maj Gen Jalil later claimed that in the three months prior to PIC, some 40 women were killed in Basra for wearing make-up, not veiling, or otherwise failing to observe the narrow rulings of the repressive local militias.[62] MND (SE) should perhaps have foreseen this, but many felt that JAM control was unlikely, and were satisfied by Mohan's air of confidence and assurances of the future capability of the ISF: despite its evident lack of effective units at that time. Others were less sanguine, but felt that the UK's ability to influence had in any case expired, and that the increasing air of Islamisation was a price worth paying for PIC.

The struggle for control of Basra persisted until March 2008, when Prime Minister (PM) Maliki chose to confront Basra JAM, moved personally to BP, and directed Mohan to begin CHARGE OF THE KNIGHTS (COTK), a British-drafted plan for the recapture of Basra due to be implemented later in the summer. The premature launch produced some initial incoherence, but when reinforced by additional Iraqi units and US support – both a first – the IA prevailed. Maliki's personal investment was also highly significant: by taking such a public stand against the JAM he explicitly re-defined Basra's turf wars as an insurgent challenge to the GOI, forcing Basrawis to decide where their loyalties were going to lie. As COTK developed, UK forces were able to re-engage with their role clarified, not as occupiers but as direct supporters of the IA, and enjoyed a sea-change in public support as a result. A highly successful mentoring mission

throughout 2008 and early 2009 has restored at least some of the UK's military reputation with the US and IA (though not perhaps with Maliki), and has enabled final withdrawal, with some sense of sufficiency in what was achieved.[63]

The accommodation is seen in some quarters as a cynical sell-out to preserve British lives: this was not its principal motive.[64] The cessation of IDF in particular was viewed mainly as a metric of Fartusi's ability to deliver: it was not the central objective but a very welcome by-product.[65] The benefits of the deal for the British were threefold:

- First, it allowed the Army to extract from a force-sapping tactical laydown, and to stem a flow of casualties which was eroding domestic support and reducing UK political will to a mission-threatening level.
- Secondly, by dramatically cutting the level of violence, it created the breathing space in which PIC could be credibly declared at the end of the year. Without a reduction in IDF there could be no PIC – *"…how can you declare PIC in the middle of a war?"*[66] - and without PIC there could be no progress: in that sense the "by-product" of Shaw's goals was more significant than the goals themselves.
- Together, these gains – a manageable casualty rate and successful transition to PIC – were sufficient to preserve UK strategic appetite to remain alongside the US in force throughout 2008 and well into 2009. Pre-deal, the political risks to the Brown government from staying in Iraq were coming to outweigh the consequences for the transatlantic relationship from unilateral withdrawal: post-deal the reverse was true.

Therefore, although the deal with the JAM did not resolve or even fully terminate the conflict in Basra, it set strong conditions for conflict resolution in three ways:

- First, by enabling PIC it transferred responsibility for resolving the conflict to the Iraqis, since only they could resolve it – and they did.
- Secondly it restored UK appetite to remain in force: and therefore to retain sufficient combat power to provide worthwhile support to the IA during and after COTK.
- And finally, it gave JAM the rope to hang itself, since JAM's complete inability to provide reconstruction or public services, and its air of oppressive Islamisation, resulted in strong popular support for PM Maliki and the ISF during COTK.

This was maybe not quite what the deal's architects intended, but it was necessary nonetheless. As Shaw put it, *"…they had to go through this. Somehow we had to persuade the population that JAM was the enemy and not us."* [67] Subsequently, the 2009 Provincial elections saw Maliki's coalition gain 35% of the vote in Basra, with independent Sadrists winning only two of the 41 seats, and Fadhila reduced to a humiliating 3%, and failing to win a seat. [68] Shaw still contends that the extremists showing their real hand and losing their legitimacy was the best thing for Basra, albeit painful at the time.[69]

The "abandonment" of Basra to the JAM is the aspect of the deal which has probably caused most unease, even within the Army,[70] and this paper suggests that the British consistently overestimated the legitimacy and public support enjoyed by Basra JAM. Misled by Sadrist strength in Baghdad, and by the organisation's roots as a social provider (*pace* Hamas), some British officers compared the JAM to the Orange Order; a relatively unthreatening body with wide-ranging public support. In fact, as Juan Cole warned as early as 2003, the Sadrist movement is *"…highly puritanical and xenophobic, and characterised by an exclusivism unusual in Iraqi Shi'ism. To any extent that it emerges as a leading social force in Iraq, it will prove polarizing and destabilizing."*[71]

Even in Basra – traditionally a relatively secular and cosmopolitan port city, inherently more liberal than JAM's heartlands of Maysan and east Baghdad – these Islamist and sociopathic tendencies emerged fiercely. Some British officers are thus now sceptical of the extent of Fartusi's enduring influence,[72] and although his power in mid 2007 was clear enough, his subsequent threats to the British, delivered from Lebanon in 2008, elicited no response from his former colleagues-in-arms.[73] In retrospect, the British view of JAM appears rose-tinted: in seeing its prime motivation as criminal and self-interested, they neglected its religious leanings, and thus underestimated its potential antipathy towards those secular and progressive elements of Basra's population that refused to conform to its strictures.[74]

Those that were there find this harsh, and point to the reality of JAM control, and the lack of realistic alternatives. By 2007 the Army had Gil Merom's choice: escalate, get out, or lower your sights.[75] It could have persevered: fought its way out of BP, and continued to bear a similar level of IDF casualties for the rest of the year: perhaps another 50 UK dead. This view had some advocates within Whitehall, who saw it as the blood-price to be paid to sustain the transatlantic relationship, but it is doubtful that the political appetite for this course existed: and more doubtful still that PIC could have been declared in such a visibly unstable environment.

A second alternative was simply to declare success – whatever suspension of disbelief this might involve – and leave. That would have triggered a range of possible consequences, all involving some degree of national humiliation: opposition from a bemused US, the probable replacement by a US Brigade, a contested withdrawal to Kuwait, looting reminiscent of the withdrawal from Maysan, the complete loss of military reputation, and the most severe hiatus in the transatlantic relationship since Suez.

A third and more palatable alternative was to reinforce: to mirror the US surge and to seek a decisive military victory over the JAM. But where would the forces have come from? Even had this been politically deliverable, UK was by 2007 operating well above Defence Planning Assumptions to sustain its burgeoning commitment to Afghanistan, and national forces simply were not there. There was also a marked national reluctance to request reinforcement from the Corps,[76] and it is by no means certain that any such request would have been met: US forces were fully committed elsewhere and there was a widely-held US view that having carved out a discrete Divisional area, the UK owned the responsibility for resourcing it.[77]

In that sense the Basra deal also served US interests, since it enabled the Corps to concentrate its resources elsewhere.

Nor is it axiomatic that reinforcement would have been useful. It is undeniable that UK never committed sufficient resources to defeat the JAM,[78] but it is also far from certain that more military resources could by 2007 have produced the desired outcome. Certain assets would undoubtedly have been helpful – helicopters and ISTAR for example – but ground troops might not. There is a critical distinction between mass and legitimacy, and despite the overall success of the US surge, it is far from clear that more troops can of themselves compensate for a lack of legitimacy, in the absence of a credible external threat. As John Nagl has pointed out, it is *"…perhaps only a slight exaggeration to suggest that, on their own, foreign forces cannot defeat an insurgency: the best they can hope for is to create the conditions that will enable local forces to win it for them."*[79] So it is by no means clear, given the Army's travails in sustaining BP, that additional FOBs in the city would have been helpful, or sustainable. Additional, capable ISF units would have been both, but priorities lay elsewhere, and 2007 in any case was the nadir in British relations with the IA. The locally-raised 10th Division was weak, with JAM influence strongly

UK MiTTs supporting an IA search operation during Op COTK (note IA troops carrying sacks of ammunition) during Op COTK (HQ 4 Armd Bde)

apparent in its Basra-based brigades. Embedding UK mentors – to prove so successful in 2008 – was unattractive: 10 Div were unwilling to partner because UK troops drew fire from the JAM where they did not, and there were several instances where 10 Div units would not fight.[80] At BP, effective co-operation had ceased,[81] although some still feel that this was a missed opportunity; that the lack of welcome went both ways.[82] Overall there were few good options and the situation was essentially Zartman's MHS.

The Basra deal in fact exhibits many aspects of Zartman's analysis.[83] There was palpably an MHS, and (for the British at least) a perception of impending catastrophe: an opposed withdrawal from BP, which was likely to produce significant casualties and a public perception of failure. Neither side any longer possessed the ability to escalate; they *"…were like two battered boxers: we could have kept slugging it out, but to what end?"*[84] And the deal also had many of the effects that Zartman's analysis predicts: it did undercut the identity of JAM,[85] and did remove the confusion over Shi'a nationalism, just as Mohan had hoped.[86] It did not resolve the conflict because that was essentially over resources: an intra-Shi'a power-struggle in which the British were no longer prepared to take a stake. So as Zartman hypothesised, both sides saw the potential for achieving their strategic aims (which in the British case had reduced significantly) by alternative means. Senior British officers were still willing to fight it out, but few saw any useful purpose in doing so.[87]

They chose instead a variant of Merom's third way, and found an accommodation with a *de facto* indigenous authority without expecting that it would obediently serve their interests. Admittedly this requires a fairly liberal interpretation of Merom's *"least unpleasant indigenous authority"* – since such authority as JAM possessed came purely from its organisation, its arsenal, and its illegal control of electricity and the ports. Perhaps the UK should simply have thrown its military power behind the GOI and its representative in Basra - the corrupt Wa'ili - and accepted the continuing cost in lives that this would have entailed.[88] But given the

implausibility of this and other options, and the benefits that were gained, the Basra deal does not look a bad one. Those that struck it remain unanimous that, given the resources and political support available, they took the best course available to them; the "least worst" option.

Restricted by a shortage of resources and an imminent failure of national will, faced with an imperative to transition to PIC, to enable both UK drawdown and Iraqi progress, they found a creative way forward, and cashed in their only remaining leverage on JAM while it still had value. Though the deal's most far-reaching ambitions for Sadrist integration were never achieved, its principal failing – the abandonment of Basra to its fate – was also relatively quickly redeemed by the GOI and the ISF: who, as Nagl implies, were probably the only people ever able to do it.

Comparative Analysis

Many points of comparison have emerged naturally in the above discussion, but it is worth highlighting some key distinctions between the deals. The first is the strategic context. The US public's commitment to Iraq has occasionally wavered, but even in 2006 the Administration was resigned to staying into the medium term, and in 2007 this hardened into a commitment not only to stay but to surge. UK strategic intent, on the other hand, was to transition to PIC as early as possible. There was therefore a strategic dissonance between Coalition partners, which affected the negotiating position of each of the parties, and thus the deal that each was able to strike.

"Your ways are defined by your means - and we didn't have enough!"

A second distinction concerns the relative strength of the parties. In Basra, UK forces no longer had a widespread power to compel: they were capable of achieving local tactical superiority in time and space, and thus inflicting localized pain on the JAM, but they lacked the combat power to sustain the effort, or expand it across the city. As Bashall put it, *"Your ways are defined by your means – and we didn't have enough!"*[89] The position in Anbar was better; the USMC could not force an outcome, but it was still demonstrably "the strongest tribe." It could therefore make fewer concessions, reflecting the US' greater combat power and political will.

A third distinction is that the Anbar deal was made with the tribes, that in Basra with a militia. This is less significant than it may seem. The resettlement of Marsh Arabs into Basra's sink estates has dismembered previous tribal structures, and seen them replaced by political-religious Islamic groupings like the JAM.[90] Both deals were therefore made with the de facto local non-state authority, neither of which was an "enemy" in the conventional sense, and both sought to mobilize Iraqi nationalism against external forces of different kinds. In Anbar, AQI was manifestly an interloper, but Basra's links with SW Iran go back centuries, and many of its tribes straddle the border. Iranian influence was therefore more widespread and less overtly hostile than that of AQI, and JAM was in a more ambiguous position, and less likely to make a dramatic shift. Arguably this changed only when PM Maliki came to recognise the extent of malign Iranian influence, and its hostility to his Government: too weak to act in 2007, he countered effectively only in 2008. But Iranian influence never offered the same existential threat to the locals as AQI, and the Basra deal was thus inevitably a harder one to strike.

"Why would you take crocodiles as pets?

A fourth distinction is the relationship between the parties, which in each case was tripartite, with MNF and the GOI as two of the elements, and the tribe / militia as the third.[91] Arguably in Anbar, USMC commanders were easier interlocutors for the Sunni tribes than the Shi'a-led GOI: the USMC therefore fostered an engagement by proxy which had utility for both the GOI and the tribes. In the South, by comparison, the GOI had no such need of the MNF as go-betweens: it could talk to the JAM whenever it wished to, and did. Indeed it questioned the need, asking frequently *"Why would you take crocodiles as pets?"*[92]

This distinction is reflected in the key issue of transparency. The key to the USMC's success in Anbar was their continuous engagement of the PM and his ministers: they linked the bottom and the top of the process in a highly structured fashion, with each proposed recruitment of tribal militias into the IP staffed in detail with the GOI. Frictions only arose with the less structured expansion of the AA into the CLC, in circumstances where the GOI felt it had little influence or control.[93] Similarly, Lamb ensured that his discussions with former regime elements were completely transparent, even pulling out from one potentially rewarding meeting because it was considered by the GOI to be "beyond the pale".[94] The Basra deal was a little more opaque: while undoubtedly socialized with the key figures in the GOI (although there now seems to be some selective amnesia on that count), it was not widely briefed beyond. There was perhaps an element of not pressing an issue where Iraqi opposition would have left the UK with nowhere to go strategically. Thus Mohan learned formally of the deal late in the day and through Iraqi channels, and although he subsequently came to value many of its aspects, this unpleasant surprise was the start of a breakdown in his working relationship with the UK, and fuel on the fire of the PM's mistrust.[95]

The final distinction between the deals is the extent to which they supported the fledgling structures of the Iraqi state. The AA was the most successful in this respect, since its members were drawn progressively into the ISF and GOI. CLCs were not, but were to a degree "socialized" by routine operational contact with the ISF and CF. But the Basra deal contained no such linkage,[96] and even those Iraqi commanders well-

disposed towards the British found their dialogue with the JAM difficult to bear: particularly when combined later with an initial (perceived) hesitancy in supporting COTK. Indeed, the most damaging legacy of the British deal is perhaps PM Maliki's continuing hostility to a long-term UK engagement, which is likely to inhibit the benefits to UK business from the blood and treasure which the nation has committed.

The transatlantic relationship is probably less dented: the most senior US commanders understood the thinking behind the Basra deal, and while they may not all have liked it, they were prepared to make tactical concessions for the strategic gain of Coalition coherence. Conceptually the deal reflected Petraeus' own aims; *"We're not after Jeffersonian democracy – we're after conditions that would let our soldiers disengage."*[97] US staffs were less understanding, although their opposition was based on a more monolithic view of the JAM than Shaw's nuanced approach. But the break has not been irreparable, and UK's military reputation was at least partly restored the following year by its vigorous support for the later stages of COTK. UK remains likely to be the USA's first partner of choice for future interventions, though perhaps with a little more scepticism than of yore.

Generic Principles

> ...this paper has probably invested all of the deals with a coherence they did not in fact possess.

Finally, does this analysis reveal anything useful generically in terms of conflict resolution in intervention and COIN? It may, but with two important caveats. First, all COIN campaigns are *sui generis* – of their own kind - making problematic the transfer of lessons from one to another.[98] Secondly, in packaging complexity for easy presentation, this paper has probably invested all of the deals with a coherence they did not in fact possess. The proliferation of CLCs in particular was uncontrolled, even anarchic: in the prevailing mood of strategic opportunity, effects were created first and explained to the GOI later.[99] Tribal and militia dynamics are complex, and JAM in particular embraces a wide range of nationalist, criminal and religious motivations, impossible to reflect fully in a paper of this length. All of the commanders interviewed felt that they were improvising to some degree, and in dissecting the deals for examination, this paper rather over-tidies an intensely complex picture.

But with those caveats, the generic conclusions are as follows:

- Military commanders negotiating towards conflict termination must not overlook the pre-conditions for conflict resolution, though it may be tempting to do so to solve immediate and pressing security problems. This is important, because it is the relationship between conflict termination and conflict resolution that determines the ultimate value of any military campaign.[100] In practice, this principle will inevitably be difficult to operationalize, and will require some difficult judgment calls.
- Informal deals are best negotiated from a position of strength: or at least, not of weakness. This may be self-evident, but then so is Clausewitz' prescription that *"the best strategy is always to be very strong..."*[101] In retrospect, neither the US nor the UK committed sufficient resources to the campaign, and this is reflected in the bargains each was compelled to strike. The British Army has belatedly recognised the importance of persistent presence and mass in operations designed to secure the population, and the need for a more flexible approach to force levels through the course of a campaign.[102] One hopes that this thinking will inform the upcoming Defence Review, though mass of itself is of little use without legitimacy.
- Similarly, time and will are important in creating the conditions in which such deals can be struck. Burton and Nagl conclude that counterinsurgents must demonstrate staying power if they are to break the grip of militants over the population, since without the promise of protection, civilians will support the insurgency in order to survive. Premature transition to indigenous forces can thus be a "rush to failure"[103] This is a fair position, but it conflicts with another lesson from Iraq, which is that the legitimacy of an occupying force declines progressively – Petraeus speaks of a "half life"[104], and endures only for as long as that force is perceived as beneficial and non-oppressive. And since each citizen makes that calculation individually, the loss of legitimacy can be sudden, catastrophic and irrecoverable. Balancing the commitment to stay with a corresponding commitment eventually to leave is another fine call: each case will be *sui generis*, even in different parts of the same theatre. This will be a key judgment in Afghanistan.
- Next, kinetic activity is important and a high level of intensity appears to be required. Both deals support Zartman's analysis that *"...to ripen a conflict one must raise the level of conflict until the stalemate is reached and then further until it begins to hurt...the ripe moment becomes the godchild of brinkmanship."*[105] Pressure on the Anbar tribes came from both sides – AQI and the USMC – and forced them to choose; UK strikes against JAM had a similar effect; in fact they were one of the few real levers the Army still possessed. Thomas Schelling has written of the bargaining power that comes from the capacity to hurt,[106] and this featured in both deals. Kinetic force may not produce a decisive result, but must at least generate the perception of MHS: the necessary but not sufficient condition for negotiations to begin.
- That said, this is not a carte-blanche for unselective violence: CF behaviour is critical.[107] One of Lamb's key lessons from Anbar

was the highly discriminate use of force, and this accords with the author's own experience in Basra in 2008, when weapons had utility in direct relation to their precision. There is still a view that successful COIN demands a willingness to escalate violence to extreme levels, with the Philippines and now Sri Lanka cited as examples. There is little evidence that this worked in Iraq, at all. On the contrary, Iraq suggests that successful COIN is *"a function of legitimacy first and violence second."*[108] Occupiers get no latitude: they have to get their targeting right.

- Relationships with the host government are critical, and any lack of transparency between the parties, perceived or real, can lead to a fundamental breach of trust. In the factional and conspiratorial politics of Iraq, the most successful deals were also the best-socialized. Since the host government will have to bear the consequences of whatever is agreed, it seems only appropriate to cut it in from the outset.
- Finally, a successful deal is likely to draw reformed insurgents into some kind of relationship with indigenous security forces or governmental structures. Ideally this will see their formal inclusion (as in Anbar): failing that some form of socialization through joint operations (as with the CLCs). Any deal which does not create such a linkage risks recidivism, as in Basra.

Conclusion

The tribal strategy and the Basra "accommodation" were therefore not quite the resounding success or the craven sell-out they might initially have appeared. As has been shown, in a little over 8 months the Basra deal achieved the desired end-state: allowing the British to withdraw from the city, removing any lingering confusion over Shi'a nationalism, setting the conditions for COTK, and leading to a military victory over the JAM which has since been ratified in the Provincial elections of 2009. It did not work out quite as its architects intended but in war little does. Although the Sadrists remain largely excluded from mainstream Basra politics, the intra-Shi'a conflict has effectively been resolved: just as Shaw predicted it would be, once the British were removed.

The consequences of the tribal strategy are less certain. Having removed a Ba'athist regime at least declaredly inimical to sectarianism, racism and tribalism, the US has been forced to ally itself with tribes which are largely xenophobic and sectarian, in order to avert strategic failure.[109] Its Faustian bargain has delivered spectacular short-term success, but has set the conditions for a potentially problematic confrontation downstream. The AA has been the most successful element, and its integration has reinforced the position of the Sunni bloc within the GOI as an effective counterbalance to the Shi'a parties. But the success of the CLCs is less clear, and the GOI still faces a serious challenge in terms of their disarmament and reintegration, with a falling oil price limiting the sweeteners it is able to offer.

Yet few in either the US or the UK would subscribe to such a view. Perhaps notions of victory and defeat are indeed largely perceptive:[110] the US has decided that it "won" in Anbar, the UK that it "lost" in Basra. In both cases the truth is less clear-cut, but neither public is interested in the detail. In Britain in particular, the Iraq war suffers from such a lack of popular legitimacy that the country is not yet prepared to entertain the view that it could have been anything other than a massive mistake.

And the Army remains locked in a corporate cringe, preferring renewed action in Afghanistan to any rigorous examination of what went wrong, or indeed right.

This paper suggests that the true verdict on the Basra deal should be much less critical, and that the current embarrassment is both misplaced and unhelpful. There are legitimate reasons for national unease over the performance in Iraq, including the lack of resources committed, the failure to apply COIN doctrine, the lack of continuity in key appointments, the occasional arrogance with Coalition partners, the inability to meet the aspirations of the Iraqi people, the failure to regenerate and actively mentor effective ISF, and the extreme dissonance between ends, ways and means, particularly since 2006.

If these mistakes had not been made, perhaps a deal with JAM would not have been necessary, but they were, and it was. UK commanders found an imaginative and pragmatic way of escaping a strategic cul-de-sac: COIN is no place for absolutist thinking, and the Basra deal looks much better now than it did in early 2008. Although its ambitious goal of creating an inclusive politics in Basra did not work out as intended, it did set the conditions for effective conflict resolution, and thus perhaps for some long-term strategic benefit. The tribal strategy cannot claim as much, at least, not yet.

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1 Carl Sandburg's poem "Choose"; taken as the informal motto of the Force Strategic Engagement Cell (FSEC) by Maj Gen Chris Hughes, who headed the cell from Nov 07–Sep 08. Hughes, interview, 10 Jun 09.

2 CLC were later re-named Sons of Iraq (SOI) – this paper uses the earlier term to avoid confusion with other acronyms.

3 Michael Handel, *War, Strategy and Intelligence*, p 456.

4 Christopher Tuck, "Conflict Termination in Iraq", p 17.

5 Ibid, p 18.

6 Ibid, p 18 & p 21.

7 Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (eds), *Understanding Victory and Defeat in Contemporary War.*

8 Ibid, p 227.

9 Ibid, p 109.

10 Ibid, p 58.

11 Ibid, p 153.

12 Ibid, pp 183-184.

13 I William Zartman, *Negotiation and Conflict Management*, p 120 and p 234, and Elusive Peace, pp 8-9 and p 18.

14 This paragraph draws on Austin Long's "The Anbar Awakening", and on an interview with Lt Gen Sir Graeme Lamb, Deputy Commanding General (DCG) MNF-I Sep 06 - Sep 07, 11 Jun 09.

15 AQI's violence towards the tribes has thus mainly been an effect of shifts in allegiance rather than a cause. Long, op cit, p 78.

16 Carter Malkasian, "A Thin Blue Line in the Sand", p 55.

17 Ibid, p 51.

18 Maj Gen Walter Gaskin, CG Multinational Force West, Department of Defense News Briefing, 10 Dec 07, available online at http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4103

19 Amit Paley, "Shift in Tactics Aims to Revive Struggling Insurgency", Washington Post, 8 Feb 08.

20 Liz Sly, "In Iraq's Anbar Province, the Awakening grapples with a new role", LA Times, 4 May 09.

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ADP *Operations in the Land Environment* is now being taught at ICSC(L) and is being used by the Land Warfare Centre to inform the development of lower-level tactical doctrine. The final version will be published in Jun 10; comment on the 2 Star Trial Draft will be accepted by the Writing Team up to 30 Mar 10. You can access the 2 Star Trial Draft electronically at the DCDC Teamsite (This can be accessed by searching for DCDC on the RLI Search Engine). along with links to further direction on how to comment, the Land Team's contact details and Commander Force Development and Training's direction on its development. Alternatively, you may comment directly to the Land Team at DCDC by sending an email to **'DCDC-Land Ops in LE Comment.'**

We Learn from History that We Learn Nothing from History

Brigadier J K Tanner OBE
Commanded LWCTG(G) and its Field Training Group offspring before and during TELIC 1. COS MND(SE) TELIC 3 and 4. Currently SBA, Saudi Arabian National Guard.

George Bernard Shaw's remark about history was not intended to highlight its pointlessness; it was to highlight the importance of learning from history. And for an Army that is, ostensibly at least, imbued with a deep notion of its past, one might think that the British Army was good at learning from it. If this is a truism and one accepts that the British Army is the main repository of knowledge in dealing with conflict of the type faced in Iraq then it should, surely, have done better. Well: yes and no. Yes, because the Army should have recognised what it would be facing before it committed forces to the Coalition of the Willing. And no, because, once into the inevitable insurgency, the British Army was left to carry the can (but perhaps this is something else the Army should have learned from the past). Ultimately, amid any debate about victory and defeat in Iraq (not military victory or military defeat), it was not only *"no way to win a war"*, it was no way to start a war.

Iraq is, of course, yesterday's war as far as the British Army and the UK in general are concerned. But before the Op TELIC medal (with or without clasp) shifts too far along the chest, like that of Op BANNER, the tale might be told of the British Army's struggle to achieve

Iraq Medal (MoD)

success. Because, despite what might be alluded from the introductory paragraph, 'failure', as far as the British military effort **within** South East Iraq was concerned, is an altogether unfair and unwarranted conclusion given the circumstances of this six-year war. It would be like blaming the British Army for the loss of Aden in 1967 or for the political disaster of Suez in 1956. Notwithstanding the impact of the so-called 'strategic corporal', there are far greater forces at play in counter-insurgency than any manner or number of soldiers can influence in the long term.

Notwithstanding too the enduring principles of counter-insurgency; they can be intimately understood, but applying them is often unique to the prevailing circumstances. Ashley Jackson and Colonel Alex Alderson, while neither are that specific about Iraq, have both gone some way to show how tactical lessons cannot fit every situation[1]. It is the over-riding principles that prevail, but these must not be taken at face value. A glib repetition of the principle that there must be 'a clear and achievable political aim' might be assessed as a principle too far in the case of Iraq. That it is 'all about the politics', to quote General Petraeus, and that *"Fighting insurgencies is a long-term proposition"*, to quote General Casey before him, must put whatever any army can achieve in a counter-insurgency campaign into context. So, if fingers are to be pointed at the British Army regarding Iraq, Multi-National Division (South East) is not the place to point them.

> "It is easy to conquer any Arab country, but their natural inclination to rebellion makes it difficult and expensive for the invader to maintain his control."

South East Iraq

Perhaps the overall outcome in South-East Iraq can be seen at best as ambiguous, and certainly persistent tactical successes did not a strategic victory make. But, given the conditions from the outset, the UK should not have expected anything different and, in not appreciating this, the British Army might be viewed as culpable as its political masters and other involved government departments. Once the Iraqi Army had been kicked into touch – as inevitable at the hands of the original warfighting members of the Coalition as night follows day – then, without a truly massive, politically led, all-government department effort to secure Iraq's future, strategic failure was always going to be on the cards. Never mind that slowly and with some horrendous violence still to come, security in Iraq has been said to have improved since the terrible days of 2005-2007, strategic failure has been a much wider matter. The Arab and Muslim world had been assaulted by an army of foreigners and kufaar and Iraqis did not have to be in any way 'extremists' to be opposed to their occupation by foreign infidels. Perhaps the first lesson from past experience that might have been borne in mind ahead of the invasion of 2003 was that provided by Glubb Pasha:

> *"It is easy to conquer any Arab country, but their natural inclination to rebellion makes it difficult and expensive for the invader to maintain his control."*[2]

But the point of this article is not to ramble on about learning from the past in general; it is to try to learn something specific to the British Army's experience in South-East Iraq in the early days of the war against the insurgents in the hope that that experience is at least

recorded and that something good might come of it.

1 Armoured Division Planning

It is a simple fact that, in training for the war in Iraq, the 1st Armoured Division and its main constituent parts (7 Armoured Brigade, 16 Air Assault Brigade, 3 Commando Brigade) did not at any stage consider any post-war insurgency or how to deal with it; indeed, in all the weeks before crossing the Iraqi border, the very broad area of "post-conflict operations" was barely discussed. It was not totally ignored because 'Phase IV' was an obvious concern, but no Coalition plan was ever issued during this period and well after. So it was in an entire vacuum that the Divisional Headquarters – a tactical level headquarters – conducted what planning it could and under the general belief that, once the hurly-burly was done, divisions of civilian aid agents would quickly assume all responsibility for the undefined but presumably considerable tasks required. These tasks were, after all, not military ones and, while the invading military forces would clearly have a lot to do in the business of stabilisation, it was also generally assumed that the very grateful people of Iraq, especially the Shi'a in the South, would be benign and happy in their attitude towards the foreigners now in their midst.

So – should 1st Armoured Division have prepared itself better and, indeed, Headquarters 3rd Division, which followed in the early summer of 2003? 1st Armoured Division could not. It is very correct to be enormously impressed by the Division's preparation and move to be ready for the ground war, for in just about seven weeks the whole force had been transported from the UK and Germany and was ready in its assembly areas. But the very few weeks preceding the move had allowed for no more than complete dedication to the task of organising and preparing an army for warfighting operations. The holding back of the political order until after the Christmas of 2002 prevented any meaningful reorganisation and training until the very start of the New Year, despite it being blatantly obvious, given the sabre rattling that had been going on since the summer of 2002 that we were going to war.

Royal Engineers hurry to deploy a bridge from an advanced ABLE bridgelayer vehicle (MOD)

Headquarters 1st Armoured Division had enough to do in sorting out the force it was given – for that was also not confirmed until the New Year – let alone in planning the actual operation. Up until the week before Christmas not only was the make-up of the brigades vastly different from those committed eventually to operations, but the whole decision-making process was predicated on an attack south out of Turkey[3]. The successes and failures of the preparation and conduct of the war – of Op TELIC 1 – have been examined in some detail and the findings published[4]. But some information, which would help further explain the Division's predicament, is missing from that analysis. No full explanation of what then transpired post-war can be considered complete without this further context.

It was very fortunate that each allocated brigade was well up to the tasks immediately ahead for no sooner had lower level training begun in earnest in early January 2003 than vehicles and equipment had to be prepared for the long move. By the end of the month commanders and their staffs were already moving too, removing the chance of any Divisional integration. There were few concerns with operating at brigade level and below but, while Headquarters 1st Armoured Division was a well worked-up headquarters, the Air Assault and Commando Brigades had never operated within the Division's framework and there were also divisional level operations that were extremely rusty. Divisional level transitional operations, such as forward passage of lines, had not been practised in the field in years and movement in the combat zone had begun to assume the aura of an administrative task, so little had it been done since the end of the Cold War[5].

The point of all this is not to finger the Division for its weaknesses; they were known and understood and the brigade level and divisional level CPXs (not FTXs) and the small amount of integration with the US Marines that took place in late February and early March in the Kuwaiti desert helped to iron out some creases. The point is to demonstrate that, given what the Division faced (and, even if anyone had read Glubb, the last thing to be assumed was that the whole thing would be a walkover), there was simply no time to think very long about the aftermath, about what to do with Basrah, the Marsh Arabs, the rest of the South East or whatever the Brits found themselves in possession of. That it was a walkover[6] and that the truly complicated stuff of warfighting – getting things in the right place at the right time – was not overly tested, were blessings. The Divisional Headquarters had the chance to hold just one major planning session to consider the perceived aftermath before launching the attack into Iraq and then, as we know, the very rapid collapse of Iraqi forces meant that the aftermath descended all too rapidly upon the Coalition.

Of course it was too late, even in February 2003 and a month ahead of the attack, to be putting together a concrete plan for stabilisation and for securing Iraq's future. But, late as it might have been, opportunities were then missed to use troops already in theatre and fully embedded in the Division to lead the planning and preparation for stabilisation operations while the main Divisional staff effort was focussed on the Iraqi Army[7].

The bulk of Land Warfare Collective Training Group (Germany), including the

Map - SE Iraq (MoD)

CAST team, had deployed with the Divisional Headquarters to run the in-theatre training. Once this was completed a number of its officers augmented the Divisional Staff, such as SO1 CAST, who set up the new and much needed Ops Support team. A number of officers took the GOC's Tactical Headquarters into 1st US Marine Division's Forward Headquarters for the attack into the Ramaila Oilfields and the remainder reorganised themselves in Kuwait ready to form the UK's liaison team to the surrendered Iraqi Army, once that occurred[8]. Rather ignominiously, all of these troops were ordered home (not by the GOC) at the beginning of April as the Division sat on the edge of Basrah, in order to train 1st Armoured Division's reliefs which, subsequently, they were never asked to do.

Post Invasion Iraq

Jump forward about nine months to December 2003. British troops were still in Iraq but now as part of a coalition of forces in occupation of the south-east of the country. The situation had settled down and was relatively quiet across all four of the Provinces of Basrah, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Muthanna. 3rd (UK) Division had replaced 1st Armoured that summer and, while the frustrations of the population had boiled over in the heat and amidst shortages of all essential services, the Iraqis in the south-east still seemed cautiously hopeful that the temporary occupation by foreign soldiers would lead to better times. By late December Headquarters 3rd Division had completed its handover to Headquarters Multi-National Division (South East)[9], led by the British but now including another 12 nations' officers, although the Americans always called MND(SE) "those British guys" – a remark that was invariably unhelpful when constantly surprised US officers in Baghdad got a Dane or a Rumanian or an Aussie on the other end of the telephone. The greater impact of this will be described later. Through the second half of 2003 the Main Effort for the South-East had been the improvement of essential services; to move the situation, in a phrase, from 'Fragility to Stability'.

Rioters burn the Ice Factory, Nasiriyah – 2003

Ammo everywhere

Burning Cash

This seemed to be working, if only because the deteriorating security situation in the rest of Iraq was not happening in the South East. The attack on the Italians in An Nasariyah in November 2003, which left 19 Italian soldiers and Carabinieri dead, seemed an aberration. So, while considerable military effort was still focussed on essential services, about the same time HQ MND(SE) stood up, Main Effort shifted to Security Sector Reform, the avowed aim being to establish:

the plan had established four enduring, mutually supporting and concurrent Lines of Operation: Security, Essential Services, Economy, Governance. While just one of these – Security – was the direct responsibility of the military, without the military lead across the board, the rest would have been stillborn.

> *"A sufficiently credible and capable Security Sector accountable to the population and working to effective and representative provincial governments within the MND(SE) AOR to allow Coalition Forces to withdraw."*[10]

...the plan had established four enduring, mutually supporting and concurrent Lines of Operation: Security, Essential Services, Economy, Governance. While just one of these - Security - was the direct responsibility of the military, without the military lead across the board, the rest would have been stillborn.

Subsequently, Main Effort would shift within four months to enabling transition of political authority to the Iraqis. All of this was within the campaign plan which, albeit focussed rather locally on the South-East, was in line with the overall Coalition aim and the aims of the UK. But it was at most an operational level plan, worked up by Headquarters 3rd Division, as still no clearly defined strategy existed. Nevertheless, the plan had established four enduring, mutually supporting and concurrent Lines of Operation: Security, Essential Services, Economy, Governance. While just one of these – Security – was the direct responsibility of the military, without the military lead across the board, the rest would have been stillborn.

There is a good exposé of what went wrong and why between Op TELIC 2 and 5 in the Army's published analysis contained in *'Stability Operations in Iraq'*[11]. Some of its language is perhaps somewhat guarded but it clearly identifies the *"failure to plan the military and non-military Phase IV tasks for Iraq in timely fashion and in sufficient breadth and depth"*[12] as the prime source of all the trouble that eventually followed. The analysis also clearly absolves 1st Armoured Division of the responsibility for this failing.[13] There was not only no time afforded for such planning but outside the military there was also very little effort; no concept that a national, cross-government approach was required from the outset and through to the end. One has to ask why and, if time was the only problem, why no more time was allowed? To say that, as a result, *"local support for and confidence in the Coalition ebbed"*[14] is to put it mildly. The situation noticeably worsened in South East Iraq from the latter part of Op TELIC 3 onwards and the story is well known, but as the dust has settled since the final withdrawal of British troops on 31 July 2009 – the last of what was left of MND(SE) – there is arising a tendency to point the finger of failure at the British military effort in Iraq.

General Jack Keane, former Vice-Chief of Staff of the US Army, declared of the British in Iraq that they were *"a regular pain in the ass"*, and maybe he was right...

Winston Churchill said that *"Coalition warfare is a tale of the reciprocal complaints of allies"*[15] and the difficulties, especially between the main components of the post-war Coalition, were certainly manifold. It was readily identified in MND(SE) that *"Such multinationality has inherent frictions, difficult enough in a purely military operation but conceivably greatly exacerbated in the politico-military environment of counter-insurgency."*[16] They have barely been mentioned in the British Army's literature, except in the case of the perceived difficulties created by US military NOFORN procedures during the war. But never mind the very fact that the US leaders of the Coalition, including those at CFLCC in Baghdad, did not prepare for Phase IV. US attitudes towards 'those British guys' was invariably at odds with the situation in the South East and the way MND(SE) was dealing with it. General Jack Keane, former Vice-Chief of Staff of the US Army, declared of the British in Iraq that they were *"a regular pain in the ass"*[17], and maybe he was right, but next to no attempt was made by CFLCC to properly understand the different conditions inherent in the southern Provinces.

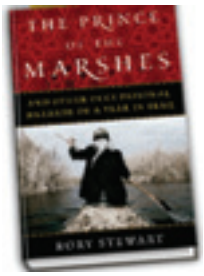
The Insurgency Emerges

Never mind the fact too that, initially, the Americans in the centre and north *"wasted a year by using counterproductive tactics … in unprofessional ignorance of the basic tenets of counter-insurgency warfare"*[18]

before they started to 'get it' (and get it they did). There was simply little dialogue. Until certainly into Op TELIC 5 not one single senior staff conference, such as for the collected Divisional chiefs of staff, was called by CJTF-7. Planned staff visits to Baghdad were invariably met by blank looks on arrival, with senior American staff absent at other meetings, and attempts to set up even a weekly conference call on secure telephones all failed.[19] Passage of information from CJTF-7 was largely confined to a tortuous daily conference call comprising lengthy summaries of that day's activities from each Division[20] and the daily FRAGO frenzy, requiring HQ MND(SE) simply to "concur" or "non-concur".[21]

> *"some Americans in Baghdad … chafed at what they saw as Britain's failure to grasp the nettle."*

It must be said that CJTF-7 was becoming entirely consumed by the rising intensity of an insurgency at a time when it was still relatively quiet in the South. But MND(SE)'s whole point was that there already appeared to be a minimum of consideration of the political context of the situation across Iraq and a poor understanding of the very different conditions prevailing in the South. A point was made to Baghdad in the late summer of 2003 that 'One Size Does Not Fit All' and that planning considerations in other Provinces might not be appropriate to the South. This did not make MND(SE) easy or particularly compliant allies, especially when concerns were voiced about the impact on the political scene in the South of US military operations elsewhere. A good example was HQ MND(SE)'s resistance in



Rory Stewart - The Prince of the Marshes

Iraqi Boys - Nasiriyah

February/March 2004 to the US plan to seize the Shi'a cleric Moqtada Al Sadr because, with the Shi'a entirely dominating southern Iraq, his arrest could seriously destabilise the region. His arrest might or might not have prevented the subsequent Shi'a insurgency, but the Americans just did not engage with MND(SE) (or with MND(Central) for that matter – and their problems were becoming acute). The result was that *"some Americans in Baghdad … chafed at what they saw as Britain's failure to grasp the nettle."*[22]

This was bad enough but next to no consideration was given by the US towards Britain's other Coalition partners, and their presence also goes almost entirely unmentioned in the various British post-operational reports. It has already been alluded to, but the reaction of CJTF-7 to finding a Rumanian or Lithuanian staff officer on the end of the telephone in Basrah was often to hang up. This was not just a minor inconvenience, for J3 Operations in MND(SE) was a Danish lead, and J5 Plans was an Italian lead. There were up to 13 nations represented in MND(SE) in 2004[23] and each had, apart from the Danish battalion embedded in the British brigade, a very different approach to operations. None of them, apart from the British, had any experience of counter-insurgency operations and only the British and the Danes could operate outside specific, nationally defined, areas of operation. None of them were inclined to accept direct orders from what they saw as a British Headquarters, whether or not the order had originated in Baghdad. This implies harsh criticism of other Coalition partners and some –

Centaur Tank Iraq (Italian Army)

Japanese Self-Defence Forces Iraq (Australian Army)

the Dutch and Italians for instance – had made significant contributions to MND(SE). The point is that all these differences had to be understood and worked with if the Coalition was going to be held together, let alone if any insurgency was going to be defeated. The Italians, the lead nation in Dhi Qar

Province, came in for some particularly hefty criticism, and some of it from within the MND(SE) military hierarchy. Rory Stewart, the CPA deputy governorate coordinator at the time the 'Sadr insurgency' erupted in early April 2004, has given a particularly critical account of this period.[24] His immense frustrations at apparent lack of Italian will to engage with the enemy and with HQ MND(SE) for seemingly doing little to support him must be well appreciated. But what was never properly factored in was the enormous political pressure the Italians were under not to have any more fatalities. Great efforts had to be made to keep the Coalition together at this stage,[25] and with pressure from CJTF-7 growing (CPA reports from Dhi Qar went straight to Baghdad and, unhelpfully, not to Basrah), MND(SE) pulled together a British battlegroup to move against the insurgents in An Nasariyah. It was not

required as the Italians, whose pragmatic agreements with local Iraqi leaders had clearly broken down, went on to the offensive, and with their Centaur wheeled tanks cleared their way into the city. It was the first time Italian troops had fought a battle since the Second World War and the judgement from HQ MND(SE) was that *"The Italians kept us informed of their intentions throughout and in their own measured way appeared to us to deal with the situation effectively … the Italian response, just like ours, must be measured by balancing risk and effect."*[26] Stewart acknowledged some time later that Dhi Qar Province did actually settle down in the following year, although he ascribed this to Iraqi exasperation at Italian efforts rather than the effort itself.[27]

And then there were the Japanese, massively disadvantaged by lack of any relevant experience and the constraints of domestic politics, but nevertheless anxious to work on civil engineering and medical projects. The battalion from the Japanese Self-Defence Forces, deployed within the Dutch area of operations in Al Muthana Province, had over 80% of its troops fixed to force protection and support tasks. But this was probably an improvement on their original plan, which was to hire a private security company to protect their soldiers! The Japanese might be considered naïve and were certainly, eventually, daunted by the task they had taken on. But no nation committed to MND(SE) refused to soldier, like the Ukrainians in Wasit Province, or simply turned tail for home, as the Spanish did during this period. This is no intended slur on the Spanish military, forced home by domestic politics after the appalling attacks by Al Qa'ida in Spain in March 2004, but their departure was preceded by serious planning at very short notice by MND(SE) to move British troops into the Spanish area.

No force in history has ever before countered an insurgency within such a disparate Coalition. And no counter-insurgency had ever been attempted within the political chasm that prevailed in the Coalition in Iraq and the resultant lack of overall, let alone correct, strategy. It is difficult to understand why, given the knowledge and resources of the Coalition, that this could not be achieved. Professor Eliot Cohen's conclusion is particularly damning:

"From the outset of the Iraq war much of our difficulty has stemmed not so much from failures to find the right strategy, as from an astounding and depressing inability to implement the strategic and operational choices we have nominally made."[28]

It might be all very well being critical or otherwise of the tactics used by any particular nation but this is as irrelevant as US tactical victories in Vietnam for, as Colonel Bob Killebrew, a Vietnam Special Forces veteran, commented on Iraq: *"If you get the strategy wrong and the tactics right at the start, you can refine the tactics forever but you will still lose the war."*[29]

Troop levels in South East Iraq did contain the insurgency and terrorism that erupted in April 2004 and then intensified over the following two years, but MND(SE)'s military leadership could not hope to reach its Centre of Gravity – defined as *"The support of the majority of the people within each Province of [the] AOR"*[30] – without a fully wound up effort from other Government departments and agencies: *"Cross-Government team efforts are vital to strategic success".*[31] There is no space here to delve into the lack of British cross-Government coordination in the South East, and the added difficulty and confusion when other Coalition partner's efforts were thrown into this muddle must be imagined. Tom Rick's 'Fiasco' paints a graphic picture from the US angle and Mark Etherington's 'Revolt on the Tigris', albeit from MND(C), shines a light on this from the British perspective, concluding that:

> *"I believed that our leadership structures were flawed on the British side, and that what we needed was someone capable of satisfactorily combining diplomatic and military strategies."*[32]

One of the fundamental principles of counter-insurgency, re-learnt countless times, is unity of command at the highest level. It is also outside the scope of this article to comment on the mess that was the higher leadership of the Coalition Provisional Authority and the division between its Director and Commander CJTF-7. But neither was there any unity at the lower levels and, while locally, CPA heads and their military counterparts often did their utmost to tie their activities together, without a fully integrated approach and unity of political and military command, efforts will founder and fail. The genius who physically separated the British led CPA (South) from HQ MND(SE), the former in Basrah Palace and the latter in Basrah Airport, should surely step forward and explain his logic. So, too, should the genius who established that each governorate would report directly to Baghdad and not to the regional military commanders, which further hampered proper coordination of effort. When the CPA then folded in June 2004 this effectively removed in-country political direction, contravening perhaps the most fundamental of the counter-insurgency principles – that civil primacy reigns and the military role is subordinate to it. Had Thompson and Kitson and many others taught us nothing?

This was all very well understood within MND(SE) even in the first half of 2004 but, as this article has tried to portray so far, understanding the situation was all very well; being able to do something particularly coherent about it was another matter. Additionally, the situation did not seem all that bad and there was genuine confidence that, certainly as far as the South East was concerned (an attitude which might have been at least selfish), the delivery of the Four Lines of Operation was still achievable. For Security this meant a *"Secure and stable environment maintained by Iraqi security structures"*[33]. The timeframe for the overall goal of an Iraq run by Iraqis by July 2004 now seems, but in hindsight, hopelessly naïve.

Moreover, it must be appreciated that dealing with the majority of these threats was not in the gift of the military alone, although the military alone was increasingly being held responsible.

It is another unfair judgment to accuse MND(SE) of not preparing for an insurgency in the South East. In its CONPLAN, HQ MND(SE) had identified the seven threats it faced and the nine effects required to overcome them[34] and, aside from measures to defeat terrorism and what were somewhat ill-defined 'non-compliant forces', filled its time to full measure and more with all its other tasks whilst maintaining the Coalition. Moreover, it must be appreciated that dealing with the majority of these threats was not in the gift of the military alone, although the military alone was increasingly being held responsible. MND(SE) was not complacent and in its planning had long recognised that its Centre of Gravity meant – and this was unique to the South – maintaining the consent of the majority of the Shi'a; *"we did not need them all and could afford to lose the small Sunni population in the South East, but we had to have the majority of the Shi'a. We had long recognised that a general Shi'a insurgency directed against the occupying power – us – would make our position rapidly untenable."*[35] In providing fertile grounds for an insurgency, the people are the threat.

Within the paucity of military, political and economic resources available, it could do no more and when the Sadr Insurgency bit MND(SE) on the backside, it came as a shock. HQ MND(SE) was at that time planning for British troop reductions and a withdrawal from some of the Basrah city locations, including Basrah Palace,[36] and clearly did not see the insurgency coming. Perhaps it should have, but the point here is that MND(SE) was doing its level best to forestall any insurgency from developing and thought it was succeeding. In many ways it was, but Iraqi expectations ran very high *('surely the nation that put a man on the moon can give us electricity')* and the Coalition had failed to meet the overall need of 'security' – security in its very widest sense: *"It had little to do with the military situation but made us understand that the vast majority of common men in Iraq, just like anywhere, are driven by security of family and home and wished to lead their lives free of fear."*[37]

As it was, the insurgency was not as was feared – a large-scale rising of the people – but a minority, urban insurgency with a military flavour. Feeding off the frustrations of the Shi'a and the masses of unemployed young men, many of whom had been soldiers, Moqtadr Al Sadr had an easy audience. But, despite the severity of the subsequent violence, the insurgents were relatively easy to defeat militarily and tactical success for MND(SE) was always achievable. It was achieved entirely within the principles of countering an insurgency and force, when it was applied (for military force is, of course, a key part of counter-insurgency) was applied under the principle of minimum force. Hereby hung a further dilemma. There are lessons from the past that tell us that the Arab respects force and that to show weakness is to invite a whole heap of trouble: *"Arabs … are accustomed to be ruled by the strong hand. Indeed, there is no denying that they respect force, and force alone."*[38] This quotation from the British commander in Iraq at the time of the Shi'a uprising in 1920 is from another age and its imperialist arrogance cannot be denied. But the same lesson was evident in Iraq in 2004.

In trying to define the potential insurgent, MND(SE) was facing myriad groups amongst the Shi'a and even Shi'a tribes that had supported Saddam, having placed their bets on the strongest man. The town of Qal at Salih was particularly notorious for its tribal lawlessness and an incident in February 2004 rapidly escalated when local police and members of the Badr Corps suspected the British were about to seize their weapons. The day long battle that followed left a number of Iraqis dead, but local leaders were then convinced the Coalition would punish the town as Saddam would have done, and we would have done in the 1920s, by bombing. In 1926 a British officer remarked that:

> *"These people … best understand a .303 bullet. The Turk beat them at their own games [and] they are rather apt to regard our leniency and straight dealing as a sign of weakness."*[39]

Should MND(SE) therefore, in anticipation of an insurgency of some sort, have bombed the living daylights out of the place? Perhaps the rules of engagement used in the South East were also seen as a sign of weakness and there is certainly a recognisable dilemma between employing *"firm and timely action"*[40] and using minimum force. A very real concern arose when the Norwegian contingent commander revealed his nation's very tight RoE to the newspapers as it was feared these could be very easily exploited by any 'non-compliant' group, as they probably were in the case of British troops later on. But MND(SE) was simply and rightly not in the business of deterrence by firepower, whatever the consequences were a month or so later. This led to further battles with Baghdad. The UK had often to argue to persuade CJTF-7 that groups of Iraqis clad in black and armed to the teeth did not necessarily constitute insurgents and could not be 'taken out' unless they engaged the Coalition first. This reached the limits of absurdity when Baghdad sent a team to Basrah, led by a retired British officer, to impose protection measures on the electricity power lines being cut down by criminal gangs. The measures – helicopter gunships that would 'whack' anyone seen within five kilometres of the power lines – ignored the fact that the bulk of the population lived along them. The suggestion that local tribes should be encouraged to protect the power lines, perhaps being paid to do so, was met with derision.

And finally, of course, good intelligence

would give MND(SE) the answers it required. Intelligence drives operations and this is more important in counter-insurgency than in any other form of conflict, but quite how an efficient and universal intelligence service was going to be established and in the time available is an unanswered question. Iraqi society, deeply suspicious of its neighbour after decades of attention by Saddam's own intelligence services, is virtually impenetrable by outsiders. The intense tribalism often encountered actually helped to deter terrorist acts in the South East but it made the quest for intelligence almost impossible, certainly in the short term.

No matter that the HUMINT teams were poorly resourced as well, if this very closed society also views the occupier, no matter how altruistic that occupier's intentions might be, as merely temporarily in residence, then a foreign-led counter-insurgency campaign is going to stumble and fail. The occupier will eventually depart, so there is little to be gained by supporting him.

