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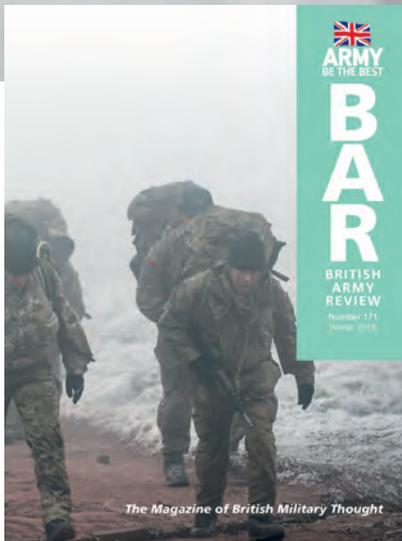
# BAR

**BRITISH  
ARMY  
REVIEW**

Number 171  
Winter 2018

Includes an  
article on ECAB's  
500th meeting

*The Magazine of British Military Thought*



BAR is interested in articles on Army 2020, Resetting for Contingency, STRIKE, Defence Engagement, Operational analysis, Lessons learned, Integrated Action, Manoeuvrist Approach, The Utility of Land Power, historical analysis and more.

If anyone is interested please contact  
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## British Army Review

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# Editorial

The idea for a professional journal for the British Army was first mooted in the early 1900's at a time of profound change for the British Army. Reflecting upon institutional short-comings highlighted in the Boer War, the need to save money (for the Royal Navy to spend to ensure that Britain remained the world's leading naval power) and confronting an emergent threat from an increasingly assertive power in Europe, the Army and successive governments wrestled with reforming the Service root and branch, a task eventually driven through by Lord Haldane as described in an article in this edition.

Against this backdrop, an increasing numbers of professional and experienced officers pressed for the establishment of a periodical that would enable professional soldiers to express opinion upon matters of pressing professional importance, unconstrained by conventions of political neutrality. This came to nothing and, hence, the conceptual debates conducted by Basil Liddell-Hart and JFC Fuller between the wars took place largely in the pages of *The Times*, thereby effectively excluding serving personnel from participating. It is tempting if perhaps tendentious, to associate the absence of professional discourse with the Army's unpreparedness for the new character of warfare visited upon it in 1940 and its generally poor performance for at least the first half of the Second World War.

This lacuna in the British Army's institutional apparatus was finally filled in 1949 when FM Lord Slim launched the *British Army Journal*, which, in September of 1955, became the *British Army Review*. Slim's intent was that it should be 'for every officer and NCO to read and contribute' to it, with a particular remit to help develop leadership at every level. Slim called the journal a magazine and it was his wish that it be interesting, stimulating and in some cases even amusing. He wanted it to be a magazine of current military thought that supplemented and enhanced training and provided 'lessons of war illustrated by experience in battle.'

Indeed, Slim's view of leadership was that there was no such thing as a good or bad unit, only good and bad officers and NCOs. Leadership is a central pillar of the British Army. Slim believed it when he launched the British Army Journal:

*No man can be given a more honourable task than to lead his countrymen in war. We, the officers and NCOs owe it to the men we command and to our country that we make ourselves fit to lead the best soldiers in the world, that in peace the training we give them is practical, alive and purposeful, and that in war our leadership is wise, resolute and unselfish.*

Slim's vision has persisted as a general guide for successive editorial teams ever since, but does it remain the right aiming mark for a professional journal in the 'information age'? As the British Army experiences another era of profound and persistent change, we sense it is worth our reconsidering what the BAR is for and how well its current format, content and style fulfil this purpose. Hence, in the first quarter of 2018 we will be conducting a review of the Review, informed by consideration of comparable journals of other armies and professional bodies, both analogue and digital; a survey of you our readership, and; interviews with our senior stakeholders and paymasters in the upper echelons of the chain of command.

This review will entail consideration of whether we should maintain primarily printed output (quarterly editions augmented by periodic special reports) or whether we should switch to a more on-line model that enables great immediacy of communication, thereby encouraging interactive debate. It will also touch upon whether its distribution should be limited (as now) or entirely open to public view (as are many others), with implications for what can be published under its aegis. Is it true that we can be really challenging only if we are 'closed', while openness will oblige us to be anodyne? Of course, financial considerations will be important, but it is not necessarily the case that a purely online forum will be a more affordable option - online debates would need to be managed and moderated actively, and informed moderators will not come cheap. Above all we want to know how we can encourage a greater range and, in some cases, quality of input, noting that the BAR has far fewer senior officers offering articles for publication than does the US Army's *Military Review*.

We intend that this will enable us to shape the *BAR's* future, so that it remains engaging, relevant and influential in show-casing British (and wider) thought on the profession of arms. Indeed, as money runs short and the threats appear to deepen in complexity and broaden in range, it is more important than ever that the British Army has a modern and responsive vehicle for communicating innovative thought, so that it can provoke engaged debate. In turn, this debate should help shape informed responses to the challenges we face, at every level of command and in every sphere, be it technical, social, economic or ethical - perhaps excepting the political! If we get it right, then the *BAR* should be a *guidon* for CGS's 'brains-based approach', but we won't get there without the active support of an expanded readership and a wider contributor base.

So, please read and enjoy this edition of the BAR, which offers a typical spread of articles, from the contemporary to the historical, from the conceptual to the moral and from the familiar to the

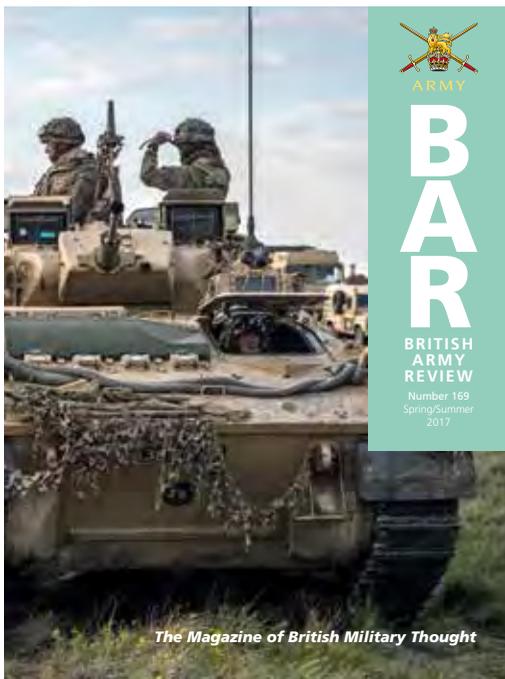
novel. Then, we need you to go online to the Defence Gateway and click on the News tab then the New BAR Readership Survey announcement then complete the Survey. It is all anonymous, but we want you to tell us about you as reader, how well the *BAR* meets its purpose now and where you want it to go in the future.

Our thanks in advance for your support and engagement.

*Graham Thomas*  
Editor

*Colonel Martin Todd*  
AH CHACR

# Announcement



# British Army Review Readership Survey

**The new BAR Readership Survey is now available online. Why are we running another survey? Simply, for BAR to remain relevant and alive it needs to be reviewed periodically. As we begin the new review process for BAR there are many questions that need to be answered before we can settle on the right format. And what that right format is will, in large part, be shaped by your answers to these questions.**

For example, do we continue to print and distribute hard copies in these times of austerity or do we make it primarily an online journal? We believe it is time to expand BAR beyond the printed copy into a new site that provides forums for debate, quick themed publications such as newsletters or bespoke reports, more visual content, blogs and vlogs so it becomes a dynamic and relevant repository of information and debate.

We need to know your views about BAR and what you want the future of BAR to be. This is why we are running the New BAR Readership Survey. So please take a few minutes to fill out the survey. Your thoughts and comments will help us shape your journal.

To get to the survey simply log on to your Defence Gateway account click on Defence Gateway News and you'll see it in the featured items. Click on the article entitled the New BAR Readership Survey and that will take you straight to the survey. Then you are ready to go!

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Editor

## Interview



*As part of MOD's full-spectrum military capability, the MOD has recruited hundreds of computer experts as cyber reservists to help defend the UK's national security, working at the cutting-edge of the nation's cyber defences. Photo Sergeant Ross Tilly, Crown Copyright*

# The New Frontier: Operating in the Information Realm

*In an exclusive interview with BAR on 04 October 2017, Major General Richard Semple, Director Information, outlines his career and how the Army is working to ensure it operates effectively and efficiently in the information space.*

## **1. Could you outline your career for us and tell us the path you took, that culminated in your role as Director Information?**

My career has really followed three parallel paths. The first was at regimental duty where I spent the earlier part of my career commanding Royal Engineer soldiers including a squadron in 16 Air Assault Brigade and then a regiment in 7 Armoured Brigade. Secondly at staff, I have undertaken a number of strategy, policy and financial programming roles in the MOD on a number of occasions. Finally, and most importantly, in relation to my current role, I have also filled a number of technical roles, particularly in Information Services (IS) throughout my career.

I initially moved into the IS arena as the first SO3 G3 CIS in a divisional HQ, Headquarters 3 Division. That was back in the early 90s just as computers were being introduced at scale into the Field Army. Indeed, I brought the first networked computers into our divisional and brigade headquarters, both in barracks and when deployed. Subsequently, as a colonel, I worked as the Deputy Assistant Chief Of Staff Command and Battlespace Management in HQ Land. This lead

to promotion and assumption of the role of ACOS J6 in PJHQ. That was at a time when we were still in the thick of deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. The latter required considerable effort during my time to join up effective multinational C4I (Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence).

About two and a half years ago, I was already working in the Army HQ as Director General Logistics, Support and Equipment and was invited to step sideways to set up the new role of Army Chief Information Officer (CIO) and establish an Information Directorate. Now I am well on into that journey.

## **2. Can you please explain what the role of Director Information is in terms of the rest of the Army and, what your objectives are as head of the Directorate?**

It's important to understand the dual function I have as the Army's CIO and the running of an Information Directorate, the two are inextricably linked. As CIO, I have responsibility for driving the development, exploitation and protection of information across the Army and the Land Environment. In particular, there is a pressing



*Major General Richard Semple, Director of Information. Crown Copyright*

strategic need for the Army to up its game in its ability to improve our evidence base for decision-making, so as to operate more effectively and gain competitive advantage in the information domain. This includes ensuring that we can protect ourselves in the cyber and electromagnetic environments. My Directorate provides the staff in the Army HQ that helps me drive this agenda through.