The Strategic Perspective

Any criticism of MND(SE)'s effort in its occupied territory misses the point entirely if it does not view the whole strategic perspective: occupied Iraq was just that. To occupy an Arab/Muslim state by western/infidel troops has always and will always invite a shed-load of trouble. Compound that occupation by not resourcing stabilisation and reconstruction in any way adequately from the very beginning leaves the military, the very obvious representatives of the occupier, increasingly vulnerable. It is then all too easy to dig into tactical ups and downs, but the solution does not and never will lie at this level. To have any hope of defeating an insurgent people the approach has to be very special and grounded in an underlying political condition for eventual success. In the British experience only Malaya and Northern Ireland (it is still hoped), and perhaps Cyprus to some extent, have seen insurgency completely overcome because the politics worked. Left to the military, the dilemma is unchanged. T E Lawrence, commenting on his Arab comrades and their revolt against the Turk, noted the relationship between insurgent and regular soldier:

> *"… suppose we were (as we might be) an influence, an idea, a thing intangible, invulnerable, without front or back, drifting about like a gas? Armies were like plants, immobile, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head. We might be a vapour, blowing where we listed. Our kingdoms lay in each man's mind; and as we wanted nothing material to live on, so we might offer nothing material to the killing. It seemed a regular soldier might be helpless without a target, owning only what he sat on, and subjugating only what, by order, he could poke his rifle at."*[41]

TE Lawrence (IWM)

There can be tactical victories at every stage and even partial strategic success. The occupier might view this as victory, having created a semblance of order but ignoring the resulting greater ripples he has created. Ultimately, might we not learn from history that there are times when there is no possible way to defeat an insurgency, unless the occupier has annihilation in mind?

1 Ashley Jackson, *British Counter-insurgency in History: A Useful Precedent?*, BAR 139 and Col Alex Alderson, *Counter-Insurgency: Learn and Adapt. Can We Do Better?*, **BAR 142**.

2 Lieutenant General Sir John Bagot Glubb, *A Soldier With the Arabs*, London, 1957, p 37. Anyone who has cause to work with Arab soldiers, especially Beduin, must read Glubb's books.

3 When the 'mother-of-all-training-conferences' took place at Herford on 18 December 2002 it was attended by 7 Armd Bde, 20 Armd Bde and a 'Rear Operations Group', based on HQ LWCTG(G) and to comprise about three and a half battalions. Three days later the conference re-convened, now with 19 Bde in place of 20 Armd Bde. On Christmas Eve planning was halted and by the New Year the ROG was stood down and 3 Cdo Bde was in. Then 19 Bde was stood down and 16 Air Assault Bde was included. The Division went through more than 80 changes to the ORBAT before the force finally departed for Kuwait. And, of course, all planning had, until Boxing Day, been focussed on an attack from Turkey.

4 *AC71816: Operations in Iraq – An Analysis From The Land Perspective.*

5 Exercise SAIF SARREA II in Oman in September/October 2001 had shown up these formation level weaknesses and attempts were made, with limited success, to improve matters procedurally on Exercise ARRCADE FUSION 2002 and practically in Poland.

6 Many British soldiers and marines faced fighting locally that was tough and bloody and some company groups and even battlegroups conducted coordinated offensive operations in the couple of weeks of battle that prevailed. But to describe this as *"significant Iraqi resistance"* is drawing the longbow too much. The quotation is taken from *Operations in Iraq: First Reflections*, DGCC MoD, July 2003, p 11.

7 AC71816, op cit. Much is made of what is perceived as the over-manning of British headquarters, especially that of 1 Armd Div. A fairer criticism might have been that some of the staff might have been better employed in planning for Phase IV.

8 It is a now forgotten fact that on 16 February 2003 the GOC tasked Comd LWCTG(G) with forming a team to take on faction liaison post warfighting. This team, later called the Divisional Liaison Group, had as its main task, liaison with the surrendered Iraqi Army and would comprise four pairs of Landrovers manned

entirely by officers and warrant officers from LWCTG(G). Work with US Special Forces had already begun before the entry of 7 Armd Bde into Basrah, but the DLG was then stood down and sent home.

9 It is hard to fathom Dr Daniel Marston's remark in his article in BAR 147 that *"the role of MND(SE) divisional HQ was not fully established until TELIC 5"* (Daniel Marston, *"Smug and Complacent?"* Operation TELIC: The Need for Critical Analysis, **BAR 147**, p 18). Admittedly, the founding of the Headquarters was entirely ad hoc. It was 'set up' at PJHQ in September 2003 and its established staff consisted of just three – the COS, GOC's ADC and a clerk – until staff officers from all contributing nations started to trickle into Basrah from early December 2003. It had managed a three-day 'training' period at PJHQ, attended by about half the nominated British officers and the Romanians, and the majority of the British officers attended the OPTAG package at Chilwell. During the course of December the HQ MND(SE) staff gradually took over from the HQ 3 Div staff, the bulk of British officers not arriving until the very end of December, when the GOCs handed over. Within the first month HQ MND(SE) had produced, largely from scratch and with no direction from Baghdad, a full operational plan that, over the highs and lows of the following couple of years, stood up to scrutiny. But as a doctrinal basis for stabilisation operations and then counter-insurgency, such an ad hoc approach is an absurdity. It was saved by the quality and dedication of many of the officers and soldiers (many of them ill-qualified) at the time.

10 MND(SE) CONOPS 01/04 dated 5 February 2004.

11 *AC71844, Stability Operations in Iraq (Op TELIC 2-5)* – An Analysis From a Land Perspective, July 2006.

12 *AC71844*, op cit, p 2, para 5.

13 While AC71816 states, accurately, that HQ 1 Armd Div did not publish its Op Order for Phase IV until 21 April 2003, some 15 days after Basrah fell, this apparent slowness must be excused. The requirement did not seem that urgent and any adverse consequences were certainly not apparent. And, of course, no plans were being distributed from above.

14 *AC71844,* op cit, p 4, para 10.

15 Quoted in Eliot A Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime,* New York, 2002, p 68.

16 Col James Tanner, *The British Counter-Insurgency Experience in Iraq*, Counter-Insurgency Seminar, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Baltimore, December 2004.

17 SAIS Seminar, op cit. General Keane had not realised a British officer was in the audience.

18 Ricks, op cit, p 4.

19 This situation did improve markedly later on and by the time of Op TELIC 8 was a mature and informative system. But by this time British political intent – to pull out of Iraq – was also clear.

20 Except from the Brits! GOC 3rd Division stipulated that the summary from HQ 3 Div/HQ MND(SE) was never to exceed two minutes in length.

21 Poor passage of information reached an early nadir on 13 December 2003, the day Saddam Hussein was captured by US Forces. HQ MND(SE) discovered the capture that lunchtime when the Iraqis working in the cookhouse got suddenly very excited as they saw Sky News broadcast the fact. The 'celebratory firing' of weapons across Basrah that morning, which could so easily have turned to something else, was then explained.

22 Mark Etherington, *Revolt on the Tigris – The Al Sadr Uprising and the Governing of Iraq,* London, 2005, p 96.

23 In February 2004 these were, in addition to the UK: Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, Romania, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, New Zealand and Iceland. Soon after, the Australians arrived.

24 Rory Stewart, *Occupational Hazards – My Time Governing in Iraq,* London, 2006.

25 The declared Coalition Strategic Centre of Gravity was defined as *"The maintenance of international support."*

26 COS MND(SE) to CPA Dhi Qar, quoted in Stewart, op cit, p 384.

27 The Spectator/Intelligence Squared, The Great Iraq Debate, 11 December 2007, at www.spectator.co.uk.

28 Cohen, op cit.

29 Quoted in Ricks, op cit, p 195.

30 MND(SE) CONOPS, op cit.

31 *AC71844,* op cit, Para 17.

32 Etherington, op cit, p 117.

33 MND(SE) CONOPS, op cit, Annex E. The other three Lines of Operation and their goals were: Essential Services *("delivered to acceptable standards")*; Economy *("Stable market economy established")*; Governance *("Democratic and representative Iraqi national and provincial government established")*.

34 MND(SE) CONOPS, op cit. The threats in February 2004, in no order of priority, were: Terrorism, Criminality, Environmental, Economic, Cultural, Religious and Political. The effects required were: Defeat Terrorism, Force Protection, Reduce Criminality to an Acceptable Level, Improve/Maintain/Secure Essential Services, Neutralise Non-Compliant Forces, Maintain and Improve Consent, Establish Effective New Iraqi Security Forces, Secure Environment for Political Progress and Maximise Iraqi Control.

35 Tanner, op cit.

36 Subsequently not handed over to the Iraqis until 3 September 2007.

37 Tanner, op cit.

38 Lt Gen Sir Aylmer Haldane, *The Arab Rising in Mesopotamia*, 1920, RUSI Journal, Vol LXVIII, Feb-Nov 1923, p 65.

39 Sqn Ldr CH Keith, quoted in Lawrence James, *Imperial Rearguard – Wars of Empire 1919-85,* London, 1988, p 77. These were the years of RAF primacy and the policy of 'Air Control' in Iraq and Transjordan in an attempt to provide imperial policing on the cheap.

40 Maj Gen Sir Charles Gwynn, Imperial Policing, London, 1934, p 15. The principles of *'imperial policing'* that General Gwynn identified would be recognisable today but his advocacy of nipping any insurgency in the bud (he never uses the word "insurgent") must be taken in the context of the time. As understanding as British and Imperial forces were in the 1920s and 1930s of the use of minimum force, this was still the age of the punitive expedition.

41 T E Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom,* quoted in Malcolm Brown, *T E Lawrence in War and Peace,* London, 2005, p 265. ☐

The Practice of Strategy Presentation at the Conference on – "The Importance of Strategy"

Norwegian Defence University College, Oslo, 18 August, 2009

Professor Colin S Gray

What is Strategy? Basics

If this were a sermon and I had a text as a theme, it would be the following quotation from the American strategist, Bernard Brodie. He said that:

> *Strategic thinking, or theory if one prefers, is nothing if not pragmatic. Strategy is a "how to do it" study, a guide to accomplishing something and doing it efficiently… Above all, strategy is a theory for action.*[1]

My current definition asserts that strategy is the direction and use made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy. There cannot be a correct definition. But there can be definitions that do what they need to do by way of specifying closely what it is that you are talking about. My definition here refers narrowly to military strategy, hence the specification of the instrumentality of force. This definition easily can be rendered more inclusive so that it covers grand strategy. Put tersely, strategy connects ends purposefully with means. The classic explanation of the strategic function states simply that strategy is about the relations among ends, ways, and means. Strategy is the bridge that should bind political goals coherently to military (et al) power. Strategy's product is strategic effect, admittedly a rather opaque phenomenon.[2] Strategic effect is made manifest in the course of events and appears in the form of some measure of control over the enemy. It may be brute physical control or, much more often, it appears as a controlling/influencing factor over enemy thought and behaviour.

The Practice of Theory

The only purpose of strategic theory is for the education of the strategist. Theory has no other value. It may be elegant, even entertaining, and perhaps useful for those who are immersed in intellectual/cultural history. But, the justification for strategic theorizing is its educational utility to the practising strategist. So, what do we mean by the practice of strategy? Commonly it is claimed, I believe misleadingly, that while one "has a strategy, one does tactics". Capt. Wayne Hughes, USN, states that

> *At the most fundamental level, it is accepted that the strategist directs the tactician. The mission of every battle plan is passed from the higher commander to the lower. There is no more basic precept than that, and no principle of war is given greater status than the primacy of the objective. This is not the same as saying that strategy determines tactics and the course of battle. Strategy and tactics are best thought of as handmaidens, but if one must choose, it is probably more correct to say that tactics come first, because they dictate the limits of strategy.*[3]

All of which is mainly correct, but, alas, misleading. It is a mistake of large dimension to take the formal hierarchy of policy, strategy, and tactics, too seriously. In practice one does not just have a strategy, which is implemented by tactics in pursuit of military objectives that somehow miraculously should correspond to political goals. Instead, in practice strategy is done by tactics and as tactics, and everything that we rightly consider tactical is, basically, strategic in addition (and effect for purpose). As Antulio Echevarria has written, *'all events in war have some weight'*[4] I translate those words of wisdom to mean that all tactical behaviour has strategic value, and I would add that that weight can be negative, given that our subject must have the nature of a net consequence. Competition, rivalry, enmity, war and warfare, are duels.

Complexity and Confusion

In minds that are competent and honest, strategic theory can only be an important source of assistance. But, when deployed by the incompetent, the careless, and the evil-intending, strategic theory is a source of serious peril. T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia) famously wrote in his war memoir, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, about "the whole house of war".[5] He conceived of war as a building comprising strategy, tactics, psychology, and command. This is useful, but not always readily explained to students. It is tempting to present a PowerPointed array of marvellous trinities: policy, strategy, tactics; ends, ways, means; fire, manoeuvre, shock; fear, honour, interest (Thucydides); intellect, wealth, psychology (Kautilya); passion, chance, reason (Clausewitz) – and so on. But, nothing in practice about our subject is quite as simple as an elegant briefing can make it appear. Yes, policy is logically superior to strategy, as strategy is to practice. But, each is meaningless without the others. They are truly interdependent, and more. The German and French languages are wonderfully indecisive about politics and policy. Our English usage, which distinguishes clearly between the two, is actually misleading. In principle, politics produces policy, but the "policy process" is both continuous and inherently political. It is a serious mistake to believe that policy begins when politics concludes. Similarly, if actually more poignantly, surely nothing could be clearer than the distinctions between policy and strategy, and between strategy and tactics? Strategy is the

agency for policy, while tactics is the agency for strategy. QED: quod erat demonstrandum. But, but, just as policy cannot be viable without ongoing political enablers, so it cannot be made sensibly except with the most careful reference to strategic feasibility. Can it be done by strategy? And, strategy cannot answer that vital question except by interrogating tactics. Can the troops, will the troops be willing to, do it? It is important to distinguish purpose from methods and means. However, the three ought to be a trinity, that is 1 in 3 and 3 in 1. Clarity in a conceptual (vertical) hierarchy is prone to mislead the unwary.

Difficulty and Possibility

So many and varied are the impediments to good strategic performance that it can be something of a mystery why strategists sometimes succeed. I can suggest that there are at least three major reasons why the purposeful practice of strategy is possible, why sometimes it succeeds.

First, the very complexity of the strategist's domain, the sheer variety of factors that interact to generate strategic performance, paradoxically is a great help, as well as a hindrance, to high quality strategic outcomes. Why? Because complexity and variety tend to allow for fungibility, for compensation, for substitution with work-arounds. And there is usually merit in mass. One reason why navies have been highly vulnerable in recent times is because their major combatant units have been very few in number. You might have a 600-ship fleet, say, but how many fleet aircraft carriers are there? It is hard to lose air superiority in an afternoon or to suffer irreversible defeat on land in a matter of hours. Of course, it can be done, if you try hard enough. But, air and land warfare in modern history generally have been attritional, because of the resilience of numbers. Decisive victory has been difficult to achieve, but by the same token decisive defeat is not usually readily conceded.

Second, to the safety (imperfect, I admit) in complexity, I must add the

Eastern Island, then the site of Midway's airfield, is in the foreground. Sand Island, location of most other base facilities, is across the entrance channel. (US Navy)

Scene on board USS Yorktown (CV-5), shortly after she was hit by three Japanese bombs on 4 June 1942. (US Navy)

security that resides in the nature of competition and warfare as a duel. The enemy, who usually is the greatest source of difficulty for the strategist, also is the largest source of assistance. His errors and the friction that must afflict him provide my opportunity.

Third, to succeed as a strategist it is fortunate that I do not need to be excellent, or even competent necessarily, though I do have to be lucky – Napoleon was right, on this matter at least. Many an incompetent strategist has been rescued by a wise policymaker, good enough subordinates, outstanding fighting power on the part of his troops, and – to repeat – by the follies of the enemy and the fall of the iron dice of war in his favour.

Genius and Talent: The Strategist

Although we refer casually to "the strategist!", in fact the label can, and probably should, cover an inclusive job description. If you like the biblical admonition: *"by their deeds shall ye know them,"* what are the deeds of the strategist? Let me suggest what the strategist must do if he is to "do" strategy. The strategist must:

(a) conceptualize for the overall matching of ends, ways, and means;
(b) plan how to translate the high overall concept into attainable advantage;
(c) command both the continuous process of adaptive planning and the actual "doing" of the plan in action by, and in support of, the troops;
(d) and both items (b) and (c) require a command performance that needs leadership.

If you prefer a much narrower identity for the strategist, that is your choice. But, I am taking my cue from the fact that strategy is a pragmatic endeavour and that it has to be done, or it is nothing.

An American classical scholar once observed that the Roman Republic typically was blessed with generals who were only talented.[6] He noted that Julius Caesar was a rare exception: he was a genius who thought strategically. I should hasten to add that it is not sufficient only to think strategically, unusual though that may be. Rather is it helpful if you are able to think both creatively and soundly, strategically. It is, perhaps, a source of some relief to recognize that few countries, and then

Churchill (National Archives)

hardly ever, truly have need of military strategic genius. Talent typically is good enough. And talent can be helped by some formal education, whereas genius is apt to be more damaged than assisted by attempts at improving instruction.[7]

General George Patton (USMA)

General Dwight Eisenhower giving orders to American paratroopers in England 1944 June. (Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress)

HM King George VI visiting the headquarters of the Commander of the 21st Army Group, Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery. (IWM)

For once, history (which is to say historians) is firm in the opinion that genius has a downside as well as an upside. People with great gifts and competencies, tend also to have great deficiencies. Genius can be hard to live with, even if it may save the country. Military genius can even lead you to disaster. For a modest example of the distinction, I could argue that whereas Eisenhower and Montgomery certainly had talent, Patton was a genius. Churchill too had genius, for good and ill. Professional military education can improve those with talent to fit them better for high command, but there is a limit to what can be taught. To express it brutally, you cannot put in what God left out. It is useful to ask the question, what makes a strategist? The answer, I suggest, is the following: the strategist is the product of

(1) nature/biology;
(2) psychology/personality;
(3) opportunity and experience;
(4) education (formal).

I am sure that many an Alexander-the-Great "might have been" lurks under-tested and hence unrevealed in the pages of history. Fabulous generals whose skills in strategy their country did not need when they were ready and able to perform. Occasionally, I run across a true strategic talent that is wasted because it is wearing the uniform of a country that does not need that talent to be exercised.

Conclusion

As a social scientist I am generically less challenged by theory than are most of my historian friends, but I have my skill biases, as do they. I subscribe to the theory of "historical permanence", to quote Eliot Cohen.[8] This is to say that I believe the strategy function to be eternal and universal and inescapable. Also, I believe that there are no new important ideas about statecraft, war, and warfare. The details are always changing. Some scholars whom I respect argue that a large change in war's character can mean a change in war's nature.[9] I do not subscribe to this belief. I think that there is but one general theory of strategy, covering all periods and characters of conflict. But I believe also that mastery of this general theory of strategy is a tool so to educate the practising strategist that he can cope with the challenges for the strategy he needs for today, whenever that is.

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1 Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p.452.
2 Strategic effect and the other concepts employed in this paper are developed in detail at length in my book, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).
3 Wayne P. Hughes, Jr., 'The Strategy-Tactics Relationship', in Colin S. Gray and Roger W. Barnett, eds., *Seapower and Strategy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1989), p. 47.
4 Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Dynamic Inter-Dimensionality: A Revolution in Military Affairs", *Joint Force Quarterly,* No. 15 (Spring 1997), p.36.
5 T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991), pp. 191-2.
6 F.E. Adcock, *The Roman Art of War Under the Republic: Martin Classical Lectures,* Vol. VIII (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. 124.
7 I explore this subject at length in *Schools for Strategy: Educating Strategists for the 21st Century* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, forthcoming).
8 Eliot A. Cohen, "The Historical Mind and Military Strategy", *Orbis*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Fall 2005), pp. 575-88.
9 For the leading example, Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.56. Both Echevarria and Clausewitz claim that war's nature, as well as its character, is dynamic. With no little trepidation, I persist in believing that they are unwise in their judgment. ☐

We are most grateful to General Barry McCaffrey for his permission and that of Colonel Michael Meese, Professor and Head of Department of Social Science, US military Academy West Point, to publish this report. Editor

After Action Report – General Barry R McCaffrey USA (Retd)[1]

VISIT TO KUWAIT AND AFGHANISTAN – 10-18 November 2009
December 5, 2009

Memorandum For:
Colonel Michael Meese, Professor and Head Dept of Social Sciences

1. Purpose:
This memo provides a strategic and operational assessment of security operations in Afghanistan. Be glad to conduct a Faculty Seminar and Cadet Class lectures based on this report during this spring semester.

2. Context:
This report is based on a series of briefings at the United States Embassy in Kuwait, ARCENT HQS at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait —-and then subsequent field tactical observations in Afghanistan (ISAF, Afghan Government officials, UNAMA, USFOR-A, US Embassy Kabul, RC-South Kandahar, RC-East Bagram) at the invitation of General David Petraeus, Commander, USCENTCOM and General Stanley McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A).

It was an honor to again assess the current challenges in Afghanistan. This report is based on personal research, data provided in-country during this trip, and first-hand observations gained during my many field visits to Pakistan, Kuwait, and Afghanistan during the period 2003 forward to the current situation.

The conclusions are solely my own as an Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at West Point and should be viewed as an independent civilian academic contribution to the national security debate. No one in CENTCOM or the ISAF Command in Afghanistan has vetted this report.

MG McCaffrey - Comd 24 Inf Div, Desert Storm

These observations focus on Afghanistan and the way forward. They do not center on Pakistan or the US domestic political challenge.

The President's Afghanistan Strategy Speech at West Point was coherent, logical, and sincere. It was the end result of a very deliberative and thoughtful analytical review of the situation in Afghanistan and our several unpalatable options. It was an appropriate political statement which delivered resources to his field commander and explained why the Commander-in-Chief would not downsize or withdraw—-and face the short term political and military disaster that would immediately ensue.

There is precious little support for the Afghan operation among the American people. 66% say it is not worth fighting for. Only 45% of Americans and few among his political party approve of President Obama's handling of the war. This was not a speech on military strategy. We are unlikely to achieve our political and military goals in 18 months. This will inevitably become a three to ten year strategy to build a viable Afghan state with their own security force that can allow us to withdraw. It may well cost us an additional $300 billion and we are likely to suffer thousands more US casualties.

One of the most important concerns of American national security policy in the short run is arguably the stability of Pakistan. Pakistan is four nations under one weak federal government. Only the Pakistani Army is a load bearing bureaucracy. The Pak Army is disciplined, under-resourced, and courageous. The Pak Army is also the Frontier Corps, the Intelligence Service (ISI), and the most respected and trusted institution in the country. They are also the guardians of Pakistan's 70-90 nuclear weapons. They have only tenuous control over much of the country.

We are very vulnerable in our Afghanistan operation. 90% of our Afghanistan logistics comes through the Port of Karachi and runs a dangerous thousand miles of wild country on "jingle trucks" headed to the Bagram or Kandahar Logistics Bases. Pakistani success in maintaining internal stability and economic growth is vital to our continued operations in Afghanistan. The present Zadari government and the economy are tottering on the edge. The Pakistani Army is fighting their own Taliban for the future of the nation. It is not clear if Pakistan will regress to fundamentalism or become a modern, unified state. There is little question that Pakistan offers de facto secure sanctuary in both Baluchistan and the FATA regions to the Quetta Shura and the Hekmatyar Taliban factions.

3. General:
Afghanistan and her 28 million people are trying to build the basic elements of a civil and Islamic society while traumatized by 35 years of cruel violence and chaos. The country is a giant and beautiful land of great contrasts. The natural leadership of the tribes has been slaughtered (one million murdered) or driven into exile (three million) first by the Soviets during their terrible invasion and repression of the people—-then by the Taliban as an antidote to clan resistance to their unwelcome and poisonous rule.

The Afghans are such impressive, devout, generous, and energetic people. They have an acute sense of humor in the face of relentless misery and adversity. They are superb, courageous soldiers and energetic, creative businessmen. They have deep respect for learning and teachers—-and a thirst and gratitude for education and knowledge even at the most elemental level. They are intensely focused as students at any age and quick to learn and adapt.

4. The Military Situation — The Bottom Line:
The Taliban believe they are winning. The Afghan people do not know who will prevail—-their government or the Taliban. The populations particularly the Pashtun are hedging their bets. Most Afghans are also dismayed at the injustice and corruption of the government (in particular the ANP) compared to the more disciplined and Islamic Taliban. Taliban open internet communications among themselves and their propaganda to the Afghan people take into account their slogan that "the West has the clocks…but the Taliban have the time."

The Taliban think they have the moral high ground. They are richly funded with drug money. They are well equipped and heavily armed. They have perfected massive anti-armor IEDs. They are good at rapid and effective information operations. They deal in recent months with the Afghan people in a careful manner to avoid the cruel images of their past oppression.

The Taliban now have a serious presence in 160 Districts of 364—- up from 30 Districts in 2003. They have a Shadow Government at Province level and most Districts throughout the country. Insurgent attacks have increased 60% in less than a year. In July alone they employed 828 IED attacks against friendly forces. We should expect 5,700 IED attacks in total by year's end 2009. We must guard against tactical arrogance by US and Allied ground combat forces.

Twice in recent months we have seen battalion sized units of Taliban fighters conduct highly successful (not-withstanding catastrophic losses by the attacking insurgents) complex attacks employing surprise, reconnaissance, fire support, maneuver, and enormous courage in an attempt to over run isolated US units. This is not Iraq. These Taliban have a political objective to knock NATO out of the war —-backed up by ferocious combat capabilities. We must ensure that ISAF forces follow the tactical basics of: fire support to always include supporting artillery, intelligence oversight, OP/LPs for early warning, adequate reserves, and operate with appropriate tactical mass against these very clever enemy fighters. Only the incredible small unit leadership, fighting skill, and valor of these two small US Army units —-which suffered very high casualties at Wanat and COP Keating —-prevented a humiliating disaster.

US, Allied and ANA (Army)/ANP (Police) casualties have gone up dramatically. (The ANP take the overwhelming preponderance of the losses. Apparently the Taliban take them very seriously as a potential threat to their night control of villages.) As of 25 November US casualties are 922 killed and 4565 wounded. (Eight + battalions killed or wounded). During the expected Taliban and ISAF simultaneous spring offensives—- we may well encounter ISAF casualty rates of 300-500 a month.

ISAF is reinforcing just in time to rescue the deteriorating tactical situation. Currently 42 nations provide 35,000 Non-US NATO troops (many with severe ROE constraints or military competence issues). The current US force level of 68,000 troops will increase per order of President Obama on 2 December by as many as 33,000 additional troops. The Allies may well provide an additional 7000+ reinforcements. However, only the courageous Brits will have both robust ROE and an aggressive ground-air-logistics-SOF combat capability. The Canadians and the Dutch will withdraw. The political support in Germany for their Bundeswehr (extremely weak capabilities because of very restrictive ROE) is on the verge of collapse. The French are extremely capable but in the field in small numbers.

The Afghan National Army is a growing success story. All five Maneuver Corps Headquarters have been fielded along with 14 of 19 Brigade Headquarters, and 82 of the 132 authorized ground combat battalions. (Kandaks). 46 of these battalions are rated as capable of independent operations. Plans are to take the ANA from 90,000 to 240,000 by 2013.

One of our most capable combat leaders US Army LTG Bill Caldwell has been recently given the task of building the ANA and ANP Afghan security force. He has already been assigned two US brigade training teams from the 82nd Abn Division and the 48th BCT of the GA NG. He will now command all NATO Training establishment forces. As the units graduate from institutional training and deploy to the Regional Commands to operate—they will then fall under ISAF operational command. More trainers will soon follow from elite US and NATO units.

The Afghan National Police ANP (now 92,000 officers) are a work in progress. They are six years behind the ANA in development. The police are badly equipped, corrupt (7,300 fired in last two years), and untrained (64 of 365 Police Districts have gone through training.) The US Department of Defense will now take total charge of this

General McCaffrey - Aghanistan, Nov 2009

program from State Department. It will take a decade to create an Afghan National Police Force with adequate integrity which can operate at village level in a competent manner. It will also require 1000 trained and protected judges—- and a competent force of prosecutors and defense lawyers. Finally, we must create a correction system so that convicted prisoners can be incarcerated in a humane manner.

We have now mostly fixed the disorganized NATO/US/Afghan military command and control system. Thankfully, Secretary Gates, Generals Dave Petraeus at CENTCOM and General Stan McChrystal the ISAF Commander (with the deft political-military support of US Admiral Jim Stavridis the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe) have unscrewed this mess. We now have a unifying theater strategic ISAF headquarters commanded by General McChrystal. The next level of control is the tactical-operational direction and coordination of all allied and Afghan forces in all four Regional Commands which is now in the hands of the very experienced US combat leader LTG Dave Rodriguez with the NATO (IJC) Intermediate Joint Command. Petraeus and McChrystal are the most effective counter-insurgency strategists and counter-terrorist fighters we have produced in nine years of war.

We now have finally rationalized and made coherent US and NATO airpower in Afghanistan. This war would be immediately unsustainable without the massive employment of US Air Force, Navy (Carrier Battle Group dedicated on station in the Indian Ocean), Marine, and Army aviation power:

The air power numbers are huge: ground attack (22,931CAS sorties year to date); UAV, ISR, medevac, re-fueling (15,438 tanker sorties year to date), and transport assets (11,984 C17 sorties and 31,871 C130 sorties year to date). Nearly 100% of troop personnel, ammunition, sensitive items, and armored vehicles moved by air. (We flew 2830 MRAP light armor vehicles into Afghanistan in less than a year. Now flying 7,000 MATVs). Casualties move in and out of the battle zone by air—three days time to return wounded soldiers to US with a 95% survival rate. Isolated Army, Marine, and SOF units are resupplied with food, water, fuel, building materials, and humanitarian aid by precision airdrop from altitudes in excess of 15,000 feet which land inside a 100 foot circle with 95% precision. Air power is the glue that holds together the war effort.

Afghanistan and Iraq are an immensely costly war running in excess of $377 million a day in FY10 Constant dollars. (WWII was $622 million per day.). US Defense outlays for 2009 are $657 billion (or 4.6% of GDP…the highest since 1992.) In FY 2009 the war in Afghanistan cost $55.9 billion in regular appropriations with an additional supplemental of $80.73 billion. Clearly Afghanistan will run with a burn rate in excess of $9 billion per month by the summer of 2010.

American military values which were put at such risk during the Rumsfeld leadership era of Abu Ghraib have now been restored by our senior military and civilian leadership. My visit to the new Bagram Detention Facility was enormously moving. 500+ detainees. Most are released after 24 months. They gain 46 lbs in confinement. They learn to read in their native tongue at the 4th grade level. They are given the option of also learning English and almost all do. They receive vocational training and have access to a distinguished Afghan Islamic scholar. The US prison commander is a Texas National Guard female Lt Colonel who is a lawyer, an MP, a mother and a grandmother. She meets unguarded each day with the senior detainees, sitting cross-legged in a circle (Shura) to hear their views. The 18th Airborne Corps Military Police Brigade Commander who has oversight command of the facility talks to each detainee as they are released. He is a hard nosed combat soldier. Invariably he tells me – the detainees thank him and hug him goodbye.

All three of our superb senior US-NATO dual-hatted combat leaders – General Stan McChrystal, LTG Dave Rodriquez, and LTG Bill Caldwell have called upon the best and the brightest of the military services and the inter-agency operators (FBI, DEA, AID, Border Patrol, etc.) to rally to this Afghanistan campaign. We now have the absolute best leaders in uniform, the CIA, law enforcement, and State/US AID headed into Afghanistan to run this operation.

5. The Problems Facing 40,000 Afghan Villages:

Afghanistan is still in the 14th Century. It is the fifth poorest nation on the face of the earth. Basic services are rudimentary or non-existent. The Afghans lack infrastructure, justice, resources and the most basic forms of local and national governance. Only 12 % of the land is arable and they face grossly inadequate potable water, soil degradation, massive deforestation, and severe overgrazing.

Afghanistan is the second most corrupt nation in the world after Somalia. Their adherence to tribal and Islamic values has been shattered by endless civil war and foreign oppression. There is almost no civil or criminal justice. Court trials last only minutes in many cases and lack juries. Human rights violations are endemic: extrajudicial killings, official impunity, restrictions on freedom of the press and religion, and severe and widespread child abuse. The nation's 34 provincial prisons and 203 detention centers are appalling. Prisoners are consistently subject to torture and police frequently rape female and male detainees.

Five million children live in desperate poverty. 70% of the country is illiterate.

Unemployment is widespread. 40% of the country literally does not know where their next meal will come from. People starve or freeze to death in the winter.

The lot of women is dismal…87% complain of violence… half of it sexual….60% of marriages are forced. The education level is at four years. From a Western perspective —-in the conservative rural areas (80% of the nation) —- women are in many cases merely abused property with less opportunity than a donkey.

General life expectancy is under 45 years. Tuberculosis and drug addiction are widespread. The country is infested with 5-7 million land mines which have disabled more than 200,000 Afghans.

Terrorism and lack of basic physical security is widespread. The Taliban enforce a parallel system of justice involving hangings, torture, beheadings and beatings. Criminality and extortion on the nation's road network is omnipresent. Decades of warfare have left property issues in great disorder.

The land is mired in endless bloody civil war among the Pashtun (42%), the Tajiks (27%), the Uzbeks (9%), the Hazaras (9%), and the many others who speak Dari, Pashto, and a polyglot of disparate languages. The frontiers with Afghanistan's six neighbor states are uncertain and divide intensely felt tribal and ethnic affiliations.

6. Afghanistan Now Has Hope:
The Afghan nation has an elected President —Hamid Karzai —who is: brilliant, well educated, non-violent, a politically astute deal maker in a nation where murder not compromise is the normal political tool; a man who deeply cares for his people; and who is a personally courageous Afghan patriot who is constantly at risk of assassination (several near successful attempts…probably from the Gulbuddin Hekmatyar insurgents in the FATA region of Pakistan.). His popularity with his own people has fallen dramatically as the Taliban have surged to greater power in part because of the ineffectiveness of his government.

Karzai is also a national leader in a deeply divided nation who has the legitimacy that comes from being part of the dominant ethnic group (42% of the nation is probably Pashtun) and the most prestigious tribe. President Karzai is also committed to earning his place in history as a transformer of his nation to a peaceful place in the civilized world. He is under enormous personally destructive and contradictory pressure from his Allies, the Afghan people, and US representatives. (Underweight, sick, nervous facial tic.) He is clearly imperfect. However, there is no evidence I have seen that he is personally corrupt in any way. Like President Grant following the US Civil War, he has a collection of ruffians in his inner circle. Some of the Provincial Governors are murderous felons. We in the international community have handled him very stupidly and arrogantly at times.

Hamid Karzai is trying to govern the transition of Afghanistan with a leadership cadre which is a mixture of world class expatriates (to include the current MOD and MOI and several other cabinet level officials), many political and bureaucratic and military leaders who are courageous and devout but illiterate; and a collection of warlords, thugs, and rascals —-which include some of his own family (brother Ahmed Wali Karzai is reputed to be the straw boss of Kandahar and a de facto drug king pin.) —-and also a smattering of dishonest international contractors.

The overwhelming percentage of 124,000+ US and Allied NGO's and contractors in Afghanistan (to include DynCorp whose Board of Directors I am proud to be with) are men and women of integrity, energy, and talent who are there at great personal sacrifice and peril. They care deeply about Afghanistan, they want an adventure, and they need a paycheck. Without them the entire war effort —-and most economic and political development would grind to an immediate and total collapse.

The recent Afghan Presidential election in this fragile, violent nation (with no history of democracy or the rule of law) was deeply flawed. The 30,000+ Taliban are mostly Pashtun. They terrorized the Pashtun plurality into not voting. Karzai's dishonest campaign electoral machine then manufactured three million ballots to make up for the missing voters. However, given the realities of this troubled nation no one else could possibly have won. The US and the UN proposed a runoff Presidential election with the number two runner-up Mr. Abdullah (seen as the Tajik candidate). This course-of-action would have produced another delayed, murderous, freezing, expensive, and equally unconvincing political charade.

We (the US, UN, and EU) forced on this primitive country a constitution that has some form of national election EVERY YEAR EXCEPT THREE until the year 2023. Could Florida handle this surfeit of democracy? We do not find many examples of operative democracy within 5000 miles of Kabul.

Afghanistan has an elected bi-cameral legislature, a constitution, a growing road network (90% of the Ring Road is complete), and the rudiments of a disciplined and courageous Army. (90,000 troops.) When we entered Afghanistan on a punitive military expedition following the murder of nearly 3000 Americans on "911" —the Afghan nation was in a shattered condition. People were living in caves in the rubble of Kabul. There were nearly no institutions left standing except the Taliban. Five million refugees have now returned since 2002 demonstrating with their presence hope for the future…

The Taliban are politically rejected by nearly the entire non-Pashtun population. Even among the Pashtun they command polling support of less than 6%. The Taliban were the spiritually pure, they held the moral high ground, they dispensed immediate dispute

resolution, they normally were disciplined and anti-crime. They were also a malignant virus in this sick society. They were the uneducated, murderous, rural hicks who destroyed the culture and invented a cruel form of Islam not normal to this devout but tolerant society. They were anti-history. They turned Afghanistan into a nightmare for women, for other ethnic minorities, and for the Shia Hazaras. They were senselessly cruel and destructive. Only the Soviets were worse.

The Afghan's are generally extremely grateful for US and international presence. US/NATO forces have a 60%+ favorability rating in the polls. (US poll numbers are lower in the UK, South Korea, Germany and Japan.) All four recent Afghan Presidential candidates publicly endorsed and supported the US presence. However, the Afghans are extremely apprehensive that we will leave again…sinking them back to the chaos of endless civil war.

Social indicators have dramatically increased for the better since the end of the Taliban's cruel era. Access to basic health care has rocketed from 8% in 2001 to 79%. 83% of the children are immunized. Child mortality has been reduced by 25%. TB deaths are down by 50%. Seven million children are in school to include three million girls — up from one million students and zero girls during the Taliban rule.

The repression of human communication and thought during the Taliban has been reduced dramatically. Eight million people have phones. There are 650 active print publications reflecting differing political views. There are 15 television networks and 55 private radio stations. There are also 150+ private printing houses and 145 media and film production companies. People and commerce now move constantly day and night (albeit at frequent risk of criminal or Taliban attack) across the Afghan frontiers with their six neighbor states.

The economy is climbing from zero to rudimentary. The legal economy is growing at 10% per year. The Afghans have rapidly created effective businesses that do: light manufacturing, crafts, construction, trucking, and road building. The agricultural system is painfully trying to repair the damage of 30 years of war and the competition of opium planting for scarce arable land. The Afghan goal is to feed the population and again become a breadbasket for SW Asia. Educational institutions to include universities and vocational training programs are appearing across the country. Large deposits of iron, copper, gold, gas, and gemstones are in the initial stages of exploration and exploitation. Hydroelectric power is coming on line.

Violence against the people has been dramatically reduced as the Taliban learned both in Afghanistan and the Pakistani tribal areas that they will have a fatal kinetic encounter with ISAF ground combat units if they mass in sizable numbers in daylight or dark – OR if discovered by US airpower to include Predator/Reaper armed UAV's. The death rate among Afghan civilians is way down since the new ISAF Commander General McChrystal instituted extremely sound restrictive ROE on the employment of firepower in populated areas. Fareed Zakaria notes that the Afghan death rate is less than a tenth that of Iraqis during the terrible civil war violence of 2006.

7. THE DRUG ISSUE – OPIUM:
The $3.4 billion opium crop of 7,700 metric tons (2008) produces weapons and supplies for the Taliban and al Qaeda, corrupts the police and civil authorities, diverts land from food (two million drug workers) and has addicted a significant percentage of the population. Left unaddressed — the heroin menace will defeat our strategic goals in this campaign.

Afghanistan is now the most damaged narco-state on the face of the earth. There are at least 920,000 drug users causing abject misery among widows, orphans, the unemployed, the poor. A new UN study will soon suggest there may be as many as two million drug users.

Afghanistan is the world's largest grower of opium which is banned under the 1988 UN Drug Convention to which it is a signatory. Drug money is a fifth of the national GNP. Afghanistan produces 93% of the global supply of heroin. This criminal trade funnels $200-400 million into the Taliban and the warlords. Increasingly the Afghan criminal enterprises process a larger and larger percentage of the opium into exportable morphine or heroin. Production has overwhelmed global demand. As much ten thousand tons of stable opium have been stockpiled—-enough to provide two years of the global demand for heroin. (900,000+ US addicts).

Afghan heroin primarily is consumed in neighboring SW Asia nations, Russia, and Western Europe. It causes enormous suffering and bloodshed. Afghan heroin is estimated to kill more than 10,000 people a year in NATO countries…more than five times the NATO troop losses from combat.

Only in the last 18 months have we begun to seriously address the problem. Secretary Rumsfeld spoke of the issue as one pertaining only to the Europeans. The current notion that we can ignore the growers as simple farmers trying to survive — and focus our counter-drug strategy only on law enforcement against the cartels — is painfully naïve. These huge criminal Afghan heroin operations if not defeated will corrupt legal governance, addict the population, distort the economy, and funnel immense resources to the Taliban and terrorist groups.

The solution is three pronged. First, work on alternative livelihood agricultural crops. Second, have the Afghan political leadership confront the opium issue as un-Islamic and one that destroys their culture. Third, destroy the crops. Without the last — nothing will work. Other nations have successfully addressed the drug issue: Thailand, Pakistan, Bolivia (until Morales), Peru, and to some extent

Colombia (the traffic moved south to non-government controlled areas.).

8. SUMMARY:
The time for rhetoric and analysis is done. This operation is now in the hands of the ISAF battalions and SOF elements on the ground. The American people will judge this on outcomes —-not political spin.

There is no inevitability to history. We are neither the Brits nor the Soviets. This is an effort to secure our own national safety and build a stable Afghan state. We can achieve our strategic purpose with determined leadership and American treasure and blood.

The international civilian agency surge will essentially not happen —-although State Department officers, US AID, CIA, DEA, and the FBI will make vital contributions. Afghanistan over the next 2-3 years will be simply too dangerous for most civil agencies.

NATO forces are central to our success. They bring resources, political legitimacy, and brainpower. With few exceptions, however, they will not conduct aggressive counter-insurgency operations. They will be a huge help with training and monitoring the growth and mentoring of the ANA and ANP.

My judgment is that we can achieve our objectives in the coming five years:

1st: Create an Afghan security force that will operate in defense of their people and reduce our own active combat role.

2nd: Create governance from the bottom up at District and Province level that makes the lot of the Afghan people better (and worth supporting the government against the Taliban).

3rd: Mitigate the corruption of the Afghan transition by having a parallel chain of financial custody and approval of resources — until the Afghan government is operating unlike an active criminal enterprise.

We now have the most effective and courageous military forces in our nation's history committed to this campaign. The superb leadership from Secretary Gates, Admiral Mike Mullen, General Dave Petraeus, and General Stan McChrystal is objective, experienced, non-political, and determined.

Our focus must now not be on an exit strategy — but effective execution of the political, economic, and military measures required to achieve our purpose.

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SOURCES:
A. SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS:

1.) General David Petraeus, Commander, United States Central Command (USCENTCOM).

2.) General Stanley McChrystal, Commanding General, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A).

3.) LTG William Caldwell, Commanding General, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan.

4.) LTG Jim Dutton (UK), Deputy Commanding General, NATO ISAF Headquarters, Kabul.

5.) MG Mike Scaparotti, Commanding General, ISAF Regional Command (East), Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-82.

6.) MG Dick Formica, Commanding General, Combined Security Transition Command (CSTC)-A.

7.) MG Peter Vangjel, Deputy Commanding General, Third Army/United States Army Central.

8.) MG John Macdonald, Deputy Commanding General, USFOR-A.

9.) RADM Greg Smith, Director of Strategic Communications, ISAF/USFOR-A.

10.) MG Mike Flynn, Director of Intelligence, CJ2, ISAF.

11.) MG Bill Mayville, ISAF Director of Strategic Plans and Assessment (CJ3).

12.) MG Nick Carter, (UK), Commander, ISAF Regional Command-South (RC-S).

13.) MG Stephen Mueller, USAF, Director, Air Component Coordination Element (ACCE), HQ ISAF.

14.) BG Mark Martins, Interim Commander, Task Force 435, US Theater Internment Facility-Afghanistan.

15.) BG Anne Macdonald, Afghan National Police Development.

16.) BG Ben Hodges, Director of Operations, RC-SOUTH, Kandahar.

17.) BG Guy Walsh, Commander, 451st Wing.

18.) BG John Nicholson, Commander, RC-SOUTH, Camp Leatherneck.

19.) BG Kurt Fuller, Deputy Commanding General – Operations, CJTF-82.

20.) BG Gregory Touhill, USAF, Chief, Office of Military Cooperation – Kuwait.

21.) BG Thomas Murray, USMC, Deputy Commander, International Security Assistance Force, RC-SOUTH.

22.) COL (P) KK Chinn, Deputy Commanding General – Support, CJTF-82.

23.) COL Brian Drinkwine, Commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

24.) COL Harry Tunnell, Brigade Commander, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

25.) COL Michael Howard, Brigade Commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

26.) COL Eric Kurilla, Commander, Ranger Regiment, Camp Alpha, Bagram.

27.) COL Randy Copeland, Task Force-714 J3, Camp Alpha, Bagram.

28.) COL Kimberly Rapacz, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3, 335th Signal Command, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

29.) COL Dennis Cahill, Chief, Development Information Operations (LOO), CJTF-82, CJ7.

30.) COL Kevin Palgutt, Military Police, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Interior.

31.) COL Tom Umberg, CSTC-A (Anti-Corruption Strategy).

32.) LTC Amy Cook, Commander, Joint Task Force Lone Star, (Bagram Detention Center).

33.) LTC James Coote (UK), Distinguished Service Order (DSO), Military Assistant to COM RC-SOUTH, ISAF.

B. Intermediate Joint Command Briefing:

1.) MG Jacques DeChevallier (FR), Deputy Commanding General.

2.) MG Colin Boag (UK), Chief of Staff.

3.) MG Mike Regner, USMC, Chief of Operations.

4.) BG Alberto Corres (SP), Chief of Staff, Stability Operations.

5.) BG Stephen Bowes (UK), Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs.

6.) RDML (S) Paul Becker, CJ2.

7.) COL Wayne Grigsby, Deputy Chief of Staff.

8.) COL Marty Schweitzer, XO to the Commander.

C. ISAF Strategic Advisory Group:

1.) COL Kevin Owens, Director.

2.) COL Chris Kolenda.

3.) COL Hal Douquet.

4.) CDR Jeff Eggers.

5.) Mr. Greg Ryckman.

D. Afghan Officials:

1.) Abdul Rahim Wardak, Minister of Defense.

2.) Mohamad Hanif Atmar, Minister of Interior.

3.) General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, Chief of Staff of Afghan National Army.

4.) MG Muhammad Raheem Wardak, Commanding General, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army.

5.) Dr. Ashraf Ghani, Co-Director, Institute for State Effectiveness; former Afghan Minister of Finance.

6.) Shahmahmood Miakhel, former Deputy Interior Minister of Afghanistan.

E. Diplomatic Officials:

1.) Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, US Ambassador to Afghanistan.

2.) Ambassador Deborah Jones, US Ambassador to Kuwait.

3.) Ambassador Frank Ricciardonne, Deputy Chief of Mission.

4.) Ambassador Tony Wayne, Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs.

5.) Ambassador Mark Sedwill, UK Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

6.) Ambassador (Ret.) William Taylor, Vice President, Peace & Stability Operations, US Institute of Peace.

7.) Core Country Team Brief.

8.) Mr. Robert Watkins, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Advisory Mission-Afghanistan.

9.) Mr. William Frej, Mission Director, US Agency for International Development (USAID).

10.) Ms. Annie Pforzheimer, Political Counselor, US Embassy, Kabul.

11.) Mr. Mike Spangler, Economic Counselor, US Embassy, Kabul.

F. LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS:
DEA/FBI/Treasury Briefing – US Embassy, Kabul:

1.) Mr. Jay Fitzpatrick, Assistant Regional Director, DEA.

2.) Mr. Bob Jones, FBI Legal Attaché.

3.) Mr. Keith Weiss, DEA.

4.) Mr. Jeff Silk, DEA.

5.) Mr. Kirk Meyer, Afghan Threat Finance Cell.

6.) LTC Joe Myers, USFOR-A LNO.

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1 General Barry McCaffery was until recently the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. He has also co-chaired the Atlantic Council of the United States NATO Counterterrorism Working Group. Prior to confirmation as the National Drug Policy Director, General McCaffrey served as the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces Southern Command coordinating national security operations in Latin America. During his military career, he served overseas for thirteen years and completed four combat tours. He commanded the 24th Infantry Division (Mech) during the Desert Storm 400-kilometer left hook attack into Iraq. At retirement from active duty, he was the most highly decorated four-star general in the U.S. Army. He twice received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest medal for valour. He was also awarded two Silver Stars and received three Purple Heart medals for wounds sustained in combat. General McCaffrey served as the assistant to General Colin Powell and supported the Chairman as the JCS advisor to the Secretary of State and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. □

The Great Game: The Role of Intelligence in the Failure of the 1st Afghan War 1839 – 1842

Major Brian Elliott

> *If a power…can command an entrance into India, our tenure of this great empire is indeed a feeble one…The country of Afghanistan rather than the fort of Herat is our first defence.'*
>
> (Canning)

The development of intelligence networks in India influenced the structuring and processing of information (and intelligence) collected in Afghanistan. The British intelligence systems that formed the basis of those deployed in Central Asia were developed in the Peninsula and Napoleonic Wars. Throughout this period the use of agents in disguise behind enemy lines became common place, along with the interception of enemy dispatches. These systems were allowed to atrophy in the European theatre once Napoleon had been defeated; amongst other things, in England there was the perception, highlighted by Ferris, that gentlemen did not read other gentlemen's' mail: 'British intelligence was hampered by a belief that gentlemen could not be spies.' In India, the system was in its infancy as the British tried to develop the systems they had used in Europe while exploiting existing local intelligence networks.

Wall painting from the head offices of the British East India Company, 1778 (British Library)

The need for intelligence in India had become apparent early on in the British conquest of India. The Mughal Empire had had a long tradition of political intelligence which can be traced back to Hindu texts which outline the importance of spies and informers to states. This tradition was identified by the British with both the military and the East India Company recruiting local staff to support their information gathering efforts. The Indian system revolved around the exploitation of the social and business networks in India's information rich society. Large numbers of the population travelled extensively because of marriage, pilgrimage or business all of which required continued communication between distant towns and villages. Whether this travel was via wheeled transport, horse or boat, whether business or social, there existed a robust means of getting information over long distances. The challenge for the British was identifying the appropriate information network because, for example, the various sectors had their own method of communication. He goes on to cite the differences between merchants, religious officials and periodic migrants. As a result, the intelligence effort of spies and news-writers focused on gathering together as much of this fragmented and disparate information and passing it on for analysis and exploitation.

This chromolithograph is taken from plate 48 of William Simpson's 'India: Ancient and Modern'. Lord Wellesley was Governor-General of Bengal during the period 1797 to 1805. (British Library).

At the same time the East India Company was continuing to extend its influence over the sub-continent, furthering Governor General Wellesley's forward policies. To support this process there developed an efficient system of news-writers and intelligence agents around each of the major residencies at Indian courts. In addition, the need to fill the positions of Resident (the official representative of the Colonial power) and their supporting Political Agents increased. The posts of Political Agent were filled by Company men and officers of the British Army. The Political Service had been formed in 1820 and was administered initially by the Company's Foreign Department. Its early recruits, Morgan suggests, were a very mixed bag. The post of Political Officer appealed to those bored with life in Indian cantonments, with a taste for adventure and an aptitude for languages.

There were a number of different locations where an 'intelligence officer' might learn his trade; key locations in India were at the Residencies of Bombay, Kutch and Ludhiana. These were perceived as rival schools as the trainee political agents came under the influence of the respective Resident of that location. The outlook from Bombay concerned the Indus Valley and Persia; those schooled in Bombay generally favoured Persia as a buffer against interference from Europe. The Residency at Kutch, under Henry Pottinger, focused on the western approaches to India; Alexander Burnes, who emerged as a key Political Officer of the period, initially learned his trade under Pottinger. Such early influence on these political officers was key in shaping the information they collected and the decisions that were based on it.

To deliver intelligence, a structured sequence is required to gather the information, process it, convert into the appropriate product and pass it on to the user. Those running the intelligence networks in India might have been able to recognise this type of process as the product of the extensive networks being used across the country. The same could not have been said for Afghanistan, despite the number of expeditions and experience the British had in the region. For that reason the terms information and intelligence are used inter-changeably here because there is little evidence of a discrete analysis process; 'interpretation' might be a more appropriate term.

Mountstuart Elphinstone had made a diplomatic visit to Afghanistan in 1808 during which he was to discover all he could about the territories west of the Indus. British Army officers were also engaged in intelligence work. Captain Grant was sent to conduct a military assessment of Persia in 1809; Lieutenant Henry Pottinger and Captain Charles Christie followed in 1810, also focusing on Persia, but travelling through Afghanistan. The information from these expeditions was collated in order to support the plans for the defence of India. In 1812, Macdonald-Kinneir produced a consolidated report of all such data collected in 'A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire'. Further expeditions followed throughout the 1820s, most notably that of William Moorcroft who kept meticulous records of his journeys including his view on which of the Afghan leaders would be most compliant to British interests.

One of the more notable Political Officers, Alexander Burnes, was dispatched on a mission to Kabul and Bokhara in 1832. The aim of this mission was to establish contact with Kabul and the Afghan ruler Dost Mohammed. He was also tasked with an assessment of Kabul's defences and local forces, and to make observations on the Kilzilkum Desert en route to Bokhara. Underpinning all this was the perception of the Russian threat and the need to identify possible invasion routes.

Dost Mohammed, this lithograph is taken from plate 3 of 'Afghanistan' by Lieutenant James Rattray. (British Library)

Burnes could not have done this without local, in-country support; in this case Mohan Lal, a Kashmiri who was fluent in several languages and experienced with working with the British. He had supported Elphinstone's 1808 visit to Afghanistan and a previous Burnes expedition - the 'eyes and ears' of Burnes' mission to Bokhara. There were other expeditions to Afghanistan - for example Leech (Bombay Engineers) and Wood (Royal Navy) explored the passes of Hindu Kush for routes practicable for Russian troops. Thus prior to the 1st Anglo-Afghan War, the British had experience of operating in Afghanistan and had had the opportunity to gather intelligence and develop the concept of using local networks and contacts for use in the future.

The need for further information on Afghanistan arose out of a request by Lord Ellenborough, at this stage President of the Board of Control, in 1829. With Britain deciding not to go to the aid of Persia in the Russo-Persian War of 1826, there was a growing concern over the extent of Russian influence in the region. This led to Ellenborough asking the Foreign Office for military, political and commercial information about Afghanistan and the Central Asia states. The perception of Russia's role in the region was the key influence in the developments of British thought on how best to defend northern India. There were a number of schools of thought which were to play an influential role in the way intelligence was used in the campaign in Afghanistan. The 'Metcalfe' school of thought, which had existed since the time of Wellesley, proposed that any threat from the Russians should be faced on the North West Frontier (on the River Sutlej which had been the boundary between British India and the Sikhs since 1809). In 1833 Metcalfe is reported to have stated that any extension beyond the Indus would lead to 'embarrassments and wars, expensive and unprofitable at least, without any equivalent benefit, if not ruinous and destructive.' A development on this theme was the position of John Malcolm, who set out the 'forward policy' arguing that it was necessary to pre-empt the advance of Russian influence by expanding British interest in the intervening areas. This might involve alliances with Afghanistan, Persia,

Lord Palmerston (GAC)

Iraq or the states in Turkestan for example. A third school of thought recommended achieving the security of India by investing military effort into the sub-continent itself; winning the hearts and minds of the country, in modern parlance.
Views of these strategies differed between London and India. The internal enemy in India (the tribes and various 'princely states') was not well understood by those in London, yet the external enemy (Russia and Persia) took up almost as much time as their deliberations on the threats within Europe. Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary, saw control of Afghanistan as providing a check on the Persians from the East and the Russians from the North.

The British government in London was concerned by two key events in Central Asia in the late 1830s, one Persian, one Russian. In 1837 the Persians attacked the city of Herat; the Shah hoped that the Heratis would unite with him and he would lead them against the British in India, whose riches they would share between them. There was also Russian intrigue linked to this incident, as a Russian officer – Vitkevich – had been discovered on the border with Persia by Rawlinson, the political officer in Tehran. The British believed the Russians were supporting the Shah of Persia's expedition to Herat, where they hoped to encourage Kamran Khan (the ruler of Herat) to make a bid for the throne at Kabul.

The second incident is the Russian expedition to Khiva in 1839. This failed due to 'cold, pestilence and famine' without reaching its destination, however, it confirmed the views of the Russophobes in London and India that the Russians were prepared to march through Central Asia to threaten India. Operations in Afghanistan were not, therefore, a foregone conclusion, despite the gathering belief that the threat from Russia was imminent; evidence was carefully selected (and edited) in London to put before Cabinet to ensure that the position of the Russophobes was carried.

The decision to take military action in Afghanistan arose out of this continued fear of Russian activity which convinced Auckland (the Governor General of India)

Country round Cabul 1839 (India Office Records)

of the need to move from a passive to more active policy and one of direct intervention. It is in these earliest days that some of the concerns over the role of intelligence, or perhaps more correctly at this stage, information, can be identified. The first of these was the political decision to back Shah Shujah rather than Dost Mohammed as the ruler in Kabul. This arose out of a number of factors. Firstly it was testament to the influence of Wade at Ludhiana in his support of Ranjit Singh (the ruler of the Sikhs) and their subsequent recognition of Shah Shujah as the rightful ruler in Kabul. Burnes, on the other hand, with considerable first hand experience of Afghanistan, proposed that Dost Mohammed, the current ruler in Kabul, was the most appropriate leader for Afghanistan and could be trusted to side with the British against the Russians.

The results of this debate were in part, the Simla Treaty and subsequent Simla Declaration which set out the reasons for the British campaign: to depose Dost Mohammed, replace him with Shujah and withdraw British troops once this had been achieved. This is the first failure of intelligence linked to the war because Auckland, Wade and MacNaghten (Secretary to the Secret and Political Department in Calcutta and due to be the Resident in Kabul) believed that the majority of the populations of Kabul and Kandahar would welcome Shujah. This belief may well have arisen, Johnson suggests, because Burnes' correspondence, that had to be passed via Wade at Ludhiana, was being doctored as Wade, an ally of the Sikhs, wished to see Dost Mohammed ousted.

The Army of the Indus which marched on Afghanistan was successful in terms of achieving a military victory. Early intelligence reports suggested there would be a force of 26,000 Baluch opposing the expedition as it came through the Bolan Pass; this appears to have been erroneous as most accounts suggest the move was largely unopposed. The diaries of Captain Augustus Abbott suggest that there was other information that the campaign planners might have considered, yet failed to. Abbott records that on the initial march to Kandahar in March 1839, there was no forage in the Bolan Pass for the horses and camels, water was scarce in the desert and that due to the effect of the environment on the animals, much of the baggage of the infantry and cavalry had to be abandoned. The experience of political officers in Afghanistan and those working in the northwest frontier recorded the environmental conditions on their travels and could have been referred to by military planners. Similarly, Abbott notes that by the end of March supplies were running short and rations were reduced for soldiers and animals and that by the time they reached Kandahar the cavalry were nearly unfit for service; he concludes the entry with 'fortunately no enemy appeared'. These examples highlight the fact that the British were not using the information that the political officers would have gathered and reported throughout their expeditions or exploiting the local knowledge of Ranjit Singh, Shah Shujah or Burnes who was deployed with the Army of the Indus as MacNaghten's deputy.

The Army of the Indus forcing the Bolan Pass, 1839. NAM 1971-02-33-481-6

These environmental, logistic and subsequently cultural issues are a frequent theme in correspondence of the time; an officer of the Queen's writes when on the march from Kandahar to Kabul, *'the first thirty miles across a desert, nearly famished for want of water'*

Fighting in the Passes

and comments on the 'shameful inefficiency of the Commissariat' which forced men on to half or quarter rations for many days. The same officer reflects that since leaving India *'we have scarce met with a dozen cultivated fields'.* Further lack of appreciation of the terrain, particularly the passes - the Bolan and Khyber – which the Army was to experience, is borne out by the diaries of the officers on the march from India into Afghanistan which note that a *'few hundred men judiciously placed on the heights, could have prevented our forcing the Pass'.* Captain Sir Richmond Shakespear, a Political Officer of the period, noted during his journey from Herat to Orenburg in 1840 the key influence that religion played in the lives of the Afghan peoples and related the differences with Turkomen peoples; this type of evidence should have been known to the chain of command in Kabul and applied appropriately. The lack of support for Shah Shujah amongst the Afghan people is a further example of a failure of intelligence by the British. Burnes, with all his experience of the country had consistently suggested that Dost Mohammed would have been a more appropriate ruler. Abbott notes in his diary that everyone is 'surprised at the mis-information given us regarding the roads and the resources of this country and the dispositions of its inhabitants towards Shah Soojah'.

There were nonetheless, some intelligence successes during the initial invasion of Afghanistan. Having occupied Kandahar, the Army moved on

Storming the fort of Ghazni, July 1839 (NAM 1971-02-33-480-4)

Ghazni and were able to successfully take the city due to information from an informer. This episode is recounted by a number of publications on the period including Hopkirk who notes that Mohan Lal made contact with a deserter from the fortress, informing the British that the Kabul Gate to the city was the least well defended. Abbott recounts a similar tale in his diaries suggesting that information was received from Abdul Reshed Khan, a deserter from the fortress at Ghazni. This was a fortunate turn of events for the British as General Sir John Keane had left the Army's siege train at Kandahar assuming they would not be needed – the Army had received reports that Ghazni was of no great strength and the Afghans would not defend it. Through the use of locally sourced contacts and Mohan Lal, the Army was exploiting the same type of system that existed in India and the methods that Burnes had utilised during his travels. Equally, it was clear that by the time the Army was planning its retreat in 1842 that better use was being made of the intelligence that had been gathered. Mackeson writing to Pollack about the route to Jalalabad suggests that *'yr communications between those places wd be anything but safe esp along the Khaibar – because our inactivity has given confidence to the numerous friends of the Barakhzyais'*

Throughout the period of this first British expedition into Afghanistan there was a fundamental lack of understanding of the people and the culture of Afghanistan, which influenced the way information and intelligence was interpreted. Letters from those in Afghanistan betray the attitude of the Army to the local people. *'Truly they are a villainous-looking set'* an officer of the Queen's writes. *'Any man of whom would whiz you a ball from his matchlock, or stick into your midriff the long knife he wears at his girdle, for the value of your jacket, if he caught you a mile from the town unarmed'.* Bayly contends that intelligence from Kabul had, since the time of Elphinstone's first expedition, been precarious and not to be relied upon. Despite this the British continued to believe their perceptions of Afghanistan rather than the reports they were receiving. Rawlinson noted in August 1841 from Kandahar that,

> *'The feeling against us is daily on the increase and I apprehend a succession of disturbances in this part of the country till the winter. The moolahs [sic] are preaching against us from one end of the country to the other, and we may now be said to hold our position by military strength'*

This was in part due to the humiliation meted out to the Afghans by the British garrisons in Afghanistan. It was also due to the failure to grasp how unpopular the government of Shah Shujah was with the majority of the Afghan people. Much of the opposition manifested itself in religious terms and Shujah was accused of heading an infidel government. This undercurrent of bad feeling would begin to show itself through a series of disturbances from 1839 to 1841.

In addition it appears that the British showed little regard for the effect that Shujah's policies were having on the local population, economy and political structures. Garrisoning Afghanistan for example, was expensive and MacNaghten and his officers had to finance the Army and their operation. The demands of the Army had an impact on the Afghan economy, pushing up prices; Yapp cites one estimate as five hundred percent. If this caused resistance and attacks on government forces, Shujah enacted reprisals, which often needed British support. The deterioration of the situation across Afghanistan saw an expansion of British influence and control of government structures through the Army and the Political Officer system, almost a complete shadow government. This led to further examples of the failures of the intelligence process in Afghanistan.

The political officers were remote from Kabul, responsible for their own regions (Jalalabad, Kandahar, Quetta and Ghazni for example) and developed their own local intelligence networks and administrative structures. As a result they had considerable influence and importantly, a monopoly of information which they were able to use to further their own policies, uncontested by MacNaghten in Kabul. The culmination of this lack of cultural awareness and the effect of the independence and influence of the Political Officers came as a result of the uprisings occurring across Afghanistan. The British tried to reform Shujah's Army by disbanding the Afghan feudal cavalry. This traditional Afghan army enabled the tribal chiefs to maintain patronage over their tribesmen; the creation of the Janbaz (a more disciplined, readily deployable cavalry formation officered by the British) struck at the heart of traditional Afghan society by destroying the existing patron-client system and fostered further resentment. In essence, the intelligence process in Afghanistan was outward-looking, focusing on Russia and Persia, not the

enemy within in Afghanistan. There were not the networks that had been long established in India but the British established local information networks and were able to gather intelligence once they were established in country. Lack of cultural awareness and typically colonial attitudes to the local population meant that invariably either the intelligence was ignored, or because any analysis was being done by the decision makers, wrong deductions were made. The intricate politics of the tribal groups were a closed book.

Intelligence, or the failure of it was however, not the only factor leading to British failings in the first Anglo-Afghan war. There were other military failings, particularly in logistics. Abbott's diaries frequently comment on the logistic problems brought about by campaigning in Afghanistan. One entry notes, *'Sir John (Keane) declares that he will not move one mile from Kandahar to the westwards without four and a half months supplies and we have not camels to carry half that quantity'*

The scarcity of transport made it impossible for the whole force to move at once; the 1st Battalion, the 9th Jat Regiment recorded on their advance to Quetta, the shortage of rations (which was to last for 3 and a half months) would have a severe impact on horses and camels. The 2nd Battalion at Kandahar also highlighted that rations were scarce and that they had to wait for crops to ripen. This would of course also have an impact on the local economy as the crops would have been part of the subsistence needs of the local community, perhaps adding to the friction. The Army was equally unprepared for the environment of Afghanistan, some of which has already been discussed. The winter of 1839 proved particularly challenging when both logistic failings and a harsh winter caused the loss of horses and severe privation amongst the soldiers.
A further cause of the failure of the first expedition to Afghanistan might also be specifically attributed to some of the key personalities involved. Palmerston for instance was prone to prevarication. This was largely driven by London politics because as foreign secretary, if a war was fought in Persia, costs would fall to London (and greater scrutiny in Parliament). Any action in Afghanistan would fall to the East India Company and attract less Parliamentary attention; hence the prolonged debate over the extent to which a 'forward policy' should be employed. For Palmerston the retention of Afghanistan benefited Britain in Europe. Of course the continued debate over which course of action the British should take to secure the northern frontier of India was influenced by the information and intelligence that was being received in London and Bombay and how it was being interpreted by the various factions involved in the debate. MacNaghten and Auckland were also key figures that eventually came to disagree with the intervention in Afghanistan but failed to do anything about it. Both were due to move to new posts either out of Afghanistan or away from the Afghan issue and therefore failed to confront the difficulties the Army was facing. For Yapp the 'responsibility therefore, for the Afghan disaster rests squarely with Auckland and MacNaughten.'

Burnes should also bear some responsibility for the 'Night of the Long Knives' in November 1841 when the Kabul uprising begins. Burnes' servants and Mohan Lal had warned him that there was a plot against him yet he failed to heed their advice., Burnes still believed he had the ability to quell any disturbance; his relationship with MacNaghten however, had been strained for some time, perhaps because of the debate over Dost Mohammed or Shah Shujah for the Afghan leadership and he had begun to refer to himself as *'a highly paid idler'* whose advice was never listened to by his chief. Davis suggests that Burnes had continued to believe any danger to the British in Afghanistan would come from the North and that he had *'overlooked what was taking place under his eyes and at his feet'.*

Lessons Learned From The 1st Anglo-Afghan War

Following the retreat from Kabul in 1842, Britain abandoned its earlier attempts to implement the 'forward policy' through alliances with Persia and Afghanistan; Afghanistan would prove too troublesome and too expensive to hold. The focus became the 'internal enemy' in India and a period of masterly inactivity (providing influence without commitment) prevailed. From an intelligence perspective, the right information and intelligence was available to the Army and the government structures in Afghanistan. The networks had been established by the Political Officers but the users failed to understand what the right intelligence was. This was probably the result of the decision-makers also being the analysts of the information they were receiving, together with the personalities involved and their associated personal agendas.

In India the British continued to use the existing traditional systems – the news writers and spies from their local networks. This begins to change in the 1840s and 1850s as this useful human intelligence is replaced by statistical surveys, court reports and the local press. As a result, the successful intelligence systems operating in India prior to the 1st Afghan War atrophy as a new generation of officers regard the traditional systems with suspicion. In terms of the development of intelligence structures, very little is learned from the war in Afghanistan. In India the intelligence process continues to be degraded and the British fail to spot the warnings that might have averted the 1857 Mutiny. There are a number of wider developments in intelligence in the 1840s, but it is not clear whether they are attributable to the lessons from the 1st Afghan War. The introduction of military attachés is one example, the closure of the Deciphering Branch of the Foreign Office another (although the Foreign Office does increase its intelligence handling and processing capability) and the establishing of the Corps of Guides in 1846, dual roled as cavalry screen and intelligence gatherers are others.

Despite the experience of the first war, Britain continued to underestimate the local Afghan population and neglect cultural awareness issues. Morison notes that the British failed to appreciate the anarchical strength of Pathan fanaticism, a factor that would play a part in the *next adventure into Afghanistan. 'if there is a single lesson to be learned from the Afghan war it was that Afghanistan is a land not only of rocks but of men – natural fighters all but unconquerable in their own valleys'.* He goes on to suggest that Afghanistan and Persia were both phenomenally difficult campaigning grounds amidst hostile populations at the end of long supply lines. Both were considerable barriers to Russian influence in India, particularly if they were strong, independent nations. Going to war would only weaken them as buffer states and provide an opportunity for the Russians. This was a lesson the British failed to learn as they would be at war again in Afghanistan within fifty years.

Summary

Intelligence was a factor in the outcome of the campaign but it was not key nor was it the only factor. The Army and the Political Officers had access to intelligence; it was the way that intelligence was used (or not) that led to failures. Equally influential were logistic failings and a lack of cultural awareness, which could have been addressed by referring to the reports and utilising the previous experience of earlier Political Officers. Prevarication by politicians in London over the merits of a 'forward policy', the personalities of the individuals involved and their respective influence in India and Afghanistan, particularly Auckland and MacNaghten, were to also figure heavily. In this light the outcome of the first Anglo-Afghan war is perhaps not surprising; from an intelligence perspective the British did not learn from their mistakes, which ultimately lead to them failing to spot the undercurrents of discontent that would culminate in the 1857 Mutiny. The result is perhaps appropriately summarised by Templar who reflected on *'the impossibility of controlling, by force of arms alone, a country in which the mass of the people are against the "foreigner."'*

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A Governance and State Building Perspective

An extract from Joint Doctrine Publication 3-40 Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution

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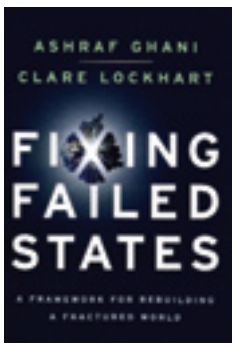


Saving Failed States, 2009, OUP, Pbk

The Character and Context of Failed States and the Impact of Military Intervention; Maximising the Positives and Minimising the Negatives.

A stable, sovereign state requires legitimacy, won and sustained by the trust of its own citizens in return for fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of those citizens, and through responsible international behaviour according to agreed rules. A large number of states are now failing to meet this 'double compact' to their citizens and neighbours, representing a significant threat to global security. The ultimate aim of international engagement in these contexts must be a coherent and integrated process of state-building, through which international and national actors seek to enhance state legitimacy and functionality over a long-term timeframe. It is only through such a process of co-production that a vicious cycle of destructive politics can be transformed into peace and constructive change.

The counter-insurgency literature, from Galula and Thompson, to the recent U.S. COIN manual (FM 3-24) emphasises that the use of force must be part of a process of movement towards political objectives, as part of a coherent multi-dimensional effort. A state-building approach, which creates support from the population for positive change through a reframing of the relations between state, market and citizen, must be central. It is often illegitimate leadership, abuse of power and misuse of resources that results in alienation of segments of the population. Efforts to expand networks of rights and obligations give citizens a stake in the system, rather than outside it, and create widening spheres of opportunities to underpin peace and stability.

Stabilisation doctrine must provide a clear roadmap for soldiers to understand the tasks they should be performing, across what timeframes and in what ways, with what resources, and in concert with which other actors. These are not easy challenges, nor are there 'generalisable' answers - indeed, a failure to date has been the propensity of international actors to use off-the-shelf solutions. Furthermore, while understanding of these issues has now evolved at the strategic level, the international community often lacks the tools at the operational level to translate thinking into practice. That said, analysis of British experience from a range of contexts indicates a number of useful lessons.

First, stabilisation operations must recognise that state functions are interdependent, and that security is only one aspect of state functionality across the spectrum of tasks a national government must perform. This does not mean that British troops should perform more tasks across a wider variety of sectors; rather, they should understand that developing security forces also requires understanding the spectrum of functions that underpin and complement those services, including a judiciary system, a legal framework, a public finance system and health and education services. All functions cannot be performed simultaneously: the issue is rather to determine which functions are appropriate to context, at what level of governance (from village to capital) they should be performed, and how their performance should be prioritised and sequenced over time. They must be able to design an appropriate response to the problems, understanding which tasks they, and which others, will be responsible for, and which tools the different actors will bring to the table. Lastly, they must have the ability to be able to supervise tasks which they are directly responsible for.

As the goal of a stabilisation operation is ultimately to return the control of the territory to a legitimate government, stabilisation operations should be carried out in such a way as to create and empower legitimate national actors wherever possible, rather than substitute for those actors. While it is understood that the skills base can often be low in fragile contexts, it is critical to build capacity within national institutions to ensure that stability becomes sustainable. This requires a long-term approach - state-building is a 10 to 20 year endeavour at a minimum - with a comprehensive mapping of assets at the outset, and with clear timelines and benchmarks for the handover of responsibilities to the national

government. All local actors are not necessarily legitimate in the eyes of the population, and so care must be taken not to empower illegitimate actors, without bringing them within a framework of rule of law and accountability for use of power.

Finally, stabilisation operations should recognise that in the past, aid has not always been appropriately designed for context, and that mere spending of money on thousands of uncoordinated, unsustainable small projects will not win the population or create stability in the longer term. Learning is currently taking place among development actors on how to improve their behaviour and instruments, including through use of trust funds, programmatic instruments and private sector financing tools.

National programmes which execute critical tasks across state territory are a key component of stabilisation processes. In Afghanistan between 2001-2005, for example, a National Programme for the Afghan National Army ensured an institutional foundation within a law and order framework, with fair and transparent recruitment processes; and the National Solidarity Programme transferred decision-rights over funding to locally elected bodies which could then identify reconstruction and development priorities. Support for this type of programming can enhance stabilisation in such contexts. Ultimately, the key instrument of change and accountability is the national budget process, and thus the key counterparts are not western aid agencies, but national representatives of government, civil society, business and media.

As the result of past experience and forward-thinking, the UK has been better than most at developing and implementing stabilisation processes in difficult contexts. The confidence that a British military presence can generate, both within the countries in question, and among the larger international community, is significant. This does not mean, however, that our efforts have always been appropriate or successful, and it is critical that our thinking evolves as quickly as the threats and issues that our soldiers face in the field. This means a movement towards long-term, coherent, people-centred approaches, with a clear division of labour with other stakeholders. It also necessitates support for nascent state institutions and capacity building wherever possible, and a holistic, programmatic approach that marshals the relevant resources and actors behind national, partner-country objectives. It is only through thinking of this type that the UK will be able to withdraw its troops from these places and leave behind sustainable state institutions that provide for security and stability, which should be the ultimate objective at the outset.☐

Beyond the Wire, Sangin (Arabella Dorman)

Achieving Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict – HQ ARRC

Capability Experimentation: Part 1

Brigadier Iain Harrison – Chief Joint Fires and Influence Branch HQ ARRC

This is the first of 2 articles about HQ ARRC's operational experimentation through 2009. This short article describes the underpinning ideas; the subsequent one – in the next edition of BAR – will analyse the experiment and seek to draw relevant conclusions for HQ ARRC's involvement in operations in ISAF in 2011 and, more widely, for higher level multinational HQs of the future.

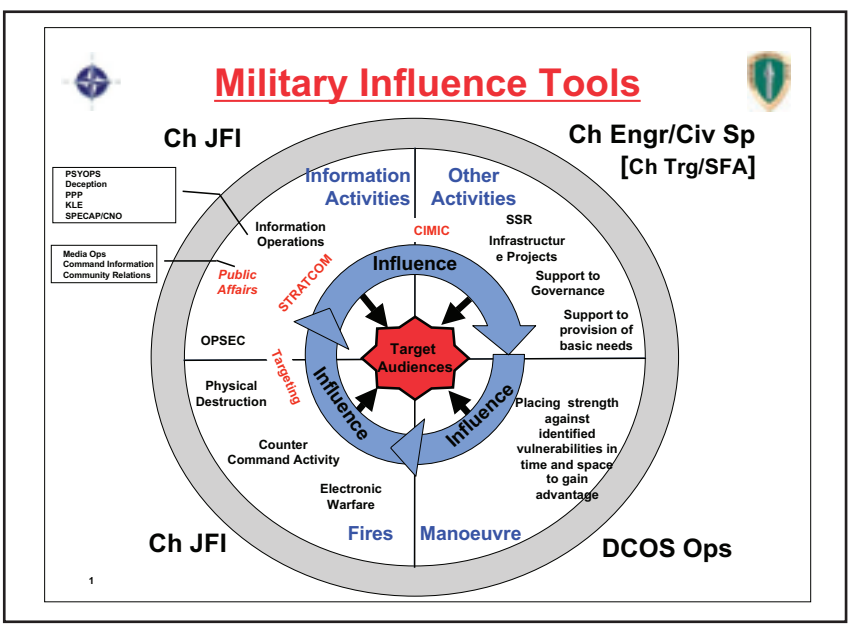
Based on lessons from current operations and recent UK and US doctrine, COMARRC directed that the HQ would experiment with a number of capability initiatives through 2009 – under the banner of *"Achieving Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict"*. It sought to ensure the HQ's structures and processes were optimised to meet the complex challenges of contemporary stabilisation operations which need to be conducted in a manner that integrates, at worst, unity of understanding and, at best, unity of action with civilian partners and the host nation. To achieve this required 5 key changes to the HQ's thinking and structure: Influence was placed at the heart of HQ ARRC's thinking; civilian planners were embedded across the HQ; the Engineer Branch expanded its remit to incorporate the planning requirements of Civil Support; the Joint Fires and Influence Branch increased its Information Activity capacity; and the Training (G7) Branch widened its role to include Security Force Assistance. In addition, a civilian-manned Commander's Initiative Group (CIG) was formed as intimate command support for COMARRC. These initiatives were developed throughout 2009, tested on Ex ARRCADE FUSION 2009 in November and debated during COMARRC's annual Land Componency seminar in December 2009; its conclusions will be reported in the next issue.

Influence at the Heart of the Thinking. Achieving Influence is a contest and is everyone's business; all military action should be seen for its Influence on key conflict causes and in shaping the eventual (political) settlement – everything a military force does or says has an Influence. We aim to achieve an orchestrated combination of coercion, persuasion and/or reassurance underpinned by communication designed to get targets/target audiences to do something or believe something or to restore their confidence or sense of wellbeing. It is all about the message we want our actions, words and images to convey; to/through whom we seek to convey it (using the levers of influence) and how we think it will be interpreted.

The ARRC's approach to Influence has drawn on the model in the UK's recent Joint Doctrine Publication 3-40 (see Figure 1) which shows the military influence tools available to COMARRC in 4 broad areas and assigns one star proponents for each. Given that not all influence tools are under COMARRC's immediate control, some influence may need to be achieved indirectly; this emphasises the importance of an integrated civil-military effort and strategic communication. The HQ's planning process and battle rhythm are the gearing to ensure COMARRC's direction and guidance achieves the intended influence. Analysis of superior commander's orders and the operational environment identifies the intended message(s), potential levers of influence and the best combination of military actions and words to achieve desired outcomes.

At the heart of the battle rhythm are four boards designed to ensure the Influence effort is effectively planned and coordinated:

- The Influence Synchronisation Board (ISB) – chaired by COS or DCOS Ops – synchronises all aspects of operations, focusing in particular



Military Influence Tools

ARRC Planning Staff

on ensuring there is no gap between what is being said and what is being done.

- The Civil Support Board (CSB) is the principal body for planning and coordinating the civil support effort.

The Integrated Targeting Board (ITB) plans and coordinates the lethal (kill and capture) and non-lethal (focused influence) targeting effort. And the Information Effects Board (IEB) plans, coordinates and directs discrete information operations and coordinates the communication and engagement agenda.

Integrated Planning
The HQ's Plans Branches (G5 and G3/5) included an embedded Civilian Planning Element of 12 specialist civilian planning staff drawn from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development, Stabilisation Unit and US State Department. Working within the Integrated Planning Teams, they brought civilian expertise immediately to bear on military plans and also ensured, where possible, that military planning was synchronised with the wider civil planning effort. Other specialist civilian planners were also integrated in other branches in the HQ – specifically, within the Engineer and Civil Support Branch and within the STRATCOM cell within the Joint Fires and Influence Branch. With an influence based approach, the message that COMARRC wants military operations to convey is at the core of planning. Planning is synchronised through the COS/DCOS Ops-chaired Influence Synchronisation Board.

Engineer and Civil Support (E&CS) Branch.
With an expanded remit to provide both military engineer and civil support planning in support of essential services, governance and economic development, the Branch included teams covering Governance, Economic Development, Essential Services, Infrastructure and Civil Liaison with NGOs, IOs and Humanitarian Organisations. The Branch was reinforced by reserve personnel and contractors with the requisite specialist skills. Chief E&CS chaired the Civil Support Board.

Joint Fires and Influence (JFI) Branch.
As the HQ's proponent for Joint Fires, Targeting and Information Activity, JFIB focuses on the lethal and non-lethal fires aspect of influence; close coordination with the HQ's assessment staff is essential. Information agility and achieving influence are key and led to new staff capabilities being exercised, including: a Strategic Communication Cell, a Counter-Propaganda and Rebuttal focus, a focus for the military influence aspects of Reconciliation/Reintegration, and a Key Leader Engagement Support Cell. Chief JFIB chaired the Integrated Targeting Board (Lethal and Non-Lethal targets) and Information Effects Board.

Training and Security Force Assistance (Trg/SFA) Branch.
The branch is the focus for the HQ's effort on planning the development of indigenous security capacity through partnering, training and mentoring. Recognising some aspects require external assistance and reach back, the HQ is prepared to define the strategy and develop the SFA plan which includes policy guidance on manning, training and equipping indigenous forces as well as synchronising and integrating operations at lower levels within the command.

Commander's Initiative Group.
The civilian academic initiative group provide the commander and HQ with advice on a broad range of civil-military issues and, more specifically, cultural and historic context. They can look and influence beyond tactical and operational boundaries and also consider the broader second and third order effects over time. A virtual commander's initiative group – comprising home-based individuals – expands this network considerably.

Analysis and Conclusions.
More considered analysis is underway following the Land Componency seminar to determine how the momentum established through this programme of experimentation is sustained – particularly given HQ ARRC's year-long commitment to HQ ISAF Jointry and February prior to being circulated formally in March. The conclusions will also be published in this journal. ☐

Winning Friends and Influencing People

Colonel Duncan Barley

Experience of contemporary campaigning has caused more than a degree of flux in the minds the UK military establishment as it has struggled to understand the fight it has been in. Now several years into a COIN campaign credible doctrine has been issued to guide education and training but its introduction begins to question mindsets and structures forged in less turbulent times.

A Battle for Minds – Psychology First, Ballistics Second

Photo by Maj Ewan Cameron

Photo by Maj Ewan Cameron

The title of this article might be a better mantra for the operations that we are conducting now than 'clear-hold-build' or variations on such a theme. You might ask why? I would argue, with others, that it is the psychological dimension of these operations that is important although less understood in terms of our preparations. If the population is the prize, then the question is not how many insurgents have been killed but how many civilians died in the process? Perhaps it has taken us too long to think about the population - their perceptions on what constitutes security and development - rather than effects on the opposition. Furthermore, our words and actions are scrutinized and then publicised in a 24 hour globalised news network empowered by the Internet. In the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban spokesman has equal access to a global population as the UK Helmand spokesman but is less fettered. Critical audiences will judge our performance on these sources of information, disinformation and outright propaganda that aims to brainwash the vulnerable.

Our attempts to frame the idea of influencing a population including those who support us, are hostile or simply ambivalent have led to taking our kinetic capability and providing an antonym. In this binary way, with terms such as 'hard and soft', 'kinetic and non-kinetic', 'lethal and non-lethal' or even 'fires and influence', we encourage oversimplification. We need to frame this subject by viewing the information environment as just as much a part of the battlespace as the physical environment and commanders at all levels need to plan to operate in both simultaneously. Isolating an adversary psychologically is a skill we and our allies have found difficult to master against a highly savvy irregular.

An Afghan Child smiles at Members of the OMLT on patrol with the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) around Musa Qaleh in Helmand (Cpl Steven Peacock)

Two articles in recent copies of the British Army Review reflect on this subject of 'influence': Captain Emile Simpson's *'Gaining the Influence Initiative: Why Kinetic Operations are Central to Influence in Southern Afghanistan'* and Lt Col Mark Wenham's *'Information Operations – Main Effort or Supporting Effect?'* These articles highlight the growing pains of the British Army as it adjusts to meet the

Local people seek to influence 52 Bde's BRF

demands of COIN or any variation on that theme such as 'hybrid warfare' or even contested state-building. The struggle to penetrate the complexity and ambiguity of COIN, that is essentially a psychological contest, a battle of ideas, is reflected in the late arrival of doctrine. Doctrine is obviously not an end in itself but rather the beginning of an intellectual journey for the Army and a change in mindset that must start with education; whether it is the young officer at Sandhurst or soldier at Harrogate. And, as it will be argued later, it has to be investment in life-long education. Moreover, as the proof is in action and not just words and teaching, we need to be structured and resourced to deliver 'Influence' on operations.

What Exactly Do We Mean By Influence?

We know and have been told by many practitioner-theorists that COIN is a contest of perceptions played out in the minds of the many of actors and bystanders. Of course such minds can be influenced by propaganda, images, money and favouritism and by reinforcing prejudice. In terms of a body of knowledge, our latest doctrine captures the idea of 'Influence' placing it at the very core of our thinking. Such thinking has been generated by commanders in the field where there has been much experimentation and innovation. Essentially, 'Influence' is a catch-all term implying that whatever activity we perform the aim is to influence a situation in which the attitudes and behaviour of a myriad of actors are the objective. At campaign level it is an activity that shapes key conflict relationships moving them towards a political settlement. It takes the focus off the enemy and on to the populations and communities in question: ones in the affected country, its regional neighbours and those of our own and partner populations. Such a mental approach implies 'we partner and protect the population in order to harm the enemy rather than do harm to the enemy and protect the population'. Of course such preferred action implies sufficient forces: that is 'mass', but a subtle change in mindset that seeks to view force through a psychological lens. This requires an altogether sophisticated approach by relatively junior and inexperienced officers who are confronted with combat and the management of violence.

Military Influence (that applied in a theatre of operations rather than strategic measures from Whitehall) is therefore at the core of the COIN business and must be led by the commander using whatever 'levers' he can pull or 'tools' at his disposal. Communicating intent and arguing the counter insurgent's case, states Kilcullen, must be supported by kinetic and non-kinetic activity such as 'money as a weapon' rather than vice versa. This implies that we are savvy at operating in the information environment whether this is traditional word of mouth, a local radio, regional TV or simply through leaders meeting. Because this environment defies hard boundaries what we say in the UK will influence audiences in theatre.

Taking this idea further, if commanders and their civilian colleagues are to be convincing communicators they need to understand the society in which they operate in order to shape both what they say and also what they do in this battle for the support of the people. The insurgent has the advantage of understanding, access and continuity but also he can, unrestricted by clearances and legalities, get his story out first. So Influence, in doctrinal terms, implies that commanders need to communicate to 'target audiences' and synchronise their 'words and deeds' but also be 'first with the truth'. If there is a disconnect between what we say, what we stand for, or our 'narrative', and the way we act, or are perceived to act, then we lose credibility in the battle of perceptions. We lose credibility, and then we lose authority.

The language of Influence draws more from the social sciences and commercial marketing than from bandwidth and ballistics and that has implications for the nature of our military education, careers and mindset. However, at the coalface of operations, it is a matter of getting the balance right, as Emile Simpson is indicating, between using lethal force and other measures in unison to influence a situation to our advantage or at least 'do no harm'. This is a view now institutionalised in ISAF by its new commander. At sub-unit level, however, the junior commander has few tools in the box other than massing lethal force quickly and that will inevitably affect his mindset.

52 Brigade Crest

The Current Understanding and Application of Influence

In UK military circles it was probably the experience of 52 Infantry Brigade in Helmand and the thinking and language used by its commander, Brigadier Mackay, which captured the idea of Influence. In essence this is the use of psychological pressure in a politically charged environment with many 'stakeholders' who have alternative views and perhaps conflicting agendas. The use of psychological pressure is not new. British forces in Sierra Leone applied Information Operations to great effect during the early period of our intervention. Furthermore we always knew that the fundamental character of the manoeuvrist approach was to out-manoeuvre opponents mentally and not just physically. While theory and practice ranging from T E Lawrence to Galula have pointed to information as a weapon, we have been slow to integrate this idea into our operational design. Increasingly US and British military commanders have sought to integrate information effect

and wider military influence (the British term) into their operations although the bureaucratic processes that previously controlled the release of information tend to remain unwieldy and hence untimely.

Recent Helmand Task Force commanders have considered themselves as 'Chief Influence' and have applied, given their unique circumstances, the general idea during their six month tour with some enthusiasm. This declaration has implications: it raises the profile of the previously niche area of Psychological Operations and the slightly broader notion of Information Operations and associated Media Operations in terms of managing the 'word'. It also brings into core thinking non-kinetic levers such as 'money as a weapon' and amnesty.

Sometimes such non-kinetic initiatives run counter intuitive to the military mind. Moreover, it creates a further dilemma, since 'Influence' measures may not yield results within a commander's six month tenure. Apart from the issue of campaign continuity, it means that the way we organise our formation headquarters and design their internal processes must reflect the new status given to activities previous designated 'operations support'.

Experimentation on operations appears to have achieved a good balance of staff effort with formations organised with a Chief Fires, Chief Influence, Chief ISTAR and no doubt a Chief Military Assistance to Civil Effect (formally CIMIC). Process-wise J2/ISTAR provides the situational understanding that shapes the commander's synchronisation of activities; whether the use of force or another incentive. Important, however, is the ability to deliver the effect on the ground and that requires capability. An Influence capability requires cultural experts, educated staff officers, some specialists and equipment for example combat camera and 'radio in a box'. I would ask readers to contrast the lifelong training of CO 'Guns' as Chief Fires with that given to a more complex area dealt to Chief Influence. To shape the action of these 'chiefs' needs a multi-disciplinary team of experts, a 'prism cell' rather than just a Red Team, that views activity through the eyes of others.

It is on the ground, where our troops reach out to the community, that most decisions on the use of force are executed by relatively junior officers. In another article in this issue of BAR, a commanding officer reflecting on his experience suggests that we prepare well for kinetic operations but do not think psychologically in terms of their impact on the minds of the population. We are judged by these contacts, essentially what the locals see and hear, and in that order. Consulting a recent Junior Officers' Tactics Course at the Land Warfare Centre, they believed our training is overly kinetic. Sometimes on operations we win the fire-fight rather than the perception battle. Perhaps there is still an attitude of mind that views operations as an enemy-focused testing ground for the warrior ethos. Moreover, junior commanders now have direct access to substantial firepower and the responsibilities that it attracts. I suspect that Ross Kemp's series exemplifies the idea that Afghanistan is a military playground where junior ranks might prove themselves in a fire-fight. One might speculate that military kudos is measured in how many scrapes a young officer gets into rather than avoids, and that the weapons he uses indicates the seriousness of the contact.

Undoubtedly, no one wants front line infantry to be incapable of aggression when necessary. The warrior ethos remains valid but as General Kiszley warns in his paper on the 'post modern warrior' that 'controlling the warrior ethos and achieving the right balance in the right circumstances is one of the most important responsibilities and duties of any military commander at any level'. With the emphasis on 'survival skills' in mission specific training it must also be remembered that junior officers need to hone judgemental skills and understand the context in which they use lethal force. However, this deeper understanding of the relevance or utility of force in the contemporary operating environment cannot be left to theatre specific training. It is a matter of education and this must be engrained further in their psyche in Hybrid Foundation Training. Arguably, education provides understanding for fine judgement and certainly the imagination needed today on operations at all levels. Such a sophisticated approach also requires company commanders and more senior officers to set the conditions for the use of force.

Having learned through bitter experience and drawn heavily on US military thinking, how can we get the ideas on Influence entrenched into the institutional army therefore into the Army's DNA?

Where We Need To Go

Influencing a population requires:

- An understanding of the affected society – the origins of conflict that will be political and social. Understand the role played by needs, motivations, attitudes, beliefs and aspirations in influencing social groups. And this includes the grievances of the opposition.
- Educated and trained military and civilian practitioners who understand the ways and means to influence individuals and social groupings unconstrained by conventional thinking. This opens up a new military lexicon and command 'style'.
- A capability to influence in the information and physical environments: a means to communicate and act with kinetic and non-kinetic 'levers'.
- An institutional army that is able to deliver the education and training that enables an 'Influence' mindset and creates real experts in the areas of military assistance to civil effect and 'information effect' amongst others.
- I will focus on three areas that

are currently topical, restraining comment to the Army although accepting that information effects demand coherence from strategic to tactical levels. After all these conflicts are by nature ones of political competition that affect a whole population and regional neighbours.

- Cultural Understanding and the Role of Intelligence.

There is no question that ISTAR is critical in avoiding the blind delivery of kinetic effects and associated collateral damage. ISTAR has, not surprisingly, gained a 1* seat at HQLF's top table and will be nurtured as a capability that seeks to deliver situational understanding. While ISTAR allows us to view the situation through our eyes, cultural understanding, drawing from the social sciences and expertise whether academic or from Diaspora, is not as militarily tangible but will provide a perception of deeper motives and attitudes. General Lamb summed it up well as 'wars amongst the people, watched by the people, fought for the people, judged by the people'. There is obviously a limit on how much cultural immersion can be achieved before a deployment.

Undoubtedly the advent of Cultural Advisers and cultural awareness short courses will help but must not be viewed by the Army as good enough. The chances are this is the tip of the iceberg: it is not just a matter of understanding what motivates a given population but rather how to exert influence as a result of that knowledge. This can only be gained by interaction with an affected community in which 'partnering' with their fledgling security forces must offer a 'force multiplier'.

In a similar vein, we know that intelligence-led operations (as if one would do otherwise) are at the nub of COIN yet our transition from the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield to one of 'the Environment' has been slow. Our understanding of the 'human terrain' is subject to much research but seems to lack clear ownership and coherence. Previously understanding the local people would have been in the domain of Psychological Operations and target audience analysis drawing on intelligence expertise but now this is core business and a key skill that demands greater institutionalisation.

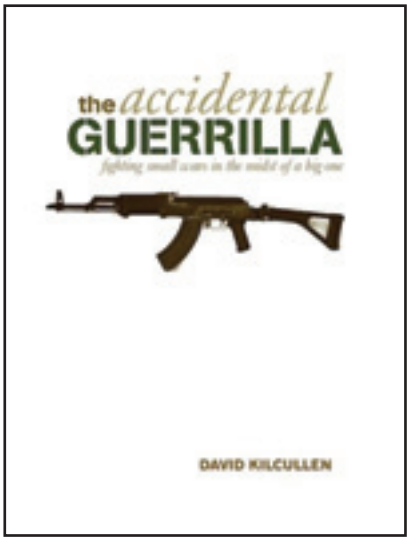
Who is the Army proponent for understanding the environment; the society in which we operate? Is it a wider intelligence function, a simple matter of language training and therefore the domain of our professional educators or does it demand more lateral thought? It needs a champion and probably a Joint/Defence one. Operationally the traditional divisions between psychological operations, CIMIC, J2 and surveillance become indistinct. All information needs to be fused and exploited in a more sophisticated way. Moreover HUMINT depends on a supportive population, so these capabilities are mutually supporting.

Mindset, Education and Training

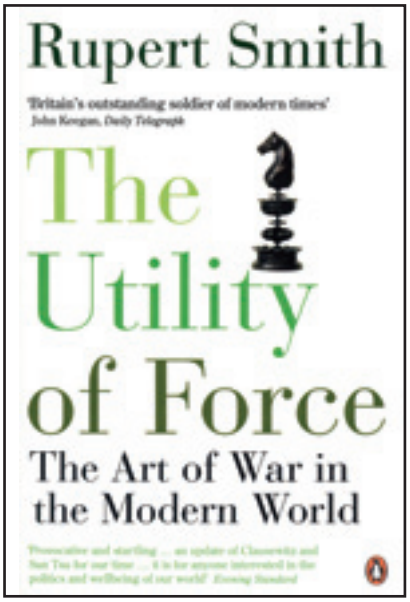
Of course the Army is adapting. Physically Thetford becomes Sangin, and Land Warfare School courses have been progressive in introducing the subtle approach demanded by current operations 'amongst the people, and for the people'. The issue appears to be one of speed and mindset or maybe the depth at which change takes place. Crucially, is this new way of campaigning now firmly in the Army's DNA? I would say the direction is right but the apportionment of effort is out of balance. For example, the Army's plan to place itself on a campaign footing makes little mention of how we need to operate in the information environment, less for small enhancements to a single TA unit. Future Army structures work in HQLF that aims to give form and resources to new capability areas will undoubtedly focus on the larger capabilities that deliver mainly kinetic effects.

Of course, modern warfare needs gunners but there requires to be recognition that new areas need to be resourced and professionalised. It is not an equipment centric area, nor entirely a structural issue, but more a mindset. Perhaps we view COIN or hybrid threats through the lens of the past. In other words, what does such a change to the operating environment mean for the gunners, infantry and sappers rather than have we got our Information Operations and Media Operations – essentially 'information effect' – right? Is it that our institutional change mechanisms are overly evolutionary and over-loaded? New capabilities have been acknowledged, such as Military Assistance to Civil Effect, but others such as Information Operations, Media Operations and cultural understanding (not just awareness) need to be reviewed and resourced better; as core business this means professionalised. In terms of delivering capability now, we cannot afford to view 'information effects' as peripheral activity, the domain of reservists (although granted they bring necessary niche skills) and the individual augmentee. I do not imply little has been done; within the LWC there is a strong bottom-up approach particularly in the training line of development.

To change the institutional mindset requires education supported by training. This means education and training informed and guided by doctrine. Senior officers must use such doctrine as a



catalyst for change. This is not just the pamphlet but the wider debate in professional journals, on-line in various intellectual forums and fed by analysis from various 'think tanks'. Wider formal and informal doctrine should shape junior officer thinking within units and formations. More time needs to be spent educating officers in thinking rather than simply perfecting procedures and processes. The change at ISCS (L), and its director's emphasis on reading the seminal works of COIN, is greatly welcomed but why has it taken so long? We need to understand ourselves better, be reflective and more self-critical. Such development skills that are readily accepted in academic circles might, I suspect, be less attractive to an army officer judged on exuding self confidence and charisma. We might look more closely at how the US Army adapted so quickly and is now viewed universally as on the cutting edge of thinking and operating in the Contemporary Operating Environment.



Reading Mao Zedong, Sun Zu and Machiavelli along with Bernard Fall might be too much but General Sir Rupert Smith's aptly named *'Utility of Force'* and David Kilcullen's *'The Accidental Guerrilla'* are surely a must. General Kiszley emphasises cultural change in the officer corps through education, but drawing more from the social sciences and I would include history and economics here. While potentially a rich source of understanding the underlying psychology of operations amongst the people, these liberal sciences are less applicable to conflict and many theories impenetrable; being far too abstract compared to the hard sciences that feed more conventional military capability. More accessible social psychology typified by Robert Cialdini in his *'Yes – 50 Secrets from the Science of Persuasion'* appears to have some utility along with ideas that underpin social marketing and civilian Public Relations. But social science alone is not the answer; it requires analysis and research to make it useable for the practitioner and applicable to the society in question. This idea underpins DGLW's overhaul of the LWC.

Ensuring that Influence is understood and resourced, within a wider change management programme, as General Kiszley argues, requires 'buy-in throughout the hierarchy and leadership from the top'. As COIN is irregular, unconventional, dynamic and calls for imagination, then it would follow that less conventional voices get a mention. We must take risk on this and allow the dissenters in too.

Information Effect

Raising the profile of our Information Operations, essentially Psychological Operations, capability has been slow and does not reflect the urgency indicated by doctrine. Compare this to the significant amount of thinking and writing that takes place in the US. The book *'Ideas as Weapons – Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare'* edited by two serving officers has over 20 contributions from officers ranking from general to captain. My argument here is one of creating the right balance of investment and focus for change. COIN requires different skills that need to be provided even if their proponents do not have much internal influence themselves in the battle for limited resources.

Delivering information effect has been constrained by the military disciplines of Media Operations and Information Operations. Terms developed, like CIMIC, in the Balkan campaigns and used more traditionally (through Psychological Operations) during the invasion of Iraq in 2003 are not necessarily helpful. While it is necessary to make clear the difference between certain Psychological Operations initiatives and the activities of Media Operations, such a literal division is not useful. Contemporary operations require the delivery of 'information effect' that allows us to operate in a contested information environment. An environment where the services offered by Media and Information Operations, with the civilian component's activities to build and strengthen local media, operates together, holistically. Activities in Afghanistan in Regional Command (South) provide the example to follow using the banner 'information effect' delivered in partnership with the Afghans that offer a 'narrative' to counter that of the Taliban's armed propaganda.

So What?

There is no question that the Army is adapting and has to make choices with Defence on capability priorities. My plea in this article has been for those previously peripheral capabilities – to deliver 'information effect' - to be modernised and not overshadowed by more powerful proponents. 'Close battle' change is taking place but shaping the Army's DNA will require a mindset shift in terms of the way in which commanders balance force with other tools at their disposal.