In the 21st Century we have moved from the industrial to the information age of warfare and that means we must be able to prosecute operational effect in the information as well as physical environment. That presents all sorts of new and exciting challenges for us. It is as much about understanding and cognitive influence as it is about the delivery of technology. Although digital technology is, of course, a real enabler for driving transformation into our business processes. This means ensuring that our people receive the type of digital services that we all expect in 2017. I therefore have a clear focus on ensuring that our skills and wider capabilities are keeping pace with the digital technologies available.

**3. Given that you want to make information much more mobile how will you get past the security issues while still providing information on mobile technology?**

This is an interesting question and a quite difficult challenge to square. We do want to exploit mobile and digital technology so as to keep pace with the rapid technological change available in the IT arena. For example, look how often Apple or Android drop new

updates onto your mobile phones. We've got to be able to move to that sort of approach while making sure that we do so in a safe and secure way. Most young people today run much of their lives on social media but that presents potential security risks as their information is made readily available to the wider world in open source. It can then easily be used and exploited by an adversary with malicious intent. So I have been investing quite a lot of time and effort in looking at how we change our culture and behaviours that allow us to use modern technology, but to consciously do so in a safe and secure way, so as not to put our people at risk.

**4. Information is a vast area so what is your definition of information?**

Data needs to be pulled together, organised, rationalised and presented in a consumable form that can be understood by the human brain, this is information. The key point is that information is absolutely everywhere. We have masses of underlying data, but we are not necessarily as good as we could be at analysing and exploiting it to present meaningful information that can be used to inform better decision-making, whilst contributing to the overall knowledge base within the Army.

Like a lot of big organisations, our information tends to be held in functional silos of bespoke IT systems. This makes it very difficult to enable our cross-cutting business processes. We have to make a 90-degree twist to focus our information services on enabling our core processes. On operations we call these mission threads where again, we have tended to focus on buying individual stove-piped systems rather than components contributing to a joined up enterprise capability. As CIO, I am trying to drive a better understanding of these mission threads, so as to develop and integrate digital capabilities to enable them. This includes a clear multi-national focus because future operations are invariably going to be conducted within alliances or coalitions, where interoperability is critical.

**5. How is the Directorate organised? Can you briefly explain what some of the teams within your organisation do?**

There are five broad components to my organisation. First and most obvious is Information Services. My IS

branch is focused on the delivery of the whole range of IS and C4I capabilities required by the Army and the land environment. They manage most of the IT programmes running in the directorate, including the in-house development of software and running our own hosting environment and data warehouse.

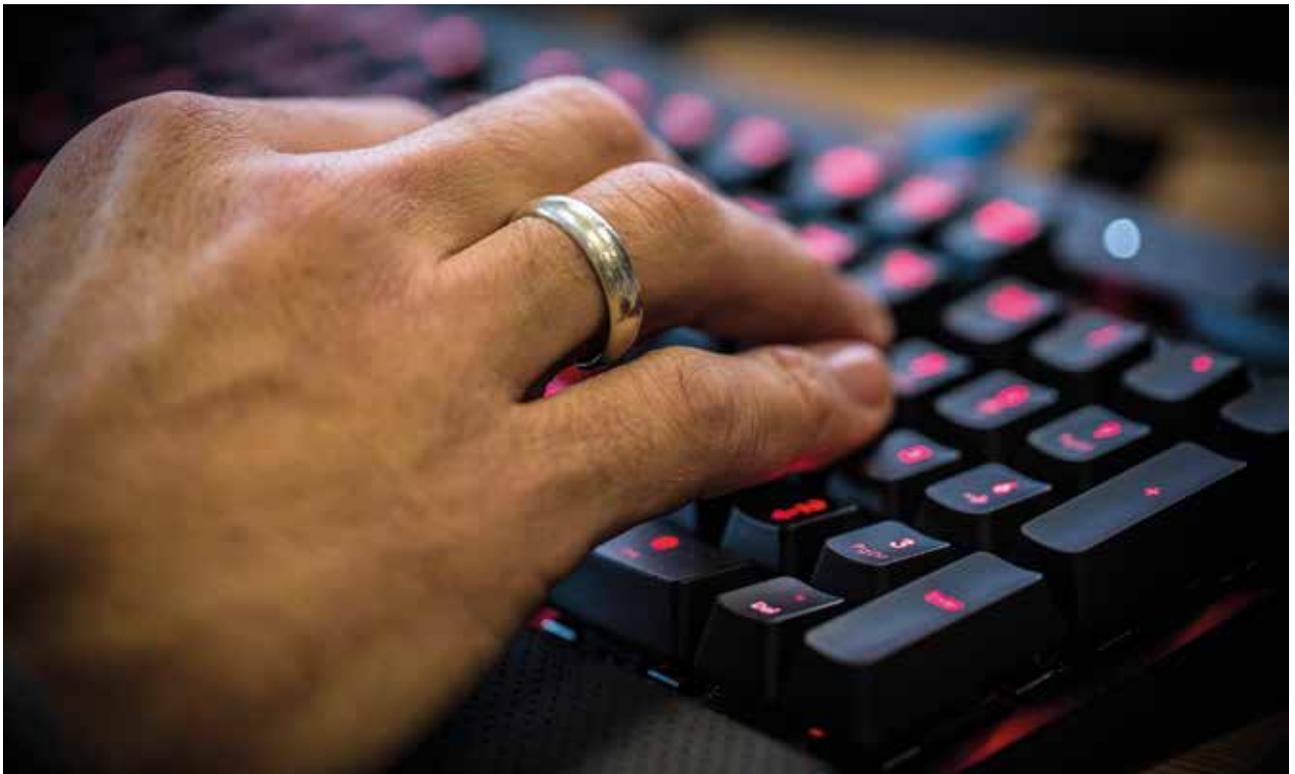
Secondly, my Information Exploitation Branch works to get us better at managing and exploiting our data and information. This includes looking at how we can more effectively join up our intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance capabilities. Critically, they are exploring how we can utilise data analytics and visualisation more effectively. 'Big Data' analytics is currently very trendy, but in my view, Defence has simply got to get better at analysing all of our data whether it is big, medium or small in volume.

My third Branch is Cyber and Security. They look after all aspects of security and counter intelligence covering physical, personal and information risks, as well as developing and delivering the Army's very new capabilities in Cyber and Electromagnetic Activities (CEMA) and

Information Activities and Outreach (IA&O). We link cyber with electromagnetic activity, as a continuum, because wherever you find a computer you invariably find some radios attached. For example, every smart phone is a computer with several radios attached and it can be attacked, electronically through the electromagnetic spectrum or through its virtual networks; both attack vectors must be protected against. Equally, we want to look at how we can exploit the CEMA opportunities and the vulnerabilities that potential adversaries have.

The fourth element of my organisation focuses on Strategy and Capability Development, looking at where we are going in the future, helping me to produce and manage the Army's Information Strategy, and conducting long term force and capability development for C4 ISTAR.

Finally, I have a Chief Enterprise Architect. This is a relatively new role with a small team that is bringing greater focus to developing and employing an enterprise architectural approval to digital transformation. He is developing an overarching architectural framework that all information services need to conform to in the future.



*In May 2013 the Joint Forces Cyber Group stood up to deliver defence's cyber capability and this includes the Joint Cyber Reserve that provides support to the Joint Cyber Unit (Corsham), the Joint Cyber Unit (Cheltenham), and tri-service information assurance units. Photo: Harland Quarrington, Crown Copyright*

Those are the main areas of my organisation and they are working pretty well now. It took about a year to build them from inception and we've now had a year and a half of driving progressive change.

## **6. What are your most immediate difficulties and challenges?**

The approach to acquisition in Defence has evolved over decades, if not centuries, focused on buying tanks, ships and aircraft. The challenge is that the pace of change of IT is so fast, that by the time you've gone through the acquisition cycle, technology has moved on. If you are not careful you are always buying yesterday's technology. So, I have been looking at how we can adopt a much more agile approach to the design, development and acquisition of digital technologies. This includes keeping up to date through both the development process and the in-service life of capabilities. We need to get to a point where we are dropping software updates on a regular basis as is already the case for the digital technology that we use at home. Part of this approach is making sure that we keep pace with anti-virus software patching so as to defend against the evolving threat.

This agile approach presents another significant challenge, which is ensuring that we have the necessary capacity and capability in our people to be able to take on the rapid development of technology. We used to have a significant in-house design and integration capability but it was consciously outsourced to industry over the last couple of decades. Now, however, we need to bring some of those design and integration functions back into Defence. This means upskilling ourselves to meet the demands of the 21st Century and to exploit the technology that's available to us, embedding a culture of innovation across the organisation.

## **7. What do you see as the challenges and threats facing the Army today and how will the Information Directorate help the Army to face those threats and challenges?**

The operational environment has shifted, and become more complex and sophisticated to reflect the information age. We see the Russians prosecuting hybrid warfare, where information messaging and influence is being used alongside cyberattacks and conventional military

operations. The information domain is constantly contested, 24/7, 365 days a year. We face potential cyber threats against us whether we're sitting in barracks, deployed on operations or training. Similarly, we are constantly susceptible to disinformation and misinformation, often through new social media channels. My Directorate has been conducting work to focus on how we can start to develop the necessary capabilities to conduct manoeuvre in the Information Environment. This means bringing together the cognitive functions of influence and intelligence with the technical delivery of digital services and cyber operations. We will enable these capabilities in Force Troops command so as to put effective defence in place, as well as getting onto the 'front foot' by looking at how we can gain real competitive advantage over potential adversaries in the information domain; a persistent activity that will be orchestrated with physical manoeuvre when troops are deployed.