We might start by looking at the competencies of an officer with an eye on the future. He or she must be a mentor, negotiator, mediator, more than just aware of social sciences, be media savvy, have something of the criminologist, academic but be able to fight too but understanding the utility of lethal force. Then we can do cerebral soldiering based on education that is through military life, with a degree of self-education, which is positively encouraged. Indeed, recognised and

rewarded too. But this must be aligned with career paths and new specialisations as well. Life is too complex to be less than totally professional in these new skill sets. The military practitioner needs to operate at 'post graduate' level and this must not be for a few and limited to technical disciplines. We need more think tanks, institutes of excellence in cultural understanding and 'strategic communication'. After all winning the war of ideas has often been the decisive line of operations in successful COIN. Last year Cranfield University started a post graduate certificate in Information Operations, which is a beginning. The Land Warfare Centre has established an Afghan Centre as a centre for excellence and community of practice. These initiatives need to be resourced to build credible institutions - virtual or physical - to support both commanders and specialist alike. We need a centre of excellence for operating in the information environment. If the opposition use information as a weapon system, then we should too. ☐

Arabella Dorman

Over the past few years, Arabella Dorman has gained a wide reputation for her portrait paintings, landscapes and, more recently, her studies behind the scenes with the British military in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Arabella's paintings are an unusual blend of contemporary perception and classical technique. Though in every way an expression of the modern day, her work demonstrates a rare adherence to classical values, which owes much to both an MA in History of Art as well as four rigorous years of training in the old master techniques in Italy, at one of the few remaining schools in Europe in which traditional methods are still taught.

Based in London, Arabella works on portraits commissioned from around the world, and increasingly on paintings for the British military. She has also travelled extensively in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East producing portraits and landscapes for several successful exhibitions in London and Oman. These painting journeys have added further depth to her work, clearly discernable in her recent work from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Drawn from her first hand observations whilst living and travelling with the British army in Southern Iraq (Dec 2006) and Sangin, Helmund Province (Sep – Oct 2009) as well as time spent with wounded soldiers upon their return to the UK, Arabella's work explores the realities of soldiering today, from the courage and complexities involved in day to day duties in theatre, to the psychological experiences of conflict and its aftermath.

Arabella Dorman sketching in Helmand Province

Arabella Dorman has signed limited edition prints available, with 10 % of proceeds going to ABF or Combat Stress.

They can be seen at her website:
Arabella Dorman –
Portrait Commissions
www.arabelladorman.com

5 Chelsea Farm House Studios,
Milmans Street, London, SW10 0BY

Studio Tel: 0207 376 3925 ☐

Chronology of the Higher Control of Defence

Using, in part, House of Commons Defence Committee material

This chronology is a reminder of the evolution of the arrangements to oversee the defence of the United Kingdom. A little bit of history may be helpful as we approach another SDR - it is prepared in conjunction with the next article on the role of the MoD. Editor.

1546 Henry VIII creates the Navy Board, operational control remains with the Lord High Admiral.

1643 Formation of the New Model Army – Cromwell.

1666 Secretary at War's Office formed.

1815 Fifteen government departments oversee the army.

1832 Navy Board abolished, bringing its functions under the superintendence of "Their Lordships" - the Board of Admiralty.

1854 War Office set up.

1895 The Defence Committee of the Cabinet was established.

1904 Elgin Committee and then the Esher committee set up the Committee on Imperial Defence (CID) – abolition of the Commander in Chief and reform of the War Office – S of S chairs the Army Council.

1908 Haldane Committee sets up a national army of a regular expeditionary force and the Territorial Army for Home Defence.

1917 Second Smuts Report - Report by General Smuts on Air Organization and the Direction of Aerial Operations - August 1917.

1918 January – Air Ministry created.

1918 Royal Air Force formed.

1924 The Chiefs of Staff Committee was created.

1933 The Defence Requirements Committee was established to advise on the deficiencies of the Armed Forces relative to their intended roles, and on how these might be corrected.

1940 Ministry of Aircraft Production formed.

1940 Winston Churchill becomes first minister of defence (and prime minister).

1946 Ministry of Defence was created.

1946 Min of AP becomes the Ministry of Supply.

1957 SANDYS REVIEW. It was to some extent a response to the Suez debacle of the previous year which was a diplomatic disaster and had revealed the poor state of readiness of British forces and the obsolescence of much of their equipment. The resulting review (conducted over a two month period) placed the priorities on nuclear deterrence and missiles. It proposed the phased ending of national service with the last call-up in 1960 (reducing service manpower from around 700,000 to around 400,000 by the early 1960s. Overseas garrisons were to be reduced/replaced to an extent by aircraft carriers. One of its proposals—*'that fighter aircraft will in due course be replaced by a ground-to-air guided missile system'* —shows the danger of making premature predictions. It was an error which had some serious consequences for the UK aerospace industry. However, the rebalancing of forces away from East of Suez and toward Europe was frustrated by events. By 1960, British Army of the Rhine numbers had been cut to 55,000 while 100,000 troops were still stationed in the Middle and Far East.

1959 Aircraft production moves to Ministry of Aviation.

1963 Peter Thorneycroft as (conservative) minister of defence proposes a unified MOD.

1964 MOD unified: the Admiralty, the War Office, the Air Ministry and the Ministry of Defence itself.

1965 HEALEY REVIEW - The newly elected Labour government launched a defence review in 1965 under the Secretary of State for Defence, Denis Healey. The Healey Review was, in essence, a series of separate studies undertaken by different bodies using different methods. It initially reported to Parliament in a White Paper of February 1966, but was not completed until mid-1967. The process did involve a review of foreign commitments, but that followed after the decisions to make substantial savings by cancelling major equipment orders and reorganising and reducing the Territorial Army. Its numbers were halved to 45,000, and the dissolved units were 'cadreised' into nuclei from which they could supposedly be rebuilt—which in practice meant that they were reduced to an almost notional existence. Although the 1967 White Paper announced continued commitments East of Suez (though with 40,000, at half the previous manpower levels), it warned— Defence policy can never be static ... *This Statement ... describes the framework of policy within which further decisions will be taken in the years ahead.*

By 1968 a further White Paper, in an attempt to stay within a £2 billion cash limit, proposed accelerated withdrawal from Singapore and Malaysia as well as from the Persian Gulf (all to

be completed by 1971). The review also signalled the abandonment of further aircraft carrier construction.

1967 TA and County Associations merged into the Territorial Auxiliary Volunteer Reserve Associations (TAVRAs).

1967 Aircraft production moves to Ministry of Technology.

1970 Aircraft production moves to the Ministry of Aviation Supply.

1971 Aircraft production moves to the newly created Procurement Executive – part of the MOD.

1974 THE MASON REVIEW - The cuts proposed in the Healey Review were slowed only slightly by the Conservative government between 1970 and 1974, although the Prime Minister's undertaking to rebuild the Territorial Army was put in to effect—it took some six to eight years to return its establishment to the new effective levels. In March 1974, the Secretary of State for Defence of the newly-elected Labour government, Roy Mason, ordered a defence review on his first day in office. It was to begin first with a reconsideration of the UK's defence commitments, but pre-empting this was a government decision that defence spending should drop from around 5% of GDP to around 4.5% over ten years, a decision founded on the presumption that the UK's spending should move towards the NATO average. The Expenditure Committee commented in its preliminary report on the review that— ... the Ministry's analysis quickly established that our commitments outside the NATO area were of lowest priority in strictly military terms ... NATO would remain the first charge on resources available for defence ... We endorse this approach.

Three major commitments were deemed essential:

- the UK's contribution to NATO's front-line forces in Germany;
- the anti-submarine forces in the eastern Atlantic;
- and home defence.

The three other major commitments examined were the nuclear deterrent, reinforcements earmarked for defence of NATO's northern flank and naval forces in the Mediterranean. It was decided to withdraw all British forces from the Mediterranean theatre with the exception of Cyprus. The overall defence budget was projected to fall by 12% over ten years, with manpower falling by 11% over the same period. The Army's strategic reserve division was broken up, the RAF's transport fleet cut by half and amphibious forces reduced. The commitment to airdrop two parachute battalions and supporting services was scrapped, and the 'airportable' capability was to be reduced from three brigades to one. The Expenditure Committee commented—

The period following the 1967-68 defence review and the adoption of the strategy of flexible response by the Alliance has seen considerably more emphasis on mobile forces and reinforcement capabilities in NATO. In this field, the United Kingdom has hitherto given a lead amongst the European partners. The review proposals will tend to reverse this trend and therefore reduce the options open to NATO Ministers at the lower levels of strategic escalation. While the commitment to the Central Front is to be maintained, the cuts affecting mobility, support and reinforcement capability will have a weakening effect on both the Northern and Southern flanks.

1981 The NOTT REVIEW ran from January to June 1981. It was conducted in the international context of a Soviet military build-up and the domestic context of a severe economic downturn and the introduction of cash planning to control public spending. In the report on the 1981 Statement on the Defence Estimates (SDE): The Secretary of State in his introduction says that the right balance must be re-established "between inevitable resource constraints and ... necessary defence requirements". In other words, the Government's commitments to spend money on defence have outstripped the availability of funds ...

The Nott review confirmed the decision to proceed with the purchase of the Trident system from the USA to replace Polaris as the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent. The Territorial Army and the other reserve forces were to be merged and rebuilt to meet the requirement for home defence, which was also to be reinforced by a new fighter aircraft (eventually the Eurofighter programme). The British Army of the Rhine was to be held at the level of 55,000 but to be re-equipped. The main cuts under the Nott review were to fall on the Navy which, although it took on the Trident submarines, was to lose around one fifth of their 60 destroyers and frigates. Despite the supposed abandonment of the carrier programme, three so-called 'through deck cruisers' had been built, designated as the *Invincible Class*. One of these three carriers and the two amphibious ships *Fearless* and *Intrepid* were also to be cut. Out-of-area, or expeditionary, warfare capacity was therefore to be further significantly reduced. With Trident, greater reliance was once again to be placed on the strategic nuclear deterrent as the counter to the Soviet threat (together with an

increased submarine fleet), and the overall force structure emphasised the UK's increasing expectation of acting only as part of NATO for overseas expeditionary operations.

These proposals were rapidly scotched by the experience of the Falklands conflict in the Spring of 1982. In the White Paper on the lessons of that conflict, published in December 1982, it was announced that the 5th Infantry Brigade was to become an airborne force including an all-arms assault parachute capability of two battalion groups (withdrawn under the Mason Review); *Fearless* and *Intrepid* were to be retained in service. The third aircraft carrier (HMS *Invincible*) was to be retained, and the number of destroyers and frigates held at around 55. The White Paper concluded by signalling a return to 'flexibility and mobility', but as an extra rather than a central feature of force structure.

1990 OPTIONS FOR CHANGE – The main proposals:

- to retain four Trident submarines;
- to reduce the air defence capability by withdrawing two Phantom squadrons;
- to halve the forces stationed in Germany so that their reinforced strength would be two divisions rather than four;
- to reduce RAF bases in Germany from four to two, and to end the UK's contribution to German air defence;
- to maintain the UK's amphibious capability and air defence contribution to NATO's northern region;
- to maintain three carriers; to reduce the frigate/destroyer force to about 40; a submarine flotilla of 12 SSNs (nuclear powered submarines) and four SSKs (conventionally powered submarines);
- to re-establish a strategic reserve division;
- to reduce service manpower by 18% over about five years to an Army of around 120,000, a Navy of around 60,000 and the RAF of around 75,000.

3 Defence Roles:

- To ensure the protection and security of the United Kingdom and our dependent territories, even where there is no major external threat.
- To insure against any major external threat to the United Kingdom and our allies.
- To contribute to promoting the United Kingdom's wider security interests through the maintenance of international peace and stability.

1993 a further 'mini-review' took place. The Secretary of State said in his introduction to the 1993 Statement on the Defence Estimates that—

... changes over the last 12 months led me to conclude that a number of further adjustments, both enhancement and reductions to the force levels and capabilities of the armed forces, are now appropriate. These adjustments ... include an increase in Army manpower, improvements to our amphibious capability and the Army's anti-armour capability, and further investment in transport aircraft and support helicopters; as well as reductions in our anti-submarine warfare capability and the number of aircraft provided for the air defence of the United Kingdom.

Although the 1993 *Statement on the Defence Estimates* did, for the first time, deliver a welcome analysis of the defence programme and strove to make clear how the force structure related to the military tasks that flowed from the three roles, in its report on the 1993 *Statement on the Defence Estimates* the Committee commented—

Careful reading of SDE 93, which is subtitled 'Defending Our Future', produces very little idea of which national interests are to be defended and where, in what order of priorities, and in the face of which anticipated threats or dangers ... In the absence of explicit governmental arrangements for formulating a national security policy, it would be idle to expect the presentation of even the bare bones of such a policy to Parliament ... But experience in this Parliament, particularly but not exclusively in relation to the former Yugoslavia, has already heightened the interdependence of foreign and defence policy, and the inappropriateness in many circumstances of the conventional division between them ... some means should be found of providing Parliament with an opportunity to debate a rounded statement of the Government's security policy goals, as well as the resources it is proposed to devote to attaining those goals.

1994 **Front Line First: The Defence Costs Studies – Main proposals:**

- the establishment of a new Central Staff to replace the Defence Staff and Office of Management and Budget set up by Michael Heseltine in the mid '80s;
- a reduction in the single service HQ staff and a reduction in MoD HQ personnel from 5,200 to around half that number;

- the formation of a Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) at Northwood;
- the restructuring of Land Command;
- the merging of all research and development and most testing functions into a new Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA)
- the collocation of Procurement Executive (PE) staff at Abbey Wood;
- reorganisation of financial management;
- reorganisation of management of the MoD estate, maintenance functions and stores and spares;
- the downgrading of the Rosyth naval base;
- the establishment of a new tri-Service Joint Staff College;
- reorganisation of the recruitment services;
- reorganisation of defence medical services with further integration into the National Health Service;
- reorganisation of MoD Police and guarding services with further civilianisation.

Defence Cost Studies: Major Procurement Decisions:

- new nuclear attack submarines (Trafalgar Batch 2), further Type 23 frigates and seven Sandown minehunters;
- two Landing Platform Dock amphibious assault ships (LPDs) to replace Fearless and Intrepid;
- 259 additional Challenger 2 tanks;
- a mid-life update of 142 Tornado GR1 aircraft to GR4 standard;
- procurement of submarine-launched conventionally armed Tomahawk cruise missiles, and a possible conventionally armed stand-off missile (CASOM) for the RAF.

1997/98 **Strategic Defence Review –** initiated by incoming Labour government.

The main changes in force structure are summarised in the following table:

	Additions	Cuts andReorganisation	Confirmation and Enhancement
Army	* *3330 more troops to be recruited.* * *Territorial Army cut from 57,000 to 40,000:*	* *Airborne Brigade and airmobile brigade to be amalgamated to form new air manoeuvre brigade* * *Re-role 2 of the armoured regiments* to armoured reconnaissance and NBC roles respectively, and enlarge the 6 remaining tank regiments to full 58-tank units; * *Additional Mechanised Brigade* to be created: Re-roled and strengthened from 5 Airborne Brigade which will be dissolved	
Navy	* *2 Aircraft Carriers:* Decision to plan for 2 medium aircraft carriers, for deployment after 2012 replacing the present 3 smaller carriers; * *Royal Navy Reserve:* To increase by 350; * *4 ro-ro ships to be acquired;* * *3 escort vessels cut:* Frigate and destroyer force to be reduced from 35 to 32; * *3 Mine Counter Measure Vessels cut:* Planned MCMV force to increase from 18 to 22 instead of 18 to 25; * *2 Attack submarines cut:* Attack submarines to be cut from 12 to 10		* *Cruise missiles:* All Trafalgar class submarines to be made capable of firing Tomahawk land attack missiles.
Air Force	* 4 C17 transports to be acquired: C17 large transport aircraft, 'or their equivalent' to be acquired * RTAF Reserve: To increase by 270 * 36 combat aircraft cut: 23 offensive support and 13 air defence aircraft cut, number of squadrons to be cut by two to 18.	* *Confirmation of EF2000:* The number of Eurofighters to be brought into service remains unchanged at 232; * *Air-Launched missiles enhanced:* * *Tornado GR4:* Deployability to be enhanced and some improvements to operations; * *Nimrod-R:* Improvement in on-board processing systems for long range reconnaissance aircraft; * *Air transport:* Confirmation of the need for a successor. to portions of the ageing C-130 fleet.	

Land Forces - The concurrency requirements for the Armed Forces distil to the following requirement for the Army: in addition to meeting its permanent commitments in the United Kingdom, Cyprus and elsewhere, it must be able to –

- maintain a brigade employed indefinitely on a peace keeping mission such as SFOR, and at the same time deploy an armoured or mechanised brigade for warfighting for a period up to six months; or
- be capable of deploying a warfighting division.

The Review has concluded that *'the Army's current structure will not meet post-SDR requirements without overstretch'.*

Consequently, in order to meet these requirements, the structure of the Army has been significantly revamped in the SDR. The stated overall purpose of the changes made is to 'make existing forces more usable and to address overstretch' while retaining 'a balanced, combined arms, high capability structure of two deployable divisions'. At present the Army has three armoured brigades, two mechanised brigades, an airborne brigade and an airmobile brigade. Post-SDR, the airborne brigade will be re-roled as a mechanised brigade, with its airborne role transferred, along with the airmobile brigade, to a new air manoeuvre brigade.

A new formation readiness cycle has been designed for the two deployable divisions. Under the new training cycle, each of the six brigades (excluding the air manouevre brigade) will adhere to a three year activity cycle with a year of in-role training, followed by a year at high readiness (mostly at thirty days' notice to move) as part of the JRRF pool and a year preparing for, deployed on, or recovering from, a six-month tour of peace support or "operations other than war" such as Northern Ireland or training support in Canada. This cycle is designed specifically to provide at any one time an armoured and mechanised brigade at high readiness for warfighting; two brigades to meet an indefinite non-warfighting commitment such as SFOR; and two brigades able to 'train coherently'. Each division will have its three brigades at graduated readiness. Changes in Equipment Requirements under the SDR:

The SDR proposes the decommissioning of some existing equipment, in particular

- reducing the flotilla of attack submarines from 12 to 10;
- reducing the flotilla of destroyers/frigates from 35 to 32, by paying off three more Type 22 frigates;
- increasing the flotilla of mine counter-measures vessels to 22, instead of to 25 as originally planned, by paying off more older vessels;
- removing 36 RAF fast jet aircraft from the front-line.

Some previously intended procurements will also be reduced in number or cancelled –

- a second batch of 22 Merlin anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters will not be ordered;
- the medium range TRIGAT and the Next Light Anti-Armour Weapon projects will proceed, but with fewer numbers to be ordered.

February 2002
SDR New Chapter:
Secretary of State came before the H of C Defence select Committee on 28 November 2001, and set out a list of questions which the New Chapter work would need to address:

i) …can we base our policy on getting intelligence of specific threats, with occasional misses, or do we have to assess our vulnerabilities to potential terrorist capabilities and counter these?
ii) How far do we try to defend the homeland in a collective NATO and European sense and how should we try to deal with terrorists, in their bases or in transit?
iii) In the UK, how far should the Armed Forces play an increased role in security? If so, what sort of forces are best suited for these tasks? Should the Reserve Forces have a different or enhanced role?
iv) In the military dimension, is there a role for pre-emption? What is the role of Armed Forces in dealing with problems upstream, what capabilities do we need? What is clear already is that we need fast, integrated operations, involving high levels of military skill, improved intelligence-gathering capability and a deeper understanding of potential opponents.
v) How do we engage the causes of terrorism as well as the terrorists themselves? How do we do so on a cross-governmental and coalition basis and what is the role of the military, if any, in this? How do we avoid the use of force becoming our opponent's own recruiting sergeant?
vi) How do we deter or dissuade states from support or complicity with terrorism, especially in the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear activities? What if the state has failed…?
vii) …what is the nature of asymmetric threats? How does this impact on our approach to operations?

The Select Committee commented: *The discussion paper did not, however, clarify the MoD's understanding of asymmetry and specifically how it related to existing doctrine. Similarly it left unclear how operations against asymmetric tactics might, in practice, be conducted.*

March 2008
The Government published *The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Security in an interdependent world* (NSS). Although the publication was coordinated by the Cabinet Office, the Strategy's stated aim was "to set out how we will address and manage this diverse though interconnected set of security challenges and underlying drivers".

The NSS lays out the fundamental security architecture for its approach to threats to UK security and resilience, acknowledging that the traditional boundaries between Government departments, and between concepts of foreign and domestic policy, no longer apply. Equally, the concept of 'threat' has changed with the development of non-state actors such as international terrorist organisations.

"In the past, the state was the traditional focus of foreign, defence and security policies, and national security was understood as dealing with the protection of the state and its vital interests from attacks by other states. Over recent decades, our view of national security has broadened to include threats to individual citizens and to our way of life, as well as to the integrity and interests of the state."

The definition of national security and resilience now, therefore, encompasses a wide range of threats, from traditional state-on-state aggression through terrorist groups to civil emergencies such as flooding or pandemics. It also encompasses a spectrum of capabilities and responses—not merely preventing or dealing with attacks or natural disasters ('security'), but also ensuring that vital services are maintained and life can continue as close to normal as possible ('resilience').

March 2009

A central plank of the Government's approach to national security is its Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST), an updated version of which was published on 24 March 2009. It aims *"to reduce the risk to the UK from international terrorism so that people can go about their business freely and with confidence"*. The strategy is built around what are described as the 4 'P's, Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. The MoD notes that it *"provide[s] a range of support in each of these areas to a greater or lesser extent".?* □

On the edge of the Green Zone (Alexander Allan).

Keep the Army in the Public Eye

John Wilson

FM Jan Smuts (HMSO)

In the Smuts Report[1] of 1917, it says: *How shall the relations of the new air service to the Navy and the Army be determined?* There is no mention of its relation to the Ministry of Defence because there wasn't one. None of us would argue for the abolition of the MoD but we might argue that things have centralised too far towards the MoD and away from the 3 fighting Services. And the basic logic is that what the MoD gets, it can only get at the expense of one or more of the single Services. The current arrangement is beyond the point of justifiable and proper synergy. There are two issues: centralisation and jointery. Both are an essential and proper culture and like any culture it can grow malignant organs. It is the extent of these two cultures that needs examining.

Centralisation

Centralisation should attack two dangers: inefficiency and anomalies. A joint pay system makes sense: why have 3 pay corps? And a common rank structure is logical even if the Army wants lance corporals, where the other two services have less need for that rank. Similarly, do we really need 3 sets of lawyers? We can have specialist maritime lawyers without requiring 3 distinct and separate organisations. Yet for all the objections we might raise about centralisation/jointery, this common-sense approach has not materialised. A common medical service makes sense – it even partially exists in practice, medical teams from all 3 Services do wonderful work in Afghanistan, yet each Service keeps its own. But MOD centralisation has not gone down this path, as you might have expected. Just to be clear, I would suggest that, for example, the Royal Navy runs the medical services – ie all doctors, nurses and dentists wear RN uniform.

We see centralisation in other areas. We have a separate and centralised procurement agency absurdly headed up by someone who out-ranks the man who gives him his orders: the operational requirements man. You would expect to see commonality in such areas as fuel, rations, clothing, general stores, and accommodation.

To take an example, a closer look at accommodation. We have a joint quartering system but do we have a common need? The Navy has a few main bases: Portsmouth, Devonport, Faslane and Culdrose and their people are encouraged and choose to buy their own house. The restricted number of bases makes the decision easier and most sailors with a few years service weekly commute from home. So, SFA and even SLA is less important to the Navy. The RAF is a bit different having a fair spread of air bases across UK – but with more specialisation and fewer moves the requirement is less demanding than the soldier's. We don't need to go through all the Army's needs but we can say that they are greater and more complex than the other Services'. Creating a common accommodation policy for all 3 Services is not really possible. Although you might be able to create arrangements that suit all, given enough flexibility – but that is hardly a policy, just a series of exceptions. In other words, whilst some broad guidelines are a good idea, for example, standardised rents and building design, the Army should set the quartering requirement for itself without having to conform with another Service's needs.

Doing What You Promise

The Army has to provide what its people need. As do the Royal Navy and the RAF. It is partly a matter of expectation. Soldiers join the Army, they don't join the Services. They look up to the Army and they hold the Army to account not the MoD/Defence.

Identity

"It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 2nd Battalion The Rifles (2 RIFLES) was killed in Afghanistan".

The announcement on the MoD website (November 2009) was accompanied by this image:

MoD crest

No-one in the Rifles or the rest of the Army identifies with that crest - in this sad case, would not this image have been more appropriate?

RIFLES Cap badge

This is not carping on my part; it was a deliberate decision to use the MoD crest. Why?

Operationally, we can take the case of Sergeant Roberts RTR. You will recall that Sergeant Roberts was killed in Iraq but there was a shortage of body armour and Sergeant Roberts went without. The simple point of this tragic story is that no-one was responsible. Centralisation had enabled those who made the decision not to buy sufficient body armour to avoid accountability. When we had a Quarter-Master General (a 4* man), he would have answered to CGS and the Army Board. Direct accountability concentrates the mind. If a quarter is sub-standard, a soldier should get satisfaction from the chain of command and ultimately CGS should be able to answer that soldier's grievance. But he can't. It is a matter for a defence *agency – "Vice Admiral Tim Laurence has been in post as Chief Executive of Defence Estates, the UK military's property department"* – (MoD Defence Estates website). Vice Admiral Laurence doesn't answer to the Army Board, he answers to? A good question, but not one that the Defence Estates website answers. The Army's training estate is no longer controlled by the Army; it was taken over by an agency: the Defence Training Estate. Which in turn has been taken over by Defence Estates – *"the UK military's property department"*. And that is how they describe themselves. So, not only does the Army not control its own training estate but those who do are exactly what they say they are: estate agents; it takes no imagination at all to understand that the training estate will be run to conform to that ethos:

*"**UK Training Estate.** There will be little scope to reduce the existing UK training estate in the near term, as it will continue to be required to support the delivery of military capability, despite the increasing use of synthetic environments[2]."*

So, this, the first idea in the Defence Estates Development Plan 2009, is to seek reductions; how inconvenient that the *UK Training Estate.... will continue to be required to support the delivery of military capability*. You might have hoped that the first thought would have been to recognise the urgent requirement for changes to our training demanded by the fiercest fighting since the Falklands War – only this fighting is lasting for years not weeks. In the 26 pages of the DEDP the words 'Afghanistan' and 'Iraq' do not appear. A soldier writing this paper as an army plan who did not make direct reference to the fighting in Afghanistan, and deductions from that, would have been invited to acquaint himself with life in Sangin without the benefit of body armour or colleagues.

How can the Army promise to provide the right training under this regime, and honour that promise? Now, before you shovel all the blame onto the politicians and mandarins for this, I have to tell you that the Army let this happen. Was it ignorance? No, because good men working inside the Army Training Estate told their bosses that this was not a good idea. So, was it cowardice, idleness or poor judgement? Take your pick, because I have no other explanation to offer. Had the Army mounted a strong challenge, what would have happened? I don't know, but I would have liked to have seen the effort. I guess that someone (not a soldier) got a nice big bonus for thinking up this scheme, and so it would probably have gone ahead anyway with a few modifications as a sop.

Jointery

Jointery is a good word – a word of hope: positive and benign. You cannot go wrong by bunging in words like balance and joint (but not in the same sentence as 'Mick Jagger'); they are what Jamie Whyte[3] calls 'Hooray Words'. He suggests – 'justice' – and points out that we are all in favour of justice, although we disagree about what is just and what unjust. You cannot fail by suggesting jointery as a solution. How could it not be helpful to have more understanding of each other's service?

And staff college is a good place to start. When we – (a digression, who was 'we'? who were the people who thought jointery was a good idea and who are they now? – a thought to keep in the mind during this article) – when we decided we wanted a joint staff college, there was the inevitable study to determine where it should be.

The Weekly Dinner (Alexander Allan)

Jointerising the Staff Colleges

Now an early factor (or driver as factors are now called) was that the junior divisions should be co-located with the senior version. Young officers learn about their own arm on the YOs course at their arms school - because at this stage of their career that is what they need to know. No-one disputes that it would be good thing for them to know all about the army, but not at this point. That comes later - we had the Junior Division - JDSC. It was at Warminster; indeed I can see the hut I occupied on that course 33 years ago from the window as I write. Warminster was (is) a good location: non-academic, soldiers all over the place, easy access to military kit and training areas. At JDSC, captains learnt about the rest of the army. An excellent solution for all, only mildly inconvenient for the Commandant at Camberley who had responsibilities for JDSC - ie the SRO.

The chosen few subsequently went onto Camberley where they continued to learn about the army, war, the nation and other nations and the other Services. Now you can argue about what more joint education was needed at the Camberley level. But the need to co-locate the junior divisions with the senior divisions was weak, yet it drove the choice of Shrivenham as the site for JSCSC simply because it was a big enough greenfield site, and none of the existing sites - Greenwich, Camberley and Bracknell could hold a new joint college and the juniors.

It will be so good for all the juniors to be together, they cooed. Today, we have ICSC(L) at Shrivenham on a 30 week course, whilst the RAF and RN have an 8 week course. The junior courses are run separately by their respective Services. No need then for them to be on the same site as the advanced course, no requirement to be together as juniors.

You might wonder why the Army's course is 30 weeks and the others are just 8 weeks. The RN and the RAF see a staff college as somewhere that teaches 'secretarial' matters - ie equips the officer for employment in the MoD or some other major HQ. They run their warfare courses elsewhere: principal warfare officers are trained at HMS Collingwood, and the RAF run battle management courses at the Air Warfare Centre. Whereas the Army sees staff work at the heart of warfare and how it does business, combining the 'secretarial' and the operational. Jointery compared a light blue pear and a dark blue peach with a russet brown apple - and produced a lemon.

The lesson here is that the only argument was – 'jointery'. It was ideological and therefore not susceptible to rational discussion. So we have spent hundreds of millions of pounds to sustain an ideological point – which in practice has yielded no measurable benefit.

MOD Main Building

Operational Jointery

I am in favour of operational jointery and I was an early supporter of PJHQ – in my time I was one of only 2½ joint warfare staff officers in the MoD. But it hasn't quite worked out as we had hoped. The idea of a single operational HQ for expeditionary operations seemed to make sense. In practice it has at times sat uneasily between Whitehall and the theatre; uneasy, because it is neither in Whitehall nor in the theatre - where the real decisions are being made. (note that in the first three articles in this issue - all of which deal with decision making in Iraq - there is no mention of the PJHQ).

Is it at the operational level or the strategic? It should be at the strategic level but it cannot behave strategically and is really a national provider – yet provider is the description we give to HQs Navy, Land and Air. It tries to command from a distance, yet usually UK forces are in a coalition which adds more links and complications: and we can see those complications played out in Helmand, which we treat as a national operation. PJHQ is an annex to the MoD. The real reason why PJHQ stutters is because there should be 3 of them. The PJHQ tries to do too much. In consequence it overloads the capacity of its staff and expects those without sufficient experience to understand more than is reasonable. In part this is because of the purple approach which assumes that any serviceman/woman can do some jobs irrespective of their parent service. You can call it 'Buggins turn'. For example, it is not reasonable to expect an RAF officer to write the enemy forces paragraph when the enemy is a shadowy set of Arab insurgents. Nothing in his training will have prepared him for it. You can expect him to give you an analysis of the 2003 Iraqi air force; even if s/he was unaware of the actual details, he would be able to research intelligently and produce the answer – a soldier shouldn't be asked to brief on Iran's submarine capability. More education and training is not the real answer – people have areas of competence and expertise, stick to them.

3 PJHQs

Three rather than one PJHQ seems to be asking for trouble x 3. The logic follows from the first point about expertise and it applies to the establishment level as well as to the individual. Jointery is a necessary quality when we want to conduct joint operations – GBO. And all operations beyond our shores will be joint. Maritime always has an air component; any land operation has to

Parliament

get there and will almost certainly have an air component. Possibly a UK air contribution to a coalition operation might be purely air, for example the bombing programme of Iraq during Op Desert Fox. But environments demand a minimum level of expertise.

Basing a PJHQ on an environment would bring us back to where we were when we had the three JHQs – and that logic doesn't quite stand up to analysis. Our need is to think in 3 areas – partly geographical, partly functional:

- Home Front. Home is the air and coastal defence of UK and its internal security. Which might include terrorism, public disorder, disaster relief, CBRN – MACA and MACP tasks.
- Distant Front. The HQ which conducts operations beyond Europe.
- Near or Europe. Ignoring Europe is not a sensible option, and linking ourselves closely to European forces need not cause any distress to our Atlantic partners – Canada and the USA.

No one of these Fronts is obviously a preserve of land, sea or air and that is a useful characteristic.

This is not my original thought. It is the view of General Sir Rupert Smith (ACDS (Ops) MoD 1992-94; Commander UNPROFOR; DSACEUR) and I hope we might see an expansion of this idea in **BAR** in the future. But for the purposes of this article it is relevant because of the associated actions and effect. Which is that Navy Command Headquarters, Headquarters Air and Headquarters Land Forces should all disappear. Sorting out our force requirements would be the preserve of the 3 PJHQs with the COSs. And here is the real point: more power to the chiefs. Make them responsible for their individual Services' contributions to operations. Authority is aligned with responsibility.

And the apportioning between those commands, which is where the chiefs will exercise much of their power is done collegiately with the CDS.

The Services as Institutions

The Army (these arguments apply equally to all 3 Services) is not a business; it is an institution which handles violence on behalf of the people of this country as regulated by Parliament and owes its allegiance to the Crown. That it is not a business is no excuse to be inefficient or to ignore economy (recalling that economy of force (and logistics) is a guideline of war) – and it most certainly should be effective. The British Army has an enviable record of staying out of domestic politics:

...the English hatred of war and militarism ... is rooted deep in history, and it is strong in the lower-middle class as well as the working class. Successive wars have shaken it but not destroyed it. Well within living memory it was common for 'the redcoats' to be booed at in the streets and for the landlords of respectable public houses to refuse to allow soldiers on the premises. In peace time, even when there are two million unemployed, it is difficult to fill the ranks of the tiny standing army, which is officered by the country gentry and a specialized stratum of the middle class, and manned by farm labourers and slum proletarians. The mass of the people are without military knowledge or tradition, and their attitude towards war is invariably defensive. No politician could rise to power by promising them conquests or military 'glory', no Hymn of Hate has ever made any appeal to them. In the last war [WW1] the songs which the soldiers made up and sang of their own accord were not vengeful but humorous and mock-defeatist. The only enemy they ever named was the sergeant-major.

And of the last war, the four names which have really engraved themselves on the popular memory are Mons, Ypres, Gallipoli and Passchendaele, every time a disaster. **The names of the great battles that finally broke the German armies are simply unknown to the general public.**

In England all the boasting and flag-wagging, the 'Rule Britannia' stuff, is done by small minorities. The patriotism of the common people is not vocal or even conscious. They do not retain among their historical memories the name of a single military victory. English literature, like other literatures, is full of battle-poems, but it is worth noticing that the ones that have won for themselves a kind

of popularity are always a tale of disasters and retreats. There is no popular poem about Trafalgar or Waterloo, for instance. Sir John Moore's army at Corunna, fighting a desperate rearguard action before escaping overseas (just like Dunkirk!) has more appeal than a brilliant victory. The most stirring battle-poem in English is about a brigade of cavalry which charged in the wrong direction. And of the last war, the four names which have really engraved themselves on the popular memory are Mons, Ypres, Gallipoli and Passchendaele, every time a disaster. The names of the great battles that finally broke the German armies are simply unknown to the general public[4].

Orwell's essay, written in 1941, continues to strike chords – some things have changed and it is worth a short examination of public attitudes today.

The public – and here it is impossible to distinguish between media slant or spin and the views of the public – support the soldiers as people. Public affection for the 'soldier' has probably never been higher. Affection and support for the Army is less, particularly where the army appears to be acting against the interests of the 'soldier'. But there is a change from Orwell's day at this level: public support for the Army as an institution is *relatively* strong. The armed forces generally and the Army especially rank *comparatively* highly in the public esteem as a trusted and worthwhile institution – esteem for the Army is probably higher than at any time. Support for 'Help the Heroes' shows the extent, as do the many occasions when the Army is in the Public Eye (hardly a major sporting event goes by without some combat-95'd blokes and blokesses leaping around, even if some are rather less soldierly than we might like) – the recruiting programme of the 1970s – *Keep the Army in the Public Eye* (KAPE) – could only have dreamt of such levels of publicly approved exposure.

Yet that only serves, too, to demonstrate the fickleness of such affection. It is a high risk phenomenon which is vulnerable to a change in mood.

Casualties are an emotive issue and when linked with perceived neglect – ie equipment shortages for 'our boys' – the issue can get out of control. I suggest that we are close to that point. Contrast today with Summer 1972 – the Army was losing a soldier every other day, media coverage of NI was intense and although there was some sympathy for the 'let the Irish get on with it' call, and 'Troops out' was a marginal campaign, the broad British consensus was that this was a messy conflict and our soldiers (and the Army) were doing a good job and should see it through. Soldiers' bodies were returned to the United Kingdom discreetly, no ceremonies. Neither the government nor the Army was under attack for its handling of the military operation; nor was there any real campaign for the lot of the individual soldier.

So, there is a paradox: defence/MoD is regularly excoriated for its failings – fairly and unfairly. Failings which should be *jointly* shared with the Services it serves. It is not healthy for the common good for the Services to hide behind the MoD. But this is a situation largely of the MoD's making. In the desire to create a separate identity for 'Defence', power has been taken from the Services to the Centre, which now takes the brickbats. It is not well-equipped to defend itself. By definition the 'suits' (and not all the 'suits' are civilian) look silly if they stand up to defend themselves because that would expose their naked power and bring down yet more derision on themselves. So they are obliged to respond with proxy spokesmen who range from 'talking heads' to real soldiers on occasions; plus the use of the usual press office tricks. It does not go down well.

Over the long run the Services need public support based on good practice for which they are themselves responsible. The coroners' courts are an example – militarily educated and experienced soldiers know that military operations are a series of interlinked actions and reactions. Concentrating on one issue creates vulnerabilities: war is not just a risky business; it an option of difficulties. This is a hard point to make in the forensic atmosphere of a court - but since that court also operates in tandem with the court of public opinion it makes it all the more important that the military argument is heard and understood. You cannot conduct war without public support; you must take the people with you. The current centralised arrangements in the MoD are unhelpful in this respect.

Reform

Part of the malaise is the budgetary system: it has gone too far. I am not talking about accountability, it is utterly right that the civil service should be demanding in this aspect; it is public money.

A Small Example

The Army's operational and tactical publications budget (which includes BAR and ABN) is about £800,000 pa. Unknown to the spenders of that money, MoD decided to make the BFPO an agency which will in future charge postage to all users. So, out of the blue the tactical publications budget has taken a hit of £37,000 for postage, with no compensating increase in its budget. What is the point of this exercise? The only effect is to reduce the flow of tactical doctrinal information to the Army. We now have an extra layer of bureaucracy to price, charge and account for this money for no obvious benefit. It is time for the NAO to estimate the costs of the MoD's accounting system - what is the value of this charging regime? Is it worth it?

The one major point here is that money is power. To find the power, follow the money. The COSs do not have money. Give them the money for their Service so that power goes with their responsibility. The really extraordinary part of this discussion is why the COSs were by-passed in the first place. And it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it suited (no pun intended) one constituency, indeed they (whoever they are) designed it that way.

Another example is the removal of the single Service public relations one star directors. Consequently, the single Services no longer have control over their media image – a vital function for any institution. The clear message from this measure is that Defence/MoD is the institution and the single Services are minor pillars supporting Defence/MoD, not the other way round. In 1946, when the MoD was first formed, such an idea would have been thought preposterous – that is the extent of the reversal of authority. I do not argue for a return to the position in 1946, it is the extent of the change that needs discussion. Clearly, I am suggesting that it has gone too far and needs correcting.

A current example is the recent report into the Nimrod XV230 crash (fuel lines explosion over Afghanistan). Air Vice-Marshal K A Campbell RAF (Ret'd), a senior RAF engineer, wrote to The Times on 10 November 2009. An extract: *From the formation of RAF Strike Command in the early Sixties the engineering branch of the RAF met these challenges by co-locating all the specialist engineering staff for each aircraft in a single office — the Role Office — and required each office to prepare an annual review of its long-term airworthiness plans. By the late 1990s these reviews were heard by the Chief Engineer himself so that he could satisfy the responsibility that all RAF aircraft were airworthy.*

The XV230 report details that early this century the post of Chief Engineer was discontinued, that the chain of delegation now no longer passes through the hands of properly qualified and experienced engineers. Instead, it seems to follow the chain of command, which could and did include not just non-engineers but also personnel who had no experience of military aircraft operation. In addition, a whole management layer was removed and with it the capability to supervise the Role Offices — now expanded and re-titled integrated project teams. This was a recipe for disaster. It was akin to giving a GP responsibility for the quality and extent of cancer care — or even giving the task to a non-medical person.

... Nor does it sufficiently criticise the convoluted dissipation of airworthiness responsibility in the new tri-service logistic organisation so that the heavy weight of this task is not clearly laid on specific individuals. The public should demand the immediate restoration of airworthiness responsibility to those who are qualified and trained to handle it.

The report showed the extent of the organisational failures. Now, I suggest that the plea to the British public is wrongly aimed – the people who should demand the change to this culture are those in the Services. It is our job to sort these things out, not to leave it to someone else. A crash is an obvious catastrophe, difficult to ignore; the organisational arrangements I criticise are less obviously dramatic but are even more serious than the Nimrod crash. They are easier to ignore. This is not the time for good men to do nothing. Power and responsibility go together, if one gets ahead of the other, trouble follows. We are at that point.

The Power of the National Institution

Defence/The MoD is no more a national institution than is the Department for Children, Schools and Families, which was formerly known as the Department for Education and Skills and before that the Department of Education and Science and before that (with a few other name changes in between) the Ministry of Education. Government departments change at the behest of - the government; they are ephemeral, national institutions are not. They can lose their status or can decline – the aristocracy may have some influence but few outside of them would regard them as a national institution; 70 years ago they wielded power, influence and had real status, no longer. There is no merit in trying to give Defence/MoD this sort of status; it's like having a dredger as the flag-ship.

The Services can use this status, indeed they need it. The image (and reality) that the Army wants is that of an organization which is professional and focused in its approach to the defence of the nation, thoughtful, responsible, prudent and which looks after its own. An Army that the people can respect as one of the important institutions of the State, which is not subject to the immediate whims of government because it has continuity of purpose. Yet places itself unequivocally at the service of the people through its loyalty to the Crown. These are images which evoke powerful emotions. The Army largely meets these democratic expectations of itself, but is having increasing difficulty in achieving them as its ability to determine its performance declines.

Taking power away from the Services and placing it in the Centre has not helped the Centre to gain public support. Instead, criticism is aimed at the Centre. Reduction of status from the Three has not increased the status of the One – status has not followed power and money.

To re-phrase the Smuts Report of 1917... *how shall the relations of the Navy, Army and Air Force to the Centre be determined? By a re-distribution of power*

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1 Report by General Smuts on Air Organization and the Direction of Aerial Operations August 1917 :

Shall there be instituted a real air ministry responsible for all air organization and operations? Shall there be constituted a unified air service embracing both the present RNAS and RFC? And if this second question is answered in the affirmative, the third question arises: How shall the relations of the new air service to the Navy and the Army be determined so that the functions at present discharged for them by the RNAS and RFC respectively shall continue to be efficiently performed by the new air service?

2 The Defence Estate Development Plan 2009 (DEDP 09) dated 9 July 09.

3 *Bad Thoughts – A Guide to Clear Thinking*, Jamie Whyte, Corvo Books, ISBN: 0 95432553 2.

4 The Lion and The Unicorn, George Orwell, 1941. □

The Celebration of an Idea

William Barlow

The Queen's Birthday Parade increasingly interests me. I have been on it twice and will never forget the impression the Queen made as she inspected us. Magnificent in uniform, with a composed yet obvious pride, she seemed to be looking at us, both collectively and individually, as if to say, *"You are my Guards."* It caught me unawares and my response was immediate and true. I felt a pride which was without sin and nothing will ever erase the memory.

Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth riding to the QBP for the last time in July 1986. Her Majesty rode the same horse, 'Burmese', originally presented by Canadian government, from 1969 to 1986. (Wikipedia Commons – Sandpiper)

I have also seen the Parade many times and noted the reaction of those watching. It was obvious that most were unprepared for what they saw and had no idea how to interpret it. Nearly all remarked on what they regarded as the casualness of the participants. They could not see this was a relaxed style which came from being natural. What they were expecting was derived from popular images of sentries at Buckingham Palace not batting an eyelid, something they could not possibly have known for themselves since the sentries no longer stand outside the Palace gates. Yet here they were, thinking this was the key to knowing what was happening.

It was obvious they came to be entertained as though the Guards were into show business. Who could blame them? I recall hearing that a meeting had been convened at which show business professionals were given their say. They wanted to have the Guard Changing Ceremony twice a day because of its appeal to tourists. They did not see the Guardsmen as real soldiers. I also heard the then Garrison Sergeant Major say, to his great credit, that he wasn't going to stand for the Drum Majors performing like prancing horses. This, it seemed, was suggested as being much more with it than their customary style. That was seen as dull and unresponsive to the audience.

Margot Fonteyn remembered the Secretary of State for War consulting Frederick Ashton about re-choreographing of the Parade and being told to leave it alone because it could not be improved upon. This would seem to confirm what an American professor of cultural studies, who liked the military, said when he described the Parade, admiringly, as theatre. It depends what is meant by theatre. Anyone who attains to the standards of a Margot Fonteyn will know that the demands made on their bodies also involve the mind and this determines how they see their art. They would never use the word 'theatre' lightly. Perhaps this is why an experienced theatre producer, who saw the Parade, came away saying "That is not theatre."

The spectators also made comparisons, especially between bands, the Guards not thought to be up to much. This is of interest given the appeal of musical displays, including military ones, seen elsewhere, not least on TV. What seems never to have occurred to anyone is that they were seeing something different.

The word 'different' is useful here. Once its importance is recognised, it will be seen that it is more to the point than saying that standards have got higher or lower. A Drum Major with pre-WWII service said he thought the standard had gone up. He was thinking of the dressing during the march past which had indeed been attracting comment. Photographs had appeared in the Press which were embarrassing certainly, and there had been an improvement. Did that mean the standard had gone up necessarily? What is the test? Suppose the dressing was perfect. Is there a price to be paid for that? Perhaps. What is really instructive,

Household Cavalry at the Queen's Birthday Parade (Sgt Mike Harvey)

however, is how the Guardsmen recover their dressing. That is where training comes in and it can say a lot more about the meaning of the parade than keeping the lines straight since, if that's all that matters, why not call in Riverdance? Much more telling than whether the lines are straight or not is how the arms are swung. Whereas once they were swung to waistbelt level, now they are swung almost shoulder high. This constitutes a definite change, discernible for some years. Now it is obvious and deliberate. This marks a fundamental shift towards an extrovert style which is at variance with the Parade as a whole. It has an immediate visual impact which makes no demands on an audience which has no difficulty in identifying with what it sees. But at what level? It may matter.

There is a marvellous shot in the film *A Queen Is Crowned* of the Foot Guards emerging from Admiralty Arch. It is like a revelation. They are swinging their arms barely waistbelt high, a style contrasting strongly with other contingents on the Procession. It suggests they know something we don't, or else have forgotten. What may occur to some observers is that they are a challenge to think again as to what drill is about.

The Queen's Birthday Parade has a lot to say about this. It is a parade of great iconographic significance, as indeed it should be. Like any real icon, however, it is in the business of iconoclasm, the smashing of false images. What it demonstrates superbly is that where such an event is concerned, the Drill Book cannot be allowed to have the last word. The reason is simple and should be obvious. The Drill Book can tell you how to do a drill movement. It cannot show you. Only a person drilling can do that. This does not deprive the Drill Book of its almost biblical status. It simply confirms its role in serving greater ends.

This raises the question, a necessary one, of the relationship between the written and spoken word. How are words that are shouted meant to be assimilated by those hearing them? A lot more is involved than what words mean in themselves. That is the reason the Drill Book should not be allowed to have the last word. It is the human element, the actual physical embodiment of the words which decides the standard. Where this is denied, the fulcrum of drill shifts to a more peripheral and less human role affecting discipline which becomes externalised, making it more overt. Hence, the extrovert style. This makes it possible for orders to be so totally objective as to change their function, with possibly sinister implications. The swinging of the arms shoulder high, therefore, may not be as innocent as it looks. It could indicate a complete break from traditional standards and style. However, both standards may seem to co-exist comfortably at present but all that the Queen's Birthday Parade has stood for could eventually come under threat, firstly from within, but then from outside the military.

Meanwhile, it is the Massed Bands which set the standard and tone of the Parade as a whole. The contribution they make would be irrelevant were it musical only. It isn't. A keen observer, not British, remarked with admiration that the music is not militaristic. This is not accidental.

What one is here witness to, beginning with the Slow Troop which finds its perfect musical expression in Les Huguenots, is a credal exposition of what the Parade symbolises and must be faithfully adhered to in what follows. It is also a statement of identity, by Household Troops who are determined to be true to themselves, made without arrogance and with self-confidence.

The Drum Majors are superb, showing the same unerring purpose in moving the huge phalanx of musicians in their charge as enables the later, awesome Spin Wheel manoeuvre to be carried out in the absence of any written instructions. The economy of movement with which the Drum Majors inform the Bands is aesthetically perfect, seeming also to empower them as though they were performing a liturgical function befitting their golden, vestment-like uniform. No wonder that former Irish Guardsman Patrick O'Donovan could imagine he had attended "a most beautiful ceremony in which 1,500 men and one woman become actors in a solemn masque."

Besides their Colonel in Chief, the Queen, the other focal point is the Colour being trooped and displayed, as O'Donovan says, like a relic of the True Cross. Indeed, it would not be difficult to accept that the Colour solemnly paraded by the Irish Guards this year had been presented, only weeks before, at Windsor, by the Emperor Constantine's mother, Helena, recently returned from Jerusalem with her historic Find. Who could be blamed for thinking that? The fact is, it is deeply impressive and moving.

This may seem to set the Parade apart as being self-centred and having, perhaps, questionable military significance. The opposite is true. Certainly it celebrates the Queen's Birthday but Patrick O'Donovan went further. He called it the "*celebration of an idea.*" There is, however, nothing vague about this. It can be seen in the sobriety, steadiness, self-confidence and certainty which here combine to testify to a tradition of soldiering originating in, and refined by, a tried and true image of man. Perhaps this explains another observer's remark that *"something happened here today."* What he saw was evidence of a definite attitude to Society involving an unwavering commitment to values both civilised and human. A celebration indeed and an adornment befitting the Monarchy and an Army with standards which come from living in earnest and knowing its true place in Society. This makes it also a reproach wherever that vision is not shared or honoured.

Having begun by remarking on the failure of spectators to understand what's happening on the Birthday Parade, perhaps I should say that Patrick O'Donovan had the same problem. His is an apophatic response, however, one where, having made a stab by choosing

the "*celebration of an idea*", he says, *"I don't know, but I know that this is a moon's length away from the May Day performance in Moscow. This is innocent. It is not arrogant. And, it is beautiful."* One thing he did know, however, was that of all the regiments on parade, *"There was not the slightest doubt that the ranks of the Irish Guards were the straightest."* But, then, he was himself a Mick. Case explained.

"One rapid but fairly sure guide to the social atmosphere of a country is the parade-step of its army. A military parade is really a kind of ritual dance, something like a ballet, expressing a certain philosophy of life. The goose-step, for instance, is one of the most horrible sights in the world, far more terrifying than a dive-bomber. It is simply an affirmation of naked power; contained in it, quite consciously and intentionally, is the vision of a boot crashing down on a face. ...Beyond a certain point, military display is only possible in countries where the common people dare not laugh at the army. ... In the British army the drill is rigid and complicated, full of memories of the eighteenth century, but without definite swagger; the march is merely a formalized walk. It belongs to a society which is ruled by the sword, no doubt, but a sword which must never be taken out of the scabbard.

An extract from England My England (The Lion and The Unicorn) George Orwell 1941. Ed. □

A woman returning from Windsor with shopping walks through the ranks of Coldstream Guardsmen seemingly without a care in the world. The soldiers were rehearsing for the Queen's Birthday Parade in Windsor

Manning the Loop – The future utility of the Formation Reconnaissance soldier

Maj A N B Foden QRL

> *"Bear in mind that your telegrams may make the whole Army strike tents, and night or day, rain or shine, take up the line of march. Endeavour therefore to secure accurate information… Above all, vigilance! vigilance! vigilance!"*[1]
>
> Maj J.E.B Stuart

Introduction

Whilst telegrams and tents may have been replaced by full motion video and forward operating bases, the purpose of the reconnaissance soldier does not appear too different 150 years later. With a defence review imminent, it seems an appropriate time to consider if we are making full use of our reconnaissance capability, both in the short term for success on current operations and in the longer term for future, hybrid operations[2]. ADP Land Ops defines Reconnaissance as "to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the enemy, terrain or indigenous population of a particular area", now often termed as 'understanding'. We can see the direction in which ISTAR is moving, and the role that reconnaissance regiments are being required to fill within manoeuvre brigades. All the pieces are theoretically in place for manned reconnaissance to deliver what is required, both now and in the future. I would question if our reconnaissance troops are optimised to do this? I submit that they are not and that we should therefore debate what we wish them to achieve.

The recent history of reconnaissance operations and structures has been hindered by the reverse engineering of ad hoc structures, to wit the BSC/DSC[3] in Iraq, the BRF in Afghanistan, and the creation of 2 squadron FR regiments in armoured brigades which prove that small is not necessarily beautiful. Setting aside the equipment debate, do we have what we need in terms of reconnaissance specialists in ground manoeuvre brigades, and if we do are we employing them effectively? Looking at examples from another army, and from a historical perspective, the purpose of this paper is to pose some questions as to the future utility of FR Regiments. This is by no means about criticising the structures and training that is in place now, rather adding to the discussion on how we might optimise for the future.

Optimisation

Whilst Future Army Structures (Next Steps) will set the baseline for SDR settlement on the future structure and orbat of FR regiments, their concept of employment in the battlespace must be the critical factor. FR is still optimised to conduct linear mobile surveillance and yet operates in the Contemporary Operating Environment (COE) in an increasingly non contiguous battlespace. Whilst training focuses in the enemy and terrain from the ADP Land Ops definition, the importance of the human population is now recognised, now often referred to as 'mapping the human terrain'.

I am not seeking to go back over the debate about the composition of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force. I would just make the observation that we are attempting to reverse engineer a solution. The model upon which we are building is 3 Cdo and 16 AA Bdes' BRFs which are made up of infantrymen (not quite – 3 Cdo Bde's BRF was based on 148 (FO) Bty and 52 Bde's was based on 4/73 Special OP Bty, both with increments such as a COP – Ed.); understandably they are comfortable conducting company attacks. The wide ranging use of the current force says more about the lack of a dedicated TFH reserve than it does about reconnaissance operations. However, that there was a debate at all justifies my purpose in writing this paper – that there is a perception that FR may not be the first choice to deliver a Brigade level reconnaissance capability in the COE. Perhaps rather than debating who should create this bespoke 'Force' for operations in Afghanistan we could take the view that FAS has structured manoeuvre brigades to provide brigade reconnaissance regiments, and even accepting the current force generation norm of collapsing sub-units to 'thicken' those deploying it should be possible to provide a two squadron FR capability to deploying brigades. Recent operational evidence, such as the performance of the Light Dragoons Battlegroup on Op PANCHAI PALANG, more than serves to demonstrate the utility of the reconnaissance soldier in the COE. As for the future, whilst the nature of conflict may be uncertain, its key characteristics are beginning to come into relief. The complexities faced on future operations will certainly be no less than are faced now.

> *"The challenge of identifying an adversary's future intentions is more complex in MASD than in LSDI. In the Future Operating Environment the find challenge will revolve more around people than it will platforms."*[4]

CVR(T) Commander Afghanistan

In other words we must focus on the individual soldier and the skills which we give him to future-proof reconnaissance as a combat arm, given the increasing importance of the FIND function.

The Loop

This paper does not set out to debate the relative merits of manned versus un-manned reconnaissance, but it may help to consider why we want the 'man in the loop'? Put simply, the man in the loop provides twenty four hour all weather loiter, has the ability to understand rather than to simply find, can take decisions knowing the commander's intent, and is therefore rapidly self-taskable in order to provide the highest quality understanding for the commander.

Much has been made of the size and structure of the modern brigade headquarters. One only needs to stand in the ops room of Task Force Helmand in Lashkar Gah to understand the potential for the overloading of Bde HQ with both information and intelligence. It is possible that placing the man in the loop before this would reduce this burden, but we must consider if this is advisable? Lots of organisations and equipment can find but only the human can decide what and who to find - finding something without understanding it or putting it into context can deliver a false picture to the commander.

One feature of our COIN campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan has been battlegroup areas of operations that are far larger than we might otherwise wish for. This has necessitated a more technical solution, having fewer, more specialised men in the loop at a higher headquarters – for example relying on image analysts studying multiple ISTAR feeds in Bde HQ rather than reconnaissance soldiers always being able to use an OP overlooking the objective – which will be an increasing likelihood as we continue to prosecute economy of force operations. However, "reconnaissance capabilities such as FR have great utility in both providing commanders with…actionable intelligence … in this complex, asymmetric and unpredictable environment"[5]. Manned surveillance gives you the persistence to understand why the insurgent places IEDs in certain locations; a non-manned sensor may only confirm the presence of an IED.

The natural culmination of these two points is that FR regiments should be capable of operating those equipments which can contribute to the understand function, for example an organic UAV capability. FR soldiers would be well placed to both employ its sensors and manage the information they gather. They could conduct pattern of life UAV patrols, and coordinate the appearance of the UAV over the tactical battle, noting that its appearance is often a double edged sword, conduct screening, acting as a covering force, pursuit and exploitation tasks as well as reconnaissance. This model has proved successful in the surveillance section of a US RSTA squadron, see below. In addition, German reconnaissance units have a UAV capability, in the form of Aladin. In May 2006, The Netherlands bought 10 Aladins for use in Uruzgan,[6] thereby setting a precedent for the sort of operations that the British Army is facing today.

The move to embracing equipments that were not traditionally the preserve of FR regiments began with MSTAR – the UAV example is clearly more relevant to the COE. Such equipments have traditionally not been the preserve of the cavalry, so there would undoubtedly be some naysayers. However, this is an opportunity to corral multiple capabilities in order to best deliver the understand function to the commander – and is something that FR regiments should be optimised to do.

Focus On The Man Or The Platform?

If we accept the validity of having the man in the loop, especially given the increasing complexities that we face in the land environment, the obvious concern is to ensure that we have the right sort of person for the job. Whilst we might accept that "patience, nerve and cunning are the essential characteristics of the reconnaissance soldier"[7], it may be worthwhile looking at the skills that we give to our soldiers to prepare them for operations. As an RAC Soldier Class 3 the FR soldier will have completed Basic Close Combat Skills, and as a Class 1 soldier he may attend SCBC.[8] Of note the RAC have 10 (to be 15) spaces annually on SCBC equating to 2 per FR regiment; 4 Troop Leaders can attend the Live Fire Tactical Training phase of PCD[9] across 5 FR Regiments per year. SCBC is rightly held as a gold standard of training by the Infantry - should this be the case across the ground combat arms? The answer to this depends on what you require from that soldier – again recent operations in Afghanistan have highlighted that he is capable in the COE, but has he been given all the training that he could have had?

Mounted/ Dismounted Cooperation in Afghanistan

This is not a question of mounted versus dismounted close combat – ideally you want someone who can do both, although the training bill to achieve this will be high. Work is ongoing to rationalise all surveillance and reconnaissance training in LWC under a single chain of command, I would assert that this does not go far enough. The reconnaissance corporal (of whatever cap badge) will not be considered by many to be the equal of the Section Commanders' Battle Course qualified Infantry corporal until their training is on a par. A Combat Reconnaissance Course (in line with the Combat Infantryman's Course) should

form part of Phase 2 training. Additionally the creation of a Reconnaissance School, qualifying reconnaissance soldiers of all capbadges to a standard perceived as the equal of the Infantry Battle School would be a step in the right direction. Achieving this in the short term would be a challenge; why not a Reconnaissance Battle School collocated in Brecon, or else a single Combat Battle School which covers delivers all Combat Arm Training and therefore increases rationalisation? It would need to be challenging, but there are plenty of high quality instructors across ARTD who could form the cadre of a significantly enhanced school.

US Influence

Is this possible? The US Army is corralling the training for all Combat Arms together. The Armor School has moved from Ft Knox to Fort Benning to join the Infantry School under the umbrella of the Maneuver Center of Excellence. The Maneuver Center reached IOC on 1 Oct 09, with more than $3.5 billion earmarked for the programme. The *raison d'être* of this new centre is to train ready, adaptive soldiers for an army at war. As the US Army Chief of Staff said on 20 Oct 09 "We call that full-spectrum operations (and) all Army maneuver formations will operate like that… from conventional war all the way to peacetime operations. This will help us come together and it will be much better, because all of our maneuver forces are going to maneuver similarly, particularly in the kinds of operations that we're conducting in Iraq and Afghanistan."[10] Indeed evidence suggests that the US National Guard are able to conduct a 19D (Cavalry Scout) to 11B (Infantryman) Military Occupation Specialty conversion for a National Guard unit in two weeks[11]. Whilst this unit may not have been ready for operations, there are clearly benefits to grasping the initiative and taking a unified approach to training across the Combat Arms.

The US have further seen the utility of the RSTA battalions[12] within the Brigade Combat Teams, proportionately they

MCOE badge

make up a far larger proportion of the BCT than dedicated recce troops (of all capbadges) do in a UK brigade. One of the reasons for reducing the number of combat sub units in the BCTs was the fact that the US had proved that their emphasis on FIND and the resourcing of the RSTA Bn enabled them to consistently win.

Precedence

In our own fairly recent history we also saw the operational imperative driving interoperability between the combat arms. After the disastrous defeat in France in 1940 (at the hands of German forces with strong recce units mounted in light armoured vehicles) the Bartholomew Committee called for the formation of a British equivalent. This was achieved by forming the new Reconnaissance Corps, which took the place of the Divisional Cavalry Regiments (themselves removed in 1940 to create Armoured Reconnaissance Brigades). They were initially formed from Infantry Brigade Reconnaissance Groups; with each Company (later Squadron) comprised of three Troops of light recce cars and an Assault Troop of lorry borne Infantry.

The concept of employment was to probe ahead and locate the enemy, and to screen the flanks and rearguard when under attack. Troopers fought both from their armoured vehicles and on foot[13]. Indeed, contemporary accounts point to the benefit of rapidly converting from the infantry to the reconnaissance roles, such as at Eindhoven where "Brigade Headquarters…decided from a study of night patrol reports that the situation had indeed changed, and at ten o'clock in the morning permitted the regiment to forsake its infantry role and become a mechanised reconnaissance regiment again"[14]. Whilst their famous motto 'only the enemy in front, every other beggar behind' might not suit the 360° battlespace, the idea of a Unit with an enhanced baseline of Infantry training that is able to rapidly alter its role would surely be appealing to modern commanders?

sniper

As precision attack becomes all the more important (given increasing engagement ranges and the importance of the avoidance of collateral damage) we might see a shift in emphasis across the land environment from Strike to Find (or more importantly in the COE to 'understand' as we seek to succeed in what Gen McChrystal has recently called a 'population centric approach'). Whilst the future cannot be certain it seems that in order to maximise utility we could do worse than adopting the flexible approach we saw in the Reconnaissance Corps of WW2. When considering the utility of the FR soldier now and in the future we cannot get away from the principal purpose of reconnaissance. In a recent think piece on the utility of the find battlegroup from HQ 12 Mechanized Brigade, the role of the FR battlegroup in initiating enemy activity was discussed. It concluded that "the presence of manned ground reconnaissance operating in concert with other ISTAR assets encourages the unmasking of the enemy and serves to delineate combatants from civilians as well as providing the most productive ISTAR to the point of battle – themselves."[15] Combat operations in

Afghanistan are still seen as light role company business, despite the increasing mechanisation of the force. It is important to retain the ability to battlegroup, but FR needs to deliver the 'understand' function to the brigade commander.

Conclusion

> *"…Skilfully reconnoitring defiles and fords, providing himself with trusty guides, interrogating the village priest, quickly establishing relations with the inhabitants"*[16].
>
> Napoleon

Whilst Napoleon was talking of the duties of a chief of reconnaissance during the Peninsular Campaign, his comments have equal utility in the COE. US COIN doctrine reaffirms the utility of "overt reconnaissance by patrols allow(ing) commanders to fill intelligence gaps and develop relationships with local leaders, whilst simultaneously providing security to the populace"[17]. It will be difficult to really optimise for this role any further until we decide on the focus for the man in the loop, either on the skill sets required for current and future hybrid operations, or on a specific platform. The future for FR Regiments is probably somewhere in the middle, rapidly adapting from technical to close combat specialist. The army and the wider reconnaissance community needs to focus on the development of the 'understand' function to ensure its utility in the future, whilst continuing to make full use of the lessons from the past.

> *"We must remember that one man is much the same as another, and that he is best who is trained in the severest school.*[18]*"*
>
> Thucydides

There is little doubt that things will change to reflect the needs of current operations. However, the Cavalry has not, in the past, been swift to accept unglamorous roles and so a move into the UAV world would be viewed with suspicion and not a little scepticism by the Royal Artillery (and others) which has done the donkey work of development in this area. Just having the rights over them would not do. As to armoured recce soldiers operating on their feet – in the days of Saladin and Saracen in the 1960s and 1970s, the RAC armoured recce squadrons had support troop which carried 5 or so RAC troops in the back of the Saracen for dismounted tasks. Ed.

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1 Freeman, *D.S Lee's Lieutenants: Gettysburg to Appomattox* (Indiana, 1944)

2 As given in HQLF FragO 001/09 Op ENTIRETY dated 6 Apr 09.

3 Brigade and Divisional Surveillance Company.

4 Future Land Operational Concept Deductions paper dated Jul 2009.

5 Royal Armoured Corps Tactics Volume 2: The Formation Reconnaissance Regiment.

6 *Abbildende Luftgestützte Aufklärungsdrohne im Nächstbereich*. Typical missions are 45 minutes and are flown over a 5 km range, at an altitude of 30 – 200 meter above ground.

7 http://www.army.mod.uk/armoured/role/2044.aspx

8 Section Commanders' Battle Course - Annex A to Royal Armoured Corps Employment Structure 09 dated 4 Feb 09. Clearly he will have to wait for promotion.

9 Platoon Commanders' Division.

10 http://www.army.mil/-news/2009/10/21/29069-casey-infantry-armor-merger-boosts-armys-full-spectrum-operations/accessed on 2 Nov 09.

11 http://www.nationalguard.com/forums accessed on 26 Oct 09.

12 A dedicated ISTAR battalion containing all organic ISTAR assets - Scouts, UAV, EW etc.

13 Doherty, R *The British Reconnaissance Corps in World War II* (London, 2007).

14 Kemsley, W *The Scottish Lion on Patrol - 15th Scottish Reconnaissance Regiment* 1943 – 46 (Michigan, 1950).

15 HQ 12 Mech Bde, The Find Battlegroup in a FAS Brigade G3-314 dated 29 May 08.

16 http://modern-warfare.org/philosophy/napoleon/napoleon_04.htm accessed on 12 Nov 09.

17 Dept of the Army, FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (Dec 2006) Para 3-139.

18 Foster Smith, C. *Thucydides - The History of the Peloponnesian War* ☐

The first squadron of the Federation Armoured Corps in Malaya became operational in 1951 after its passing out parade before His Excellency the High Commissioner, General Sir Gerald Templer at Resah camp, near Seremban. The Squadron, the first Malayan squadron to go into operation against the Communist terrorists, has been highly trained in convoy work, communications, maintenance of vehicles and weapon handling. (IWM).

The Peninsular War – An Allied Victory or a French Failure?

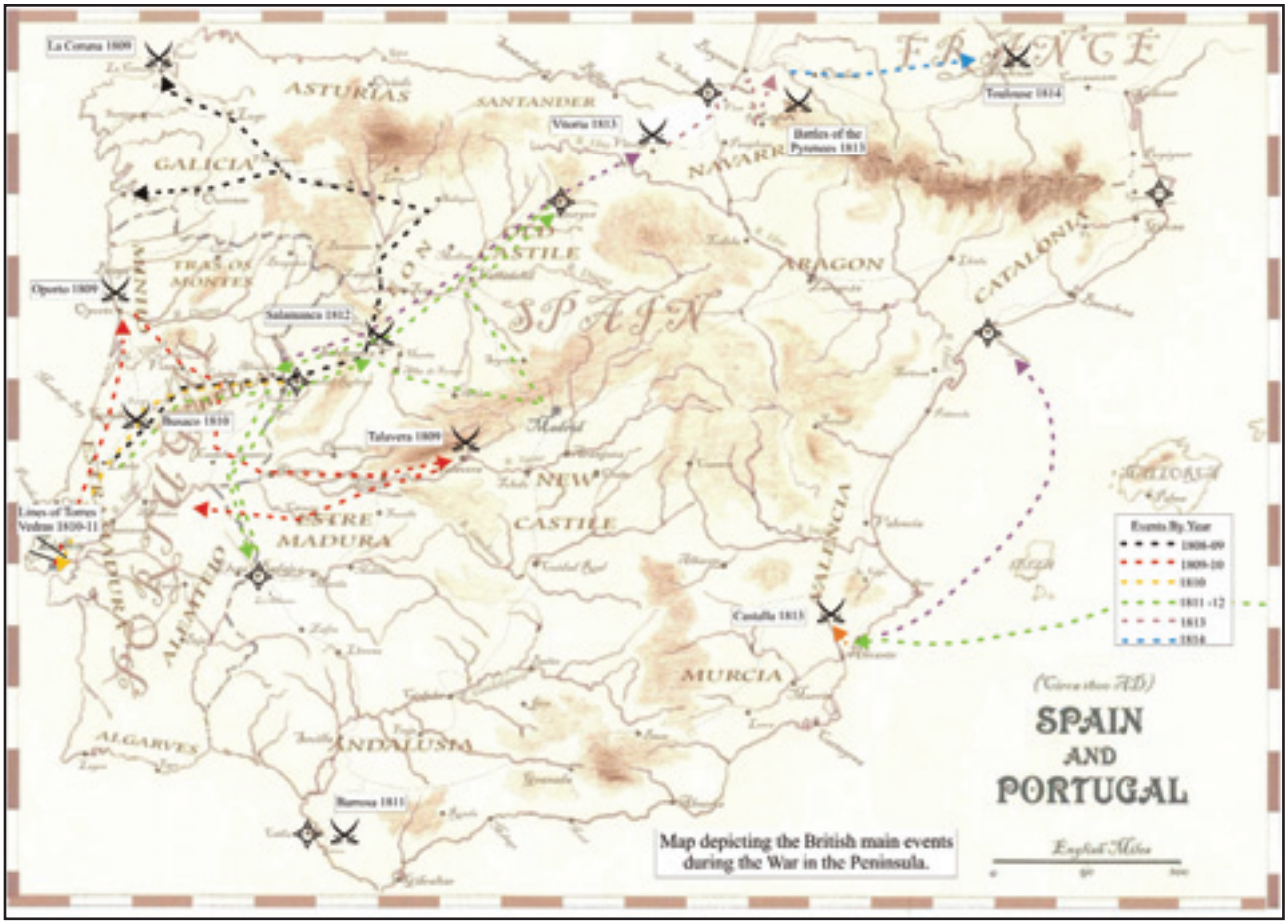
Colonel Nick Lipscombe
Chairman of Peninsular War 200

'When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, the men's weapons will grow dull and their ardour will be dampened. .... Now, when your weapons are dulled, your ardour dampened, your strength exhausted and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.'

Sun Tsu, 5th Century BC

In 1782 a French Jesuit translated Sun Tsu's Art of War into French. Father Amiot's painstaking work was to have far reaching and rapid consequences. It struck a chord with a young and ambitious French artillery officer who was quick to comprehend the value of General Tsu's enduring regulations. Within a few years Napoleon Bonaparte had conquered most of Europe, in 1807 the Fourth Coalition was dead and at the zenith of his power, he turned his attention to the Iberian Peninsula.

Following French success in the Prussian campaign in 1805-6 and subsequently in Poland and eastern Prussia in 1807, Napoleon concluded the Treaty of Tilsit, thereby establishing peace with Russia, dismembering Prussia and releasing his mind to matters of a semi-domestic nature, namely Spain. The disaster at Trafalgar in 1805 had removed a vital component of his allied foundation, specifically the Spanish navy; deemed essential to the defeat the Royal Navy and the ultimate invasion and subjugation of Britain. It was this latter obsession, which eventually led Napoleon to involve himself in the Iberian Peninsula. Since 1806, he had applied renewed impetus to the Continental System, designed to boycott trade with Britain and thereby force defeat on the nation through economic, rather than military means. This fixation, coupled with the open proclamation in October 1806 by Manuel de Godoy, the



Map depicting the main British events of the Map depicting the main British events of the Peninsular War (author's collection - Nick Lipscombe)

first minister of the Spanish Bourbon King, Charles IV, which rallied the Spanish people against an undeclared foe, so obviously France, was enough to put the two countries on a collision course. Despite Napoleonic impatience this impact was to be circumlocutory.

The French Foreign Minister, Count Talleyrand was instructed to deal with one of the principal evaders of the Continental System and a defaulter on her indemnity from the War of the Oranges, namely Portugal. Using Spain as a base for offensive operations would pose few problems as Godoy had been suggesting such a move for some time. Thus Napoleon, by soliciting a public demonstration from his principal ally, could extend the blockade, satisfy his principal obsession and get more than a foot in the Spanish door. A combined Franco-Spanish army would descend on the ill-prepared state, and once subjugated, it would be divided up as secretly agreed at the Treaty of Fontainebleau in September 1807. However, the terms of the Treaty were merely a means to a Napoleonic end; two months later, General Junot entered Lisbon unopposed and, almost immediately, Napoleon began planning his next move against an unsuspecting Spain.

Unconnected, but remarkably timely for Napoleon, was the arrest by Charles IV of his son and heir, Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias on the charge of plotting to overthrow his aged father. This development resulted from Ferdinand's disapproval since childhood of Godoy's manipulative prominence; a sentiment shared by a good number of his fellow countrymen. Lacking the conviction to tackle Godoy head-on, Ferdinand elected to solicit the support of the French Emperor via proposals of marriage to a spouse of Napoleon's choice. A ploy he felt sure would cement his claim to the throne, in due course, at Godoy's expense. It was to backfire when one of the many spies of the first minister intercepted correspondence on the matter, which was subsequently dressed up as a plot to oust the aged King.

Charles IV was left with scant room to manoeuvre and publicly vilified the unfortunate Ferdinand. Napoleon was, of course, delighted at this public stately melodrama by the Spanish house of Bourbon.

A few days before Junot entered Lisbon a second Corps, consisting of another twenty five thousand men under General Dupont, had crossed the Pyrenees disguised as support to Junot should the British choose to defend Portugal. This caused considerable concern to the Spanish authorities; but concern was to turn to fear some six weeks later when yet another fourteen thousand men, half French half Italian, flowed into Catalonia, under Marshal Moncey and two further corps assembled on the Franco-Spanish border. Dupont and Moncey marched south but clearly not to the aid of their colleague in Portugal. Godoy and the King, realising that a military response was not an option, ironically suggested a union between a Bonaparte princess and the heir to Spanish house of Bourbon. Napoleon took his time in sending a reply, which when finally conveyed, questioned the advantage of a liaison to Fernando who, by his father's own declaration, was tainted. By mid February 1808, Napoleon tired of the pretence, yet more troops entered Spain and the frontier fortresses were seized. Godoy was cornered and at a loss as to how best to proceed. With no little difficulty he sent word to the Spanish troops under Junot's command in Portugal to return to Spain. 'The mistrust of Junot demanded a reservation and a pretence very difficult in its execution of the order…to avoid being translated in movements that would get the attention of the French general, which would make him suspicious and provoke contrary providence'[1]. Most got away but those in Lisbon were disarmed and interned; Napoleon accused Spain of bad faith, declaring that he no longer felt bound by Fontainebleau. He did, however, promise Spain the whole of Portugal, but in exchange she would have to surrender all territory between the River Ebro and Pyrenees and sign a permanent and unlimited alliance with France[2].

By early March Murat had been placed in command of the French forces in Spain and had established his headquarters in Vitoria. 'The populations of the transited cities and towns received Murat with the greatest cordiality and possible indulgence, going out to meet him and hailing him as a liberator'[3]. To the people

Rédition de Madrid 1808 Antoine-Jean Gros (Wikipedia Commons)

the presence of the French reinforced their view that it was Napoleon's intention to install Fernando on the throne and the invaders encouraged the deception. Godoy lingered over the best way to proceed and despite having ordered the Spanish garrisons in French occupied zones not to resist, war looked inevitable. Direct conflict was not in the interest of the fernandinos and they now plotted an uprising to provide Napoleon the excuse for regime change. On the 18th March, with rumours that the King and Queen were evacuating the royal palaces at Aranjuez, the royal guard rebelled and the mob took to the streets. The next day Carlos abdicated in favour of his son.

Meanwhile, Napoleon's brother in law Marshal Murat had entered Madrid and, by the end of April, had a considerable force within the city limits. He refused to acknowledge Fernando and encouraged Carlos to protest against the circumstances of his abdication. This provided Napoleon the pretext to lure Carlos and Fernando to Bayonne in order to consider the issue. However, on arrival, far from discussing the implications of his recent accession, the hapless young King was presented with an ultimatum to abdicate and confronted with confessions from the former king claiming that he had vacated the throne through coercion. Napoleon settled the matter by claiming the throne for himself. In Madrid, restless at the proximity of this French force and with news of the unravelling treachery at Bayonne, the mood turned vicious and on the 2nd May (El Dos de Mayo) the city erupted; the Spanish *guerre de la independencia*[4] had officially begun.

Napoleon, and the majority of his imperial advisors, predicted a swift conclusion to events in much the same manner as Portugal. This was not to be. The war was to ebb and flow throughout the Peninsula over the next six years, culminating in the allied army invading France itself, the final humiliation. The reasons leading to ultimate failure were numerous and largely interlinked, being underpinned by Napoleon's contemptuous failure to appreciate of the determination of the Spanish people, the demands of the Iberian topography and the tenacity of the small British expeditionary force sent to the aid of the Iberian nations.

The allied forces consisted of the regular armies of Britain, Portugal and Spain and the irregular Spanish *guerrilleros*[5] and Portuguese *ordenança*[6]. From 1808, Britain and Portugal combined their regular forces in an Anglo Portuguese army but cooperation and coordination with the Spanish regular and irregular forces was, at best sporadic and at worst, non-existent and in some cases counterproductive to the greater cause. The relationship between the Spanish armies and the local *guerrilleros* was convoluted and troublesome, the latter were seen (by the military establishment if not the people themselves) as denying the army of badly needed recruits, horses and supplies. Unfortunately, the Spanish regular forces having been poorly resourced, trained and prepared in the years running up to French occupation were no match for the more developed European armies of the day. Their failures on the field of battle inevitably evoked criticism; with the previous regime removed, the army commanders themselves took the blame. The *guerrilleros* conversely, were elevated to the status of national heroes. In reality, neither group earned the condemnation or respect thrust upon them.

The *Grande Armée*, by contrast, was fresh from legendary victories over Austria, Prussia and Russia; it was arguably the best-equipped European army of the time. *'La Glorie'* and honour were alive and well, and this seemingly invincible force was poised to perform the next *coup de théâtre*. It was not to be. Strategically Napoleon's plans were flawed; had he chosen to manipulate the young Bourbon King, rather than replace him, his long term ambitions may well have been realised. By installing his own brother Joseph, he demonstrated an uncharacteristic misunderstanding of the Spanish populace and, in so doing, lost sight of his strategic aims. There was a certain irony in this misjudgement; this was the first instance since the French revolution where an entire nation took up arms against an oppressor. His contempt is best illustrated by the fact that he personally only spent two months in theatre of the seventy-eight month campaign. As time passed, and the months turned into years, the Iberian campaign became a second front draining vital resources and distracting the Emperor's focus from his *grande stratégie*.

Napoleon's failure to maintain what can be described as a questionable strategic aim had far reaching operational consequences. He executed a deliberate policy of fragmented army command and control, which fuelled the ambitions of many of his army commanders and crippled the overall effectiveness of the fighting force as a whole. This was all the more incredible as Napoleon considered centralisation of supreme authority another *sine qua non* of successful campaigning. 'In war, men are nothing; one man is everything,' or again, 'Better one bad general than two good ones.'[7] By refusing to install a single commander-in-chief he fuelled the simmering rivalries that existed amongst his Peninsular lieutenants. For most they were experiencing independent command for the first time and, with the Emperor's guiding hand well over the horizon, some revelled in the experience whilst others floundered, rudderless. Cooperation between the separate district armies became the exception, flexibility was lost and sustainability complicated but most significantly, concentration of force was rarely achieved. In March 1812, with his Russian campaign looming, Napoleon finally accepted that the autonomous commands needed to be focussed under a single leader. Surprisingly he decided not to appoint a military man as primus inter pares, instead King Joseph was given the charge, much to the chagrin of the numerous Peninsular marshals who considered Bonaparte's dithering brother incapable of the task. Inevitably, the majority refused to submit themselves to Joseph's direct control, electing instead

to play both sides off against the middle by going unswervingly to Paris, questioning the military orders and directives they received from Madrid. Consequently, other than the period in 1808 and early 1809 when Napoleon took personal charge of events in Spain, no single commander ever exercised effective command and control over the French armies in the Peninsula.

Of equal significance was the lack of a dedicated operational reserve. Initially a small reserve of about eight thousand men under General Dorsenne was located in Madrid where their primary responsibilities lay in protecting King Joseph (in support of the imperial guards); however, the impetuousness of the *Madrileños* inevitably removed the likelihood of nationwide deployment in their secondary reserve role. An operational reserve did exist for a short period during the time of Napoleon's personal involvement in theatre but quickly dissolved once the Emperor left in early 1809. By mid 1811 the reorganisation of the French Army of Spain into six separate armies increased operational isolation, counter to strategic aims. The Army of the Centre in Madrid was de facto the only military organisation directly controlled by King Joseph and its utilisation as the

Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington (Sir Thomas Lawrence)(Wikipedia Commons)

operational reserve even more remote. The third significant operational blunder was the failure to appreciate the complexities of the Iberian topography on military operations and logistics. Iberia is an extensively mountainous region except in the central plateau and the narrow coastal plains; the rivers are in deep ravines, generally not navigable and, depending on the season, either raging torrents or trickling streams. Both mountains and rivers run at right angles to the French lines of communication from the Pyrenees and much of the land is infertile. In the early nineteenth Century, these numerous rivers did not support the major lines of communication; roads were underdeveloped and inevitably circuitous in their nature. Junot's invasion of Portugal in 1807, Blake's retreat over the mountains in the Asturias in 1808, Moore's retreat to La Coruña in 1808-9, Soult's retreat from Oporto in 1809, Massena's retreat from the Lines of Torres Vedras in 1811 and Wellington's retreat from Burgos in 1812 all bear testament to the rigours of soldiering in the Peninsula. Movement of anything other than lightly equipped soldiers was problematic, the movement of artillery and baggage trains was at times impossible and the 'rapid' movement and concentration of armies a desperately slow and frustrating affair. Furthermore, deep defiles enabled small forces to hold off entire armies and provided the perfect surroundings for the Spanish *guerrilleros* and Portuguese militia and *ordenança* who roamed the hills in unison with their environs. In turn, French commanders were forced to penny-packet their forces to maintain control of their vast areas and, more importantly, their principal lines of communication. These small detachments were vulnerable to the more resolute guerrilla operations and immediately lost their localised control when withdrawn or concentrated. As a direct consequence economy of effort was rarely achieved, it was impossible to be strong everywhere and exploits were often wasted for little or no positive effect.

Logistically the Peninsula was a nightmare. In central Europe and Italy the *Grande Armée* had lived off the land in cantonments or on the move; in simple Napoleonic terms, operations were to be self sufficient and self-financing. However, in Spain this was simply not possible as the majority of the land was infertile and barely able to sustain the indigenous population of just over twelve million people. Furthermore, the country was almost devoid suitable livestock; carts and carriages were quickly damaged beyond repair. The bulk of military supplies had to be brought into the country, moved and concentrated in advance of operations, which was both time consuming and expensive. The logistical challenges of the region are often cited in official French dispatches but were underplayed by Napoleon himself. Conversely, his Peninsular commanders were quick to grasp the Iberian dilemma: that large armies starved whilst small armies were defeated[8]. Wellington too, quickly appreciated the problems associated with supplying his army and the French dilemma. 'Bonaparte cannot carry on his operations in Spain, excepting by means of large armies; and I doubt whether the country will afford the subsistence for a large army, or if he will be able to supply his magazines from France, the roads being so bad and the communication so difficult. The more ground the French hold down, the weaker will they be at any given point'[9]. The British commander on the other hand, paid considerable attention to the logistic implications of (most) operations early in the planning and in minute detail. In so doing, he was often frustrated by the lack of Spanish and Portuguese support. However, to be fair to the host nations, they had a finite amount of available resources, and what little they had was often provisioned for their own armies and starving populations in the first instance.

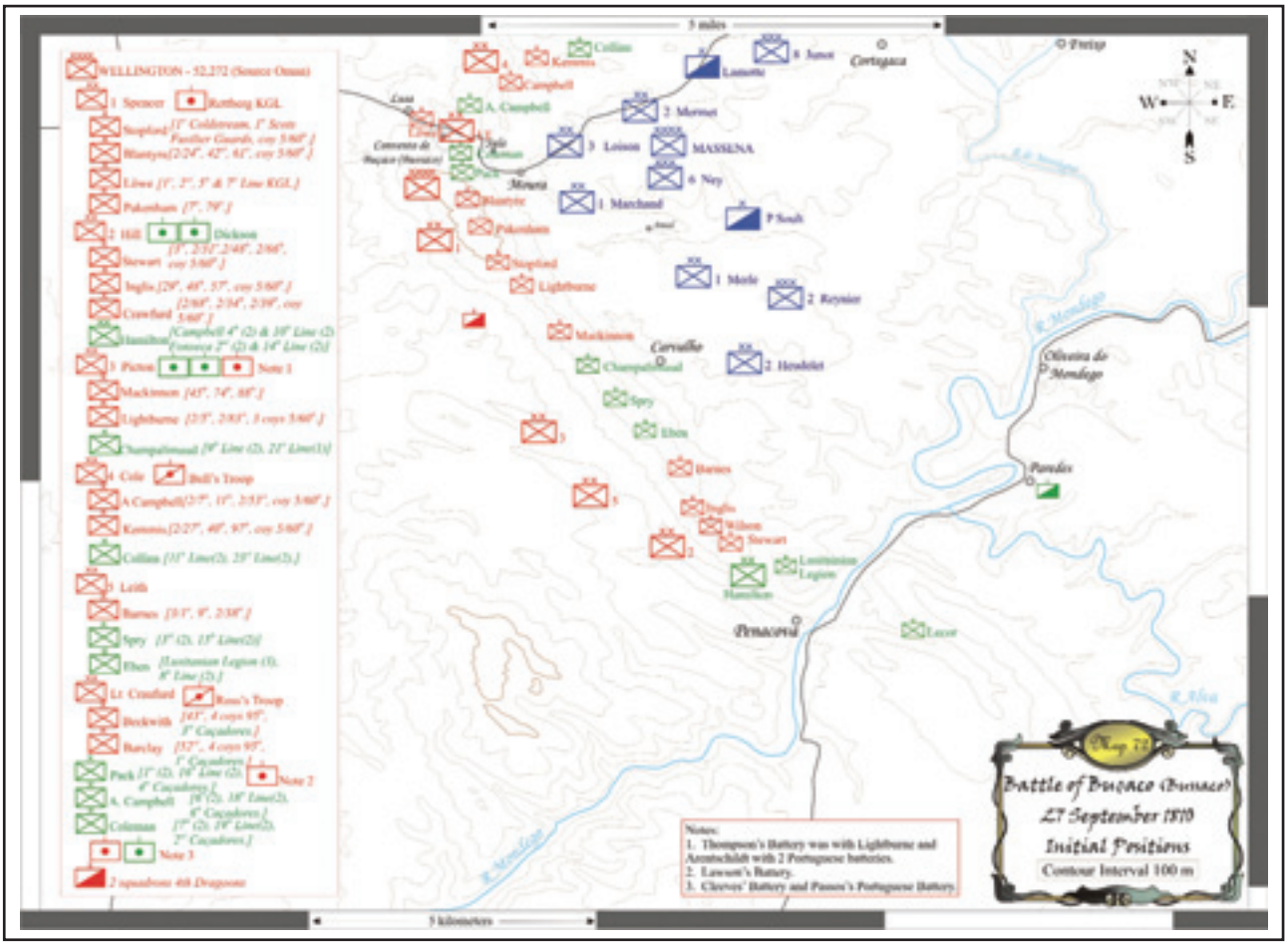
With one thousand five hundred miles of coastline, there was, of course, another option available, namely sea transport. The want of a French naval presence

provided Wellington a significant operational advantage, which he was adept at exploiting. Only the French operations in Catalonia and Navarre ever received succour of any significance; conversely, allied operations throughout the war relied on sea transport for supplies, ammunition and the movement and evacuation of men, horses and guns. The war is peppered with examples of joint army and navy cooperation, albeit sometimes frosty in nature, from the evacuation at La Coruña in 1809, succour at Cadiz, Gibraltar and behind the Lines of Torres Vedras in 1810-11, to operations on the eastern and northern coasts in 1813. The absence of this luxury to the French cannot be overstated and was another noteworthy aspect ultimately contributing to French defeat.

Operational security and surprise were two additional areas where the allies enjoyed significant advantages. Wellington noted in his dispatch of 21st July 1812, 'the French armies in Spain have never had any secure communication beyond the ground which they occupy.' To deter partisan intervention, the movement of French troops and supplies had to be supported by large military escorts but the movement of communiqués and dispatches was a far more dangerous affair, as speed was critical. Small groups were often intercepted en-route and dealt with mercilessly by their captors who then passed the contents of captured documents to British exploring officers[10]. This provided the allies with an immense advantage, as they often received timely and accurate information on the bona fide and planned movements of the French forces and, from this intelligence, the allied command were able to piece together their plans and objectives with remarkable exactness. Operational surprise was almost impossible for the French as any movement, large or small, was reported through the network of partisan units, allied spies and reconnaissance or intelligence officers. The French too had their own network of informants, the *Afrancesados*[11]; numbers were limited and their network very fragile. The early codes and ciphers used to try and protect the contents of dispatches were easily broken and it was not until late 1811 that a more sophisticated system of cipher, known as the *grand chiffre*, was introduced[12].

Tactically the French had mixed success. The oft-held view that Spanish armies were uncooperative and ineffectual has pervaded British historical accounts. 'The Duke of Wellington in his dispatches, and still more in his private letters and his table-talk, was always enlarging on the folly and arrogance of the Spanish generals with whom he had to cooperate, and on the untrustworthiness of their troops'[13]. General Napier, Lord Londonderry and the many Peninsular diaries echo similar sentiments. Modern, more subjective studies do not support this poor opinion. 'The enemy confronting the Duke of Wellington would never thereafter be of the same high standard as the one which destroyed the Spanish armies in the winter campaign of 1808'.[14] Those armies, without doubt, endured numerous defects at the start of the war. They were suffering from a lack of funding and an antiquated organisation: there were no army corps, only independent field armies and as such, no corps troops, no major units in reserve and the divisions were not further broken down into brigades. Consequently the armies moved and operated as one, normally on the fringes of the country and at the speed of its slowest arm, the artillery, that was chronically short of suitable draught animals. This lack of mounts was to have a momentous effect on the organisation and efficiency of the Spanish cavalry. Centuries of inter breeding horses and mules across Iberia had reduced the quality of suitable mounts and at the start of the campaign, the cavalry only had about nine thousand horses, half the number they needed. 'No matter whether it was classified as light or heavy cavalry, as dragoons or chasseurs, or as line or elite, Spain's cavalry was unlikely to be able to make much of an impact on the battlefield'[15]. 'The few cavalry divisions were reduced to a handful of precious squadrons, without any organisational link between regiments. Badly mounted, they were even less well trained, and consequently they lacked the morale. As a result they were completely ineffective in the face of the French cavalry, which

Salamanca - A view of the Grand Arapil (left) and the Lesser Arapil providing scale to a Napoleonic battlefield. (Nick Lipscombe)



Map depicting the initial positions at Busaco. From a collection of maps to be published in a Peninsular War Atlas in 2010 by the author (By kind permission of Osprey Publishing)

was united and superior in every respect'[16]. Time and time again, battles between the Spanish and French lay in the balance until the decisive employment of the French cavalry. Of course, there is a fine dividing line between quitting the battlefield to save your skin and extracting yourself to save your force to be able to fight another day and this is perhaps where many (mainly British) historians have been harshly critical of the Spanish military achievement and contribution. To dismiss, out of hand the collective Spanish military performance is missing the point; the sheer presence of numerous formed bodies of Spanish regular troops required the French to allocate troops to take on or contain these formations, rendering many tens of thousands of French troops unavailable for operations against Wellington. For example, the great battle at Salamanca would not have been possible if the Spanish 6th and 7th armies were not containing forty thousand French troops to the north.

The *Grand Armée*, at the commencement of the Peninsular campaign, was invincible having swept aside Austrian, Prussian and Russian armies in the preceding years. The basic tactical formation in the attack having been worked during the Revolutionary Wars some fifteen years previously, and then honed by Napoleon himself during the northern Italian and Austerlitz campaigns. Fundamentally, it consisted of a numerically strong screen of *tirailleurs*[17] who manoeuvred in small groups or individually in front of the main body of advancing troops. Their tasks was threefold, firstly to distract the enemy's attention from the main body of attacking troops moving into their attacking positions and formations, secondly to probe the enemy lines for weaknesses following the initial artillery barrage and finally to exploit those weaknesses if the opportunity presented itself. Indeed, a number of engagements prior to the Peninsular War had ended with the opponent's lines being penetrated before the main body was brought to bear. The main body itself consisted of *Ordre Mixte* with the lines supporting a central core of troops in deep columns who literally battered their way through the lines by sheer weight of numbers. Artillery was a significant supporting element to this tactic, as Napoleon himself observed *'columns do not break through lines, unless they are supported by superior artillery fire'*[18].

These tactics were to fail in the Peninsula and there were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the French were unable to put into the field the amount of artillery that they had traditionally enjoyed in central Europe[19], due to the difficult terrain and conflicting demands for both guns and gunners. Secondly, Napoleon's commanders generally opted to attack in column alone and not *Ordre Mixte*[20], partly because this was an easier manoeuvre for the less experienced troops who tended to be sent to the Peninsula but it also perhaps demonstrated a lack of confidence on the part of the commanders themselves. By attacking in column alone, a division of five thousand men would assault on a front of one hundred and seventy individuals, twenty-four ranks deep. Only the two front ranks of the column could fire with any effect. Out of the five thousand advancing men only three hundred could shoot at the enemy.[21] The rate of fire of these two bodies is also significant: advancing infantry take much longer to re-load than static well drilled and highly disciplined soldiers. Conversely, attacking infantry in column provided an easier and bulkier target for both artillery gun and infantry musket. However, the matter of column versus line is only part of the reason for continued tactical success.

One notable modern Napoleonic tactician considers that Wellington generally employed three additional and quite separate precautions. He anchored his flanks, 'to prevent the enemy working his way around and attacking the weakest part of the line…by extending the line to some natural obstacle or strong point. Wellington also took steps to ensure that the men along the line were never needlessly exposed to either small arms or artillery fire before it was time for them to enter the action. However, it was not enough to anchor the line and initially hide most of the defenders behind protective or covering terrain. Adequate countermeasures had to be taken to neutralise the French skirmishers. Wellington's solution was to send out skirmishers of his own, who would not only contest their opponent's advance but force the opposing commander to send out ever increasing numbers of skirmishers….[22].

Grand Kitchen of Europe - The Spanish Ulcer placed Napoleon in a stew, Ney in a pickle and Massena on the spit. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Bibiloteca Nacional de Portugal.)

Perhaps Wellington's greatest tactical strength was his ability to select ground for both defence and attack. His appreciation of the tactical significance of the terrain north of Lisbon is perhaps the best example. In so doing he selected positions that afforded dead ground, masked considerable numbers of his force, provided mutual support, covered lines of withdrawal and facilitated good communication for the lateral movement of reserves. Busaco is undoubtedly the best example. This tactical genius of utilising dead ground was, at that time, ground breaking; it prevented the attacker knowing the defender's dispositions and de facto strengths and weaknesses, but it also prevented him employing his main body, reserves, artillery and skirmishers to best effect, thereby undermining the shock and manoeuvre of the attack in column.

Wellington countered the mass of *tirailleurs* and guns deployed in advance of the main body by throwing out a correspondingly strong line of skirmishers, a tactic that had been hitherto ridiculed by the British military establishment. These skirmishers were largely resourced from the integral light companies or from the newly formed British[23] rifle and Portuguese[24] light battalions. This protective line prevented the *tirailleurs* from penetrating the allied ranks but often suffered heavy casualties as a result. At Barrosa the tactic worked but at Fuentes de Oñoro the infantry were returned to skirmish order prematurely and were cut to pieces by the French cavalry.

Off the battlefield the French were ravaged by the *guerrilleros*, hated by the population, exhausted by the climate and terrain, overwhelmed by starvation and disease and unable to produce the decisive blow to thwart allied intentions. They died in their thousands, the high morale which they exuded at the outset of the campaign quickly faded. In contrast to the campaigns in central Europe, opportunities for personal ambition and advancement were few and far between. One by one the best of Napoleon's subordinates tried and failed, and with their reputations tarnished their despair and lethargy bred throughout the French ranks. Even when fighting on French soil at the twilight of the conflict, the dogged determination

and *esprit de corps* of the early days was long gone.

It is difficult to tie down one particular aspect of these failures by Napoleon and his Peninsular commanders that ultimately led to the French failure in Iberia. It was a cocktail of misjudgement and mismanagement and, following his disastrous Russian campaign, Napoleon must have rued the day he ever cast his eye over his southern neighbour. Not that it was a flawless performance by the allies. Co-operation between Wellington and the Spanish central junta (or Regency) and subsequent *Cortes*[25] was riddled with mutual suspicion and with the Portuguese authorities matters were often little better. Despite this, the combined allied aims, adherence to the principles of war and the determination and tenacity of the Spanish and Portuguese people were sufficiently harmonised to bring about the defeat of the greatest military force of the period and shatter the Napoleonic dream.

1 Arteche, *Guerra de la Independencia*, vol. I, p. 209.

2 Esdaile, *The Peninsular War A New History*, p. 31.

3 Arteche, *Guerra de la Independencia,* vol. I, p.p. 202-203.

4 The Spanish term for the Peninsular War, it is worth noting that the French called it the Campaign in Spain, while the Portuguese term was the war of Liberation.

5 The Peninsular conflict was to spawn this term, guerrilla meaning "little war". The fighters were correctly called *guerrilleros* and they collectively fought la guerrilla the irregular struggle.

6 Portuguese Home Guard; quite distinct from the *guerrilleros* as they were in fact uniformed but they, nevertheless, fought unconventionally.

7 Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, p. xxxix.

8 Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer, a History of the Peninsular War*, p. 32.

9 Reid, *Tracing the Biscuit: The British Commissariat in the Peninsular War,* Militaria, Revista de Cultura Militar, Número 7, 1995, p. 103.

10 These were officers in uniform who moved and operated independently, providing intelligence on French movements, concentrations and troops strengths. They also liased with the *guerrilleros* and therefore had to speak good Spanish.

11 Spaniard loyal to Joseph Bonaparte – literally "frenchified one".

12 Major George Scovell, one of Wellington's staff officers, ultimately broke this code.

13 Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War*, vol. I, p. 89.

14 Griffith, *A History of the Peninsular War*, vol. IX, Sañudo, *Oman's view of the Spanish Army in the Peninsular War Reassessed*, ch. 6, p. 159.

15 Esdaile, *The Peninsular War, A New History*, p. 45.

16 Griffith, *A History of the Peninsular War*, vol. IX, Sañudo, *Oman's view of the Spanish Army in the Peninsular War Reassessed*, ch. 6, p. 148.

17 French term for skirmishing troops or sharpshooters, who were positioned in front of the main body of forces.

18 Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer, a History of the Peninsular War*, p. 21 (from Girod de l'Ain, p. 107).

19 Napoleonic doctrine stipulated 5 guns per thousand infantry. In the Peninsula, the figure average about 5 guns for two thousand men.

20 Though not exclusively and it would be wrong to assume that the entire campaign was fought on this basis: at Fuentes de Oñoro the central battalions that attacked the village of Pozo Bello were in line, those on the flanks were in column and at Albuera the mixed order attack so nearly broke the allied line.

21 Glover, *The Peninsular War 1807-1814 a concise military history*, p.32.

22 Griffith, *A History of the Peninsular War*, vol. IX: Nosworthy, *Sir Charles Oman on Line verses Column*, ch. 10, p. 232-233.

23 The 95th Regiment wore green jackets and were known by the French as *santerelles* or grasshoppers.

24 Known as caçadores. Initially there were 6 caçadores battalions and by 1812, the number had risen to 12.

25 Spanish parliament. ☐

Rifleman Broom A Company The Rifles, Helmand, 2009 (Arabella Dorman)

Boer IEDs

Lieutenant Colonel IP Mills
SO1 PSO Logistic Plans
British Peace Support Team
(South Africa)

What can the actions of a Scottish renegade Improvised Explosive Device (IED) expert in the Anglo-Boer War tell us about techniques, tactics and procedures in Iraq and Afghanistan today? At a time when most of the US, coalition and ISAF lives that are lost in these theatres are a result of IED attacks, the answer is a great deal and that although technology may have moved on, the lessons to be drawn from the British counter-measure experience are as relevant today as they were all those years ago.....

This paper studies the use of innovative IEDs against British and colonial forces during the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa (1899 – 1902). Using existing reference material and the results of a field trial, the paper examines the tactical and technical aspects of how IEDs were used against British trains on the Pretoria to Delagoa Bay railway line between September 1900 and July 1901. The paper draws comparisons with current and recent British military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Boer insurgency took root because of a limitation on the number of Main Supply Routes (MSRs), the vastness of the terrain and the nature of the insurgent forces who fought in small fractured cells.

During the Anglo-Boer war, the key means of communication for British forces was the railway network. Other supply routes i.e. roads, paths and tracks, were unpredictable due to weather conditions and reliant upon the supply of dependable oxen and horses. The British also experienced a great deal of difficulty in maintaining healthy livestock[1]; the general shortage of horses, particularly in the war's earlier stages and the poor condition of troop horses in South Africa, hindered British and colonial force mobility[2]. All of this meant that the British were forced to use the rail network for the movement of troops, materiel and combat supplies.

Between 2003 and 2009, coalition forces in Iraq were also limited in choice of MSRs, using the established network of major hard-top roads and highways for the transportation and distribution of supplies. Conditions off these highways were too soft and unpredictable and the majority of military logistic vehicles were too heavy to handle off-road terrain. In Afghanistan, the ability to travel off the MSR varies, with conditions generally better in the southern desert. Careful reconnaissance and planning such as that carried out prior to the repair of the Kajaki Dam hydro-electric turbines in August 2008 demonstrated that alternative routes could be used, making troop movement less predictable. Nevertheless not all minor roads and tracks in Afghanistan are suitable for the many varieties of lightly and heavily armoured ISAF vehicles. The result being that there is a strong tendency to use the Highway 1 circular road that traverses through most of the country's regions.