## **8. Can you please inform the readers of some of the key programmes that will bring greater effectiveness and efficiency to the Army and the Land Environment?**

There are a whole range of change programs running in my area, so I will touch on only a few. At the Defence level, MoDNet will shift the Defence enterprise to Office 365 cloud services, replacing some of the traditional technology that currently sits on DII. Importantly, it brings all sorts of new and exciting collaborative tools to allow us to work more effectively and efficiently, such as Skype for business telephone and video conferencing. It will enable new and more distributed ways of working and my team are looking at how we exploit it to best effect across the Army.

The largest programme that I run is Land Environment Tactical CIS (LETacCIS). It will completely overhaul our tactical command and control capabilities in the deployed environment, replacing current Bowman and Falcon capabilities. Not only will it transform the capacity of our networks on deployed operations, it's going to allow us to bring in new and innovative application services and will allow us to interoperate with our allies much more effectively and seamlessly. It is also starting to shift the way we acquire IS, by adopting a more agile approach, opening up architectures so as to evolve the technology over time.

I also want to flag up the raft of small software

applications that we are constantly developing and delivering for the Army and sometimes for Defence as a whole. For instance, my team have just developed a set of services that run over the internet, behind the Defence Gateway, that allows the Army Reserve to effect command and control without access to DII or MoDNet, at OFFICIAL classification. This is but one example of some quite exciting capabilities that we are delivering over new channels on the internet, in a secure way.

### 9. What other initiatives or thoughts would you like to mention?

This has been a hugely exciting journey as the CIO. Starting from scratch, I feel that I have now imparted momentum into a much more joined-up approach to delivering our IS, keeping pace with technology and

above all improving the lot for our service men and women. We have introduced modern analytics techniques to exploit data more effectively and now have a clear focus on cyber security. There is a lot more to be done but I can truly say that the British Army has joined the digital era.

### 10. Finally, what would you say to a private soldier or young officer about the Army and about what you do and how it filters down to his/her level?

My key point for them would be that we are absolutely going to deliver 21st Century Information Services for those young men and women that are joining the Army today, but that we need to do so in a safe and secure way.



*Pictured is the new AJAX Armoured Vehicle at a 3 Div Combined Arms Manoeuvre Demonstration held at Knighton Down, Salisbury Plain Training Area. Each AJAX platform variant has extensive capabilities, including acoustic detectors, a laser warning system, a local situational awareness system, an electronic countermeasure system, a route marking system, an advanced electronic architecture and a high-performance power pack. Photo: Stuart Hill, Crown Copyright*

## Articles



*The 500th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Army Board, 14th December 2017*

# ECAB's 500th meeting

*Dr Louise Tumchewics, Resident Fellow at The CHACR, examines the history of the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) and how it has guided the Army during fifty years of profound change on the anniversary of the ECAB's 500th meeting.*

**The anniversary of a board meeting is rarely a cause for celebration, and indeed the 500th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) on 14 December 2017 will have passed unnoticed by most of the Army it serves. However, this occasion offers a point for reflection on how the Army's senior leadership have managed the institution's changing role over the past 50 years of profound strategic, operational and societal change.**

Trawling through the minutes of 500 ECABs is dry work, and if researchers are seeking exciting insights into strategic decision-making and Machiavellian politics then they will be disappointed. But that, surely, is not surprising because the Committee's role is not to debate, formulate or deliver decisions upon military strategy, but rather to discuss the hard realities of implementing strategies directed by Government and the Ministry of Defence (MOD). In short, the ECAB has tended to debate not what to implement, but *how* to implement, although recent financial empowerments have changed this norm. What may strike the reader (as it did the researcher) is that over the fifty-four years of ECAB meetings and, indeed, of the meetings of the ECAB's forerunners stretching back into the Nineteenth Century, the topics discussed have had a noticeable consistency despite considerable changes in the national and military strategic circumstances.

The ECAB is the Army's routine senior management body, chaired by the Chief of the General Staff (CGS). Its role is to direct the strategy and policy required

for the Army to function efficiently and meet the strategic aims required by the Government and the Defence Council. It helps CGS to produce the Army's *Strategy and Command Plan* and direct the resources required to deliver it, while managing the risks and issues that arise in delivery. ECAB also fulfils a procedural role in reviewing some military awards and decorations. These roles have been fairly consistent over its lifetime, but its construct and its supporting structure have changed to reflect shifting empowerment and institutional priorities.

## History and Function

ECAB is the latest in a long series of developments in the Army's senior executive function. The aftermath of the Crimean War led to the consolidation of all administrative duties in 1855 under a new Cabinet post: the Secretary of State for War. The Secretary of State shared responsibility for the Army equally with the Commander-in-Chief, until 1870, when further reforms made the Secretary of State pre-eminent. In spite of this, a considerable amount of personal influence was retained by the long-serving Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Prince George, Duke of Cambridge, who held the post for 39 years (1856-1895). Though deeply devoted to the Army, his conservative nature and reluctance to embrace reform caused the Army's development to stagnate, a problem which became apparent during the Boer War of 1899-1902.

In 1904 the position of Commander-in-Chief was therefore abolished, and replaced with the

1. Holmes, Richard, *Soldiers: Army Lives and Loyalties from Red Coats to Dusty Warriors*, London: Harper Collins, 2011 (22-23).

2. United Kingdom, *Defence Transfer of Functions Act (1964)*, 1964 c. 15, 12 March 1964.

Chief of the General Staff, renamed the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in 1909.<sup>1</sup> An Army Council was established, chaired by the Secretary of State for War, and an Imperial General Staff was formed to coordinate administration of an Army, which at that time was stationed at all corners of the British Empire. All branches of the Army were subordinate to the Army Council. The Army Council and the General Staff served to reduce the dominance of a single personality, such as Commander-in-Chief, on the direction of the Army.

The Army Council remained in place throughout the First and Second World Wars, but a series of Defence Reviews in the early 1960s led to significant changes in the way in which the Army was managed. The Admiralty, the War Office and Air Ministry were amalgamated into a new Ministry of Defence, housed in a new modern building on Horse Guards Avenue. In recognition of the gradual dissolution of the British Empire, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff became the Chief of the General Staff. The Army Council was transferred, by act of the Privy Council, into the Army Board.<sup>2</sup> The Army Board remained the supreme administering body for the Army, with a membership including the Secretary of State for Defence, the Chief of the General Staff, Parliamentary undersecretaries and permanent under-secretaries.

Gathering this many senior people together on a regular basis was challenging, and therefore it was

decided that a smaller 'executive committee' would meet more frequently. This committee was intended to mirror that of a large corporation, with the most senior representatives of different branches of the Army reporting to a chairman. It did not fulfil military strategic or operational functions, and did not get involved in the intricacies of campaigns, but was charged instead with setting and managing the policy and financial direction required to implement the decisions of the Government as articulated in its direction to the Army Board.

### Composition

The inaugural meeting of ECAB was held on 17 April 1964, in room 6301, on the 6th floor of the new Ministry of Defence. The membership of the initial ECAB was suitably high-ranking, a mix of senior civil servants and generals. It included:

- *Chairman: Second Permanent Under-secretary of State (Army) - Sir Arthur Drew*
- *The Adjutant General - General Sir James Cassels*
- *The Quartermaster General - General Sir Gerald Lathbury*
- *The Master General of The Ordnance - General Sir Charles Jones*
- *Deputy Chief of the General Staff - Lieutenant General Sir John Hackett*



*Sir Arthur Drew. Photo Crown Copyright*



*General Sir James Cassels. Photo Crown Copyright*



*General Sir Gerald Lathbury. Photo Crown Copyright*

- *The Chief Scientist (Army) - Sir Walter Cawood*
- *Secretaries - Mr J N A Armitage-Smith and Lt Col A D Mackenzie.*

All the generals on the first ECAB had served in the Second World War, and their experiences spanned nearly every theatre. Lieutenant General Hackett had been a prisoner of war in Germany, escaping captivity to re-join the fighting. General Jones had served in Malaya, and General Lathbury in North Africa, Sicily, the Netherlands and then in the post-war counterinsurgency campaigns in Palestine and Malaya. The spectre of the Second World War loomed long over ECAB - General Sir John Stanier, appointed in early 1980s, was the first CGS not to have served in that conflict.

It is most notable that in its early days ECAB was chaired by a departmental civil servant, reflecting the importance attached to civil control. However, the CGS soon assumed chairmanship, which he holds to this day, but departmental representation continued in the form of the Second Permanent Under-secretary (2nd PUS) until 2012. Civil representation remains strong, particularly in terms of financial responsibility, in the person of the Director Resources who has direct responsibility to the Permanent Under-secretary (PUS) in the MOD. Another key innovation in 2015 was the inclusion of the newly appointed Army Sergeant Major to the Board.

### Business

The Cold War remained the dominant security challenge for the first two and a half decades of ECAB's existence, and was similarly influential on ECAB membership, shaping the formative training and command experiences of many senior leaders to the present day. While the lives and experience of former ECAB members were different from those of ECAB members today, they spent their time addressing issues that would not be out of place on today's agendas - matters of implementation policies and, particularly, financial resources.

The agenda and papers for the first and subsequent ECAB meetings do not in themselves offer a coherent narrative of the Army and the challenges it has confronted since 1964, but they do highlight a certain thematic consistency of issues. Certain items appear for discussion time and again:- the Brigade of Gurkhas, bands, recruitment, career and organisational structures, and of course, balancing financial resources against competing priorities. While the business under discussion may not seem riveting, these recurrent matters, spanning decades of ECAB business, allow us to understand that there is much in common with the circumstances in which the Army of 2017 finds itself. The history of the ECAB is a consistent story of the senior Army leadership seeking to live within its means and balance resources responsibly against a host of global and domestic commitments, sophisticated



General Sir Charles Jones. Photo Crown Copyright



Lieutenant General Sir John Hackett. Photo Crown Copyright



Sir Walter Cawood. Photo Crown Copyright

3. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on Defence, 1964, 33*

4. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on Defence, 1964, 34*

and expensive equipment issues and aspirations, and the demands of sustaining a quality workforce in a manpower-intensive profession.