By 24th September 1900, the Orange Free State and the majority of the Transvaal south of the Delagoa Bay railway line were under British control. The northern Transvaal Republic could only be controlled where it was physically occupied by their military columns[3]; the vast expanse of land making it impracticable for the 250,000 British and colonial troops to control the rest of territory effectively. Furthermore, these distances allowed the Boer commandos considerable freedom of movement and suited the strategy of guerrilla warfare; commandos were sent off to their own districts with orders to act against the British whenever an opportunity presented itself. Their aim was to do as much damage as possible, and then move off quickly, disappearing into the veldt prior to the arrival of British reinforcements.

In South Africa the British won the

Map Southern Africa 1899

The Transvaal (Australian War Memorial)

conventional war against the Orange Free State and Transvaal Boer forces convincingly, but they were unprepared for the insurgency that followed and could not fully comprehend the freedom and succour afforded by the terrain.

In a similar vein, the US Coalition in Iraq was surprised by the speed at which the insurgency followed the fall of Baghdad on 9th April 2003. Even the apprehension of Saddam Hussein on 14th December 2003 did nothing to quell the number of attacks by various groups against coalition forces throughout the country. Indeed, British forces operating in Basra experienced one of their busiest years in 2004. The trend was country-wide; US DoD statistics show that the total number of service personnel Killed in Action, or died of wounds, was 319 in 2003 – but rose to 713 in 2004. The situation in Afghanistan is more complex, where the counter-insurgency dimension is mixed in with the traditional war-fighting and peace support aspects of ISAF's mission. In this case, Taliban havens extend as far as the semi-independent tribal regions situated along the frontier with Pakistan. This unreachable geographical factor, similar to that encountered by the British in the northern Transvaal, means that despite the establishment of a formal Afghan government on 7 December 2004, the insurgency has flourished and even today some areas still remain "ungovernable".

During the Anglo-Boer war, the Boer commandos operated semi-independently. A degree of control was exercised by senior leaders however commanders, such as Smuts and De la Rey, were allowed to formulate and execute their own operations provided they complied with strategic guidelines. This was perhaps a true example of mission command. Moreover Boer units were small and fractured, making it difficult for the British to dislocate and frustrate the overall structure. The same is true of many of the insurgent forces which emerged during the twentieth century and is particularly pertinent to Iraq and Afghanistan where the enemy make-up was and is multifarious, disjointed and deliberately difficult to disrupt through a central point of access.

With regard to IEDs, Boer attacks became

increasingly sophisticated. The British response took time to formulate and required the use of armoured trains followed by the construction of block houses plus other obstacles to combat the threat.

Early on in the war, the Boers recognised that British reliance upon the railway was a significant weakness and by late 1900, attacks against British trains had become increasingly complex and well executed. One of the stretches of railway that received a great deal of attention by Boer Commandos between late 1900 and mid 1901 was the line that linked the Mozambique coastal port of Delagoa Bay with Pretoria, the capital city of the Transvaal. One Boer unit that employed particularly sophisticated tactics and technology in this regard was commanded by a renegade named Captain Jack Hindon.

Captain Oliver Jack Hindon, aka 'Dynamite Jack', was Scottish by birth. He joined the British Army as a boy soldier but deserted claiming to have been physically assaulted by a senior member of his unit. After this, Hindon travelled north to the Transvaal Republic where he became a stonemason and later a police officer. In 1895/6 he assisted the Boers during the infamous Jameson raid where British supporters tried to take the Transvaal Republic and its gold deposits by force. For his loyalty, Hindon was awarded citizenship by the Transvaal government; an honour normally not bestowed upon an *uitlander* at the time. At the outbreak of the war he was sent to the Middelburg commando where he fought with distinction throughout the first year of the campaign, particularly at Spion Kop. Between February and April 1900, he formed the Hindon Scouts; the unit proved so successful that Lord Kitchener publicly stated that Hindon had caused more difficulties for British and colonial forces than any other Boer Commander. The Hindon Scouts became notorious train-wreckers, particularly along the Pretoria - Delagoa Bay railway line where they operated under the command of General Ben Viljoen alongside Captain Henri Slegtkamp and his group of commandos.

Hindon would take time to survey the ground in order to ensure that once a train had been derailed, his unit would have the advantage of surprise and the ability to withdraw from the scene rapidly. During a reconnaissance on 16th January 1901, Hindon noticed that three trains were successively sent out of Balmoral at short intervals; he realised that by derailing the first at a particular point on a slight rise they would have the opportunity to ambush the second and third in the same way before the British understood what was happening and able to react according. As a result of this raid, Hindon's unit was able to resupply itself sufficiently well to continue to operate for several more months.

Considering the technology available at the time, perhaps more impressive than the tactics employed by Hindon and his men, was the relatively sophistication of the IED used to derail British trains. This was a victim operated device, based on the firing mechanism of a Martini Henry rifle. Research suggests that this particular type of device was unique to this unit and that the IED was designed to operate when a locomotive passed over the rail track directly above it. The designer of this device was a man named Carl Cremer. Not much is known about Cremer other than he was an associate of Hindon and, one assumes, was a member of his unit. The payload was sometimes up to fifty dynamite cartridges contained in a bucket, although it is probable that the size of main charge was at least half as large as this. The bucket was buried underneath the ballast (stone aggregate) surrounding the track and sleepers. The great advantage was that it did not bring about destruction on a great scale, since normally the only the locomotive was derailed from the track and made unserviceable. Damage to the track was relatively superficial, but for British railway engineers, replacing twisted and damaged tracks was a time consuming business. In most cases the train was brought to a standstill at a distance of about thirty yards beyond the contact point. At which stage the British had very little time in which to choose between two courses of action - fighting or surrendering.

Those who positioned the IED and bucket of dynamite were very careful not to leave any footprints which could be traced by British foot patrols. To avoid leaving any sign of their presence, the perpetrators would walk for quite a distance along the rails. Then the ballast would be painstakingly removed from beneath the rails and then replaced after the device had been positioned correctly. The trigger, placed in intimate contact with the underside of the track, was designed to operate by the weight of the locomotive as it passed over. Lastly, all remaining excess stones were taken away in a bag; at every stage, great care was taken to conceal all traces of the device.

Insurgent tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) have been no less cunning in recent times. The use of surveillance to determine and therefore predict allied and coalition TTPs is a well practised and executed procedure in both Iraqi and Afghan theatres. Both groups of insurgents have become adept at pinpointing likely incident control point positions, cordon locations and the make-up of vehicle convoys and patrols. In Afghanistan, just as Hindon's commando took painstaking precautions to conceal their signature, so the Taliban have become expert at burying devices in footpaths and tracks without visible disruption to the ground. Indeed, a degree of weatherproofing now takes place in order to prolong the life of Taliban pressure plate IEDs.

South Africa. C 1900. The Wreck Of An Armoured Train Lies Beside A Railway Line. In The Background, Centre Left, Is The Headstone Commemorating The Dead (AWM)

Glen, South Africa. The Glen Railway Bridge Showing Damage after an Attack by the Boers AWM)

The amount of destruction Hindon and his men created was considerable and the immediate British reaction was to up-armour more of its military trains. The insurgents realised that they could not defeat this additional protection head on, so they focused their attacks against a softer target (the railway line) instead. And so a contest of measure versus counter-measure ensued throughout the guerrilla phase of the Anglo-Boer war. A similar pattern can be observed in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The gradual up-armouring of the HUMVEE in Iraq for example led to the burial of IEDs designed to destroy the vehicle's less well protected underbelly. Very large HE devices with payloads around the 750 - 1000 kg mark were sometimes dug in under tarred roads at night; such devices were responsible for seriously damaging or destroying a number of Bradley APCs. In Afghanistan the migration in 20006/7 from WMIK vehicles to the MASTIFF and other new armoured vehicles currently in theatre is as a direct response to the increase in IED payload encountered in recent years. One can expect to see the payloads of IEDs increase in future and the positioning of devices altered to maximize effect against vulnerable parts of these vehicles.

Between June and mid September 1900, construction engineers of the Imperial Military Railways (IMR) made repairs to the Pretoria to Delagoa Bay line. The IMR began to move troops and materiel along the line once the Komatipoort Station was finally occupied by British forces on 25th September 1900. A total of 102 trains were used to transport troops from the eastern part of the Transvaal back to Pretoria from 26th September to 10th October 1900. However, during the period between September 1900 and July 1901, a number of bridges and culverts were destroyed as well as tracks damaged and trains derailed.[4] Throughout the first half of 1901, the number of train derailments along the railway line gathered momentum, happening daily with the line often damaged at some point. These attacks were so successful that from the beginning of October 1900, the IMR suspended the running of trains at night on the line between Pretoria and Waterval. Troop trains returning to Pretoria were routinely ambushed and it became clear that suitable defensive measures needed to be put in place if the British were going to continue to use the railway.[5]

South Africa, C. 1900. Fourteen Streams Bridge, Blown Up By Boer Soldiers in 1899, Showing Damaged Sections of The Bridge (AWM)

Three Australian Bushmen pose in front of a wooden-sided railway freight wagon. They are holding either Lee-Enfield or Lee-Metford .303 calibre rifles (AWM)

After assuming command of the British and Imperial forces in South Africa, one of Lord Kitchener's first decisions was to implement a number of defensive measures such as the digging of camouflaged open trenches at railway stations, culverts and bridges in order to protect personnel against artillery fire. These long trench systems proved largely ineffective however, absorbing a large amount of manpower for patrol and defensive purposes. Between 1st and 7th October 1900, Boer units launched a series of successful attacks against four locations on the Pretoria to Delagoa Bay railway line derailing and destroying three trains and a culvert at Brugspruit.

On 26 October, and acting on an intelligence tip-off, British troops attacked what they believed to be the headquarters of the Boer railway attackers located at Witkloof, some 30 kilometres south of Belfast. However, despite these actions, Boer attacks against the railway became more frequent and more destructive. In response, British troops began to implement a programme of raiding and burning farms in the vicinity of the railway in an attempt to prevent further attacks from occurring.[6]

From about September 1901 onwards however, Hindon's attacks were curtailed. Prior to the beginning of the war, four armoured trains had been constructed in Cape Town. In addition, an armoured train was deployed in support of Lord Methuen throughout the advance of his Division west from the Cape Province towards the Orange Free State border; another three were positioned at Stormberg, Mafeking and Kimberley. Two more were deployed in support of British forces in Natal and Southern Rhodesia.[7] The frequency of attacks meant that the British had to equip themselves with many more trains, some of which were built as far away as Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia.

With armoured trains in use during the day, Hindon's men began to set up their IEDs at night with the ambush site kept under close observation the following day. Initially, Hindon was perplexed because so many of his IEDs were being detected by British troops and rendered safe. It seemed as though British foot patrols were capable of following his tracks for distances up to 600 metres through the veld. By observing British early morning clearance patrols however, Hindon saw that the trackers simply followed the marks that he and his men

had left in the dew. Henceforth Hindon made sure that his IEDs were positioned early in the evening before the air had cooled down sufficiently for dew to form on the grass. The British had little success in tracing Hindon's tracks after this discovery was made.

Having initiated a programme of protecting military trains with armour, British commanders instituted a procedure whereby an armoured train, which had the locomotive located between a few reinforced trucks, would travel ahead of each scheduled passenger/goods train. The front truck, designed to be sacrificial, would usually contain a section of soldiers. It would appear that the task of those that survived the blast of the IED strike was to provide the locomotive and its crew with protection. After such an attack, the locomotive would simply be uncoupled from the damaged truck, allowing it to return safely up the railway with the undamaged trucks in tow. Hindon soon identified this tactic and began to allow the first armoured train with its soldiers to pass safely before detonating a device directly under the locomotive of the second train. It is assumed that the first train passed over a partially constructed IED and that the firing mechanism was swiftly placed under the rail and connected up in the time window prior to the arrival of the second.

By May 1901, the British changed tactics again, this time using two locomotives rather than one positioned between a number of trucks and carriages. The idea behind this countermeasure was that in the event of one of the locomotives being disabled, the other might be able to carry on with the journey. On 20th May 1901, such a supply train was observed near Godwan Station by Hindon's men. On this occasion Hindon departed from his usual use of a victim operated IED, instead opting for a command initiated variant. He attached a length of wire (presumably to the trigger of the IED) and concealed himself approximately forty metres away from the track. At the optimum moment he initiated the device by simply pulling on the wire, operating the trigger and setting off the firing mechanism. Although this attack brought the train to a standstill, Hindon and his men did not manage to plunder much in the way of supplies due to the steady rate of fire that was brought to bear upon them by British troops who had survived the initial explosion.[8]

By July 1901, the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay Railway Line was defended by a system of blockhouses joined by a network of barbed wire entanglements. The number of armoured trains on the line was increased and deep trenches were dug along both sides of the track to provide positions from which the line could be defended as well a creating an obstacle to those wishing to attack. Furthermore, the British implemented a system of frequent patrols by locally stationed troops, the aim being to search for signs of the presence of enemy activity whilst denying freedom of movement to would-be attackers. The blockhouses were built in lines at great expense with the idea of organising 'drives' against small mobile groups of Boer horsemen. Such 'drives' were meant to corner the Boers against the lines of blockhouses although in practice this rarely occurred. Nevertheless the combination of blockhouses, barbed wire entanglements and covering patrols proved effective in protecting the railway line. In addition, the British had begun to execute those that they had captured who had been involved in train wrecking.[10] As a result, Hindon and his men decided that further attacks on the line would be pointless; they moved their operations to the Northern Transvaal in the vicinity of Naboomspruit on the Pretoria-Pietersburg railway line.[11]

South Africa, c. 1901. A two storey fortified house at Middelburg during the South African Boer War. The ground floor veranda has been fortified with sandbags and corrugated iron. firing slits in the corrugated iron (AWM)

Blockhouse at Modder River, Northern Cape (Lt Col IP Mills)

The measure versus counter-measure cycle feeds off itself. By adding and combining a series of defensive measures however, the British managed to preserve the integrity of the line and thus the sustainment of their forces. Whilst no-one is advocating the sacrificing of soldiers in a front railway car equivalent today, the fact remains that manpower needs to be dedicated to the protection of key supply routes in order to counter a significant insurgency, and particularly an IED threat. As the Anglo-Boer War experience shows, it is the combination of countermeasures that are important; block houses on their own are insufficient as is simply up-armouring one's means of transport. Moreover, manpower needs to be allocated to defensive tasks. Between 2008 and 2009 there has been a 37% increase in ISAF force strength. The increase in ANSF strength has increased by 28% over the same period. It may be possible to use these increases to bolster security on key routes.

The lesson for us is to anticipate such changes in direction before they occur.

As Hindon discovered, successful IED attacks must be tailored to the opportunity presented. He switched from a victim operated attack to one initiated by command means because British TTPs had changed. He also switched from operating during the day to setting up his ambushes at night. In both Iraq and Afghanistan there is ample evidence of such flexibility and technological advancement amongst insurgent groups. Simple roadside bombs in mid to late 2003 against British forces in Basra were relatively small command initiated devices which, in the majority of cases, had limited impact against British vehicles. By 2004/5, these devices had increased in size, were far better disguised and used fragmentation and plate charge technology in order to defeat vehicle protection measures and compromise British TTPS. The lesson for us is to anticipate such changes in direction before they occur.

Conclusion

Jack Hindon and some of his men finally surrendered to the British in May 1902, just prior to the conclusion of the Peace at Vereeniging agreement. After some deliberation, they were cleared of all infractions of the laws of war.[12]

When one considers the effectiveness of the type of IED used, it is easy to see why the Hindon Scouts were so successful against British and colonial forces, which relied heavily upon the South African rail network for sustainment. Placed in historical context, this was an innovative device and extremely difficult to detect; it simply required track displacement in order to operate, thus ensuring that the victim (the locomotive) was directly over the main charge when it detonated.

The British did not find a technical solution to counter the effect of such IEDs; rather they came up with a tactical methodology which relied upon a combination of obstacles (such as ditches, trenches and barbed wire), key point defence (e.g. blockhouses) and a large number of troops (to patrol, react and defend) in order to frustrate Hindon's operations to such a degree that he was forced to move away from the area.

A number of lessons have been drawn from this experience, many of which are still pertinent to operations today:

- The deconstructed nature of insurgent forces makes it difficult to counter the threat through a centralised destruction strategy.
- As measure is met with counter-measure and so on, attacks become increasingly sophisticated and more technologically advanced. Where the counter measure is robust however, the insurgent may revert to simple opportunistic attacks.
- Single counter measures are insufficient to create lasting change. Success rests upon the combination of multiple, coherent defensive measures which preserve lines of communications.

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Intelligence Lessons From Hizballah's Ground Campaign 2006

James Spencer

This paper examines technologically advanced elements of Hizballah's operation against Israel's Lebanon Campaign of summer 2006 in order to derive lessons applicable to HM Forces' operations elsewhere in the MENA region. It does not examine the relatively competent conduct of Hizballah ground operations.

The paper addresses Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) experiences only where these have a bearing on Hizballah's capability – other papers[1] have covered the issues. In summary, however, Israel's mistakes seem to have been:

- inaccurate Intelligence preparation of the environment (IPE)[2];
- unrealistic political aims;
- poor intelligence;
- "air arrogance";
- a failure to integrate all arms and services;
- and inadequate training and equipment (this latter an issue in common with the UK for Op TELIC 1.)[3]

Hizballah exploited these tactical weaknesses caused by IDF "Victory Disease", greatly multiplying Hizballah's limited ground effect.

Map of the Lebanon (CIA)

Only unclassified material has been used in the preparation of this paper. Unless otherwise qualified, the terms "Shi'i" and "Shi'a" (pl) are used to describe the 12er Shi'a found mostly in Lebanon, S Iraq and Iran.

BLUF

Hizballah's CSTAP understanding and ISTAR capabilities are much better than previously thought – as will be other Iranian clients and proxies in the region.

Political & Demographic Background

In 1920, for colonial reasons, the French formed Lebanon out of the city-state of Beirut, and parts of Greater Syria west of the Lebanon Mountains. This led to political complications as the predominately Christian ("Phoenician") Beirut was coalesced with substantial Sunni and Shi'a Muslim, and Druze Arab populations whose focus had always been Damascus.

On independence in 1943, the two sides agreed to support the idea of an independent Lebanon, and not to invite foreign patrons to intervene in Lebanon's affairs. The unwritten National Pact of 1943 was based on the last, 1932 census (in which the Maronite Christians were a marginal majority), and allocated the Presidency to the Christians, the Prime Ministership to the Sunnis, and the Parliamentary Speakership to the Shi'a. Since then, a combination of Christian emigration, low Christian and high Shi'a

and Sunni birth-rates, and rural to urban migration has left Muslims in a majority, and the Shi'a probably the largest demographic element, but the poorest and least politically represented of the 18 sects and ethnicities of which Lebanon is comprised.

In 1974, Imam Musa al-Sadr (a relative of Muqtada' al-Sadr) founded *Harakat al-Mahrumin*, a Shi'a empowerment / civil rights group, from which grew the Shi'a Lebanese Resistance Detachments militia (*Afwaj al-Muqawmat al-Lubnaniyya*), better known by its acronym AMaL –the Arabic for "Hope".

The commander of a Ferret scout car of the Queen's Dragoon Guards takes a photograph of an East Beirut street scene whilst his vehicle is on patrol 1983 (IWM)

In 1982 after Op PEACE FOR GALILEE, Israel occupied South Lebanon as far as the River Litani. Partly as a result of the occupation, Amal split, and the more militant Hizballah ("Party of God") formed, initially following a terrorist strategy and Modus Operandi. During that period, the Israelis allied with and sponsored the renegade "South Lebanon Army" officered predominately by Christians from the Maronite community interlaced with Shi'a, and operated formally against the PLO in South Lebanon. The SLA pressed many Shi'i and Maronite youths into their ranks, and engaged in disappearances and torture of their opponents, suspected or otherwise, in the notorious Kiyam Prison. Hizballah gained much kudos from its "resistance" to the hated IDF / SLA presence, and took credit for the IDF withdrawal in 2000.

After Israel's 2000 withdrawal, as so often, the client was left vulnerable to vengeance by their ethnic counterparts. In the case of South Lebanon, many SLA members fled to Israel, although some have returned. However, the Christian population reduced dramatically, leaving a more homogenous, more hard-line, predominately Shi'a society, dominated by Hizballah. It was into this polarised political environment, and rugged physical environment, that the IDF re-entered in summer 2006.

Hizballah Intelligence Preparation of the Environment & OPSEC

The 12 Jul 06 Hizballah raid was by no means unusual[4]; Hizballah had been trying to capture IDF personnel to use as bargaining chips for a prisoner exchange with the Israelis; a previous attempt in Nov 05 had failed. This raid did, however, show some interesting features which suggest good surveillance at the least. The site, Shtula - from which the soldiers were seized, is a black spot, out of sight and communication from surrounding IDF OPs. As a result, it was formally out of bounds, except for transit, to IDF personnel. But since Hizballah identified an exploitable pattern, it seems to have been frequented nonetheless – probably for the traditional cigarette break.

Forces of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) are pictured in action along the Blue Line on the Lebanese-Israeli border. Merkava tanks of the IDF are in the foreground (UN)

> *"Hezbollah's ability to harass the Israelis and study their flaws, like a tendency for regular patrols and for troop convoys on the eve of the Sabbath, gave Hezbollah confidence that the Israeli Army "is a normal human army, with normal vulnerabilities and follies," he [Timur Goksel] added."*[5]

While a diversionary rocket attack drew IDF attention, the Hizballah raiding party engaged the patrol vehicles with RPGs and small arms fire, killing three and capturing two IDF personnel. They then withdrew into Lebanon. A MERKAVA II AFV attempted an immediate follow-up but was then struck by a secondary Command Wire IED, killing its crew of four. Hizballah has a Modus Operandi of such initial contact, followed by secondary incident.

Shtula; the far hill is in Lebanon, up which Hizballah took the captured IDF soldiers. The banner marks the capture site. (Photo © S Negus 2007)

While not expecting the onslaught that followed the specific operation, Hizballah appears to have carried out an intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB) of the border areas, and from that, worked out assembly areas, avenues of approach, and killing areas.

It is known that Hizballah study IDF doctrine: Sh Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hizballah, even commented openly on the first draft of the Winograd Report. During 18 years of IDF occupation of S Lebanon, Hizballah carried out a thorough assessment of IDF tactics, techniques and procedures, and were able to integrate their understanding of IDF doctrine into their IPB; Iranian IRGC advisors are likely to have assisted in this doctrinal analysis. Together with the IDF customary use of reserves (likely to be trained in predictable drills, and rusty from lack of practice), it is unsurprising that Hizballah were able partly to anticipate IDF courses of action.

A United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) observation tower near the Blue Line on the border between Lebanon and Israel. (UN)

UNIFIL patrol base in El-Khiam, southern Lebanon. On 25 July 2006, the base was destroyed by an Israeli air strike, killing four unarmed UN military observer. (UN)

Bazzi records that *"Even before the war, the group had dozens of translators working in its southern Beirut offices to monitor Israeli media and phone intercepts."*[6] An increase in transmissions, in particular within a specific mobile phone cell, would have provided a combat indicator, and a relatively accurate location (to 100m^2), quite apart from the usual ELINT harvest. Around the framework generated by the IPB, and taking advantage of the highly complex terrain, Hizballah built extensive fortifications in the intervening 6 years. This work went undetected, by both UNFIL and the Israelis/US:

> *"When Israeli troops discovered and dynamited the [Labboune] bunker days after the cease-fire, they found a structure consisting of firing positions, operations rooms, medical facilities, lighting and ventilation systems, kitchens and bathrooms with hot water - sufficient for dozens of fighters to live underground for weeks.*
>
> *The bunker was built within view of a UN observation post and an Israeli military position, respectively 100 yards and 300 yards away. Neither the UN nor the Israeli army knew the bunker existed. "We never saw them build anything. They must have brought the cement in by the spoonful," says a UN officer."*[7]

While in Labboune OPSEC had been assisted by Hizballah's 2002 declaration of the area as a "security zone" (in other areas "nature reserves" were similarly declared off-limits) the stealthy nature of the operation and the more homogenous nature of the population is likely to have assisted discretion. With HUMINT reduced, the IDF will have had to rely on IMINT, vulnerable to camouflage and deception, and mostly negated by sub-surface activity.

Bunkers uncovered in Southern Lebanon (IDF)

Hizballah are estimated to have had at least 40 such bunkers, of which 33 were discovered and destroyed by either the IDF, or UNFIL subsequently. Hizballah also had numerous OPs overlooking the Blue Line (border with Israel), which were known (possibly deliberately revealed) to the IDF, and shelled heavily on 29 May 06.

In anticipation of IMINT collection efforts, Hizballah had also prepared, protected and camouflaged much of its rocket artillery, often employing reverse slope positions[8]:

> *"multiple rocket assemblies […] were placed in small, superbly camouflaged concrete bunkers, dug inside thick natural groves or agricultural plantations, making them virtually invisible to air surveillance. […] To fire the rockets, the bunkers were opened, the rocket assembly was hydraulically or manually tilted from its horizontal position to the required angle, and the salvo was fired by means of a remote control box located in a nearby house. Each individual launcher was pre-targeted at an individual Israeli destination, yet enough such launchers were dug into the ground of Southern Lebanon so as to hit most Israeli towns and villages"*[9]

It is probable that Hizballah's IPB had identified likely IDF concentration areas. In this Hizballah may have been assisted by previous UAV flights over northern Israel[10].

> *"Curiously enough, on various occasions, the Hizbullah fired Chinese-made Type-81 cluster munitions rockets into Israel, containing anti-armor bomblets. Since such ordnance is designed to destroy military equipment and is relatively ineffective against buildings or persons, the reason for its use by the Hizbullah is unclear. Perhaps the Hizbullah was trying to retaliate against Israel's own use of cluster munitions. Another likely explanation is that the Hizbullah was aiming at Israel's armored corps massing for the land offensive in Southern Lebanon,"*[11]

Hizballah may also have attempted to interdict Israeli operational assets:

> *"The brunt of the rocket attacks fell on civilian targets, although some evidence exists of attempts to hit military targets. The heavy fire on Safed can be attributed to the location of the IDF's Northern Command headquarters within the city's limits. Attacks on Mount Meron might have been aimed at the well-known IAF installation on its top. […] The 2006 attacks [on Migdal Ha'emek] could thus be interpreted as the Hizbullah's attempt to foil operations from that air base."*[12]

Some of the unexploded devices that a United Nations Chinese battalion involved in the demining of the town of Hiniyah in Lebanon, 2006. (UN)

What is quite certain is that Hizballah had also prepared the likely manoeuvre corridors, digging in blast explosives to attack the MERKAVAs' belly armour, as well as IEDs on the sides of the roads.[13]

Since the end of the conflict, and UNSCR 1701 (which both provided for more robust terms of reference, and larger numbers of more confrontational Blue Helmets), it is understood that Hizballah has made extensive preparations north of the Litani River, out of UNFIL's AO.[14]

- Hizballah demonstrated relatively sophisticated predictive intelligence based on historical knowledge and immediate analysis, around which they prepared their defences: strong points, killing areas etc.
- Hizballah maintained excellent OPSEC in these preparations, countering both HUMINT and IMINT-based collection plans.

SIGINT

Of all the aspects to Hizballah's conduct during the conflict, their SIGINT capability is the most worrying:

> *"Apparently using techniques learnt from their paymasters in Iran, they were even able to crack the codes and follow the fast-changing frequencies of Israeli radio communications, intercepting reports of the casualties they had inflicted again and again. This enabled them to dominate the media war by announcing Israeli fatalities first."*[15]

It is unlikely that techniques alone would have allowed Hizballah to crack (probably US-sourced) encryption and frequency hopping capabilities. Hizballah must have had some SIGINT capability. An earlier Jane's Defence Weekly Report stated: "

> *"Following the signature and ratification of a joint strategic defence co-operation accord in November 2005, Syria and Iran have moved to consolidate their collaborative strategic signals intelligence SIGINT capabilities in the region"* [16]

While the main SIGINT station was sited in the (Syrian) Golan[17], this would have been insufficient to intercept tactical level (strength) communications, suggesting that at least some traps were within Lebanon. Bazzi[18] uses the slightly odd phrase "hack into Israeli radio communications", which may imply a physical interception of landline, as happened to IDF infantry landline in their assault on Beirut in 1982.

However the interception was effected, not only were Russia / Iran / Syria / Hizballah able to track the frequency-hops, and to break the encryption, but they were also able to have the Hebrew transmissions translated into Arabic (allegedly in the basement of the Iranian Embassy in Beirut) and passed back to the front line within a tactically significant space of time: *"We were able to monitor Israeli communications, and we used this information to adjust our planning"*[19] Although this statement may have elements of Information Operations (IO) in it, as one veteran analyst notes, this shows an unparalleled degree of communication between up to three different nations, and a fourth non-state actor.

One crumb of comfort is that [a Hezbollah commander] "acknowledged that guerrillas were not able to hack into Israeli communications around the clock."[20] Unless there were physical (likely temperature) complications, this may imply a human factor.

Bazzi also quotes "a senior Lebanese security official" as stating that "Hezbollah also monitored cell phone calls among Israeli troops", which has been corroborated in part[21]. When using a digital (but not analogue) mobile telephone, the communication from the telephone to the talk-through is encrypted, but thereafter goes down the same, vulnerable fibre/copper as normal telephony. However, Bazzi's statement above that Hizballah was able to intercept IDF mobile telephones before D-Day suggests that the interception (and decryption) was done between telephone and tower. Reservists in particular are likely to have been less intercept-aware when talking to their families at home.

Hizballah also used intercept product in their IO campaign, regularly pre-empting IDF announcements of casualties:

> *"When we lose a man, the fighting unit immediately gives the location and the number back to headquarters. What Hezbollah did was to monitor our radio and immediately send it to their Al-Manar TV, which broadcast it almost live, long before the official Israeli radio."*[22]

Some analysts have pointed out that IDF raiding parties etc continued to achieve surprise, and have used this to suggest that Hizballah therefore did not have the

ability to intercept signals traffic, merely telephones. This, however, ignores the routine use of Tactical Satellite communication – nearly impossible to intercept – by direct action / strategic recce assets, a capability not available to the Field Army.

Hizballah also showed an understanding of Emission Control: according to Col Pat Lang[23] much of the decrypted SIGINT was passed via buried cables (elsewhere fibre optics[24]) to the strong points; a Soviet SOP adopted by many Arab states. (This does not explain how Hizballah's mobile anti-tank teams were informed.) There is also suggestion that Hizballah had some secure communications themselves:

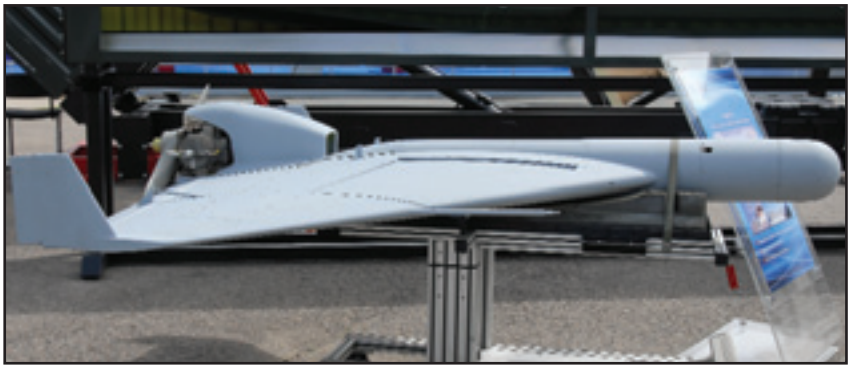
> *"But Iran and Syria also used those six years to provide satellite communications and some of the world's best infantry weapons, including modern, Russian-made antitank weapons and Semtex plastic explosives, as well as the training required to use them effectively against Israeli armor."*[25]

Given that the Israelis seem to have been unable to act similarly, there is also the possibility that Hizballah had their own encrypted communications, although there have been no reports of this. Blanford describes a use of "veiled speech" at the tactical level:

> *"Each fighter had a code number and one of the Hizbs told me that a conversation could go like '42, 42, this 83. Meet me by the house of the woman who broke your heart 20 years ago'. 'How would the Israelis be able to understand where that meant?' he asked."*[26]

At the operational level, OPSEC was likely enhanced by effective use of mission command:

> *"Goksel highlights the remarkably dispersed nature of the Hizbollah guerrilla forces, which operate in small units with very little communication through to any overall chain of command. Much of what is done is according to previously agreed tactics; this makes it very difficult for the Israelis to disrupt communications because it is simply not very important for units to coordinate with each other or with a notional "centre".*[27]



HARPY UAV Paris Air Show (Jastrow) (Wikipedia Commons)

In addition to the SIGINT capability, live satellite TV reports were broadcast from the seat of missile explosions inside Israel, and television crews also "counted them all out" as IDF units crossed the start line into Lebanon. As in other theatres, a free press is a double-edged sword.

Hizballah also harnessed their SIGINT capability at the geo-strategic level: despite the best efforts of the IAF, *al-Manar* ("The Lighthouse") never went off air, demonstrating the importance which Hizballah attach to IO – as did the IDF. Al-Manar allowed Hizballah to project their military success against Israel (which had unwisely declared unfeasible campaign aims) to the Arab World whose (mostly Sunni) rulers had been initially critical of Hizballah. Not only were Hizballah first with the news – establishing credibility – but they were also accurate, consolidating it. The success of an Arab force against the hated Israelis, who had previously humbled the Arab armies in the 1948, 67 and 73 wars, caused a popular ground swell across the Arab World – precipitating a retrenchment of the criticism by the rulers, worried by the seeming rise of Shi'i Iran.

- With the aid of Syrian & Iranian SIGINT assets, Hizballah were able to follow, intercept, decrypt, translate and disseminate IDF tactical and operational transmissions within tactically significant time frames!
- Extensive use of insecure mobile telephones by IDF Reservists undermined IDF OPSEC / EMCON.
- Hizballah's doctrinal use of mission command reinforced their own OPSEC.
- Hizballah were able to use SIGINT intercept for Information Operations purposes, achieving success at the strategic level.

UAV Recce

Iran has had UAVs since the late 1980s, both indigenous and purchased (including, ironically, a Chinese version of the Israeli HARPY.) It appears to have supplied several to Hizballah, with the IRGC having trained Hizballah ground controllers[28].

Hizballah used their UAV assets for both reconnaissance, and to attack Israeli targets. They carried out several flights over Northern Israel in the months leading up to the conflict[29], videoing the ground. This appears to have been integrated within the targeting information:

> *"The long-range Iranian-made missiles which later exploded on Haifa had been preceded only a few weeks ago by a pilotless Hizbollah drone aircraft which surveyed*

northern Israel and then returned to land in eastern Lebanon after taking photographs during its flight. These pictures not only suggested a flight path for Hizbollah's rockets to Haifa; they also identified Israel's top-secret military air traffic control centre in Miron.[30] *[How secret this IAF location was is debatable – Blanford points out that it is just visible from Lebanon, clearly via Google Earth, and had been attacked by Hizballah in May 2006.]*

Hizballah also flew UAVs during the conflict, possibly for reconnaissance, possibly for BDA. In this they were less successful: in early September 06, an ABABIL-3 was shot down by an IAF F-16 from Ramat David Air Base before it could penetrate Israeli airspace. Of more interest was its payload:

"The Ababil-T in its standard configuration carries a daylight television camera as well as a medium-sized, high-explosive warhead. The UAV was flying at night, indicating its sensor package has been modified to include an infrared system."[31]

Hizballah also launched 4 UAVs against Israel on the nights of 07 August and 13 August 2006. The UAVs were ABABIL-Ts, recce UAVs modified for "suicide" missions to carry a small payload of 40kgs of explosive in place of the ISTAR fit. The pre-programmed, explosive-carrying UAVs were thus primitive cruise-missiles.

"Since those attacks occurred when the ceasefire was already in the offing, it is reasonable to assume that they were meant to strike Israel "south of the south of Haifa," so as to fulfill Nasrallah's vow. The UAVs were probably programmed to hit the Tel Aviv metropolitan area instead of the Zelzal rockets that had been destroyed by Israel (or vetoed by Iran)."[32]

- While Hizballah's UAV assets may be comparatively rudimentary, they are sufficient for day and night video reconnaissance of tactical and operational targets, and of crude explosive "cruise missile" operations.

TI & AWARENESS

Another possible first in the Middle East was Hizballah's possession, and use of Thermal Imaging (TI). Concern was raised over the requested provision of Image Intensifying NVGs to Syria (that they should fall into Hizballah's hands). Hizballah's possession of TI, on ATGMs sold by Russia to Syria[33], both confirms the fear and makes the PNVG issue irrelevant, as Russia is also likely to have supplied them.

In his *First Look*, Dr Cordesman reports Hizballah (and thus likely Iranian) possession of the Russian-made AT-14 KORNET-E:

"The AT-14 is a particularly good example of the kind of high technology weapon the US may face in future asymmetric wars. It can be fitted to vehicles or used as a crew-portable system. It has thermal sights for night warfare and tracking heat signatures, and the missile has semi-automatic command-to-line-of-sight laser beam-riding guidance."[34]

Since TI usually requires a means of cooling the active element of the detection system, its continued use by Hizballah over 34 days implies either extensive pre-dumping, or a competent logistics chain for in-place sustainment.

Iranian etc possession of TI is likely to cause NATO forces less of a problem, since their tank engines are at the rear. TI's continued presence in the ME, however, may cause the Israelis more problems, as the MERKAVAs have their (heat emitting) engine at the front - partly to increase crew survivability.

Hizballah were also aware that IAF aircraft and UAVs would be searching for launchers, and took steps to conceal their physical and thermal signatures:

"...numerous dummy missile firing sites with fake heat signatures were targeted during the course of the campaign."[35]

and:

"The two-by-three-meter positions consisted of a hydraulic launch pad in a lined pit. The pad could be raised to fire the 122-mm rockets from a launcher at its center, and then lowered and camouflaged with vegetation. The farmers received instructions by cell phone regarding the number of rockets to launch and in what direction and range. They were often provided with thermal blankets to cover the position in order to keep IAF aircraft from detecting the post-shooting heat signature."[36]

- Hizballah showed a clear understanding of both how to exploit the thermal spectrum, and how to minimise its exploitation by the IDF.

ADVANCED ANTI-TANK CAPABILITY

Most of the IDF armoured losses took place during the attempts to exit the steep-sided Wadi Saluki during the final stages of the campaign. Tactical commanders, possibly for political (casualty avoidance) reasons, failed to commit an infantry screen or adequate indirect fire support to clear the anti-tank teams. Hizballah had identified this as a "slow-go area" and fully exploited the terrain.

While not strictly an intelligence issue, it is worth considering various aspects of Hizballah's anti-armour campaign. There are two issues of importance:

"Israeli military observers remarked that Hezbollah seemingly had accurate intelligence about the capabilities of Mark III and Mark IV and they targetted the Mark III selectively."[37]

Such granularity shows not just good recognition training, but excellent fire discipline. Of more interest is the description of the means of attack. Hizballah seems to have adopted a

mobile "swarming" defence: small, nimble anti-tanks teams using the local terrain (and in some cases tunnels) to excellent effect. Hizballah were assisted by their possession of the KORNET and METIS-M ATGMs, and RPG-29s. Some of these missiles had tandem warheads, capable of defeating IDF Stand-Off Cages and Explosive Reactive Armour. It has been widely suggested that Israeli Intelligence – civil and military – was unaware of Hizballah's possession or competence with these weapons[38].

However, it is the use of the missiles that is most interesting: "the weapons were fired in massive volleys."[39] The anti-tank teams were small (3 - 6), yet many shooters seem to have engaged the same target simultaneously. Although there is no confirmed reporting, given the intelligence required for recognition of MERKAVA variants, this may have been an effort by Hizballah to overload the IDF Defensive Aides Suite - to beat its re-cycle time, or exhaust its under-armour ammunition.

The result was impressive: "Forty-five per cent of the Israel Defence Force's (IDF's) MBTs hit by Hizbullah ATGMs during the fighting were penetrated."[40] No MERKAVA IVs were included in this figure, which may suggest that the IDF DAS was adequate:

> *"An Israeli-invented radar defence shield codenamed Flying Jacket and costing £200,000 was installed on only four tanks. None of them was struck by anti-tank missiles."[41] ["four tanks" may be a mistranslation for (MERKAVA) tank IVs.]*

- Hizballah's Recognition of IDF IFVs was excellent, to the extent of being able to distinguish between MERKAVA III and MERKAVA IV.
- Hizballah may be aware of DAS limitations and attempt to overload the system's recycle time / exhaust its ammunition leaving it vulnerable.

Human Intelligence & Counter-Intelligence

Neither HUMINT nor CI are new concepts; Sun Tzu devotes a chapter on it, and Moses sent spies into the land of Canaan (Numbers Ch 13.) The general assumption, however, is that states conduct organised HUMINT collection. The IDF is aware of Hizballah's attempts to:

> *"...locate and recruit Israeli Arabs—including Israeli Arab political figures—for the purpose of using them for intelligence missions by the organization, and its attempts to establish contacts even with Jews in Israel. An example of such tactics was Hezbollah's handling (up until September 2002) of about 10 Israeli Arabs from the villages of Beit Zarzir and Shfaram—including a lieutenant colonel on active IDF service and others who had formerly served in the IDF and in the Israeli police. [...] they delivered their Hezbollah handlers details on the movements and formation of IDF forces in northern Israel, information on IDF's intelligence gathering technologies such as stationary cameras and cameras mounted on hot air balloons, and operational intelligence on former Northern Command Chief Gabi Ashkenazi. Furthermore, some of those involved were asked to deliver to Lebanon maps, unique communication devices used by the IDF, etc."[42]*

There is also a suggestion that Hizballah may have run a penetration agent within the FBI – who was then re-assigned to CIA clandestine operations:

> *"A U.S. official familiar with the case said Tuesday that the government's investigation has uncovered no evidence so far that the agent, who was employed by the CIA until last week, had compromised any undercover operations or passed along sensitive intelligence information to Hizbullah operatives. After joining the CIA in June 2003, the agent was an undercover officer for the agency's National Clandestine Service, the espionage division, working on Middle East–related cases. The agent was reassigned to a less sensitive position about a year ago, after first coming under suspicion, officials said."[43]*

On the CI side, the legendary capability of Israel's MOSSAD (coupled with the sure knowledge of some remaining SLA members with a burning need for revenge and a knowledge of interested parties) have made Hizballah members discreet:

> *"Hezbollah commanders travel in old cars without bodyguards or escorts and wear no visible insignia, Mr. Goksel said, to keep their identities hidden."[44]*

Given the lack of tactical and operational knowledge available to even IDF Strategic recce – the MAGLAN platoon – it appears that any Israeli HUMINT asset in South Lebanon was unsighted, or neutralised by Hizballah CI – or unable to communicate with his/her handler over 6 years:

> *"Evidently they had never heard that an Arab soldier is supposed to run away after a short engagement with the Israelis," said Gad.*
>
> *"We expected a tent and three Kalashnikovs — that was the intelligence we were given. Instead, we found a hydraulic steel door leading to a well-equipped network of tunnels."[45]*

The two raids by Israeli SOF into Baalbek, the first seeking Hassan Nasrallah, and the second[46] Sh Muhammad Yazbik (a senior Hizballah figure) were both "dry holes". Unless queued by SIGINT[47], this suggests information from a deep asset, and the failure implies that the Israeli HUMINT asset has been identified, and either turned or supplied disinformation – a Counter-Intelligence coup:

> *"On Aug. 2, Israeli commandos*

targeted the Iranian-funded, Hizbullah-run Dar al-Hikma Hospital. The commando assault and Israeli strikes throughout the region around the ancient town killed 16 people, according to Lebanese police. Baalbek residents said four people were taken away and none were Hizballah fighters."[48]

and

"The commandos, dropped with two Hummer vehicles by helicopter, were engaged in a firefight in which three Hizballah were killed, before they were evacuated by helicopter.

"DEBKAfile's military sources report the Israeli commando raid probably targeted newly filled weapons stores. Also located at Bodai is the office of senior Hizballah official Sheikh Mohammed Yazbek, where the raiders apparently hoped to find information leading to the two kidnapped Israeli soldiers Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev."[49]

- Hizballah demonstrated an enduring, geo-strategic HUMINT capability and a Counter-Intelligence mentality and capability.

IDF destroy Hizbollah post (IDF)

Electronic Warfare (EW)

The failure of the IDF's EW campaign, and the great strides made by Hizballah (doubtless with extensive Iranian and Syria backing) is another aspect of great concern. Hizballah showed the usual ability to react to IDF tactical ECM:

"Then Hezbollah used radio detonators, which the Israelis also defeated, and then cellphone detonators, and then a double system of cellphones, and then a photocell detonator — like the beam that opens an automatic door."[50]

It is, however, at the operational level that there is more concern, both defensively, and offensively:

"Israeli EW [electronic warfare] systems were unable to jam the systems at the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, they proved unable to jam Hezbollah's command and control links from Lebanon to Iranian facilities in Syria."[51]

The IDF-linked DEBKAfile was even starker, writing that: "In combat against Hizballah, both [complementary US and Israeli devices and methods] were not only found wanting, but had been actively neutralized, so that none performed the functions for which they were designed."[52]

Hizballah (possibly with IRGC assistance) was able to hit the INS HANIT with a C-802 SILKWORM. IDF-linked sources have sought to play down ECM problems, suggesting that HANIT's crew had forgotten to turn on their BARAK ECM, allowing the SILKWORM to hit. While human error is always possible (and Israeli Intelligence's lack of knowledge of Hizballah's arsenal might have added to the sense of complacency) it seems unlikely. Other reports suggest:

"Iranian technicians and Iranian supplied equipment allowed Hizbullah to jam the countermeasures on the Israeli ship, allowing the upgraded Iranian Silkworm missile to severely damage it."[53]

The SILKWORM struck the HANIT just above the waterline, but failed to initiate, possibly because the ship was within the missile's arming range. Given the presence of SILKWORMs in the Persian Gulf, especially on Larak Island in the Straits of Hormuz, such counter-ECM is a worrying development.

- Hizballah's EW hardening was better than expected, and together with duplication, prevented IDF disruption of C2 by kinetic of EW means.
- Hizballah demonstrated a reasonable understanding of IDF ECM, and were able to hit the INS's best ship successfully.

The Navy rocket ship Hanit after its rehabilitation and return to continuous operations this week at the Navy Ashdod base. (IDF)

Conclusion

Hizballah showed excellent morale, sound intelligence & counter-intelligence, competent tactics (albeit in a highly specific, carefully prepared environment), mission command, good logistics, sound planning and political / military integration, good training, excellent civil military affairs, and creative (and enduring) IO. This was not the performance of the historical Arab Army, with political commanders, poor morale and lack of initiative, but the actions of a disciplined, competent cadre.

It is unlikely that all Hizballah's capability at the time was demonstrated. Iran (and Syria) are reported to have re-supplied Hizballah with more modern weaponry since then[54]. This is likely to concentrate on the anti-air campaign – in 2006 Hizballah managed to down a CH-54 heavy lift helicopter using an ATGM, but had little success against IAF strategic aircraft destroying Hizballah long-range missiles or Lebanese infrastructure.

Hizballah had six years to plan, prepare

and rehearse for an operation in a relatively small area, with strategic support of Iran and Syria, and a broadly supportive population. They faced a casualty-averse enemy, using armour in complex terrain. Nevertheless, Hizballah was able to contain Israel through a well co-ordinated defence including many sophisticated aspects, and using assets unknown to Israel.

A south Beirut suburb ruined in the recent conflict between Israel and Hizbollah

While the relationship between Hizballah and Iran is more complex than client – patron (and Hizballah is far from being merely a proxy of Iran) the close relationship is likely to mean passage of tactics, training and information will flow both ways.

Hizballah capability has already made the IDF modify its operational profile greatly – the use of piloted close air support and rotary aircraft was notably less than one might have expected, due to IDF assessment of Hizballah's possession of advanced SAMs; IDF naval assets stood off much further from land than in previous conflicts.

It is likely that Iran, and its regional clients and subordinates, will have access to the same capacity to degrade and defeat the high-technology capability on which much of the West's (and Allied) "edge" is predicated.

On the regional level, Hizballah's capability has increased the already considerable concern over Iran felt by Sunni Arab rulers, epitomised by the evocation of a "Shi'a Crescent" by King Abdullah II of Jordan. Israel's failure, albeit in a highly specialised environment, removed the aura of invincibility formerly surrounding the IDF; efforts to refurbish this, such as the air-strike on Dayr al-Zawr, have been unsuccessful.

While HM Forces remain committed to Op HERRICK, they will remain within striking distance of Iran, and its proxies. Although HMF retain a technological edge, the gap has narrowed significantly, and many of the areas in which HMF believed themselves to be supreme, they find their absolute capability compromised. Should Iran and the UK find themselves in direct or proxy conflict, many of the UK's casualty reducing advantages are likely to be neutralised.

1 Such as Cordesman, A Preliminary "*Lessons" of the Israeli-Hezbollah War*, (http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060911_isr_hez_lessons.pdf) and McGregor G *Hezbollah's tactics and capabilities in Southern Lebanon* Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Focus 01 Aug 06 (http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370089)

2 Seymour Hersch claims (http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/08/21/060821fa_fact) that the ex-pilot Gen Halutz planned to emulate the aerial bombardment campaign on Serbia that NATO used to open up Kosovo unopposed. This was possible in Serbia due to the homogenous ethnicity, and strong central control of armed force; there are 18 sects / ethnicities in Lebanon, many of which have militia. There was also a credible ground element ready to force entry to Kosovo, if the air campaign had failed.

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19 Bazzi M, *Hezbollah cracked the code* op cit

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er_tyrannis/2006/09/an_interesting_.html

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46 The second raid was after the ceasefire, and thus was nominally to interdict Hizballah weapons re-supply. However, the rank of one of the casualties (Lt Col), the presence of two HMMWVs, and the fact that the IDF SOF broke cover to engage in a lengthy gun-battle suggests a more offensive purpose.

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The Armour forces assemble in the field before entering combat in Lebanon (IDF)

BAR Thoughts

Recovering the Dead

John Wilson

On Radio 4 on 24 November 2009, Michael Buerk (*The Choice*) talked to Cathy O'Dowd about the choice she had to make when she saw a dying climber on Everest. O'Dowd encountered the woman, whom she had met briefly a few days before, just below the summit. She was dying, she begged not to be left alone, although the repetition of these words with just two other phrases – *why are you doing this to me and I am an American* showed that she was, in practice, incoherent – they could have no conversation with her. There was no question of carrying her off the mountain – she could not support her weight at all. They could give her no medical assistance and they were themselves becoming hypothermic. They eventually left her and Cathy O'Dowd returned to her base camp.

In my view there was no other possible course of action. Yet, clearly, it still troubles her, although she knew then and knows now that it was the right thing to do.

There have been several instances in recent years when soldiers have been killed whilst recovering the bodies of soldiers killed in action. There is understandably huge emotional significance in recovering the bodies of those who have fallen. It is different today from the past. In the First War the sheer scale of the task prevented any such attempts and dulled the sensitivities. In the Second War the more mobile nature of battle permitted the recovery of bodies: from 1942 onwards we were on the offensive and follow on echelons were able to recover and identify bodies and inter them. It was not a matter for front line troops.

HMS Manchester's Commanding Officer lays a wreath at the San Carlos Cemetery (RN)

Pte Nicholas Wilson, 19, from Preston, (Queen's Lancashire Regiment) examines one of the graves at Basrah. His great-grandfather died in Iraq during the First World War while serving with the predecessors of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, and is believed buried either in this cemetery or a similar cemetery at Nasiriyah.

In subsequent campaigns the nature of the conflict permitted the relatively easy recovery of bodies although there were exceptions. It is only since the Falklands War that bodies have been repatriated to UK – and not all were, hence the cemetery at San Carlos Bay. In Aden, Malaya, Cyprus et al bodies were buried in military cemeteries in theatre. Indeed, in Aden the bodies of some of the 22 soldiers of the RCT and Royal Northumberland Fusiliers killed in an ambush by police mutineers on 20 June 1967 were temporarily abandoned. All those soldiers were buried in Silent Valley Cemetery in Aden.