The Army that ECAB presided over in 1964 numbered 189,000 in the regular force, 136,200 in the reserves, and 93,500 in the Army Emergency Reserves.<sup>3</sup> Though the Army was nearly four times the size of our present-day Army, there was serious concern over recruiting and retaining sufficient officers and soldiers. National Service had officially ended on 31 December

1960, and the challenge was now to recruit the requisite number of volunteers into a professional force in order to meet the manpower requirements of the Army's multiple commitments around the world. In the mid-1960s, female officers were particularly sought for the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC), as they had a habit of marrying and leaving the service.<sup>4</sup> The challenge of recruitment into a progressively shrinking Army, both regular and reserve, would be a recurrent one, echoed in ECAB discussions for decades to come.

*Armed forces from across NATO come together to train on the interoperability exercise EX VENERABLE GAUNTLET. Photo: Corporal Timothy Jones RLC Crown Copyright 2016*



At the time that ECAB was formed, British defence priorities were three-fold: supporting a strategic nuclear force, contributing to the defence of Western Europe, within NATO, and 'keeping the peace' in former colonies and elsewhere around the world.<sup>5</sup> The first ECAB was concerned throughout the 1960s with meeting the costs of these commitments. By the mid-1960s, the British economy was healthier than in the immediate post-war period, but public net debt was still 90% of GDP. The Defence budget was £1.8 billion, with just over £527 million allocated to the Army annually, and total defence spending constituted 4.5% of GDP (or 6.1 % GNP).<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, as the new Labour government noted in its 1965 *Statement on the Defence Estimates* noted that 'There has been no real attempt to match political commitments to military resources, still less to relate the resources made available for defence to the economic circumstances of the nation.'<sup>7</sup> Financial resources, and lack thereof, would continue to be a perennial concern for ECAB.

Contributing to the Defence of Western Europe was the Army's primary purpose. Not only did the Soviet Union constitute an existential threat to Britain and the rest of NATO, Britain was bound through the 1954 *Brussels Treaty* to provide a specific minimum force level in continental Europe.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, active participation in NATO was essential to maintain Britain's relationship with the United States. Obligations to NATO remained paramount, and the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR) was the priority for the Army, protected as much as possible from cost saving measures. The BAOR was a permanent garrison of 55,000 troops, supported by a tactical air force, with the option to increase numbers if required.<sup>9</sup> Naturally, ECAB paid considerable attention over the decades to the organisation and structure of the BAOR, its training programmes, the provision of accommodation, and other matters.

'Keeping the Peace' certainly kept the Army busy. At the time of the first ECAB, British troops were committed to numerous operations: the Borneo Confrontation, Aden, and the Radfan, Cyprus, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Kenya and Uganda, Swaziland and British Guiana. In the late 1960s, 'keeping the peace,' came much closer to home, as 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland erupted in 1969, reaching their violent peak in the mid-1970's. ECAB meetings routinely

discussed the provision of Military Aid to the Civil Power under Operation BANNER, directing everything from the length of operational tours to the provision of housing and other amenities to what would become a major commitment until 1997.<sup>10</sup>

The devaluation of the pound in 1967, and the surrounding financial crisis led the Wilson government to make dramatic cuts in defence spending. The Healey review, and its subsequent policy updates, recommended drastic changes in defence policy, 'involving major reductions in overseas commitments.'<sup>11</sup>

The need to reduce defence expenditure in the 1970s, without drastically cutting numbers and capabilities from Britain's primary commitment to NATO in Northwest Europe meant dramatic reductions in Britain's military presence elsewhere in the world. Though the estimated savings were relatively small (c.£150 million) non-NATO commitments overseas were significantly trimmed in an effort to reduce expenditure.

Bases in the West Indies and the Mediterranean, with the exception of Cyprus, were closed. British Forces accelerated their planned departure from Singapore, Malaysia and the Persian Gulf. Reduced numbers of British Forces were maintained in Belize, the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, and Oman, to assist with the on-going insurgency. The sharp contraction of Britain's out-of-area capability was not only a cost-saving measure, but also a realisation that the UK was no longer, and simply could not afford to be, a leading world military power.<sup>12</sup>

Against this backdrop of a failing economy, and increasingly pinched defence funds, ECAB was also concerned throughout the decade with estimating its long-term costs, and finding further efficiencies through civilian staff reductions, and designing the long-term size and shape of the Army. At the same time, ECAB had to address the critical deficiencies in the war reserves, and the delivery of the new Chieftain tank, Gazelle and Scout helicopters. Discussions also addressed the future size and scale of the Army - one that was more affordable.<sup>13</sup>

By the mid-1980s, The Falklands conflict, renewed Cold War tensions, and an improving economy meant better fortunes for the armed forces. The Defence budget rose to an unprecedented 5.1 % of GDP in 1985.<sup>14</sup> Though the financial situation may have improved somewhat, ECAB was still looking at possible savings. Throughout the decade 'Lean Look,' a comprehensive

5. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1964, 6-8*

6. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1964, 37*

7. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1965, 5*

8. Longinotti, Edward, *Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez: Economic Determinism to Political Choice, Contemporary British History, Vol. 29, Iss3, (2015).*

9. *United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1964,30*

10. *Army and Executive Committee of the Army Board, Papers and Minutes, 1972, A/20/Gen/7566, A/120/O'Seas/706*

11. Walker, Nigel and Mills, Claire, *A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews, House of Commons. Briefing Paper, No. 07313, November 2015*

12. Walker and Mills, *A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews, 10*

13. *Army and Executive Committee of the Army Board, Papers and Minutes, 1975, A/20/Gen/7688, QMG Sec 2/77/6, D/DS7/38/80/432*

14. de Castella, Tom, *Five Years that Shaped the British Military, BBC News Magazine, 10 March 2015*



15. Walker and Mills, *A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews*, 14

study into manpower savings, considered manpower efficiencies that could be made, especially in the combat service support corps.

Suddenly, at the end of the 1980s, the future role of the BAOR, for so long the focus of Army activities and ECAB attention, was uncertain. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent end of the Cold War meant that a continued presence along the Northwest German Plain was now redundant. The future structure and functions of the post-Cold War Army would characterise ECAB discussion over the next 10 years.

Like many NATO countries at the end of the Cold War, the UK saw an opportunity to 'reap a peace dividend,' by making savings in defence spending. The restructuring programme, entitled *Options for*

*Change*, resulted in significant reduction of the Army, with a cut of 120,000 regular personnel and the amalgamation of numerous regiments, the loss of battalions from others, and the reduction and restructuring of the Territorial Army.<sup>15</sup> The BAOR became British Forces Germany, although without the impending threat from the East, its long-term future was uncertain.

The Army may have been contracting in size, but a new generation of soldiers and officers was still needed. The challenge of recruitment into a leaner Army, both regular and reserve was discussed just as it had been in 1964. By the 1990s, however, more attention was devoted to the provision of welfare, and the management of individual career paths. ECAB spent time reviewing officer, late entry officer and soldier



*Two columns of British Chieftain main battle tanks drive along 17th of June Street during the final annual Allied Forces Day parade on Sunday June 18th, 1989 in West-Berlin. The "Siegessäule" (Victory Column) is in the background. Note: Although the source tells the date as 17 June 1989, this is incorrect, as this allied parade took place on June 18th, 1989. Photo: U.S. Department of Defence, Wikimedia, Released*

career structures. This reflected the Army's need to remain an attractive career option for potential recruits at a time when the Army's purpose was not as clear as in previous decades.

The future role of women in the Army was the subject of much ECAB study, with the integration of the WRAC into the new Adjutant General's Corps in 1992. The changes in women's roles within the Army reflected changes in British society, and the greater participation of women in the workforce.

The Strategic Defence Review of 1997 recast the Army as a more contingent force within a joint expeditionary context, reflecting the Labour government's interventionist foreign policy. At the same time, ECAB's direct control over much of the Army's finances was removed as part of a centralizing of all defence resources to the MOD. This resulted from criticism of the ability of the Services to ensure balanced long-term investment across operations, manpower, equipment, sustainment, training and infrastructure. At the same time the new Permanent Joint Headquarters assumed responsibility for operations (less Northern Ireland). As a result, ECAB was left with control of manpower and training resources, while having significant dependencies upon central bodies for delivery of its equipment, sustainment and infrastructure. Interestingly, similar criticisms of the centralized regime a decade later would lead to renewed delegation of some of those functions back to Service Commands.

### The Present Day

Some of the biggest challenges facing the Army in the 21st Century have stemmed from the financial crisis of 2008, and the ensuing recession. Upon election in 2010, the coalition government sought to reduce the national budget deficit by reducing public spending, including the Defence budget.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) 2010 prescribed a reduction of 7,000 regular personnel, bringing the Army from 101,000 to 94,000. Months later this was further reduced to 82,000 regulars, with the expectation that this would be offset by increasing the strength of the Army Reserve to 30,000.<sup>17</sup> These figures meant that by 2012 the Army would be its smallest in nearly two hundred years, numbers that would have been unimaginable to the first ECAB members. Moreover, the reduction in personnel and financial resources, yet continuing commitments at home, in Europe and abroad, meant a widening gap between political ambition and military capacity, a theme highlighted in ECAB's early years.

Meanwhile, the 2012 Defence Reform Review led by Lord Levene started re-empowering the Service Commands with greater financial authority, a process of delegation still in progress. The Army responded to delegation by redesigning its operating model, first in 2012, and then again more profoundly in 2015.

<sup>16.</sup> Walker and Mills, *A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews*, 27

<sup>17.</sup> *Ibid.*, 30. In fact reserve liability was reduced from a largely theoretical 36,000.





The latter saw extensive changes to the composition and role of ECAB, which became the sole executive body to which all strands of the Army operating model converged. This gives ECAB a critical role in coordinating routine planning and delivery functions across the functional pillars, which placed significantly greater demand upon it and has increased the frequency of its meetings, to twice every month.

ECAB also plays a key role in assessing the Army's performance and risks against its Command Plan, so that CGS may be held to account by the CDS and PUS for the Army delivering its directed outputs within budget.

### Conclusions

Consideration of the ECAB records gives a valuable historical perspective on the current state of the Army, its finances and development challenges. We may think that today we are facing an unprecedented situation, but the Army has always been obliged to rebalance its strength, equipment and commitments to fit its budget, while at the same time meeting the Nation's defence requirements on land. This may not be entirely surprising or that reassuring in itself, but the fact is that, despite these serial travails and steered by its senior executive body, the Army has endured both as an institution and a military force capable of remarkable feats of arms.