There is also a different emotion – bodies from NI were returned to Great Britain discreetly, there were no repatriation ceremonies, no respectful crowds lining the route at Wootton Basset, no Elizabeth Cross. There were no websites to carry the eulogies for the dead by their comrades. The military funerals were quiet traditional ceremonies. It would be wrong to imagine that they were 'hole in the corner' affairs – it was how it was done and accorded with the wishes of the families. What we see now is the public display of grief post-Diana style. And part of that more public open bereavement is a stronger emotion for the recovery of bodies.

The Radfan Campaign A mine searching team from the Assault Pioneer Platoon of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Sussex Regiment in an up country track in the South Arabian Federation. (IWM)

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders searching suspects in Aden in 1967. (IWM)

There is, too, the huge worry that bodies that cannot be recovered will be defiled by the enemy. It is a genuine concern:

Captain RC Edwards and Trooper J Warburton from 22 SAS were killed in an action in the Radfan in May 1964, the patrol was unable to recover the bodies and fought fiercely just to extract themselves. The tribesmen decapitated the dead and displayed their heads on poles in a town in South Yemen. Before the Second War on the North West Frontier, John Mastersi tells of the savage death and mutilation of a British officer, skinned and castrated alive. The local British commander ordered 'no prisoners', and when, to his fury, a wounded tribesman was taken, he ordered that the man should be pegged out, face up in the sun. His body was left where the officer's skin had been found.

No one of us doubts the emotional need to recover the body of a dead comrade. And we can understand the deep distress of the unit should a body be left. We understand, too, the effect it will have on the family. Not just to lose their loved one, but not to be able to mourn fully – and having to live with the knowledge that his body is out there somewhere. And yet ... is it right to lose another life to recover a body? The soldier is dead we cannot bring him back, and his body is not him; in Cathy O'Dowd's words it is a suit-case, the spirit, the man has gone.

Of course things are not always so clear cut. Is he dead? Can we be sure he is dead? If we are not sure then it is a rescue not a recovery, and we expect our people to do their utmost to rescue the wounded. There are plenty of occasions over the last 6 years when soldiers have risked and given their lives to rescue their comrades – the Army has shown that is a true fighting force and a courageous force time and time again.

When it is the recovery of the dead, should we not apply a higher standard of risk? All effort short of likely further death? I do not have an answer; I do know the empty feeling of leaving a soldier behind. The circumstances were different. The IED killed two soldiers and wounded slightly others. I found the torso and head of one soldier – his face unmarked. Of the second soldier, we found nothing. In the immediate aftermath of the attack we could search, but not freely. Once the area was secured, we could search systematically. There was nothing, he had been laying on the buried IED (estimated at 100kgs). The big difference was that we could eventually secure the area – this is not always possible in Afghanistan. Nevertheless it was a bad feeling to come away, having failed to find any of his body. Not as bad as knowing that he was out there somewhere and that we were leaving him to be found and possibly defiled by others.

Shaibah War Memorial - On 4 September 2003, British troops from 19 Mechanised Brigade began work to restore a Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in Basrah, which had suffered years of neglect and deliberate desecration under Saddam Hussein's regime. Hundreds of headstones have been destroyed and many others damaged. The soldiers, including troops from the 1st Battalion The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, based only a few hundred yards away, began the task of salvaging the surviving headstones for safe storage until the Commonwealth War Graves Commission can undertake a comprehensive reconstruction.

So, I leave the question unanswered. I say only that circumstances may not permit the immediate recovery of the body. The risk may be too high and we should not judge those who have to take that decision to leave him temporarily. All situations are different and it is better to think about these things and discuss them in advance.

Cathy O'Dowd discovered that there were some who believed that she could have done more: *but they are never able to say what it is that I should have done.?* □

A Fortunate Soldier

David Benest

Ken Perkins (Courtesy of The Sun)

It is not often that tributes to the dead appear in **BAR** but Major General (retired) Ken Perkins, who died on 23 October 2009, aged 83, is one of those exceptions. I was fortunate to have interviewed him in 2007 at the Defence Academy about his time in command of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) in Oman. He arrived in a somewhat battered car and I asked him whether he needed a hand. He stared back at me and said, *'Young man, I cycled 15 miles yesterday!'* We sat in the sun on the veranda at JSCSC on what was the last day of the staff course. To his delight, the Red Arrows suddenly appeared overhead and we had a grandstand view. He had himself been a pilot, flying Beavers in Malaya during the Emergency and also spotting for the artillery from the air in the Korean War. In Dhofar he was known to take the controls whenever he could as he flew around his command.

Ken was born in Sussex in what were modest surroundings, the only son of a gardener. It was clear from the outset that the armed forces were for him, a natural soldier and a natural leader who had no time for notions that leadership was a skill that could be taught: you either had it or you didn't and there was nothing further to be said on the matter. Social background had absolutely nothing to do with it either. Not surprisingly, he gained a reputation as an 'angry young man' prepared to speak his mind regardless of the consequences. Fortunately, his leadership ability was recognised for its true worth and he commanded both 1st RHA and 24 Infantry Brigade, which deployed to Northern Ireland in 1972.

As Commander SAF (CSAF) Perkins was directly responsible for all aspects of military decision making in SAF, reporting to his Commander-in-Chief, Sultan Qaboos and sitting as a member of the National Development Council (NDC). Below him were just two brigadiers, his deputy, Colin Maxwell and John Akehurst, in command of the Dhofar Brigade. An RAF Group Captain commanded five operational squadrons of eight different types of aircraft and a Royal Navy Captain operated six patrol craft. Command of a force of 14,100[1] was exercised from his headquarters in Muscat. It was a multi-national command, comprising: British seconded and contract officers and NCOs; a US trained Iranian infantry brigade; a Special Forces battalion and engineers from Jordan; Baluchi mercenaries; both Dhofar jebeli Firqats and Omanis; and by no means least, the SAS in the guise of 'BATTs'. India, Egypt and Pakistan provided medics and Saudi Arabia lent a gunner colonel.

Ken had jumped at the opportunity to command such a force, reflecting upon the alternative in British Army of the Rhine with 'its peacetime, same as last year exercises on the North German Plain [as] hardly a preparation for war'.[2] The counterinsurgency against the Marxist Peoples Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Gulf States (PFLOAG) had reached a critical phase in Perkins' time of command. Fortune was with Perkins. The CAPSTAN feature overlooking the *'Adoo'* (ie enemy) supply line form the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was secured on 14 October. Cross border raids by SOAF Hunters had struck at PFLOAG command elements. The Iranians were now able to exploit to the west. PDRY troops withdrew across the border. The main munitions stores of the Sherishitti caves were cleared in late October. The village of Dhalqut was retaken on 1 December. A link up was made on the Darra Ridge on 2 December. SON had been cleverly positioned to ensure logistic support was well forward. Civil development was taking place throughout as soon as the Adoo were cleared, including the drilling of 50 wells and laying of 250 km of roads. Sultan Qaboos was thus able to declare the 10 year insurgency over on 11 December 1975. Dhofar was now secure for development.

Perkins views on leadership[3] bear out the simplicity of his operational art, reducing the morass of 'qualities' required of leaders to just three: moral and physical courage; the ability to communicate; and vision of the end state. He might have added that leadership of a multi-national force in Dhofar was as much about persuasion as direction. Most telling was his clarity of thought: *'What a commander needs is a clear notion of his own intentions, reliable communications and good subordinates. [In Brigadier John Akehurst] I certainly had the latter.'*[4] He typically spent no more than a few hours a week at his desk. Towards the end of the campaign he ordered a complete change in plan without issuing a single piece of paper.

He summarised the reasons for success: identification of the threat, the isolation of that threat from the civil population, its neutralisation and then how to negotiate the enemy to come over to the Government side. The impossibility of doctrinaire 'solutions' such as simply copying the civilian resettlement programme so successfully enacted in Malaya, were of no use. Given the Dhofari nomadic culture and complete dependence upon the cattle economy, the provision of Government centres

where medical and veterinary treatment was freely available was decisive in winning 'hearts and minds'. Development in the form of roads, wells, cattle troughs, a mosque and education quickly followed – all this under the direction of the Wali of Dhofar, not some non-governmental organisation imported from afar. Psychological warfare was also key, the surrendered enemy recruited into the Firqat as local intelligence advisers under SAS guidance. It was also realised that interdiction of the adoo supply chain was essential and hence the HAMMER, HORNBEAM, DAMAVAND and SIMBA 'lines'. 'Better communications, mobility and logistics and superior firepower'[5] won the day. But most importantly, counterinsurgency warfare was, is, and always will be, about politics and the development of a cross government strategy, not armed forces alone.

Well done Ken!

1 International Institute for Strategic Studies, 'The Military Balance1975-6'
2 Perkins, Ken, 'A Fortunate Soldier', Brasseys, London, 1988, pp 119 - 139
3 Interview with author, Defence Academy, 19 July 2007
4 Perkins correspondence with author 9 February 2009 □

Radio Masts over Sangin (Arabella Dorman)

FH 70 in a FOB

John Wilson

FH 70 is a towed 155mm gun/howitzer weighting about 9,000kg. It has a range of 24,700m and has a small auxiliary engine (1700cc, VW Beetle petrol engine) which will move it around the gun position without needing its gun-tractor. It was in service with the British Army from about 1980 to 1992, and with the TA until 1999.

We have 10 in storage according to the DASA website. And since we bother to keep them at all, we trust that they are in good condition. The barrel wear will be negligible. And they can be under-slung a Chinook. They fire the same ammo as AS 90 – it is the same barrel. The L15 HE round is particularly good with a lethality of about 10 times the US equivalent (M107 HE round).
The Light Gun has a range of 17,500m. So, FH 70 has a 40% increase in range over Light Gun – but:

Area covered by Light Gun fire:
962 sq km.

Area covered by FH 70 fire 1916 sq km.

In both cases I am ignoring the minimum range.

So, for a 40% increase in range FH 70 doubles the coverage.

137 (Java) Bty found itself at Fitzroy at the end of Op Corporate (Falklands). An FH 70 firing from Fitzroy could have engaged every target fired by Light Gun during the war without moving.

And, FH 70 has a burst fire capability; it has a flick rammer. Some years ago I had 30 rounds left at the end of the firing camp – we were about to convert to light gun for an emergency tour and I knew that I would not see those rounds again if we did not fire them. So, rather than blasting off we did a small trial. One gun was nominated, all ammo was prepared and I ordered "One Gun, 30 rounds continuous fire". The detachment stumbled over the first couple of rounds but then got into the swing of it. They re-laid between rounds and achieved a smooth rate of a round every 4 seconds. A pair of FH 70s can cheerfully put 30 rounds of 155mm HE onto the target in one minute – 1320kg of ammo.
Just a thought.? ☐

FH 70 on Trial Firings Sardinia.

How Myths Are Made

John Wilson

On page 421 of The Making of the British Army by Allan Mallinson (reviewed in this issue on p.?)he states that *'In February 1972 a staff-serjeant platoon commander of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment (KORBR) was killed in an exchange of fire with an IRA active service unit (ASU) near Strabane'* He then goes on to describe the subsequent operation - *'Soon afterwards the battalion received intelligence that the ASU was based in a farmhouse close by and the KORBR's commanding officer .....ordered one of his platoons to set up an OP ready to take offensive action if the ASU showed themselves'.*

He quotes from the platoon commander's diary, I paraphrase:

- 2 Feb – receive orders for OP task.
- 6 Feb – Pl comd plus two snipers and a GPMG dropped off covertly to set up OP.
- 7 Feb – Deception plan unfolds – army helicopter wakes up ASU, platoon plus 3 Saracens (APC) and two Ferrets (Armoured Car) in position to North; two men appear at the door of a lone house and adjacent caravan – unarmed; later one shot fired – platoon returns fire then withdraws as arranged.
- 7 Feb - Mid-day – *'...a car arrived on the forecourt of the lone building – was it a pub? Two men got out carrying rifles. I nodded assent: two shots, both men went to ground, but it was not clear if they had been hit. That's what the GPMG was for. Long killing burst'.* Move to emergency RV.
- 8 Feb – Return with platoon – overnight someone had constructed a brick wall with firing ports in front of the caravan. Ten minutes later shots fired from the firing ports and from two trenches beside the main road. *'All hell broke out. Six Brownings on the Saracens, the Ferrets and the troop leader's Saladin [heavy armoured car]were firing, plus the three GPMGs. Sgt H tried to grip the fire discipline but they couldn't hear him; I watched transfixed at the impact of this weight of fire on a hurriedly constructed brick wall. Within seconds it was gone and the poor sods who had taken us on'.*

2nd Lieutenant David Brough, 1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment and Lance Corporal Bernard Winter of the 2nd Battalion, The Queen's Regiment, patrol a Belfast street with a Saracen armoured personnel carrier. (IWM)

Allan Mallinson comments, "At least 4 of the seven-man ASU had been killed." The *staff-serjeant* was Colour Sergeant Boardley and he was killed at a VCP in Strabane on 1 Feb 1973, not 1972. There is no record of any PIRA gunmen killed on 8 February 1973 in the Strabane area, or around that date – certainly not 4. There were only two occasions when PIRA lost 4 men or more in one go – so it would have been a memorable event; and in keeping with PIRA's usual stance there would have been a strident campaign on 'shoot to kill' lines. Also in accordance with PIRA practice the deaths would have been acknowledged. PIRA considered itself as an army – and conducted some of the common military practices, which includes acknowledging casualties. There is only one PIRA death that has been unacknowledged because of the propaganda value and the threat of being sued and the political storm prevents me from naming that person. There are few serving soldiers who were in NI and only a handful were there in the 1970s when so many of these myths were made. So we need to nail them when they appear. PIRA were not daft – remember the bleak statistics:

- The Army killed 301 people of whom just 121 were republican terrorists.
- Republican terrorists killed 694 soldiers (Loyalists killed 6).
- Republican terrorists killed 162 other republican terrorists.

In other words they killed more of their own than the Army did, and they killed us at nearly 6 times the rate that we killed them. Curiously the figures reflect well on the Army: we understood the nature of the campaign and were prepared to accept the casualties in order to protect the people – ie what General McChrystal demands of ISAF now. Of course our force protection got better – as did our campaign design and we fought PIRA to a stand-still.

Consider again the vignette above. Was it a pub or a farm house – not usually too difficult to distinguish between them. Why would PIRA advertise their ambush point by building a brick wall – bearing in mind that it was compromised by the firing on 6th Feb. PIRA could not have been unaware of the AFVs – that excellent (in its day) family of vehicles made a most distinctive road/engine noise that carried for miles – and those AFVs had been present the day before, so why provoke an open engagement which they could not hope to win? By 1973 PIRA experience was quite good enough to know that a single brick wall was never going to survive multiple GPMG and MMG fire. It is common practice in

A Ferret of A Sqn 1RTR overlooking the border at Pettigo, Northern Ireland, 1973 (Tank Museum)

Ireland to build a brick wall to protect caravans (often found as accommodation at Irish farmhouses) from the prevailing wind and that might be a more likely explanation for the wall. It is not usual terrorist practice to mount an ambush from their base.

Fortunately we have Lost Lives (McKittrick, Kelters, Feeney and Thornton,Mainstream; Revised 2001; Hbk; £30; pp 1648; ISBN: 1 84018 504X) as a source of impeccable integrity. It is a painstaking, non-judgmental record of every 'Troubles' related death in NI since 1966. I say again to all regimental secretaries, army libraries and to any MOD branch with an interest in NI – buy a copy for reference. Needless to say, there is no record in Lost Lives of these killings at Strabane in 1973, nor is there a record on Republican/Sinn Fein websites. No, PIRA did not spirit bodies away across the border to secret burials. Yes, some terrorists were taken to hospitals in RoI but there were never unacknowledged funerals. So, how could we know that "At least 4 of the seven-man ASU had been killed ", or that there were 7 of them?

It is a recurring sin of all fighters to exaggerate hits – or at least claim a possible as a probable or even a certainty. It is just something we should be aware of – it is part of our military education to know that many military stories are myths. You will have met NI warriors who have regaled you with stories of terrorists killed. Indeed, from those I speak to we must have killed not 121 terrorists but hundred times that to match witness to death.

Saladin at Bovington (Tank Museum)

This vignette appears at a good time: we need to recognise the myth phenomenon because it interferes with our intelligence assessment and more dangerously it colours behaviour. Don't believe the stories without good evidence – they must not be allowed to set the standard. ☐

A Ferret scout car of the 17/21 Lancers at a vehicle check point in Northern Ireland, 1970 – possibly Strabane? (Tank Museum)

What future for the Territorial Army Post the Centenary (*The role of the TA Infantry in the second decade of the 21st Century*)

The Patriot volunteer, fighting for his country and his rights, makes the most reliable soldier on earth.
Lt-Gen 'Stonewall' Jackson1862

Major Gerry Long
3 PWRR

Introduction
The future for the Territorial Army is uncertain. There is little understanding or vision for the reserve forces as a whole or of those who make up the TA, as could be seen by various spokes persons wheeled out during the current fiasco with regards to cuts in the TA budget who seemed not to understand why cutting TA training would affect the capability of the TA and morale.

Post SDR
There is no doubt that the TA provides a substantial force for relatively little money, if closing the TA down for 6 months saves only £20 million, then in the big scheme of things the TA is small fry in the Defence Budget. At an established strength of 38,500 spread over 341 units the TA has shrunk back from its *'Hendy Days'* of the Cold War. Numerous cuts have probably reduced the TA to a dangerously small component of Defence. It may have gone below critical mass, too small to become a real element in the event of the need for mass mobilisation. Much of the country has no local TA; like the rural Post Office, the local TA Drill Hall has become a thing of the past. The whole idea of the Territorial Army is that it is local.

TA Poster 1938 (NAM)

The future of the TA, a possible 'Renaissance'
Since the *'Report on the Strategic Review of Reserves 2009'* is dead, what is the way ahead for the 'Weekend Warrior'? The part-time volunteer solder is as old as the Army itself (even the Spartans had a day job), but its present form is a legacy of WW2 and more recently the Cold War, and reshaped again since then.

There is no doubt that Op TELIC 1 changed the TA, and changed it for the better. Gone is the drinking club culture; and through the Regional Training Centres and the DIE, the standard of the TA soldier has never been so high. This is linked to real operational experience; but still divide remains. The Regular Army has very little understanding of the TA; and this showed when it came to cutting the budget. What is the easiest thing to cut? the TA.

The tempo for the Army since 2003 is not what was planned for, and the drawdown in Iraq has not given the expected breathing space. The argument had probably been won at the MOD that the army is too small at the moment, and, of course, the credit crunch has put paid to any increase for the Regular Army. However, this is where the TA could be used: to buy time and space for the Regular Army.


Members of 51st Highland Regiment (Territorial Army) based in Perth Scotland, are out in Kabul, Afghanistan, until March 2003.

Force Lay Down
Firstly, the lay down of the TA needs to be looked at and their roles and make up within the regional brigades. For example, my battalion – 3 PWRR - stretches from Dover to Portsmouth and from Canterbury to Farnham. Although there is a garrison administration in Aldershot, the Farnham company administration is done from Canterbury, which suggests that the footprint of units within the TA should be examined. Major units should be linked together geographically, not as in the 3 PWRR case, which is simply two battalion areas amalgamated into one, straddling 2 separate brigades. This is a wasteful legacy that we cannot afford. The Portsmouth PWRR company and the Farnham PWRR company could combine with the Reading company of the Rifles with a HQ element at Aldershot. There is no need to lose battalions; some units could be re-roled within a tighter administrative organisation.

Integral (Reserve) Coy Concept (I(R)CC)
The reconfiguring of the force lay down

RMLY Soldiers of the TA Training on Challenger 2 (Stuart Bingham)

of the TA could be linked to an alternative ORBAT for the TA, that is to say: fully integrating the TA with the Regular Army. For argument sake we will call this the Integral (Reserve) Coy Concept (I(R)CC) this would save much money, once again e.g. using A Coy 3 PWRR as an example it would become the 4th Rifle Coy of the whichever battalion was in Aldershot, presently the Coldstream Guards (or it could be just as easily be 1 Royal Anglian in Pirbright), the TA centre could be situated within the battalion lines it could be administered by the regular unit, and when the regular unit is deployed the TA Coy is mobilised to bring the regular battalion up to strength.

This could be mirrored throughout the Infantry (and other Arms and Service) with a 4th Coy being formed for each regular battalion and mobilised accordingly. Annual Camp would be based around the regular unit's training cycle so the TA Coy would deploy for 2 weeks with the regular host, this of course would cut down the number of posts for TA officers over the rank of Major, but the TA Coy would find it easier to mould with the regular counterparts and make the mobilisation and operational process a lot more streamlined and efficient. And the welfare support would be there from the start. This will also do away with the unknown quality that the regulars currently experience, instead the TA element is known.

Readiness Cycle

Secondly, a proper readiness cycle of reserve units could be formed around the regional brigade to mobilise them as formed units; with a rest period to reform as a unit post deployment, and then a focused recruiting and training period before starting the process again. The important thing is to go through the cycle as a unit and not as an individual, except perhaps for some officers.

Unit Mobilisation

Finally, if we stick to the present formation of the TA rather than go down the I(R)CC route, currently mobilisation is done on an ad hoc bases through individuals and or small cohorts going to serve (sometimes) with sister units or purely to fill gaps where needed. A more organised programmed mobilisation making better use of the TA is an obvious solution. Those deploying would have a proper welfare team to support them and a formal decompression that could be monitored by that same staff. Such a system could markedly increase the numbers of TA soldiers mobilised in support of operations.

Conclusion

Although the TA is an essential

component of the Field Army again and the Army could not do without them, divisions remain. What is required is real vision for the future and proper focusing of resources to get the best for our money. The present system is a costly legacy item of massed mobilisation of the Second World War and the Cold War. This is an opportunity to mould the forces for the future rather than hang onto the past.

Comment from Colonel Mike Scott AD Reserves (A), HQLF

The Territorial Army (TA) and the Reserves has had some high profile press coverage over the latter part of 2009. This press coverage has included news items relating to The Strategic Review of Reserves undertaken by Major General Cottam, Planning Round 2009 Efficiencies and Current Operational planning in Afghanistan. Major Long has presented some interesting ideas for the future of the Territorial Army Infantry. The British Army Review (BAR) is designed to stimulate debate and is an important platform for discussion and debate. However, it is important to be mindful of some factual inaccuracies in Major Long's letter:

- Firstly the future of the TA is not uncertain; Brigadier General Staff (BGS) is currently undertaking a detailed examination of what the requirement for the future TA and Reserves will be. Until BGS has reached his conclusions there is no change to role and size. Future Army Structures Next Steps (FAS NS) may well have a different operational requirement than currently exists.
- The temporary reduction in training that hit the headlines in 2009 were measures taken after careful consideration and proportional to the TA's requirement to be placed on a Campaign footing to support operations in Afghanistan.
- The size of the TA reflects the Regular Army reserve requirement and this is currently based on large Scale Deliberate Intervention type operations.
- The TA has a very important role to play with Community Engagement and the footprint it lays down is at the forefront of this. (There are currently over 370 TAC locations with 47 of these sites Infantry Platoon out stations).
- The Strategic Review of Reserves is far from 'dead'. Work is ongoing across 3 strands (Define Capabilities Required, Develop the Graduated Commitment Model, and Develop Options for TA C2 and Estate Laydown) with 15 of the recommendations already in place and a further 32 on track for completion. This work has been shaped and complemented by the development work carried out by CRF (now AG) and D Reserves (A) in early 2009.

Brig Tom O'Brien will be writing an article in the next edition of BAR. □

The Radfan Campaign: A Sergeant-Major of the Coldstream Guards paying local tribesmen who were employed at an up-country camp. R 035164 (IWM)

AFGHANISTAN: A TOUR OF DUTY

UNFORGETTABLE IMAGES OF THE AFGHANISTAN CAMPAIGN

PUBLISHED 29TH OCTOBER

Fast growing specialist international publisher, Third Millennium Publishing, is pleased to announce that it has launched *Afghanistan: A Tour of Duty*, the very first book of its kind, which reveals a remarkable photographic portrait of the Afghanistan campaign, taken by a former Grenadier Guards officer operating from the front line in the Helmand province. All profits from the book will be donated by Third Millennium to BLESMA (British Limbless Ex Service Men's Association).

During his six month tour of duty in 2007 Captain (Retd) Alexander Allan, 29, captured a number of unforgettable images of ordinary British soldiers sweltering in the heat, liaising with the locals, training the Afghan Army, fighting off Taliban attacks and taking casualties. His feeling for his troops, the camaraderie, sacrifices and how they cope with what they have been sent to do, is evident from every image. The accompanying words are by the soldiers themselves.

Allan has dedicated the book to one particular colleague, Lance Sergeant Adam 'Goolie' Ball, who towards the end of their tour of duty lost his leg while trying to save two Afghan colleagues injured by landmines. In his introduction Allan says: "Some people write prose, some poems, others are raconteurs telling their stories as best they can to an eager audience. These pictures are my diary; take from them what you wish."

Captain Patrick Hennessey, author of the Junior Officers' Reading Club, says: *"The Army is fond of saying that a picture paints a thousand words – Captain Allan's do so with incredible eloquence. Stunning and poignant, nothing I have seen or read in the last few years captures the colour and humanity of the Afghan conflict as well as these brilliant images."*

In his foreword, General Sir Richard Dannatt GCB, CBE, MC, former Head of the Army says: *"…this wonderful book is a graphic record of British soldiers' day-to-day experiences serving in Afghanistan…..along with service, sadly comes sacrifice, and this photographic record does not flinch from the issue. Readers will get an authentic insight into the realities of life for the British soldier on Afghanistan's front line.*

However, they should also be reassured to know that all profits from the sale of this book will, at the wounded soldiers' own request, go direct to the charity which supports and cares for those who have lost limbs in service. Such motivation and service is truly humbling."

Copies of Afghanistan: A Tour of Duty can be ordered online at: www.tmiltd.com or www.blesma.org at a special direct price of £10.99 + p&p, or by phoning Third Millennium on 020 7336 0144. (Normal RRP £12.99). Copies are also available from the likes of Waterstone's and other book trade outlets.

Third Millennium has published books for a number of leading heritage, educational and military institutions. These include titles for Westminster Abbey, York Minster, Durham Cathedral and Lincoln's Inn; the universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, Manchester, Newcastle and SOAS; Harrow, Rugby School and Wellington College; the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the Royal Artillery, the Household Division, the Royal Green Jackets, the Army Museum Ogilvy Trust and the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Books

A Young Gentleman at War, The Letters of Captain Orlando Bridgeman, 1st Foot Guards In the Peninsula and at Waterloo 1812–15 – Edited by Gareth Glover

Ken Trotman Publishing, 2008, pp188; £22.50;
ISBN: 978-1-905074-71-6;

When writing of military matters, however much the author or editor may have done his best to keep close to the truth when describing the sequence of events, their causes or consequences, inevitably he will have second thoughts almost immediately after sending his text to press. However wide may have been his reading of scholarly histories or memoirs of battles and campaigns composed by men who survived them, whenever he may re-read one, or study a new book, as inevitably he will find a point overlooked, or matter providing contradictory evidence, at odds with what he had understood previously to have been the case.

The graphic narratives of participants should be treated with caution, for many of them, although writing with immediacy, and giving first-hand evidence of what was taking place around them, were unable to appreciate the importance of the part they were playing in the events they were experiencing. Thomas Henry Browne, for one, was the first to admit when writing his Journal, that his observations had been *'confined to what could be picked up in the hurry and bustle of continued marching and counter marching ...'* Many other narratives were composed in later years, when dulled memories were jolted by the publication of Napier's great History, a mine of information from which they could pillage and pad out their own memoirs. As Oman was well aware, the strength of men's memories differs: indeed *'every year that elapses between the event and the setting down of its narrative on paper decreases progressively the value of the record.'* A failing memory, the love of a well-rounded tale, a spice of autolatry, the inclusion of a picturesque anecdote, will have impaired the value of many a veteran's reminiscences, while even the most readable narratives occasionally mix up the chronology of events. Oman reiterated that while they may be *'admirable evidence for the way in which the rank and file looked on a battle, a forced march, or a prolonged shortage of rations ... we must not trust them overmuch as authorities on the greater matter of war.'* This was brought forcibly to my notice recently when reading the letters of the third son of the 1st Earl of Bradford, Captain the Honourable Orlando Bridgeman of the 1st Foot Guards, certainly not from the 'rank and file'! Mostly written during the latter part of the Peninsular War, they describe his experiences in an attractively produced card-back volume entitled *A Young Gentleman at War*, impeccably edited by Gareth Glover, and published by him last year in conjunction with Ken Trotman. One letter, penned to his mother from Irun on 3 October 1813 while recovering from a wound received at the assault of San Sebastian, concerned the supposed stiff resistance of Spanish troops when holding the ridge of San Marcial against Soult's counter-thrust across the Bidasoa. Wellington described this combat to Stanhope many years later, as *'in their own accounts'* represented as being *'one of their greatest battles – as a feat that does them the highest honour.'* Bridgeman felt otherwise, commenting to his mother:

> *'I am almost afraid to make any remarks on Lord Wellington's late dispatches to England in which he mentions in such high terms the conduct of the Spaniards, it may be politic towards them, this they certainly deserved as they behaved better than usual, but from what everybody says who saw them, his expressions are too strong, remember I was at San Sebastian & therefore knew nothing till I returned, but all our officers saw the whole thing, & at one time so many of the Spaniards ran away that our brigade which was formed close to the high road actually received orders to form a guard in order to stop all Spanish soldiers who were not wounded. This I give you my honour is fact, had you seen the ground they were formed upon you would have said it was impossible for the enemy ever to come near them, nor could they have done so, had the Spaniards stood their ground like men. I made no remarks upon them in my last letter; but I could not help saying what I have done after reading Lord W's dispatch & you will I believe find that almost all the private accounts will agree with mine.'*

This was not the first time Bridgeman had reason to criticise the Spaniards. Writing from the near Cadiz in the previous July, he had mentioned that *'On the advanced picquet last night in a very different direction from ours, a Spanish sergeant & twelve went very quietly over to the French, & their comrades let them go without even firing at them, here's a noble set of men gallantly defending their country, by jove it is too bad, poor devils, what would become of them if it was not for us'.* But from such asides one should not assume that his letters are merely

devoted to criticism of Britain's supposed allies, for very many of them are most informative, covering a great variety of topics, from complaints of lack of ready money (for he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth) to urgent requests for additional clothing and equipment, but not *'long cotton stockings which are very inconvenient on service'* (which he would be sending home). He went on to demand

> *'...six pairs of short cotton & let them be large enough. Next comes & saddle & bridle ... the saddle with a crupper, a pad, and straps to carry a very small portmanteau behind me, as it often happens that in a march the baggage does not come up for some time after ourselves, & by carrying a small portmanteau behind me I have always a clean shirt &c, in case I am wet through. My father will also remember a small leather roller he had before his saddle to carry his great coat, I should like to have the same for me to carry my boat cloak, only it must be rectangular with three straps ... a pair of quite plain pistol holsters ... a double bridle with a straight bit & rather sharp ... [also] two or three soft tooth brushes, I have plenty of hard ones but no soft.'*

(In a later letter, he exigently specifies 'Smyth's tooth brushes', and also demands a good hair brush, as such things were not to be had.)

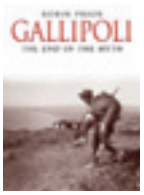
The fact that these are confidential private letters – rather than notes jotted down at the time to be 'written up' later with a view to future publication – makes this, and other such collections, all the more valuable. Such authentic, unsophisticated, personal responses to the hostile conditions in which their writers found themselves, provide us with considerable further insight into their daily needs, interests, reactions, and preoccupations.

A Young Gentleman at War is just one of a growing number of valuable and illuminating memoirs or collections of letters which have been discovered in local or family archives and long-overlooked caches, and which are now being edited by Gareth Glover and a published in a accessible form by Ken Trotman. Admittedly, some of the earlier volumes have been printed in a rather small type-size, but an appropriate design (including illustrations in colour in some cases) has now been settled on, and Peninsular war and Waterloo buffs should be grateful to Gareth Glover and his publisher for making them available at a very reasonable price.

Among some of the more substantial volumes I have had the opportunity of reading in recent weeks, and with great interest, are *A Hellish Business: from the Letters of Captain Charles Kinloch, 52nd Foot* (partly devoted to the complexities of the 'purchase' and 'staff appointments' systems then existing); *A Guards Officer in the Peninsula and at Waterloo: the Letters of Captain George Bowles, Coldstream Guards* (extracted from the very rare *'Series of letters to the First Earl of Malmesbury'*, of 1870); and, also from the Coldstreams, *'It all Culminated at Hougoumont': the Letters of Captain John Lucie Blackman*.

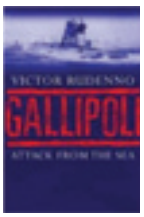
But these are only a few of the collections of letters now in print, or in the pipeline. Regrettably, too few of them are to be found on the shelves of any but specialist bookshops, and rarely attract the notice of reviewers, and readers who would appreciate being advised about the appearance of forthcoming volumes should not hesitate to contact Richard Brown at rlbtrotman@aol.com direct.

Ian Robertson □



Gallipoli: The End of the Myth – Robin Prior

Yale University Press, 2009, Hbk, pp288,
ISBN 978-0-300-14995-1



Gallipoli: Attack from the Sea – Victor Rudenno

Yale University Press, 2008, Hbk £25.00, pp338,
ISBN 978-0-300-12440-8

There are some military campaigns that just seem to go on demanding attracting attention decades afterwards. Gallipoli 1915 is one of them. Even though libraries of books have been written about the campaign, they still keep coming. This year, for example, two new major studies have been produced. After such rivers of ink, one might wonder what that is new could possibly be said.

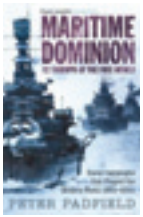
Robin Prior's book, the first of this duo, is determinedly revisionist; Prior looks at all aspects of the campaign and sets about demolishing what he says are the prevailing myths that have become attached to it. The biggest, at the level of grand strategy, is that if the campaign had been as successful as its progenitors hoped, it would have knocked the props out of the Triple alliance and drastically shortened the war. Gallipoli, according to Arthur Marder, a respected naval historian, was the one bright strategic idea of the First World War. Not so. Robin Prior is a convinced Westerner who concludes that as far as Britain and France were concerned, the Western Front was the

decisive theatre and everything else pretty much a waste of time, effort and lives, though somewhat surprisingly, given his cataloguing of the catastrophic errors of the Gallipoli campaign, he concludes that a fixation on the Western Front would probably have taken a bigger toll in human lives. This is tendentious, basically unprovable, and fascinating, stuff but Prior's discussion of these mammoth issues is at much higher level of generality than their importance warrants and is unlikely to convince Easterners, or advocates of the 'British way in warfare.'

He's on much firmer ground at the operational and tactical levels when he addresses a whole series of apparently brilliant opportunities lost through bad luck or inept implementation. Three stand out: the naval attack of 18th March, the inability to exploit the success at Y Beach on 25 April and the initially successful landings at Suvla on 6 August. Taking them in reverse order, the aim of the Suvla campaign, he says, was more to establish a base than to launch a large scale outflanking campaign. General Stopford, who apparently realized this when his latter day critics did not, accordingly gets sympathetic treatment; in any case, says Prior there were no reserves to engage in anything more ambitious anyway. This was true at Y Beach, too; the lack of manpower [partly attributable to already inadequate numbers of allied forces being distributed between too many beaches] made the famous walk up to the open village of Krithia quite pointless. The notion of so many subsequent critics that here was a priceless opportunity lost is a mixture of 'fantasy and hindsight'; the army Prior says, had no such orders and wasn't the kind of force able or willing to demonstrate initiative when the unexpected happened. Even if such an advance had been made, an extended bridgehead would have been no more than that and would have been defeated by the Turks anyway. It wasn't, therefore, 'nearly a success'.
As to the naval attack on the Narrows up to and including March 18th, Prior argues that the Navy could never have got through, as it had no answer to the combination of Turkish guns and minefields. Prior maintains that given a hitting rate of something like 2 per cent on the Turks' main guns, the Navy had too few shells and used them too sparingly. Attempts to get through the minefield in the face of Turkey's mobile howitzers were an exercise in futility. The Navy he concludes did not 'nearly get through' and would have failed the next day, or subsequently, if it had tried again. It is interesting to compare this with the more conventional account of Victor Rudenno who makes many of the same points but nonetheless highlights the fact that by 2 pm that day, both German and Turkish accounts conclude that the defenders were almost out of ammunition and in a desperate state. What saved them was the small, recent and unexpected minefield laid in the area where British and French battleships chose to manoeuvre.
Buit there's also the question of what would have happened then even if the navy had got through. Prior claims that allied policy-makers had not thought through the next step of working out what to do if a fleet of allied battleships had squeezed through the narrows and turned up off Constantinople pointing their guns at the city. Would they, could they morally, have bombarded it? Maybe, given the German bombardment of Paris in 1870-1. But would it have caused then Ottoman Empire to fall? And would that have led to a successor regime to throw in the towel ? To judge by French experience, yes and no, respectively. Again, this 'what-if' of history is fascinating, not least because definitive answers are markedly elusive, but what is clear is that Churchill, Fisher, Kitchener and all the rest of them simply hadn't thought this through. Prior's account of this is convincing, although it's more of a criticism of the estimate process then in use, than a de-mythologising of the campaign. Rudenno seems equally sceptical about the calm assumption that a fleet off Constantinople simply meant 'victory'.

However, Rudenno who concentrates on the naval side of the campaign, does draw the reader's attention to the disproportionate moral effect of a few allied submarines operating with daring and success in the Sea of Marmora. The moral effect of a full scale battlefleet turning up off the Golden Horn is of course almost impossible to predict, but perhaps shouldn't be entirely dismissed. Rudenno's account of the naval campaign, is well informed, more descriptive, much more extensive but perhaps less analytical than Prior's; his account in particular of the fearless, derring-do of allied submariners is a needed corrective to the scathing accounts of Prior whose review leads his readers to conclude that nearly all the chief protagonists in the Gallipoli campaign were fools. In their varying ways and for their very contrasting treatment of what remains a fascinating campaign, both books are much recommended.

Geoffrey Till □



Maritime Dominion and the Triumph of the Free World – Peter Padfield

John Murray, 2009, Hbk £30.00, Pbk, £12.99, pp 369, ISBN 978-0-7195-6297-6

This is the third of Peter Padfield's masterly sweeps through naval history, following on from his *'Maritime Supremacy and the Opening of the Western Mind'* which appeared in 1999 and his *'Maritime Power and the Struggle for Freedom'* of 2003. Padfield is not new to the grand vista style of naval history writing, for his *Tide of Empires* duo established his strengths in this demanding field. But this latest trilogy is really very different, much more ambitious in its scope and having a good deal to say about Britain and the 21st Century World.
At first glance, much of the present volume looks like a pretty

standard naval history of the last 150 years. Padfield packs a lot in, and the pace is more than a little breathless. The deadly U-boat war of 1914-1918, for example is covered in barely 11 pages and there are a number of other topics covered in it as well. Again on the face of it, scholars seeking major insights into the strategy, tactics or technology of the campaign can hardly expect to find very many in a work of such limited compass – but in fact they would. Padfield has the great gift of identifying key points and getting them over concisely and with effect; his paragraph on the success of convoys, for example, says it all. Of course, not everyone will agree with all his conclusions. His whole-hearted espousal of one school of thought in the great debate amongst historians about gunnery before and during the war will raise eye-brows. But no matter, naval history should raise questions as well as provide answers.

But, much more important than this and much more praise-worthy is Padfield's extremely interesting efforts to put naval history into its proper context. To illustrate the point, his U-boat chapter doesn't just focus on the questions of 'to convoy or not to convoy' and who was to blame for the Royal Navy's not doing it earlier. Instead, he draws attention to the strategic importance of the final British victory in this campaign in terms of safely bringing allied troops to the European front and allowing the Anglo-American war industry to overwhelm Germany in the Materialschlacht in the Autumn of 1918. He also points out how their defeat in this campaign illustrated Germany's fatal strategic, social, political and commercial weaknesses. These were in Holger Herwig's words, *'a mirror of the Wilhelmine class state with its growing antagonisms that ultimately split and paralysed German society as a whole.'*

And with this, we get to the real point and the real value of Padfield's trilogy. His real theme throughout is, if you like, the triumph of Neptune especially but not exclusively in the hands of the British and now the Americans. Sea power has brought so many advantages to the countries that have made proper use of it, that they have prospered in peace, prevailed in war and shaped world history. Over the past several centuries, he maintains, seapower has been associated with freedom, because intimately connected with trade. Trade flourishes in conditions where the political system provides secure property and contract rights, personal liberty, stable, responsive, incorrupt government and the rule of law. And trade produces peace and prosperity. Trade, democracy, seapower and national success all go together, he concludes. Hence the ultimate reason for the failure of the German U-boat campaign – the irredeemable faults on their social and political system. Hence the triumph of the British and, now the Americans as their natural heirs and successors. Hence, also, the shape of today's maritime world order – globalisation. But Padfield ends on a note of pessimism: sea-based globalisation can go bad and the whole intricate web of relationships he describes might well unravel.

Over the past few years, Padfield's general line of argument has been followed by a host of other historians of Empire and analysts of globalisation. Whether they agree or not with his main propositions or, his readers will surely think that Peter Padfield provides an entirely new way of looking at naval history, and that is a very impressive accomplishment.

Geoffrey Till □

The Children Who Fought Hitler – A British Outpost in Europe – Sue Elliott with James Fox

John Murray, 2009, Hbk, £20pp 309,
ISBN 978-1-84854-086-6

BAR readers may well recall the excellent television documentary on the theme of this book which was broadcast on BBC4 in November 2009 to coincide with Remembrance Sunday. The story is told of the little known British community based in Ypres as part of the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC), later to become the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). The focus is on the sons and daughters of those British citizens who were responsible for the interment of the dead of World War One, followed by the design and landscaping of the huge cemeteries around Ypres. More specifically, it is about the pupils of the British Memorial School, itself generously funded by Old Etonians. James Fox was one such pupil. What happened when Nazi Germany invaded Belgium in 1940? There are vivid accounts of what it was like to be teenagers under occupation: some found themselves in internment camps; others fled to Britain and joined the war effort in the RAF or as SOE agents; some stayed behind to form the Resistance. The accounts are all compellingly told by Sue Elliott, who has obviously conducted meticulous background research. This is one of the very few accounts of WW2 as seen from the vantage of teenagers and young adults in occupied territory.

David Benest □

Correction

In BAR 147 we attributed the review of The Forgotten Front to Jim Tanner when in fact it was written by Andrew Banks. We apologise for this error. Editor.

Dambusters: A Landmark of Oral History – Max Arthur

Virgin Books; 339pp; pbk; £7.99;
ISBN 978-0-7535-1573-0

Let me start by saying that it wasn't just prejudice on my part because recently I've been working with a small film crew who were a delight: hard-working, dependable, welcoming and creative. But my experience twenty-three years ago was very different. For reasons I needn't trouble you with now, I found myself under attack from an aggressive enclave of middle-class lefties from the film business. Even before they attacked, I knew they saw me as an uncultured, reactionary, junior part of the establishment. I remember mischievously suggesting to one especially virulent woman that one of the highest achievements of the British film industry was *The Dambusters*. With all the technical advances since, I argued, it would be a good idea to produce a remake. I was just casting around to find the most effective way of annoying them; I never thought for a moment anyone would do it. But, do you know, someone's doing just that? And the screenplay for the remake is by Stephen Fry, which is how he came to write the rather touching foreword to this book.

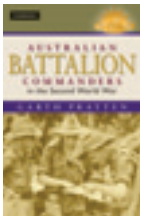
Fry says that Max Arthur's *voice has more authority than a hundred other historians because it is almost silent.* And I think he's absolutely right. This is a wonderful piece of craftsmanship in which selection, skilful editing and structure are all. What Max Arthur has done, with his customary skill and unobtrusiveness, is to locate and assemble within a simple, coherent structure, the recorded words of scores of people involved in various aspects of 617 Squadron's attack on the Mohne, Eder and Sorpe Dams on 16/17 May 1943. Foremost among them are five survivors whom Arthur approached personally: pilot Les Munro, bomb-aimer George 'Johnny' Johnson, flight engineer Ray Grayston, rear-gunner Grant McDonald and front-gunner Fred Sutherland. Les Munro's aircraft was hit by flak crossing the Dutch coast and he and his crew had to abort the operation. Johnny Johnson was Joe McCarthy's bomb-aimer and attacked the Sorpe. Grayston and Sutherland were in Les Knight's crew who together broke the Eder Dam. Grant McDonald attacked the Sorpe with Ken Brown.

Many of the other aircrew left interviews and other accounts of their experiences. Foremost among these, of course, is Guy Gibson's *Enemy Coast Ahead*, which Arthur uses skilfully to plug any gaps and to bind the structure together. But this is not just the story of the 133 aircrew, 56 of whom did not return and 53 of whom died that night. It is also the story of the groundcrew, squadron, station and group staff, engineers, administrators and scientists who together made the raid possible. In pole position here is Barnes Wallis, who everyone in this book remembers with respect and affection. For most of us, he has merged in our memories with Michael Redgrave, but it seems that depiction was by no means wide of the mark. Dave Shannon tells us: *a more distressed figure it would have been hard to imagine by the time the last aircraft had landed. He had not realised that there would be this tremendous sacrifice of life. He was in tears and quite pathetic the following morning.* Wallis's own account reveals his innate modesty. *There is no greater joy in life than first proving that a thing is impossible and then showing how it could be done. Any number of experts had pronounced that that the Mohne and Eder Dams could not possibly be destroyed by any known means. And then one shows it can be done – but the doing was done by Guy Gibson and 617 Squadron – not by me.*

It will surprise no one who has read Richard Morris's excellent biography that recollections of Guy Gibson are less consistent. This book contains the candid memories of a number of people who, in the brief, highly pressured time before *Operation Chastise*, had varied experiences of the 24-year-old Gibson's leadership. One or two remarks from groundcrew suggest gently that their contribution was perhaps underestimated in the round of post-operation celebration and congratulation. None of the many aircrew I was lucky enough to know would have been remotely surprised at this. Their entirely consistent view was that groundcrew were the unsung heroes of Bomber Command. The list of honours also looks invidious. The pilots, navigators and bomb-aimers of the aircraft that actually attacked the dams were all decorated; except in Gibson's crew, almost all gunners, wireless-operators and flight engineers went unrecognised. It was a rough and ready approach – these matters often are. But the main impression left by the participants of all sorts was that it was worth doing and they were glad to have played their part. Except, perhaps, for the Germans, whose accounts appear here too. Max Arthur includes 35 pages describing the experiences of members of the gun crew on the Mohne Dam and of those who survived the appalling flooding that followed the breaching of the Mohne and Eder Dams.

This book seems to me to paint a balanced, vivid, structured, comprehensive portrait of the raid. Read this alongside John Sweetman's masterly *The Dambusters Raid* and you'll have all you really need on the subject. Stephen Fry says of Max Arthur's book: *I do not believe it has ever been better told.* And one feels especially privileged to hear about it from those – almost all dead now – who were there, saw it and lived it.

Christopher Jary
Author, *Portrait of a Bomber Pilot* □



Australian Battalion Commanders in the Second World War Australian Army History Series) – Garth Pratten

Cambridge University Press; 2009, Hbk, £65, pp456 , ISBN-10: 0521763452

Battalion Command is the pinnacle of the soldiers trade as a commander, as Colonel David Hackworth (after his battalion command) put it in a later war *'you can do so much with a Battalion of men, at Division… you had to be some kind of manager…but if you can manoeuvre six hundred men, you could do near anything with them… take that Battalion and mould it like piece of clay and make them the best fighting force'* that is what the essence of this book is about, moulding that clay to the will of the commander and making it work to the same purpose.

The Australian Army being born of the same mother as the British Army but distant enough to have its own doctrine is an excellent vehicle to study that command. There are few books of such detail and thought about battalion command, (why do so many narratives of the Second World War concentrate on the strategic level command, on the likes Monty and Slim in command of armies). Literature by British or Commonwealth command at this level is particularly thin, I can think of only John Masters 'The Road Past Mandalay' that deals with command in this way and Masters' book is really about observing others and his own temporary command of a Chindit brigade.

Pratten's book deals with battalion command throughout the Australian Army, a predominately infantry force. The AMF has some very relevant lessons with regards to battalion command at any time. Going as it does from the AMF's less than glorious foundations after the Great War, through the Middle East through Tobruk, El Alamein and on into perhaps the lessen known to (UK readers) the Australian Pacific campaign which was markedly different form the much better known US experience.

Pratten makes some excellent observations on battalion command in the Second World War, the clear out of the dead wood of the post Great War army, the youth of the battalion commanders (under 30 in most cases by 1945) and that many after achieving so much returned to civilian life after the war to continue there pre war lives as normal.

Hopefully somewhere someone is working on a similar title with regards to battalion command in the British infantry in the Second World War or perhaps Afghanistan. Afghanistan alone (2006-9) would be a sizeable tome with some very relevant lessons learned, until that appears those taking up battalion command or aspiring to it could do a lot worse than read this excellent history, I leave the final word to one of the finest of Australian Battalion commanders: ' Fred Chilton CO 2/2 Bn, (later Commander 18th Bde) *'there is nothing like a fighting unit, an infantry battalion…the people are the salt of the earth*'

Gerry Long □

Clinton's Secret Wars – the Evolution of a Commander in Chief – Richard Sale

St Martin's Press, 2009, $27.99, pp512, ISBN: 031237366X

Had Bill Clinton become First Man to his wife Hilary, the world might have re-kindled its interest in him. But he did not, and so continues to fade into history. What is remembered of him? "Slick Willie" who dodged the draft, didn't inhale marijuana, and had a penchant for "trailer trash" women. Mostly, Clinton's presidency was 'back in the halcyon days' after the collapse of the USSR and before the calamitous events of the GW Bush Administration.

This book is an unabashed attempt to hasten the analytical process of political history. Happily for those who wish to understand the politico-military nexus, Richard Sale examines Clinton's evolving use of covert and overt forces. Sale is unflinchingly honest about all the figures in this epic, allowing anonymity to few. He extends this "warts and all" treatment to foreign actors also, not sparing even the British. (In this, Sale corroborates Sir Christopher Meyer's contemporaneous observation about the USA's "close relationship" with the UK, rather than "Special Relationship" so trumpeted by British politicians.)

Many of the scenes Sale charts – the venal factionalism within the Administration, the politico-military tensions – are universal to politics. As a Washington insider of long-standing, Sale takes for granted many of the aspects of the Executive (in particular its revolving-door patronage cliques) which are so alien to foreigners; yet in telling his tale Sale lays the Executive's workings bare, such that on one level the politics are irrelevant; rather the institutional mechanics fascinate. Also

laid open is the way in which Administrations of both parties operate internally in much the same way, and the fluid parameters within which the Executive operates: re-configuring according to personality, rather than statute.

The book is divided into three parts: the *Transformational President, Forward to Baghdad, and A Special Kind of Evil: Al Qaeda in the Balkans*. The course of the book jumps about from theatre to theatre, mimicking – perhaps unintentionally – the global jigsaw with which the US President is confronted daily. As the tale unfolds, Clinton's policy team is winnowed and threshed by events, while he himself learns the capability (and limits) of force, of multilateral action, and of intrigue. Clinton's own political acumen and personality increasingly synchronise with these levers of power, resulting in a surprisingly sure grasp of the cut and thrust of international politics, although this is often constrained by domestic political realities: *"It's the economy, stupid!"*

Clinton's Secret Wars makes use of high-level, intimate sources, including many still serving politicians, providing not only the result, but the reason – often all too human in its weakness. The book has a comprehensive bibliography, but as so often, it lacks maps (or any other illustration.) Given the geographical complexities of the theatres, and the passage of time, maps would have been useful to those now more familiar with Iraq or Afghanistan. Similarly, while the impact of 24 hour and satellite television is mentioned, its huge impact – now taken for granted – was first felt on Clinton's watch. There are occasional, distracting, lapses into journalese but otherwise Sale has written an informative and eminently readable account.