*Dismounted troops of 1PWRR mount a company attack from their Warrior Armoured fighting vehicles during Exercise BRIGHT GAUNTLET, a validation Exercise for the UK's Vanguard Armoured Infantry Brigade (VAIB) that took place at the Sennelager Training Area, Germany. Photo: Mr Dominic King, Army Press Office Germany, Crown Copyright*



*A soldier with his Sharpshooter Rifle during a Section Commanders Battle Course (SCBC) Final Exercise in Celeini Village, Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA). The course is run by the Infantry Battle School (IBS) in Brecon, Mid-Wales, which is part of the School of Infantry. It delivers trained officers and soldiers to meet the operational requirements of the Infantry, the Army and Defence. Photo: Ian Griffiths, Crown Copyright*

# Command in the 21st Century

*'Command is a capability not an overhead'*

*On 5-7 September 2017, Anthony King Chair of War Studies at Warwick University, hosted an international, soldier-scholar conference at Warwick University entitled, 'Command in the 21st Century'.*

*The conference was attended by many prominent figures including General David Petraeus, General Sir Nick Carter, Lieutenant General Ben Hodges and Professors Sirs Hew Strachan and Lawrence Freedman.*

*The keynote, given by Lieutenant General Sean MacFarland was followed by two days of panels in which the challenges of command in the current era was discussed. Here are the main findings.*

**As a result of setback and failures in Iraq and Afghanistan, military command has become a matter of grave public concern in the last decade. Indeed, it might be said that command is suffering a crisis of legitimacy. The aim of the conference, 'Command in the 21st Century', was to analyse command in order to improve scholarly and military understanding of contemporary generalship.**

Command is a complex concept that has been defined in a number of different ways. However, most commentators concur that command 'is principally about decision-making'.<sup>2</sup> Commanders are given authority to make decisions about the deployment and use of forces in order to coordinate military operations, to engender

unity of effort and, thereby, to maximise combat power.

Assigned decision-making authority, generals are responsible for three interrelated functions: command, management and leadership.<sup>3</sup> Command itself refers to the decisive executive function: *Mission Definition*. Uniquely, commanders have the authority to determine what their forces will do; command is the power of commission. As such, it incorporates two further functions: *Mission Management* and *Mission Leadership*. In order to accomplish a mission, a commander must identify, prioritise, sequence and assign all the tasks and then coordinate and supervise them as they are enacted. Effective administration is vital. Finally, troops must be motivated. Motivation is crucial in any human endeavour but in war, where subordinates must

1. Davis, Major General Dickie, 'CJTF-6: 2\* Command In The 21st Century, The lessons of Kandahar' presentation, 6 September 2017.

2. CGS, CJTF-6: 2\* Command In The 21st Century, The lessons of Kandahar presentation, 6 September 2017.

3. Grint, Keith, 'Hedgehog and the Fox: Leadership Lessons from D-Day', presentation, 7 September 2017.



5th Battalion The Rifles (5 RIFLES) undertook training in Sennelager Training Area in Germany as part of 20 Armoured Infantry Brigade, before deploying to Estonia as the lead element of the UK's Enhanced Forward Presence. Here, Commander 20 Armd Inf Bde, leads from the front whilst taking the Headquarters element of 5 RIFLES on a snap March and Shoot. Photo: Mr Dominic King, Crown Copyright

4. Kilcullen, David, *Command in the 21st Century*, presentation, 6 September 2017; Rob Johnson *'Redefining Command in the Operational Dimension: Challenges in the Information Age'*, presentation, 7 September 2017.

5. CGS, 'CJTF-6', presentation, 6 September 2017

6. Petraeus, General David, 'Commanding a Combat Division', presentation, 6 September 2017 and subsequent interventions

7. Freedman, Lawrence, 'Impatient Politicians and Cautious Commanders?', presentation, 6 September 2017.

potentially risk their lives, leadership is critical.

In any era, command consists of these three elements: *Mission Definition, Mission Management and Mission Motivation Or Command, Management and Leadership*. The nature of command endures but the character of command changes in the light of operational, organizational, cultural and political realities. The balance between command, management and leadership changes from situation to situation, as do the actual tasks of each of these functions. The aim of this conference was to identify the distinctive practice of command and the balance between its three constituent elements in the 21st Century.

### **The Operating Environment**

Contemporary operational conditions pose a distinctive challenge for commanders. In the twentieth century, the central problem that confronted commanders was one of scale; generals had to organise mass, industrial armies. The central issue for conducting operations today is one of scope, massively increasing coordination problems. Even against near peer enemies, warfare is likely to assume a hybrid, multi-dimensional and urban form, as

the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria suggest.

Land operations are likely to be conducted at increasing ranges, requiring not merely Joint but Integrated Action. Deep multinationalism will also increase coordination costs. At the same time, warfare is now conducted in a radically informational context where the military will have to operate in informational, cyber and electronic domains.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the performance of commanders and their troops will be under deep scrutiny and judgement by international law and de-regulated social media. Precision will be required.

### **Mission Definition**

Mission definition has always been critical to successful military operations. Generals must always identify a clear and achievable objective. This remains the case today. No matter how complex the situation, 'keeping the plan simple'<sup>5</sup> is imperative: 'The essence of command is to get the big ideas right. This is particularly important at the strategic level'.<sup>6</sup>

However, while simplicity is desirable, it is very difficult to achieve in the current environment. One of the central problems here is the intense politicization of military campaigns.<sup>7</sup> In 1957, Samuel Huntington recommended

20th Century Operations	21st Century Operations
Scale	Scope
Conventional	Hybrid
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Fronts	Battlespace
Field	Urban
Mass	Precision
Single service	Joint
National	Multinational
Alliance	Coalition
Citizen	Professional
Operations	Campaigns
Military	Inter-agency
Intelligence	Understanding
News	Information

Figure 1: 20th and 21st Centuries Operating Environments

objective control of the military; political leaders should give generals their goals and allow them to pursue them without interference.<sup>8</sup> It has become a common lament today: 'If only we had clear policy guidance'.<sup>9</sup>

Clear political guidance is, however, increasingly unlikely in the current context. The proliferation of government responsibilities, the growing connection between foreign operations and domestic security, the changing demands of electorates and alliance politics have complicated mission definition. The number of constituencies that now have a say in any operation and whose interests must be represented in the mission has proliferated.<sup>10</sup> To these difficulties, might be added the ubiquity of media, often confusing, undermining and distorting political judgement. As a result, political leaders find it difficult to give their commanders clear objectives.

The dangers inherent in this new politico-military complex were most evident in Basra between 2003 and 2008. During this period, the British government, having committed itself to an unpopular war, wanted to

8. Strachan, Hew, 'Strategic command in democracies: theory and practice' presentation, 6 September 2017.

9. Ibid.

10. Strachan, Hew, 'Strategic command in democracies: theory and practice' presentation, 6 September 2017.



Soldiers from C Sqn Household Cavalry Regiment deployed to Salisbury Plain on EX IRON SCOUT 3. The Household Cavalry Regiment is an Armoured Cavalry regiment equipped with CVR(T) reconnaissance vehicles (soon to receive the new AJAX vehicle) that allow the Regiment to project forward large distances and provide the forward reconnaissance for 1 (Armoured) Brigade. Photo: Corporal Pete Brown RLC, Crown Copyright.

11. Marston, Dan, 'Operation TELIC VIII to XI: Difficulties in 21st Century Command', presentation, 7 September 2017.

12. King, Anthony, 'The Decision Point: command collectivism in the 21st century' presentation, 7 September 2017

13. Boff, Jonathan, 'How to Lose a War: Lessons from German Command during the First World War', presentation, 7 Sept 2017, cast doubt on this tradition, arguing that in fact the German armies of the First World War were highly dirigist except at the very lowest levels.

minimise British commitment and accelerate withdrawal. Senior commanders affirmed this policy, while also seeking to re-orient to Helmand, which they saw as a potentially more popular campaign. The result was that UK strategy in Iraq was at odds with the US, especially after the surge; the divide was temporarily sustained only by British dissimulation. The result was a severe reputational damage to the UK and its armed forces in the eyes of its closest ally.<sup>11</sup>

Mission definition has become highly complex. Yet, it remains a necessity. Without a clear mission, military success is almost impossible. Consequently, commanders must simultaneously consider the position of their political leaders, exposed to constant media attack, the appetite of the electorate and the interests of coalition partners as they develop their mission; and continually revise their assessment. It will require great patience and subtly to engage with all the key partners and to understand their motivations, interests and constraints. Yet, only then will it be possible to define a sustainable mission. Indeed, campaigns have become so complex today that commanders must define a clear, achievable and politically effective intent more than ever.

### Management

The act of Mission Definition is critical but it is only ever a beginning. It is then that the real work of command begins. Commanders must administer and supervise their forces to ensure that they fulfil the mission. The management of any mission today requires prodigious planning and staff preparation. Planning involves a series of decisions about how, when and where forces are to be deployed. In the light of the scope of current operations, planning methods have been refined to improve decision-making.<sup>12</sup>

However, although the plan ideally identifies and assigns all the tasks, management does not stop with the plan. On the contrary, the critical phase of management is actually initiated when the operation begins; commanders need to supervise and monitor progress. Operations only exceptionally go according to plan. Typically, the plan needs to be adapted and altered quickly in the face of enemy action and new conditions. At this point, a series of subordinate decisions will have to be taken. This is the true domain of management, making minor but important alterations in direction. At this point, the armed forces face a major organizational

problem; they must ensure that immediate, local decisions, made in response to the unexpected, are consistent with the overarching objectives laid out in the commander's original intent. Indeed, because of the increased scope of operations, the decision-cycle has multiplied; numerous simultaneous decisions must be synchronised across the range of operations.

*Mission Command* has become the prime technique of managing complex, dispersed missions today. When practiced well, mission command allows for rapid, reactive decision-making at the lower level, while maintaining unity of effort. Mission command, scholars and practitioners routinely invoke historical precedent. Specifically, they point to the tradition of *Auftragstaktik* in the Prussian and German Armies up to the Second World War or to the Nelsonian tradition of de-centralised initiative. In both cases, individual initiative was encouraged; subordinates were actively expected to react to the unexpected without seeking corroboration from their superiors.<sup>13</sup>

Where it existed in the past, Mission Command was an individualist system. Local commanders acted on their own initiative to enact limited tactical action; they did not have to consider others. Indeed, even today, practitioners draw upon this individualist lexicon to describe the way in which subordinate decisions are aligned with the commander's intent. Mission Command today is seen as totally consistent with the past.

Yet, in fact, there is a significant divide between traditional individualist Mission Command, operating a *laissez-faire* basis, and today's highly integrated decision-making system. Current operations are complex, involving the integration of joint, informational, cyber, electronic, political and civic lines of operation. In this situation, when there is so much activity over such a wide field, merely devolved individual initiative of a Prussian or Nelsonian type has become inadequate. It is no longer sufficient simply for a captain to place 'his ship alongside that of the enemy'. Because of the enhanced problems of coordination, decisions cannot be autonomous at any level; they must be intimately aligned, united and mutually corroborated across command echelons.

Consequently, in order to effect mission command coherently in the Twenty-First Century, a number of requirements are necessary. In addition to a very clearly defined mission, intense teamwork between commanders at different levels is required. Preparation, training



*An Apache helicopter pilot concentrates on simulator screens during training at the Aviation Command and Tactics Trainer (ACTT) located at Middle Wallop in Hampshire that is used by the Army Air Corps for procedural Mission Command Training of pilots at crew, flight and sub-unit levels. Photo: Peter Davies (MOD), Crown Copyright*

and rehearsal is essential here so that subordinate commanders instinctively understand what kind of decision they can properly make in the face of novel situations. In addition, effective mission command requires the identification of conditions, under which a subordinate knows when and how to make a decision. Once these conditions have been satisfied, subordinates should feel empowered to make the decisions ascribed to them: 'When the conditions are met, just go ahead. You don't have to ask me at 2am. You have an understanding of the appropriate authorities and what conditions they are delegated under'.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, cyber and information ops, now more prevalent than ever before, are too often held at the Strategic or operational level. 21st Century command needs these capabilities at the tactical level as well and disciplined initiative at the heart of Mission Command.

Mission Command in the 21st Century is not, then, a matter of pristine individual initiative or intuition; and certainly, not of licence. On the contrary, because actions at one echelon have deep implications for resources at another, decisions must be made collectively; air, artillery, intelligence, informational and political lines of

action have to be assigned and coordinated. Decisions have to be aligned so that they cohere across the force and across all lines of operation. Consequently, the apparently autonomous initiative of subordinates is the product of intense training, preparation, rehearsal and constant inter-communication so that each commander is self-consciously enacting the collective intentions of the formation. The effective command of complex 21st Century missions requires neither greater decentralization nor centralization but rather an increasing collaboration between commanders. Commanders across the echelons are increasingly closely united with each other through shared concepts, understanding and training. They recognise the repertoire of decisions that they are empowered to make and when they can make them; they are constantly corroborating their decisions with their superiors, peers and subordinates. Commanders take their decisions as members of a team, not really as individuals at all; they enact a form of collective intuition, based, in fact, on extensive preparation and anticipation. Coherent operations today rely on the formation of closely bonded command teams. It is the only way to manage a campaign.

14. *Petraeus, General David, 'Commanding a Combat Division'*

16. Buckley, John, 'Montgomery: Command and Leadership in 21st Army Group 1944-5', presentation, 6 September 2017.

17. MacFarland, Lieutenant General Sean, 'Command in the 21st Century', Keynote Address, 5 September 2017.

## Leadership

In the Twentieth Century, generals were expected to be leaders in the heroic fashion. Commanders often adopted non-regulation forms of uniform in order that they were instantly identifiable to their subordinates. Indeed, in the 21st Army Group, Montgomery encouraged his subordinate commanders to develop their own sometime exotic sartorial style; pearl handled pistols, bomber jackets, grenades, canes, umbrellas and pipes were typical.<sup>16</sup> Leadership of this type is not irrelevant today, although charismatic leaders typically adopt the tidy dress of conventional professionalism, rather than personal idiosyncrasy. Although professional troops are typically better motivated than their citizen counterparts of the twentieth century, and especially conscripted soldiers, leadership especially at the lower level of the platoon and company remains very important.<sup>17</sup> However, higher level commanders seldom play the paternal role that they did in the First and Second World Wars. This does not mean that formation level commanders do

not have to be concerned about leadership; they do. However, the direction in which leadership is expressed differs markedly from the twentieth century.

21st Century military operations are heterogeneous, invariably multinational, involving cooperation with forces, agencies and partners that are not necessarily under the full control of a particular commander. Indeed, a commander will typically have no authority at all over many vital partners. At this point, persuasion and negotiation become more important than authority. In other words, leadership begins to play a crucial role. Partners cannot be ordered to cooperate but, by careful shaping, they might be encouraged to do so.

During his command of CJTF-6 in Kandahar in 2009 and 2010, General Carter relied on his ability to provide this kind of leadership. Indeed, he developed a sophisticated, often oblique system of decision-making in order to shape partners to respond positively to direction and contribute in a manner that matched the operational design. For instance, the scheme



*A US Army Officer engages enemy forces during Operation Moshtarak in Badula Qulp, Afghanistan, Feb. 19, 2010. The International Security Assistance Force operation is an offensive mission being conducted in areas of Afghanistan prevalent in drug-trafficking and Taliban insurgency. Underwood is from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment. Photo: Sergeant Efre Lopez, U.S.A.F. Released*



*The Royal Dragoon Guards (RDG) were the lead Battlegroup for Ex Iron Strike 2016 an experimental exercise at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS), Canada. Attached to RDG was B Company from 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2PPCLI) a Canadian mechanized infantry unit with Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV). Photo: Corporal Mark Webster RLC, Crown Copyright*

of manoeuvre for the Marjah operation (Operation Moshtarak) in February 2010 was designed iteratively by General Carter in conjunction with Brigadier General Larry Nicholson, commander of Task Force Leatherneck. Similarly, the British Government, and Hamid Karzai, the Afghan President, both needed convincing of the value of Operation Moshtarak, as did the Dutch, Canadian and Australian governments. Above all, General Carter spent much time with Governor Toorylai Wesai whom he sought to encourage to act in ways that suited the purposes of the coalition. General Carter's leadership was not primarily directed at his own troops; it is unlikely that many of the soldiers in the 101st Airborne Brigade Combat Team in Argandhab saw him regularly. His leadership was exercised on military and political leaders within and outside the theatre.<sup>18</sup>

The 21st Century commander needs to project professional martial qualities. Generals need to be credible commanders because otherwise partners will not respect them. To be an effective leader, it is necessary first to demonstrate one's competence as a commander. However, today's commanders cannot lead in the way that Montgomery or Ridgway led in the 1940s. They have to act not simply as combat leaders, signified by exotic martial uniforms, but as negotiators, facilitators and diplomats capable of encouraging and motivating partners, who actively want to support an operation, even though they have no requirement to do so. That is 21st Century leadership.

## Conclusion

There are evident continuities to command. The basic functions of mission definition, management and leadership endure. However, as the operational and organisational context has changed so dramatically, so have the executive functions of a commander. Mission definition has become both more complex and more important; commanders have to consider a diversity of factors and develop a mission that is sustainable both militarily and politically. Although commanders are no longer exercised with the problem of mass, they must coordinate heterogeneous forces over once inconceivable ranges, all under intense informational conditions.

Centralization cannot work here; but neither can traditional Mission Command. Effective commanders have formed highly cohesive command teams, united by common understanding of the mission and the conditions under which often pre-conceived decisions can be delegated downwards. Finally, traditional combat leadership is not irrelevant, especially at the lower level. However, higher formation commanders have to direct their leadership not primarily on their highly-trained, professional and self-motivated troops but on their military, civilian and political partners and leaders who are not under their command and whom they cannot order to act. Even as they direct complex military operations, commanders need to develop the arts of negotiation and diplomacy. History can help commanders here mainly by illuminating the distinctiveness of their own predicament.

*18. CGS, Major-General Dickie Davis and Lieutenant General Ben Hodges, 'CJTF-6: 2\* Command In The 21st Century, The lessons of Kandahar' presentation, 6 September 2017.*



*Pictured is a Royal Marine controlling a Black Hornet 2 Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS). Over 200 personnel from 1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment, 51 Squadron RAF Regiment and 45 Commando, have been putting new and innovative kit and capabilities through their paces on Salisbury Plain Training Area in Wiltshire, as they took part in the third phase of the Army Warfighting Experiment (AWE) 17. AWE 17 has been at the forefront of the drive for world-class innovation at Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S). Photo: Corporal Daniel Wiepen, Crown Copyright*

# Intrapreneurship: No It's Not a Typo

*Lieutenant Kirsty Skinner provides insight into how the British Army Intrapreneurs' Network (BrAIN) is helping the Army maximise the human capability of the Whole Force and wider society. An intrapreneur is someone who displays the characteristics of an entrepreneur but uses them to benefit the organisation they are in.*

**History would suggest that in an operational environment the Army is good at innovation as most of the 'usual' rules get rejected for the best solution at that point in time. However, this does not seem to be the case in peacetime. The line between peace and war is becoming increasingly blurred; we cannot afford to assume that soldiers of all ranks will feel willing and able to innovate or suggest change whilst in conflict if they have not felt able to do so before. We are all familiar with the commentary outlining the need for innovation in order to remain competitive, but this common narrative inevitably focuses on technology or investment in new equipment and accelerating procurement processes. Whilst all of these factors are related to innovation, I would contend that innovation is a social problem, not a technical one. We seem to be looking at robotics, space and AI but are we doing enough to consider whether our people and the organisational culture are ready for the future?**

In this era of rapid and constant change, organisations are desperately trying to recruit and retain 'talent' that they might need in the future. Looking at societal trends and forecasting forwards, 'we are currently preparing

students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet'<sup>1</sup>. So how can organisations be sure what 'talents' they will need?