To an admirer of Bill Clinton or a student of modern US politics, this book will be a useful addition to their shelves. However, its chief value is for foreigners trying to comprehend the function – and dysfunction - of the US political system. In particular it lays bare for servicemen how the *Highest Commander's* intent is formed (and waivers) and most modern politicians' ignorance of the military "train sets" they control.

This is a superb historical study of almost contemporary politics, which resonates with, and provides depth to, current events and personalities on every page. Some of the more searing criticism can make for uncomfortable reading, but it is highly recommended for those who would understand how policy is decided, and the use of force is managed or mismanaged.

James Spencer □

Oman's Insurgencies – The Sultanate's Struggle for Supremacy – JE Peterson

SAQI, London, £55, Hbk, pp522,
ISBN: 978-0-86356-456-7

Despite its success, there have been few accounts of what happened in Dhofar. Most have been autobiographical, the best from John Graham and Corran Purdon (Commanders Sultan's Armed Forces (CSAF) John Akehurst (brigade command), Tony Jeapes (the role of SAS), Bryan Ray (battalion command) and Ian Gardiner (company operations).

John Peterson provides the nearest we will perhaps ever see of an official history. He is eminently well qualified for the job: an academic historian with specialist knowledge of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf; Deputy Prime Minister for Security and Defence in the Sultanate of Oman; and Official Historian to SAF. He is refreshing in his chronology and analysis. He points to the uniqueness of the particular political circumstances of Oman in general and Dhofar in particular. He traces in detail how a nationalist war of liberation against a conservative Sultan (Qaboos's father) eventually became a Marxist revolutionary movement, backed by all the Communist Powers of the time.

The British policy was that South Arabia and the Gulf would be abandoned by 1971. The Chinese and Soviets seized this opportunity and hence the advent of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf States (PFLOAG), its insurgent leaders trained in Peking and Odessa, with support in terms of arms, advice and training form across the Cold War divide, including North Vietnam, Cuba, Iraq and East Germany.

Peterson demolishes many of the myths that have arisen as to how to 'do' counterinsurgency. The notion that victory might be achieved by deploying special forces alone was clearly not the case. That a counterinsurgency could be fought without helicopters was absurd but this was the situation up until 1971. Troops on the ground were in short supply and UK plc, faced with a considerable deployment to its own counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland, was hard pressed to do much about it. Fortunately, Iran and Jordan thought otherwise given the stakes involved - the real possibility of a pro-Soviet state on the Straits of Hormuz. Peterson reminds us that though declared 'over', the war did not end in December 1975, but went on until 1980. Development in Dhofar and the winning of 'hearts and minds' could only really take off after the insurgent threat had been neutralised, not before. The significant British

contribution was in commanders and leaders, some of the best of their generation, many of whom were to play a considerable role in the Falklands war in 1982. Indeed, this reviewer would go so far as to claim that the Falklands War was 'won' in Dhofar.

Peterson's style of writing is clear and concise. He tries to relate very incident as it arose and in this sense, the chronology is at risk of being criticised as tedious. His appendices are of particular value: a *'Glossary and Gazetteer'; 'Sultanate Command Arrangements'; 'A Chronology of the War in North Oman';* and *'A Chronology of the Dhofar War'.* There are some useful maps but no photographs at all – surely an omission. This is the best to date on Dhofar. At £55 a copy, it will probably best serve as a work of reference and should certainly be made available in every Service library.

David Benest □

Danger Close – Commanding 3 PARA in Afghanistan – Colonel Stuart Tootal DSO OBE,

John Murray, 2009,Hbk, PP 306, £18.99,
ISBN 978-1-84854-256-3,

3 PARA was the first battlegroup to deploy to Helmand Province in 2006 under Operation HERRICK. This is the only account to date written from the perspective of a commanding officer. Tootal recalls his experiences in command from every aspect, coping with uncertainties and when the odds against success were stacked high. He brings home the reality of the non-linear battle space where the CO's Tac party is as likely to be engaged in combat as anyone else: thus leading by example and in the thick of the many engagements with the Taliban was an every day occurrence. The relationships with his operations team are vividly recounted. In addition, he conducted over 120 interviews with soldiers, wives, parents and widows so as to bring home the impact of the tour on the families of those deployed. He recalls the sense of pre-deployment nerves that affect most soldiers, regardless of rank, akin to most experiences of military parachuting. He is open and frank in admitting that adrenalin and fear invariably arise. The account of operations is graphically told. The burden of responsibility in command is ever present, especially as casualties mounted. Tactical decisions, especially whether to abort a mission after discovering that the helicopter LZ was 'hot 'weighed heavily. Above all, the courage and fortitude of the young soldiers shines through on every page.

From a higher perspective, the story almost beggars belief. The assumption that development can precede security is shown for the fallacy it is. The command arrangements were ludicrous and ensured that his brigade commander (Brigadier Ed Butler), despite his extensive personal experience of counterinsurgency, was removed at the *moment critique* from the chain of command. The battle group was pitifully under strength for the task in hand - *'In short , we were fixed and our resources were stretched to breaking point'*(p111). Intelligence on the enemy was abysmal. The bravery of the Chinook pilots (see review of *Immediate Response* – Major Mark Hammond DFC RM – later in this section – Ed), was beyond the call of duty but the failure to provide anywhere near enough helicopters was deplorable. British 0.50 calibre HMG ammunition was 'faulty' and soldiers therefore had to beg, borrow or steal ammunition from NATO partners. MOD reaction to a vivid but factual account by the eminent journalist, Christina Lamb of a contact in Zumbelay village, resulted in a media black out. The policy on R&R, opposed by the Commanding Officer, required every soldier to take 2 weeks leave back in UK, entailing a shortfall of over 100 troops at any one time, as well as greater risk and strain on an inadequate helicopter force. DFID failed even to connect a single washing machine in a hospital. The treatment of the wounded on Ward S4 at Selly Oak Hospital was third rate. Why so many (avoidable) failures of policy?

Tootal resigned his commission soon after the end of the deployment as did one of his company commanders and his brigade commander. The Armed Forces lost not only 15 killed and 46 wounded in the battle group deployment but also three highly talented and experienced leaders. In all, this is a harrowing account of how badly things can go in counterinsurgency and is thus compelling reading. More importantly, it is a stirring account of leadership, moral and physical courage and endurance in the face of adversity.

David Benest □

Immediate Response – Mark Hammond DFC

Penguin, 2009, £17.99, Hbk, pp304,
ISBN: 978 0 718 15474 5

Mark Hammond is a Royal Marine major serving with the RAF as a Chinook pilot. And this book is the story of his time in Afghanistan. It was co-written with Clare MacNaughton presumably because Mark Hammond is not a professional writer

and she provides the breathless prose. And it is terrible – the story is good – and it is worth suffering the abysmal writing to get Hammond's message. One more thing about the writing and then I promise I won't mention it again – she has employed a random effing generator. We know that marines talk in such terms but the book would have been about half the length without them.

Hammond captures the fear and excitement, and allows a glimpse into the world of the support helicopter aircrew. I guess that most of us admire and respect the work of the Chinook crews. No-one has yet died in an accident in a RAF Chinook in Iraq or Afghanistan, nor have we lost a serviceman/woman (known hereafter as a soldier for reasons of brevity) to enemy action in one. Aircraft have been downed and men wounded in them, but no-one killed – and this story helps to explain why the RAF has such a good record.

The dedication and professionalism shines through; although you won't get much in the way of insights into their methods. This is a book about impressions, there is no analysis and I suspect that Hammond is that sort of a chap – an action man, not an ideas man. If I am wrong, well he has Clare to blame, not me. He revels in his world of the highly competent jack-the-lad aviator. The combination of marine and pilot is irresistible – to him. And all your prejudices and pre-conceptions are pandered to, to an almost unbelievable extent. Apart from some mawkish sentimentality, Hammond appears to have no thoughts beyond banter, his mates, bawdy good humour and how wonderful – sorry, how awesome – the Chinook is.

If Hammond was a corporal or a subaltern, the absence of deep reflection would be understandable, damn it he is a field officer – a major, and a Marine major and pilot at that, who is earning markedly more than his brown apparently equally ranked infantry colleague. But maybe it is me getting it wrong. Do I want to be flown by a couth, educated and cultured man who writes sonnets to while away the time between sorties? Well, not if the better pilot is the rude, crude, professional Hammond.

Hammond hints at that by his dismissal of an AAC squadron commander (major): *He seemed to me to be everything I most disliked in an Army Air Corps officer, an ambitious promotion thruster who just happened also to be a pilot.* Except for the tautology, Hammond is pretty straightforward. Apart from detesting REMFs, he is largely free from bile and criticism of others. Whether he (or Clare) means to or not, he does let us into this closed world of the aircrew. It is a very self-centred world and he seems to have spent little time with other parts of the Force in Helmand. In fairness, the intensity of the operations may prevent such activity.

Yet I rather suspect that (I can feel Hammond sneering at that 'rather') I am simply misunderstanding his position. I imagined that he was a sort of flight commander, who also happens to captain a Chinook. And that he has responsibilities beyond his crew and flying. When in fact he was an aircraft captain who was given extra responsibilities on an ad hoc basis. It would have been useful to have that spelt out – Clare probably felt that it would have got in the way of a good read. She's probably right; I just thought that a bit of education would not have gone amiss.

A trick was missed, an opportunity to educate was overlooked: why do RAF aircrew (and I understand AAC aircrew) do short tours? I can guess at the reasons – I even know some of them, but Hammond might have used this book to explain why a 6 month tour is too long. A book like this shouldn't be just an exercise in showing off – it is fair that he (Clare) tells us of the difficult and the dangerous, but we could have gained far more understanding of the stresses and strains and even of some of the technicalities of flying. But that would have taken a better writer – and we had Clare.

In a way I admire Hammond's approach. Of course, I admire his flying skills and courage – that is easy to do. He lives for flying and he is in a system that will let him do that – which permits high levels of professionalism. Maybe we could learn from that.

General Rupert Smith has a way of classifying soldiers[1]– implementers and innovators (the RHA have a similar idea: benefiters and contributors). Broadly speaking the higher the rank the more the holder moves towards innovation. I guess that where many in the army diverge from General Smith's analysis is the numbers in each group. You don't need many innovators and we have an army where too many try to be innovators. RAF aircrew probably get this balance better than we do. The RAF lets their people fly if that is their thing; hence the specialist aircrew system – experienced (elderly?) flight lieutenants (a good blend of mainly implementer with a dash of innovation) on wing commander's rates of pay. This achieves real expertise. Clearly our soldiers can achieve this expertise because they spend most of their time at regimental duty. Our need is to achieve something similar to that for most officers – ie more time as a platoon commander, more time as a company commander – maybe ops offrs should be second tour company commander types? In other words let those who want to be warriors be warriors, much as the RAF lets aviators be aviators. Subject, of course, to fitness.

I am grateful to Clare for sparing us Hammond's life history. Too many of these books spend pages on where the author grew up, his mother's cooking, his father's jokes and how blissful/tough his school was. We have been spared, too, the usual stuff about early training and how hard commando/para/flying training is, and how he achieved an 'A' grading on the Health and Safety course. Rightly the book concentrates on Afghanistan.

To recap – rubbish book, great story – worth buying (in paperback).

1 In his reply to the Palmer Report, General Sir Rupert Smith then a brigade commander wrote:

The third issue that needs to be addressed is to answer the question: What does the army want commissioned officers for in the future? Of course, it needs leaders but not all our leaders are commissioned nor need they be. I suggest that up to now we have required our commissioned officers to implement and innovate, as well as lead. At the risk of over simplification, our NCOs & WOs implement and hardly innovate, our 2/lts - majors do both and lt cols and above innovate more than they implement. In an essentially practical profession like ours you cannot innovate satisfactorily unless you have the experience of implementation to go with the required intelligence and imagination. Thus we have required our commissioned officers to spend a period, with the benefit of an experienced NCO or WO implementer at their elbows, of apprenticeship before we examine them for promotion and stream those judged to be the best potential innovators through Camberley. I am sure we want the innovators but do we need so many commissioned implementers in the future?

If, against the background of social change, agreement can be reached as to the purpose of the Army in the 21 Century and the role of its commissioned officers then some valid solutions can be found to the problems identified in your Terms of Reference. My own view is that we should:

a. *Reduce our requirement for commissioned officers.*

b. *Expand the responsibilities of the Sgts Mess.*

c. *Make the zoning for promotion etc more flexible.*

By reducing the requirement for commissioned officers I mean that we should set out to recruit only our potential innovators. To over simplify again, we should aim to recruit our Camberley entry plus a percentage for wastage and mistakes *(Editor's emphasis – the Staff College annual entry (1986) for British Army officers was 120 and the army strength (TAM/TAF) was 145,423).* □

The Making of the British Army – Allan Mallinson

Bantam Press, 2009, £20, pp480,
ISBN: 0593051084

In the 14 years and 2 terms I was privileged to spend on the academic staff of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the Royal Memorial Chapel figured prominently in my life. During that time I must have sat through hundreds of sermons. Most were mundane: only one was memorable and that was given by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie. He won an MC in 1944 in Normandy as a subaltern in the Guards Armoured Division. A fellow officer at the time, the redoubtable Willie Whitelaw, often remarked subsequently that he took profound comfort from the fact that he had heard the future Archbishop of Canterbury utter the F word!

The Archbishop preached a sermon on the "Just War." To my recollection it was the only time in all those years that this subject was ever addressed. Maybe the sermons became more uplifting and relevant after I left (in 1984): certainly the recently retired Chief of the General Staff, Sir Richard Dannatt referred to the Christian ethos of the British Army. But for more lowly souls such as myself it is no wonder I spent so much time reading the memorial plates to the British infantry regiments that adorned the pillars in the chapel.

I justify such distractions by claiming that this gave me an insight into at least a part of the British Army, for these memorials were almost exclusively infantry and cavalry.

Does Allan Mallinson's book give me a feel for the British Army?

It is a mammoth tome and hugely ambitious in its scope but I fear it pleases and disappoints in equal measure. The author is at his best in the formative years of his account and the post Second World War period.

At the start he takes the reader back to the English Civil War, through to the early 19th century and the defeat of Napoleon. Here the story develops in the best traditions of English military history and the writing is at times outstanding in the quality of its prose.

My first grunt of disapproval comes with the war of 1812, which for some reason the author chooses to dismiss as a footnote. The question I wanted answered was how come an army, which fought under Wellington in the Peninsular and from which some of its regiments were then transferred to North America, were soundly trounced at the Battle of New Orleans? The author dismisses this little war as "unworthy of study" which frankly is just not good enough.

By the time *The Making of the British Army* reaches the outbreak of the First World War we are reading an account which is heavily biased towards infantry and cavalry. This is not my field of specialism in military history but if the Great War was anything it was surely also a war of artillery and how this critical arm was developed and equipped and performed is covered in a superficial manner.

Similarly, at the end of the First World War and as the army reverted to its peacetime posture, it underwent the trauma of the Irish Rebellion. What happened to the Irish regiments, especially those recruited beyond the Six Counties? Where were they deployed? And what happened to the officers and men with the creation of the Irish state? Again, Allan Mallinson has little to offer yet he does cover the mutiny at the Curragh before the outbreak of the First World War. Perhaps he has a

justification for his selection of episodes but does not share this with the reader.

The interwar years were a time of stagnation which this author covers extremely well. But it was also a period of imperial policing in some very nasty parts of the world. Returning to my preferred reading during Academy Sundays, many names on the memorials listed campaigns in Mesopotamia, Waziristan, Afghanistan, Burma, China, Palestine and bits of Africa, etc. Allan Mallinson makes much – and correctly too – of the searing experience of divisional commanders in 1939 who had fought in the trenches a quarter of a century earlier. But others too, notably the redoubtable Bill Slim, arguably the finest British Army Commander of them all, had also learned his trade in pursuit of the "Great Game."

So by the time that Allan Mallinson addresses the Second World War there are gaps in his account. One in particular is that of officer education and training. Woolwich has some coverage, Sandhurst very little and the East India Company's Officer Cadet College even less. The Staff College at Camberley has a sentence or two but he leaves us with no idea of what was taught in any of these establishments and whether it mattered to an officer's career. Allan Mallinson is outstandingly good at describing in intimate detail the relative qualities of the Lee Enfield and the standard of musketry but does not address professional development.

To this reviewer's mind these are important questions if we are to take the title of this book at its face value. Any reader would interpret the words "The Making" to refer to professional development of its soldiers and their terms of service as much as to the technical side of their weaponry.

The treatment of the Second World War is better than that of the Great War. But again there is vast canvas to paint and the author has to be selective. Successful battles such as El Alamein are given wide coverage and the Eighth Army is discussed in detail. Was it as good as Allan Mallinson maintains? Other writers have pointed to its weaknesses and even Montgomery himself described its morale as "brittle." Much of this comes to the fore of course, when the Eighth Army finds itself into the heart- and back-breaking campaigns slogging its way up the length of the Italian Peninsula. This period receives little cover and Cassino, that great clash of opposing forces in a series of battles more reminiscent of the Great War, has no mention of any consequence.

Normandy and the advance through Europe provide some interesting insights. But of course one is spoilt because Allan Mallinson's chapters do not stand comparison with the impressive account, albeit in much greater detail, in Anthony Beevor's latest book.

Some of the best chapters in *"The Making of the British Army"* are those dealing with the post war period through to the present day. Even so it was always my understanding that the deployment of the 1st British Armoured Division from BAOR to Saudi Arabia in 1990 was anything but smooth. I remember conversations with its commander, Rupert Smith, which left me with the impression that the whole of BAOR had to be scoured and plundered to produce two brigades of armoured fighting vehicles. The long drawn-out struggle then to have the main battle tanks modified for desert warfare by the industrial suppliers was a nightmare.

In these pages of the post war period the author still persists with the throwaway lines which are such a distraction. For example he describes Dag Hammarskjöld as, "The UN's second finest Secretary General." Who was the first, who came third, were questions that came to mind rather than the text.

Was Afghanistan such a resounding success in the early stages? Yes, the US-led forces along with their Northern Alliance allies liberated Kabul and hurled the Taliban and Al Qaeda back to the borders of Pakistan. But if more troops had been deployed in the final operations at Tora Bora and the escape routes denied maybe we would not be there now.

The final pages – covering Chapter 32 *"The Army Falters"* and *"The Epilogue"* – are outstanding. The trials and tribulations suffered by the army in Basra, after the liberation of Iraq, are sensitively handled but with honesty and integrity. There is blame to be attached and the author apportions it with justice. But then as Mr Mallinson points out in 300 years of history there have been a fair share of setbacks. The great strength of the British Army is its ability to learn on the job and put matters right.

The author makes an eloquent defence of the need for infantry even at the price of super carriers and more Typhoons and it is very hard not to agree with this statement that, *"Afghanistan is more Victoria's wars than network-enabled."* One interesting aside is whether Mr Mallinson feels that the army of today is very different in terms of its social makeup from that of Queen Victoria's, and even earlier. An interesting statistic he provides, which will doubtless fuel the cries of those who still see the army as an exclusive public school preserve, is that it is the main source of employment for young men leaving Eton.

So overall a worthy read and for those who are not familiar with the history of the British Army there is much to enjoy. A good Christmas present, especially if the buyer goes on line rather than paying the RRP – but then that is why the High Street bookshops are disappearing.

Eric Morris □

The Scientific Way of Warfare: Order and Chaos on the Battlefields of Modernity – Antoine Bousquet

Hurst Publishers Ltd, 2009, £15.99, Pbk, pp276,
ISBN: 978-1-85065-945-7

Antoine Bousquet is a lecturer in International Relations at Birkbeck College, University of London and this book is the product of his doctrinal thesis. It is an examination of the relationship between warfare and science, and how, as the author states:

> *'…the manner in which scientific ideas have been systematically recruited to inform thinking about the very nature of combat and the forms of military organisation best suited to prevail.'*

He postulates that since the first real impact of science on warfare there have been four different scientific ways of warfare which he categorises as: *mechanistic, thermodynamic, cybernetic and chaoplexic*. Each he characterises by a key technology (the clock, the engine, the computer and the 'network' respectively) which, with their associated scientific concepts, act as metaphors for the resulting form of warfare. The underlying premise is that throughout the history of modern warfare the military has continually turned to science in its attempts to impose order on the chaos of the battlefield.

The *mechanistic* way of warfare was that which existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Characterised by drill and rigid tactical deployments, it imposed order through the creation of military organisations that worked like 'clockwork'. The author cites the example of the Prussian Army of Frederick the Great as the zenith of this form of warfare. The *thermodynamic* way of warfare spanned the Napoleonic era through to the end of the Second World War. Powered by the engine, a form of warfare emerged that was characterised by mobilisation, motorisation and industrialisation and reached its pinnacle with the use of the atomic bomb at the end of the Second World War. The third period of warfare, *cybernetics,* brings us closer to today with the automation of command and control enabled by the computer, with the Cold War as its peak. The author postulates that the final, *chaoplexic*, way of warfare is where we are moving to now. It is characterised by the central tenets of what the Americans call Network-Centric Warfare (NCW) or in the UK, Network Enabled Capability (NEC).

Bousquet's coverage of the first three ways of warfare is very much an historical review. His perspective provides some interesting and novel views on the development of warfare over the last three hundred years. His approach is very academic; as a result this is a very rich and erudite text, but at times a little hard going. It is really only in the last third of the book that he tackles some of the issues that, I suspect, the average reader of the **BAR** might be interested to explore.

In this final section of the book his central premise on chaoplexic warfare is that:

> *'…despite a clear move in the direction of a new non-linear way of warfare, network-centric warfare still remains mired in cybernetic conceptions.'*

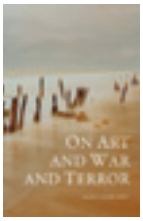
By this he means that progress to date has, and remains, largely in the automation and computerisation of command and control systems. It has not delivered the radical organisational and conceptual changes necessary to enable the transformation of warfare envisaged by the original NCW gurus such as Alberts, Gartska, Stein and Cebrowski. He does however recognise the difficulties in doing this and the dichotomies it raises. Improvements in the 'network', enabled by high-speed data links, will create superior battlefield situational awareness and allow the 'network' to become all pervading. This leaves a wide left and right of arc in our choice of how to exploit the opportunity. On one hand increased connectivity, and the consequent wealth of information, would enable a very strong centralised control to be exercised by a commander with a very flat command structure. Alternatively, the perfect omnipresent, network could allow all force elements, however small, to have the same shared situational awareness and therefore enable the self-synchronized 'swarming' behaviour envisaged by NCW purists. Bousquet suggests that although these possibilities are starting to emerge, the issue remains the military's ability to effect change.

> *'According to network-centric warfare, these huge volumes of information and the resulting superior battlefield knowledge are supposed to be the basis on which force-multiplying decentralisation and self-synchronisation can be achieved. However, such a scheme jars with much of the historical evidence on the successful practices pertaining to the organisation of armies.'*

It would be easy to dismiss this book as specialist academic territory and indeed the first two thirds would probably fall into that category. However, the final third asks, and in part answers, some of the fundamental questions that we need to address before we continue our NCW and NEC quests. Not the least of these is, do we have the intent, vision, culture, and resources necessary to fully achieve the full potential or are we

content just to automate our existing processes?

Colonel Iain Standen
Defence Network Enabled Capability Programme Office □



On Art and War and Terror – Alex Danchev

Edinburgh University Press, 2009, pp256,
Hbk, £60.00, ISBN: 9780748639151

Even after having worked my way twice through Alex Danchev's new collection of essays, I'm still unsure how to review it. What I am confident about is that this book will neither become a bestseller, nor is it likely to be on many Christmas lists. It is, nonetheless, remarkable, taking the reader from Seamus Heaney to *In the Valley of Elah*, from Georges Braque to Tony Blair, from Liddell Hart to Lynndie England. It certainly merits our attention.

Danchev is a name with which the reader may already be familiar. In more distant times he was an Army officer (John Keegan is on record as saying he was "*one of the two most brilliant people he taught at Sandhurst*") and, in due course, a successful academic – professor of politics at Nottingham University. Since the early 90s, he has published or edited over 50 books, notably including an award-winning biography of Liddell Hart and as co-editor of the bestselling *Alanbrooke Diaries* in 2001. However, Danchev has ventured far beyond the field of "drums and trumpets" military history in his work; he is a genuine polymath, even considering how often the term is overused.

According to Danchev, the aim of this collection is to "put the imagination to work in the service of historical, political and ethical inquiry." This is an ambitious, worthwhile and truly multi-disciplinary aim. What it means, practically, is that Danchev offers the reader 10 essays on subjects as wide ranging as Waugh's "Sword of Honour" trilogy, Gerhard Richter's artworks inspired by the Baader-Meinhof terrorist group, and "War Photography and the ethics of responsibility." The linking thesis is that poetry, fiction, diaries and art, in its widest sense; not only matter to us as things of beauty in themselves but as ways of better interpreting the world around us, and its history. "Armed with art," Danchev claims in his introduction, "we are more alert and less deceived."

Whether Danchev achieves this aim, or not, is arguable. In such a diverse collection, it would be unusual if readers did not find some of the essays more convincing than others. Danchev's analysis of Evelyn Waugh and other literature of the Second World War is compelling in its conclusion that their fictions often tell truths that histories do not. Similarly in dealing with Alanbrooke as diarist, Danchev highlights the pressures and "torque of mutable feeling" which impact on these records, but which make them nonetheless valuable. In recounting the shameful catalogue of interrogation methods used by the "night shift" teams at Abu Ghraib, Danchev quotes from Kafka and Camus to reinforce the humiliation and shame that these acts bring upon us all. In the final two essays, Danchev examines how film has dealt with the so-called global war on terror, and, starting from an analysis of the codewords and hidden meanings in this and previous conflicts, the tension between civilised and barbaric behaviours. Both are fresh and original.

Other essays are less effective. Danchev is clearly no fan of Tony Blair's, but I found it a stretch to make the leap from describing the provenance of the Braque painting "The Guitar Player" to a discussion of the abuse of authenticity in politics. Likewise, Danchev invites us to consider Richter's Baader-Meinhof artworks in terms of the moral responsibility of the artist, but without much conclusion. The essay on war photography (which Danchev considers to be "the new war poetry") begins promisingly. Don McCullin's famous Vietnam–era photograph of a US Marine's thousand yard stare is compared with a Goya sketch of Wellington. However, despite Danchev's erudite prose, the narrative thread lacks conviction. Occasionally, the prose itself grates. Frank McLynn has written of Danchev's writing overfilled with "*gnomic utterances and learned asides, the relevance of which often escaped me.*" The use of illustrations in the essays – especially on visual media – is also variable.

Overall, this is far from an easy read. War historians may appreciate new perspectives on Alanbrooke, or Liddell Hart (although these essays are reworked versions of writing previously published), and the inter-disciplinary scholars may admire the overall approach. The footnoting and referencing is impeccable but occasionally intrusive, whilst the index is thorough. But the whole is somehow less than the sum of the parts, which is disappointing when the aim is so original and thought-provoking. Danchev quotes Seamus Heaney: "*The imaginative transformation of human life is the means by which we can most truly grasp and comprehend it.*" In a few of these essays Danchev demonstrates that he has the ability to show how this might be, but he demands much of the reader in so doing.

Bruce Pennell □

18 Platoon – Sydney Jary MC

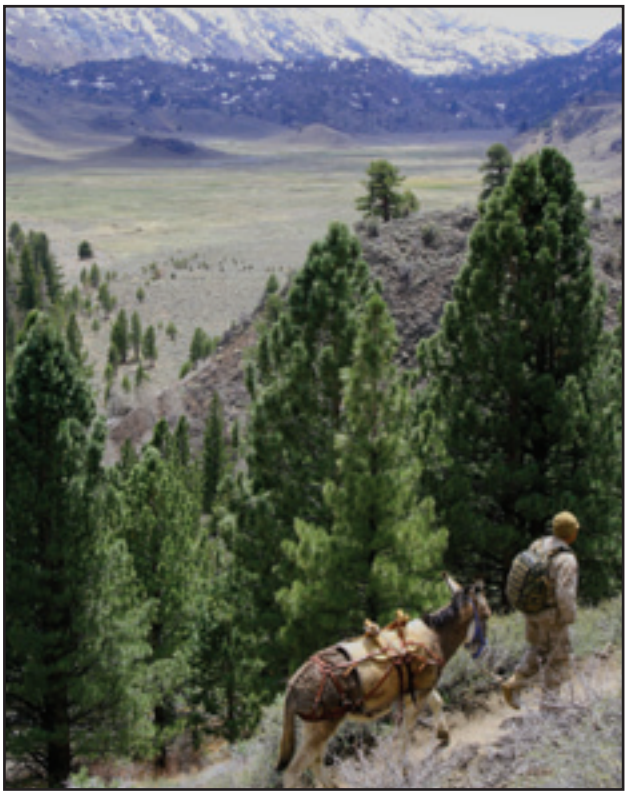
RHQ The Rifles, 14 Mount St, Taunton,
Somerset TA1 3QE - 01823 333434
Email: taunton@the-rifles.co.uk
6th Edition, Hbk, pp 138, ISBN: 1 901655 01 6

USMC Mountain warfare mule

I doubt that there are many privately published books on their 6th edition. So, there must be a reason for the phenomenon of **18 Platoon**. And that reason is quite simple: it is about fighting a platoon in a major war. There aren't many books about fighting a platoon in North West Europe in 1944/45 and the reason for that is simple, too: not many platoon commanders survived to do so.

The casualty rates for platoon commanders fighting in Normandy in 1944 were on a par with the worst battles of the Western Front. The older and more senior survivors probably found themselves commanding companies or in battalion headquarters for the latter stages of the campaign. Sydney Jary was 19, and even in war, 19 year olds didn't command companies. Although Sydney took over D Company, 4th Battalion Somerset Light Infantry for 48 hours of fierce fighting at Mount Pincon when his company commander was severely wounded and the replacement was found wanting. As Dennis Clarke MC, his estimable and elderly (34) FOO said, *" A grown-up will take over soon, sonny".*

Now take out from the survivors those who can't write, those who don't want to write and those who weren't very good – even in wartime some not-so-goods survive intact, in command. And of those who do get published, how many just write about the fighting? Precious few. The British Army has had plenty of experience in fighting since the end of World War 2, but I doubt that any post-Second War soldier has participated in as many intense fights as a 21 Army Group infantry soldier. Look at Sydney Jary's sub-campaigns: Normandy, The Seine, Market Garden, Groesbeek, The Winter Battles, Cleve, Across the Rhine and the nasty slog to Bremerhaven. Eight parts to the main campaign – and how many battles, recces, fighting patrols, night patrols, ambushes,



MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER, BRIDGEPORT, Calif. - A Marine with a company from 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, US Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command leads his mule during a mule and troop movement. Marines and Sailors went through mule packing classes here April 26, 2009. (US Marine Corps photo)

reliefs in place, advances to contact, trenches dug, meals missed does that amount to? A lot. And not many men actually did the lot. Infantrymen, tank crews, artillery observers and some sappers took the brunt – and even then few went from Normandy beach to the Baltic as part of a platoon or a troop. No goretex, no waterproofs, no sleeping bags, no rucksacks – just itchy, absorbent battle dress, leather soled boots, '37 Pattern Webbing and tins of 'Meat and Veg'.

Incidentally, one of things that mystifies Sydney Jary is the weight that our modern soldiers carry. Sydney, with Michael Crawshaw (previous editor of BAR), was a tireless campaigner for the 'Bren Gun Carrier'. They recognised the need for a basic load carrying vehicle at platoon level – a mechanical 'Mule'. The soldiers of 21 Army Group had a good administrative system to support them in the front line. Post arrived regularly (as it did to the BEF in WW1), cooked hot food, ammo and spares were brought forward to them and BCRs were drafted in as needed – noting that the army was short of infantryman then, as it is today. No one expected soldiers to fight with their large pack on their back. However good the explanation for the equipment carried by an infantryman in Afghanistan, the Sydneys of this world will wonder if that is really wise and would suggest that some discretion is in order – and a modern load carrier please.

Understandably, many authors of war memoirs spend time on their early life or the Regiment in peace and war. And they often make for good reading – an outstanding example is General David Fraser's – **Wars and Shadows**. But Sydney Jary writes about fighting a platoon, which includes the men in it. The men of 18 Platoon fought a decent war, as he says *"Aggression increases the farther one goes behind the lines"*, and he lists the qualities of a soldier,

Bren Gun Carrier

> *"..sufferance, without which one couldn't survive…a quiet mind, which enables a soldier to live in harmony…a sense of the ridiculous which helps a soldier to surmount the unacceptable. Add to these a reasonable standard of physical fitness and a dedicated professional competence, and you have a soldier for all seasons."*

British soldiers with wounded on pack mules travelling over rough terrain (IWM)

I wonder if the Army Training and Recruiting Agency uses that formula? Does the Military Secretary appoint on these criteria? Do cadre courses test for harmony and a sense of the ridiculous? Well, if you do, then I suggest that you have an army that will not perpetrate atrocities. An infantry company in an occupied country in war which hands back to the German owner the silver cutlery it borrowed for dinner is unlikely to kill prisoners or rape women.

These men out-fought the Germans. They did not manage it immediately, but once they had gained the bitter experience they beat the Wehrmacht. **18 Platoon** took on Panzer troops, Fallschirmjaeger and SS troops. They killed and captured at a most favourable ratio. Indeed, **18 Platoon** led the 2nd Army advance from Cleve to Bedburg at a rate of 3 miles in the morning, pretty good going for a dismounted platoon with no artillery or armour support, brushing aside the opposition by their skill and manoeuvre. Of course, it came at a price: 4 Som LI lost 47 officers and 1,266 soldiers killed or wounded from Normandy to North Germany, (the battalion establishment was 36 + 809). It is possible to fight hard and decently and 18 Platoon explains why it is that the British Army can do that. Our Army's record is not perfect, just better than any other.

In a sense Sydney Jary has never grown up. He left the Army in 1947 from Palestine and built up a successful business as a publisher. So, his military experience stopped at the platoon level and he has been left uncorrupted by the experience of more senior command in a peacetime army, which has allowed him to write solely about the platoon at war. The success of 18 Platoon and its enduring appeal to a new generation of soldiers is easy to understand when you have read this short and simply written book by a good soldier and writer.

John Wilson □

The Insurgent Archipelago: From Mao to Bin Laden - John Mackinlay

Hurst and Company, 2009, £20, 292 pages + vii,
ISBN: 1 84904013 3

John Mackinlay has been thinking about insurgency and counterinsurgency in one way or another for the better part of a lifetime, from 1964 when he first reported for duty in Borneo as a junior officer in the 6th Gurkha Rifles, and then after a twenty-year military career as a research academic during which time he has written many highly regarded scholarly articles and monographs on the subject. This book, *The Insurgent Archipelago*, is the product of those many years of observation and thought. It is an important book because unusually for the insurgency and counterinsurgency literature which, as I shall describe below, is relatively slow-moving, and repetitive (even static), it has something new to say. It is a timely book because eight years into the inaptly named 'Global War on Terror', about which Mackinlay says insightful and needful things, with the cost in blood and treasure of the two major expeditionary campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan far exceeding the hopes and expectations of those who launched them, and with meaningful success still elusive, it is past time for a strategic rethink. This elegantly written book, without jargon and largely unburdened by academic hokum, provides an essential guide to the 'when the rubber hits the road' issues of global insurgency, what it is, how to understand it, and, possibly, how to deal with it.

But by way of full disclosure before I review the book's most important findings I should tell a short story. Just over five years ago I was sat with John Mackinlay on the pleasant terrace of Somerset House on The Strand, which is located beside King's College London, where we both have the pleasure of working in the War Studies Department, talking about an article I was writing on the adaptation of land forces to operating in the environment which Rupert Smith describes as 'amongst the people'.[1] This was a new area of research for me and so, naturally, I craved the advice of the most knowledgeable of my more senior colleagues on the matter: John Mackinlay. 'You've got a lot to learn about insurgency', he remarked after hearing my plan. I write this for three reasons. First, obviously, because I must declare a bias in reviewing the book of a colleague whom I admire and with whom I work closely; second, because it illustrates, I think, one of Mackinlay's qualities—he is willing to speak uncomfortable truths; and third because he is a good teacher. I did indeed have a lot to learn and I did so in substantial part by listening to what he had to say. Readers of this book will have a similar experience. He has the knack for, as the Americans put it, 'cutting to the chase'—demystifying a (now) highly popular subject plagued by too much punditry and humbuggery, cutting away extraneous and tangential detail to focus on the underlying dynamics of the phenomenon under study.

The book is sweeping, as the subtitle 'From Mao to Bin Laden' suggests; yet it is also admirably succinct at 292 pages including notes and index.[2] In design it is exceedingly clear, consisting of three parts—'Maoism', 'Post-Maoism', and 'Responding to Post-Maoism', which reflect the basic components of his argument. Insurgency's classical form is the brainchild of the carnivorously ambitious strategic and political genius Mao Zedong who gave meaning to the now familiar bumper sticker that insurgency is '80 per cent political and 20 per cent military'. Mao's innovation was to figure out what to fill that 80 per cent with: industrial scale political subversion by which he was able to harness the latent power of an aggrieved population to the wagon of political change, to whit the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in the Chinese Civil War which ended with the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949.[3] This 'Maoist prototype' of insurgency was subsequently adopted and adapted widely by various revolutionaries in the course of the myriad 'wars of national liberation' which wracked the decolonizing world from the 1940s through to the beginning of the 1970s. Western countries, most notably Britain, in turn, developed techniques of defeating Maoism which were laid down in doctrine and in quasi-doctrinal works such as those of Thompson, Galula, and Kitson.[4] Though unevenly applied in practice and repeatedly forgotten by the major armies of the world, there exists a well-developed body of theory informed by practice for defeating Maoism. The celebrated US Army/Marine Corps field manual FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* represents something of an apotheosis of this genre.[5]

The problem is that what we now face in the form of 'global insurgency' is not Maoism but *Post-Maoism*—a form of insurgency which differs significantly from that which preceded it.[6] We have, in essence, been searching for the right tool to defeat today's most virulent insurgency in the wrong conceptual tool box. This is perhaps the most uncomfortable truth to be laid out in this book; another worrying one is that the security interests of Western Europe differ markedly from those of the United States—because the threat in the former emerges from their own undigested Muslim minorities which are alienated further by their involvement in expeditionary campaigns which, arguably at least, serve the needs of the latter well enough. But there are many other useful observations in the book which, perforce, in the interests of time and space I shall aggregate and summarize them into just two for the purposes of this review.

The first of these is that whereas the study of insurgency and

counterinsurgency has been static and repetitive for decades, meticulously combing through the same campaigns—Malaya, Vietnam and Algeria, for the most part—and, more or less, coming up with the same conclusions,[7] the *practice of* insurgency has not; it is constantly changing and therefore what worked to defeat it in the past may not necessarily work again. The second is that insurgency naturally reflects the society from which it emerges. Insurgents exploit the features of whatever terrain that is available to them in order to offset the gross disproportion of their military strength as opposed to that of the government and its security forces which they oppose. If what's available is steaming jungle then it is beneath its leaf-thatched and leach-infested canopy that they will make their encampments; if it is trackless desert then like Lawrence of Arabia it is in that vastness that they will lose themselves; similarly, if it is dense urban conglomeration that defines their territory than they will hide in plain sight in the anonymous multitude; and if, as Mackinlay argues, their milieu is the increasingly globally networked and borderless human society that will mean that it is the 'virtual territories of the mind' that they will seek to exploit. This is not so much true of the counterinsurgent, however, because the counterinsurgent possesses infinitely more baggage—a fact which was apprehended so clearly and presciently by C.E. Callwell a hundred years ago when he observed that the fundamental asymmetry between insurgency and counterinsurgency lies in the fact that, while tactics favour the regular army, strategy favours the irregular.[8] Insurgency naturally reflects the society from which it emerges; counterinsurgency, by contrast, must consciously laboriously adapt structure, organization, and mindset to the realities of the new environment. If the insurgent is the proverbial 'fish' swimming amongst the sea of the people, as Mao put it, the counterinsurgent tends to be the metaphorical fish out of water.

This is not a book to be agreed with a *priori*; Mackinlay has a story to tell—albeit a carefully constructed one informed by a lifetime of study—but a story nonetheless which he invites the reader to come along with. Not all readers will or necessarily should. Rather this is a book to be challenged by, to consider carefully and deliberately, and to debate. I myself who have good reason to agree with most of it cannot bring myself to agree with all of it. Mackinlay, for instance, identifies Propaganda of the Deed as the essence of the global insurgent's concept of operations. He maintains that it is solely a tool of the insurgent and not one available to the counterinsurgent. I personally am not ready to concede that point—though to Mackinlay's credit I have not a better theory yet. I am, instead, simply reminded of Galula's famous injunction about the asymmetry of insurgent and counterinsurgent propaganda:

> *The insurgent, having no responsibility, is free to use every trick […] Consequently, propaganda is a powerful weapon for him […] The counterinsurgent is tied to his responsibilities and to his past, and for him, facts speak louder than words […] For him, propaganda can be no more than a secondary weapon, valuable only if intended to inform and not to fool.*[9]

There is much wisdom in what Galula says in general but this passage in particular represents one of the most fundamental and widespread theoretical mistake in the entire literature. Facts speak louder than words for both sides; both sides strive to shape the information environment in part through harnessing the media; in crude terms, the job of the counterinsurgent propagandist is to make the insurgents stand up for their actions.[10]

But this is also why the book is to be treasured for what Mackinlay does, unusually for this literature, is say something *new*. With *The Insurgent Archipelago* he has planted a flag on new territory which others may explore too, to contest or to confirm. His theory is complete and clearly articulated and sorely needed. It deserves to be apprehended by all those whose task it is to defeat the challenges posed to the post-industrial West by global insurgency. Looking for the cutting edge of theory on insurgency and counterinsurgency? Here it is.

David Betz

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1 Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2006).

2 Compare this with Robert Asprey's two-volume 2000 plus pages *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2002) which says much less in almost ten times the length.

3 See Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005).

4 See Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer, 2005—originally published 1966); David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964); and, Frank Kitson, *Low-intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peacekeeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971).

5 United States Army and Marine Corps, FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

6 On 'global insurgency' see David Kilcullen, 'Countering Global Insurgency', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2005), 597–617, and by the same author *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (London: Hurst, 2009).

7 There is little difference in the spirit or even the detail of the principles of counterinsurgency outlined by Thompson, Galula, or Kiston, noted above, or for that matter in Charles Gwynn's *Imperial Policing* (London: Macmillan, 1934).

8 C.E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (London: HMSO, 1906), 85.

9 Galula, 14.

10 See Neville Bolt and David Betz, *Propaganda of the Deed 2008: Understanding the Phenomenon* (London: RUSI, 2008). □

Northern Ireland – The Politics of War and Peace - Paul Dixon

Palgrave, Second Edition, 2008, pp 405,
ISBN 10: 0-230-50779-4

Paul Dixon is a senior lecturer at Kingston University. His account of Northern Ireland is thus from an academic rather than a military perspective. He covers the history of the Northern Irish conflict through the lenses of: *Power, Ideology And Reality; Partition and Civil Rights; the Crisis of Policy 1968-73*; the *First Peace Process 1972-4; Withdrawal to Integration 1974 -81; the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement; and the Good Friday Agreement* et seq since 1998. The political ground is thus well covered. This is an ideal text book for those wishing to understand how, why and where we have come from over the past century. It has received judicious acclaim from seriously well placed academics such as Paul Bew and Jonathan Tongue. It is not an easy read but Paul Dixon, nevertheless, covers his ground admirably.

David Benest □

Cavalier and Roundhead Spies: Intelligence in the Civil War and Commonwealth - Julian Whitehead

Pen and Sword, 2009, Hbk; £19.99 , pp 243,
ISBN: 978 1 84415 957 4

Cavalier and Roundhead Spies is an unusual hybrid: it combines a military history of the English Civil War and Commonwealth period (1649-60) with a commentary on the role that intelligence played, at least where evidence allows. The Commonwealth era occupies over half the book, but the descriptions of the infamous Rule of the Major Generals and the collapse of the army junta in 1659 following Oliver Cromwell's death and his son Richard's disinclination to assume the Lord Protector's mantle make interesting reading.

The role of General George Monck is common knowledge to the successors of those hardy men who spent three cold weeks in a muddy village aptly named Coldstream in December 1659, but is not so well known to others. With good intelligence, Monck, a former royalist and now Parliamentarian General Officer Commanding Scotland, who was more fearful of anarchy than monarchy, set out for London on 1st January 1660 to oversee the recalled 'Convention' Parliament which debated the return of King Charles the Second. While based in Berwick, Monck used 'commissioners' and paid agents to keep him in touch with events across England and Ireland: he was giving instructions to trusted people in places as far away as West Cornwall. In late 1659, Monck interpreted the signs of growing popular feeling against the army-backed London government well: his march Southwards was unopposed as a result.

The author of *Cavalier and Roundhead Spies*, Julian Whitehead, was commissioned into the Intelligence Corps in 1966 and has combined historical interests with Service knowledge to produce this account of 'intelligence' in its broadest sense during this turbulent period. The Preface, however, reads like the opening Royal Military Academy Sandhurst lecture on Intelligence, and jargon terms like SIGINT, IMINT, ELINT, JSTARS and GCHQ leap from the page, surprising in a book on decades in the Seventeenth Century. The acronyms do show, however, that this country today has a professional intelligence system – and spark the thought that however sophisticated the product, leaders, then as now, need good judgement to capitalise on the information presented.

Julian Whitehead uses few original sources, and some of the books quoted, and historical interpretations are dated. His judgements on some tactical actions are also debatable: intelligence failures were not always the reason for Civil War defeats. That said, the approach is reasonably effective, and he describes quite well how the intelligence side of the campaigns was managed, sometimes with very sparse 'intelligence' derived from intercepted letters, observation from reconnaissance or routine reporting, or questioning those A1 sources: fearful innkeepers, wary landowners and unemployed soldiers.

The timeliness of intercepted and deciphered letters meant that they tended to contribute more to strategic intelligence, but better organised scouting certainly influenced tactical actions. The author introduces practitioners of military 'scouting' or reconnaissance, codebreakers, including Sir Samuel Luke, and others like the administrator, postmaster general and intelligence director John Thurloe, although it is surprising that the awful description of John Wallis as 'a GCHQ, albeit of only one person' escaped the editor's blue pencil.

The coverage of counter-intelligence during the Commonwealth may have less interest for general readers but the book explains Cromwell's efforts and sketches in General Monck's intelligence methods. The Commonwealth was unstable and subject to several coup attempts, including one by the Fifth Monarchist

Thomas Venner in 1657. Venner's plot was discovered and he was locked in the Tower. After the Restoration, the New Model Army was disbanded, and all but Monck's Regiments of Horse and Foot had gone when, in January 1661, Venner led an uprising in the City of London. Monck's Regiment restored order, and this led to the last-minute decision to allow Monck to keep his regiments in the royal Army (it was not really the British Army until 1707). Monck's Regiment of Foot became 'His Majesty's Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards' after its Colonel's death in 1670.

There are some disappointing features to the book. Poor editing and proofreading have allowed howlers and typographical errors to remain: Pen and Sword could do with a good Colour Sergeant shouting *'attention to detail'* on a regular basis. A fair degree of knowledge of the period is assumed, and there are some historical confusions, notably regarding the sieges of Bristol. There are no maps. That said, this is an intriguing account of the Civil War and Commonwealth period from the military and intelligence perspective. At a discounted price of less than £15.00, Cavalier and Roundhead Spies represents reasonable value, and perhaps offers a way of explaining intelligence to novices to the business. I recommend it, but with reservations.

Hugh Boscawen ☐

Barker Crossing – Theatre Troops – Specialist Support to Operations

Maj PLC Crook TD RWxY

On Monday 7th of December 2009 a temporary pedestrian crossing known as Barker Crossing was opened across the River Derwent. This linked north and south Workington for the first time since local bridges were damaged and brought down as a result of flooding.

The operation to erect the Logistic Support Bridge was carried out by 64 Works Group RE of 170 Infrastructure Support Group commanded by 8 Force Engineer Brigade. The bridge was transported by the men and women of 27 Transport Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, part of 101 Logistic Brigade. Communications to support the whole military effort, the civil authorities and the bridging task were provided by 2 (National Communications) Brigade, Royal Signals. 253 Medical Regiment (102 Logistic Brigade) stood by to provide emergency first aid to personnel on the bridging site.

Preparing the Site

All these units and brigades are commanded by HQ Theatre Troops which demonstrates the span of utility and capability within the command. This capability was then given to the local Brigade HQ in the NW (42 Bde) to command, which then used it to carry out the bridging operation itself.
Most military eyes are on operations in Afghanistan at the moment but when Cumbria County Council asked for assistance during the recent heavy rains and flooding the Army was called in. The Chief Executive of the county council formally asked for assistance on the 26th of November and work began immediately. The forward assembly area for the bridging equipment was established at Halton Training Camp near Lancaster and the bridging site itself was to be commanded by CO 64 Works Group with the immediate surrounding area under the command of CO The 4th Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (V) (4 Lancs). The building of the bridge itself was carried out by 3 Armoured Engineer Squadron from 22 Engineer Regiment. The HQ of 42 NW Brigade was established at Preston and this Brigade HQ coordinated the entire operation together with the Police and County Council. At the same time the Minister for the Armed Forces had granted permission to call out the Higher Readiness Reserves of the TA who had been standing by for just such an emergency.

It is easy to see the complete coordination of effort from central government, through the County Council and local Police, down to the local Brigade and to the units actually doing the work. HQ Theatre Troops provided the technical expertise to carry out the transport and bridging operations together with the communications plan and medical support. The local regional forces helped with security and other aspects of the task.

A combination of Regular and Territorial Royal Signals, including Higher Readiness Reserves personnel from 10 Signals Regt and 32 Signals Regt (V) deployed an Immediate

Response Team to Carlisle Castle to provide communications support with the Airwave system. A second Immediate Response Team from 10 Signals Regt moved up to Stafford to be prepared to support other elements. At the same time a Command Support Team from 32 Sig Regt (V) deployed from Edinburgh to support the GOLD HQ in Penrith. All of this was commanded by 32 Sig Regt (V) RHQ based in Glasgow, which also had further Higher Readiness Reserves mobilised in support of the Operations Room.

The actual construction of the bridge was carried out by 3 Armoured Engineer Squadron of 22 Engineer Regt under the supervision of 64 Works Group RE who designed the solution.

Most of the Royal Engineers' bridge kit is currently in use in Afghanistan, so the bridge was built from available parts from two bridges that eventually formed a single lane, 51m long, steel truss bridge. The structure is a Mabey Bridge Compact 200 panel bridge _ typically used as a military logistics support bridge.

The team assembled the bridge on rollers and pushed it across the river from the south side. It used 17 pairs of 3m long prefabricated steel truss panels braced together. The main bridge section was guided at the front by 12 lightweight truss sections acting as a “nose”. A counterweight was fitted to the back section of the structure during the push to prevent it from dipping. The trusses are linked by transverse steel transom beams which carry a proprietary Mabey Bridge decking system.

So the people of Workington now have a functioning foot bridge which allows them to get across the River Derwent until a permanent bridge is built. In spite of the pressures of the operational tempo in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the Army rose to the challenge and provided aid to Cumbria County Council. HQ Theatre Troops and its brigades and units played a crucial part in this operation thus demonstrating the considerable capabilities both Regular and TA within the command. ☐

The Team