Instead of just focusing on a select few specific 'talents' such as hacking or coding, perhaps we should consider how we develop skills such as *communication, confidence, commitment, craftsmanship, creativity, collaboration and curiosity*. These are the 7C's stipulated by Bill Lucas and Guy Claxton in their book *Educating Ruby: What Our Kids Really Need to Learn*. By developing these skills, individuals may become more adaptable, willing to learn and therefore more likely to be innovative. As well as seeking 'pure' innovation, producing products and technology that is entirely new, we should also create a culture that seeks continuous improvement in order to constantly aim for the highest performance.

The 7 C's are many of the skills that would define someone as an intrapreneur. Gifford Pinchot described intrapreneurs as the 'dreamers who do'; they are the people who manage to navigate the system in order to cut through bureaucracy and make things happen. Their impact may only be on a small scale but they will figure things out and test their assumptions in

1. *Shift Happens 3.0* video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wT2D-6-7kSk>

2. Crick, R.D., Haigney, D., Huang, S., Coburn, T. and Goldspink, C., 2013, *Learning power in the workplace: the effective lifelong learning inventory and its reliability and validity and implications for learning and development*, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(11), pp.2255-2272.
3. Chesbrough, H., Vanhaverbeke, W. and West, J. eds., 2006, *Open innovation: Researching a new paradigm*, Oxford University Press on Demand.
4. Lumsdaine, E. and Binks, M., 2009, *Entrepreneurship: From Creativity to Innovation: Thinking Skills for a Changing World*, Trafford Publishing.
5. For more information on the H4D methodology, see the article 'H4D' also in this issue.
6. Brown, T. and Wyatt, J., 2010, *Design thinking for social innovation IDEO*, *Development Outreach*, 12(1), pp.29-31.

order to find the best way of doing things. A number of business publications have suggested that intrapreneurs are vital to the future of organisations, and although intrapreneurship itself is not a new concept, it is a new concept to the British Army.

### Structure of the BrAIN

The British Army Intrapreneurs' Network (BrAIN) aims to support innovation by putting people at the centre of the process, creating networks of people from across sectors to encourage collaboration and robust development of ideas before providing them to decision makers within the Army. There are three key elements to the BrAIN: the BrAINcells, BrAINstorms and BrAINstem.

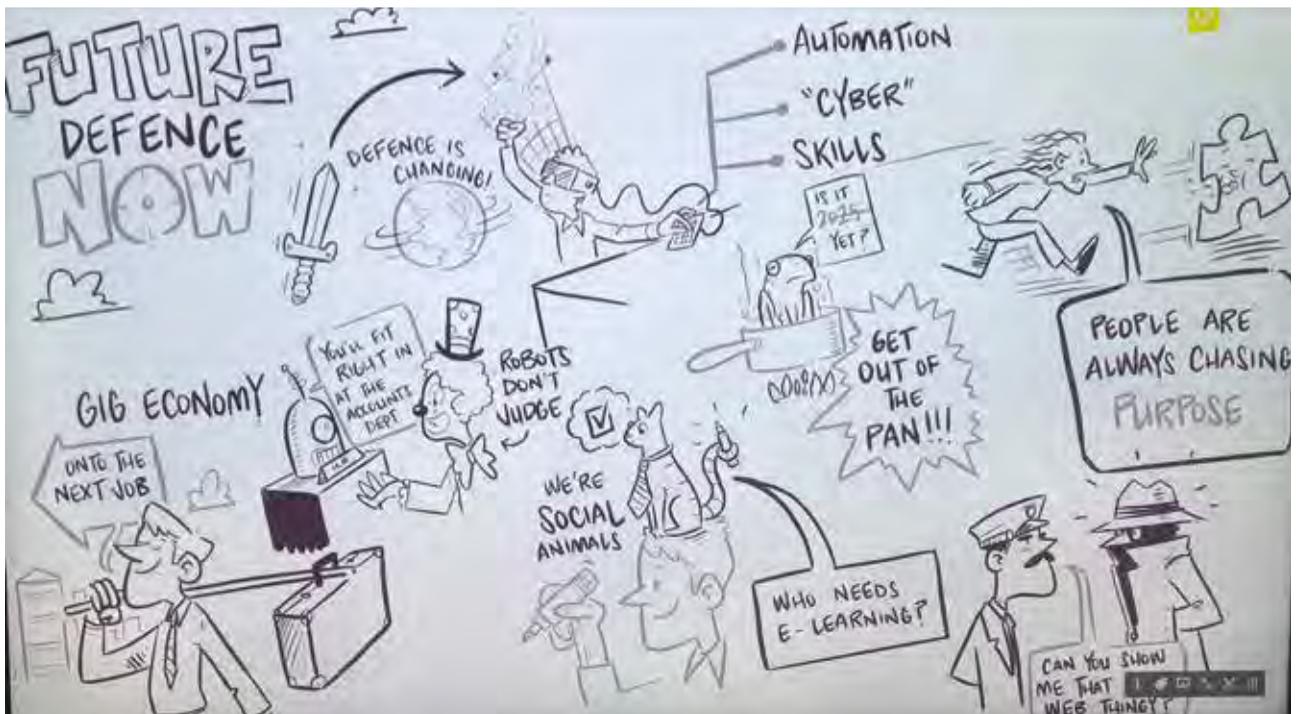
BrAINcells are geographically dispersed groups that bring together diverse individuals in order to make the most of the intellectual capital available. Organisations need to harness the collective intelligence of their people in order to remain competitive in today's rapidly changing world.<sup>2</sup> The Army has numerous stakeholders beyond regular service personnel (for example reservists, civil service employees, students, charities, NGO's and politicians) who are able and willing to contribute to

discussions and offer suggestions to solve Defence challenges. There is, therefore, a wider society whose collective intelligence is available but untapped. In the book 'Open Innovation'<sup>3</sup> the authors note that leading innovators are sharing their intellectual property across organisations and harnessing the knowledge of their competitors or allies. Other researchers<sup>4</sup> suggest that it is through conversations between people within the organisation who do not normally talk, that innovation occurs. Therefore, they highlight the importance of informal networks whilst pointing out that formal channels for submitting or communicating ideas also need to be in place. This is why BrAIN has BrAINcells for networking and relationship building and BrAINstorms as formal channels for ideas.

BrAINstorms are events centred on solving a problem or developing an idea. In order to ensure these events are productive BrAIN intends to facilitate these sessions with a volunteer who is familiar with design thinking methods or the Hacking for Defense (H4D) methodology.<sup>5</sup> Design thinking is a problem solving method popularised by Stanford University and IDEO<sup>6</sup>; it is a human-centered approach to innovation that

*RAF Regt use the DSA (Deployable Situational Awareness) system to communicate in a busy war zone type environment along with personnel from 1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment, 51 Squadron RAF Regiment and 45 Commando, have been putting new and innovative kit and capabilities through their paces on Salisbury Plain Training Area in Wiltshire this month, as they took part in the third phase of the Army Warfighting Experiment (AWE) 17.*





A cartoonist's depiction of what Defence needs to consider for the workforce now and in the future. These were discussed during a Defence People Innovation event with Ernst and Young in Canary Wharf. Photo from author's personal collection

also considers what is 'technologically feasible and economically viable'<sup>7</sup>.

Putting people at the centre of the process encourages individuals to think creatively, collaborate, communicate clearly and will enhance their confidence, all of which are desirable 21st century skills in the workplace.<sup>8</sup> BRAINstorms will not only develop the skills of individuals taking part but will also collect innovative ideas for the organisation to consider. Armies, like companies, need to innovate in order to retain a competitive advantage<sup>9</sup> but many organisations who have had success in the past tend to favour predictability and they therefore tend to filter out information that suggests a new or different way of doing things.<sup>10</sup> BRAIN offers a community who are actively interested in doing things differently. BRAINstorms will bring together people from across sectors that may be able to offer expertise on the particular problem being discussed in order to find the best solution. Once an idea is ready to be taken forward mentors from the BRAINstem may be asked to comment or the idea may go straight to the Army Rapid Innovation and Experimentation Laboratory (ARIEL).<sup>11</sup>

The BRAINstem is a board of senior leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to BRAIN; this may be as a voice for the area they work in, a judge for

BRAINstorm outputs or just as a senior advocate of BRAIN and its ethos. Intrapreneurship efforts require senior level support if they are going to be successful.<sup>12</sup> As well as offering BRAIN support and advice, the BRAINstem benefit from the relationship as they have access to a network of passionate, engaged individuals who can act as a sounding board for testing new policies or projects. Having senior level advocates as voluntary members demonstrates to the rest of the organisation that questioning the status quo, listening to the workforce and collaborating with different industries are values the Army lives by.

By combining the elements described above, BRAIN presents numerous benefits for the Army including enhanced collaboration with society, developing individuals' intrapreneurial skills, developing intellectual capital, enhancing relationships and improving communication; however, this article focuses on the following benefits: retaining and attracting talent, enhancing employee engagement and improving the organisations' ability to learn.

### Engage Your BRAIN

The workplace will soon be full of 'millennials'; this group has been criticised for being 'too self-interested'<sup>13</sup>; while

7. IDEO, 2017, *Design Thinking*, [online]
8. Claxton, G. and Lucas, B., 2015, *Educating Ruby: What Our Children Really Need to Learn*, Crown House Publishing.
9. Porter, M.E., 1990, *The competitive advantage of nations*, *Harvard business review*, 68(2), pp.73-93.
10. Ahuja, G. and Morris Lampert, C., 2001, *Entrepreneurship in the large corporation: A longitudinal study of how established firms create breakthrough inventions*, *Strategic management journal*, 22(6-7), pp.521-543
11. ARIEL is under development by the Innovation team in DCap.
12. Burns, P., 2012, *Corporate entrepreneurship: innovation and strategy in large organizations*, Palgrave Macmillan.
13. Samuels, G. 2017, *Millennials are too 'self-interested' to pursue military career, says British Army chief*, *The Independent* [online]

14. Holt, D.T., Rutherford, M.W. and Clohessy, G.R., 2007, *Corporate entrepreneurship: An empirical look at individual characteristics, context, and process*. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 13(4), pp.40-54

15. Kolev, N., Goldstein, A., & Grossmann, M. 2015. *Five Insights into Intrapreneurship*, Deloitte Digital:

16. Balmaekers, H. 2017, *Intrapreneurship: The Answer to the Millennial Problem?* Intrapreneurship Conference [online]

this may be true in some cases, the Army cannot afford to ignore an entire generation. It is not just 'millennials' who have a desire to contribute to something bigger than themselves, many people who are not classified under that title would agree. One way to encourage people to achieve these feelings is to give them opportunities to choose what they work on so they can align their motivations with that of the organisation.<sup>14</sup> The Army cannot necessarily give everyone a choice about what they work on day-to-day, but BRAIN offers

people the chance to choose what projects they might like to contribute to in their own time and if there isn't one that appeals, they can set one up themselves. Deloitte have stated that embracing intrapreneurship not only encourages existing talent to stay but also works to attract talent into the organisation<sup>15</sup>; there are also similar examples from PwC and IBM.<sup>16</sup>

In order to retain talented individuals, it is important that they are actively engaged at work. There are links between organisations with an intrapreneurial culture



*A scientist holding a tube of liquid at Porton Down, the Defence Science & Technology Laboratory (DSTL) facility near Salisbury in Wiltshire. Photo Crown Copyright*

and employee engagement.<sup>17</sup> Pierce, Kostova and Dirks<sup>18</sup> talk about ‘psychological ownership’, which refers to a scenario where individuals feel as though they own part of the organisation. Pierce says that this sense of ownership enhances individual’s personal satisfaction and therefore their engagement in their job. Similarly Pink<sup>19</sup> highlights three suggested factors that contribute to personal satisfaction: autonomy, purpose and mastery. Both Pink and Pierce highlight that these feelings are key for people to feel engaged in what they are doing. Ideally organisations would encourage an intrapreneurial culture by allowing individuals more autonomy within their day-to-day work<sup>20</sup>, but BrAIN at least offers another outlet for those who perhaps do not feel they have much ownership in the workplace.

Hisrich<sup>21</sup> defines an intrapreneurial culture as one that develops goals and encourages action through experimentation. Similarities can be seen between this and the attributes that Garvin<sup>22</sup> associated with a learning organisation: able to acquire, create, and transfer knowledge that is then used to modify behaviour. There is a lot of work going on within the Army and the MOD to enhance its capacity as a learning organisation; one of the barriers highlighted in 2015, was ‘lack of a culture of open critical thought and reflection at the operational and strategic levels’.<sup>23</sup> In many large, traditional organisations, like the Army, there is a preference for the norm, but in order to continuously improve, it is vital that individuals seek ways to make things better and are able to do something about it. BrAIN encourages people to be

17. Baruah, B. and Ward, A., 2015, *Metamorphosis of intrapreneurship as an effective organizational strategy*, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 11(4), pp.811-822

18. Pierce, J.L., Kostova, T. and Dirks, K.T., 2001, *Toward a theory of psychological ownership in organizations*, *Academy of management review*, 26(2), pp.298-310.

19. Pierce, J.L., Kostova, T. and Dirks, K.T., 2001, *Toward a theory of psychological ownership in organizations*, *Academy of management review*, 26(2), pp.298-310.

20. Birkinshaw, J. and Duke, L., 2013, *Employee-Led Innovation*, *Business Strategy Review*, 24(2), pp.46-51.

21. Hisrich, R.D., 1990, *Entrepreneurship/ intrapreneurship*, *American Psychologist*, 45(2), p.209.

22. Garvin, D. 1993, *Building a Learning Organization*, *Harvard Business Review* [online].

23. Hancock, D., 2015, *Defence Organisational Learning Strategy*, Ministry of Defence.



The British Army Intrapreneurs Network (BrAIN) logo. Designed and produced by Captain Ryal Smith, AGC, Crown Copyright

24. Park, S.H., Kim, J.N. and Krishna, A., 2014, *Bottom-up building of an innovative organization: Motivating employee intrapreneurship and scouting and their strategic value*. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 28(4), pp.531-560.

25. Moriano, J.A., Molero, F., Topa, G. and Mangin, J.P.L., 2011, *The influence of transformational leadership and organizational identification on intrapreneurship*. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 10(1), pp.103-119.

26. Carrier, C., 1994, *Intrapreneurship in large firms and SMEs: a comparative study*. *International Small Business Journal*, 12(3), pp.54-61.

27. Hill, M.E., 2003, *The development of an instrument to measure intrapreneurship: entrepreneurship within the corporate setting*.

28. Kanter, R.M., 1983, *The Change masters*. Simon and Schuster.

29. Csorba, E., and Termuende, E., 2015, *Intrapreneurial Opportunities: Leveraging People's Skills and Talents Within Organisations*. Centre for Social Innovation, University of Cambridge.

30. Gravetter, F.J. and Wallnau, L.B., 2007, *Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences*. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

critical and identify areas for improvement and offers them a forum to raise it; by targeting all ranks within the workforce BrAIN could have a positive impact on organisational culture and empower people to challenge things they know to be wrong.

Despite BrAIN's good intentions, there may be individuals who are uneasy about the development of intrapreneurship within the Army. Intrapreneurship involves encouraging individuals to question the status quo and scan for opportunities where improvements could be made.<sup>24</sup> For leaders who are used to working in a transactional manner, the idea of intrapreneurship may be uncomfortable.<sup>25</sup>

However, following the Chilcot enquiry, the MOD produced a 'Reasonable Challenge' directive which encourages people to question things they don't think are right. It offers suggestions on how to appropriately pitch a challenge and how to gracefully receive one. This initiative suggests that the MOD is aware of the need to question the status quo in order to move forward as a learning organisation and avoid making the same mistakes from the past. Despite the organisational support, BrAIN is likely to come across individuals who are uncomfortable with the idea of intrapreneurship and members should therefore be prepared that their ideas will not always be welcome; which is why having a support network to turn to is helpful.

Most of the research on intrapreneurial cultures tends to focus on small to medium-sized corporate businesses or start up companies; smaller workforces tend to mean that there is a flatter hierarchical structure compared to that of larger more traditional organisations.<sup>26</sup> Flatter structures suggest that decision-making is more evenly distributed so employees may feel more empowered to make change than those at the bottom of a vertical hierarchy in a large organisation.<sup>27</sup> The British Army currently stands at just under 79,000 regular service personnel, in order to manage such an organisation, it has a strict hierarchy but is also subject to regulation by wider Government so some decisions cannot be made inside the Army alone. This structure means that there are significant layers between the person with an idea and the person in control of resources, which significantly slows down information processing.<sup>28</sup> The hierarchical format of the Army is unlikely to change, so BrAIN needs to work within the existing system, hence the suggestion of voluntary

involvement from those 'at the bottom' and those 'at the top'; voluntary membership demonstrates willingness to connect from all parties. However, because BrAIN offers a mechanism for accelerating ideas to the decision-makers, some may view this as an attempt to circumvent the chain of command. It is important to make clear that BrAIN is not intended to cut the chain of command out, but it does offer a way to accelerate innovation and organisational learning by forging closer connections between people and pushing good ideas through to the ARIEL or other appropriate output.

Intrapreneurship is not just about innovation, it is also about empowering people to use their talents and 'bring their best selves to work'<sup>29</sup>. Although this is beneficial for the organisation, it is difficult to quantify. Case studies produced by participants can provide qualitative evidence to senior leaders that BrAIN members have benefitted from the network. Understanding that self-reported evidence is difficult to trust<sup>30</sup>, improvements in performance of individuals would also be evident by talking to their chain of command and over time senior leaders would be able to see changes to overall efficiency by looking at reports of individuals and units within their command. Although difficult to measure and prove in the short-term, evidence from other organisations and across the literature suggest that intrapreneurship can only be a good thing and therefore BrAIN should be given a chance.

## Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that innovation is reliant on human relationships and therefore organisations need to focus on their employees and encourage them to collaborate with others both inside and outside of the company. BrAIN offers the British Army the chance to implement and take advantage of the benefits that intrapreneurship can offer: retention and attraction of talent, greater employee engagement, improved organisational learning, greater likelihood of internal innovation and therefore a positive impact on overall organisational performance. Despite potential barriers such as resistance to intrapreneurship, working in a hierarchical system and a lack of resources, the potential benefits of BrAIN justify its implementation. It is recommended that as BrAIN progresses every effort should be made to quantify outputs and achievements such as membership, number of new ideas presented and eventually case studies from



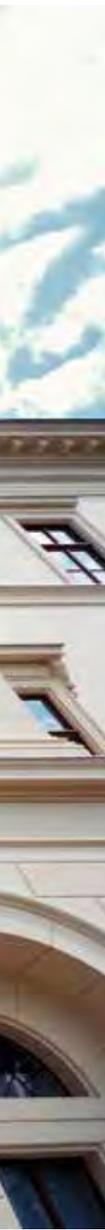
A cartoonist's depiction of the key themes discussed during a Defence People Innovation event with Ernst and Young in Canary Wharf. Photo from the author's personal collection.

members to demonstrate how being part of the BrAIN network has benefitted people personally. BrAIN offers an option for the first stage of the innovation pipeline in the Army; cultivating a culture of innovation and continuous improvement by empowering people to question the status quo and look for ways to make things better. It also offers an opportunity to really maximise the human capability available, not just from service personnel but from across the Whole Force and wider society.

If you are interested in joining the BrAIN, please register through [www.brainarmy.org](http://www.brainarmy.org).



*The frontispiece of the main building at the Ludovika Campus of the National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary.  
Photo: NUPSIInternational, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license, Wikipedia*



# Hacking for Defense NATO Workshop

*Lieutenant Joseph Read presents a problem solving approach to innovation to counter the 'good ideas club'. This article should be read in conjunction with Lieutenant Kirsty Skinner's article, as the founder of the British Army Intrapreneurs' Network (BrAIN), this sets out her vision for the way forward for BrAIN and its role in innovation within the Army.*

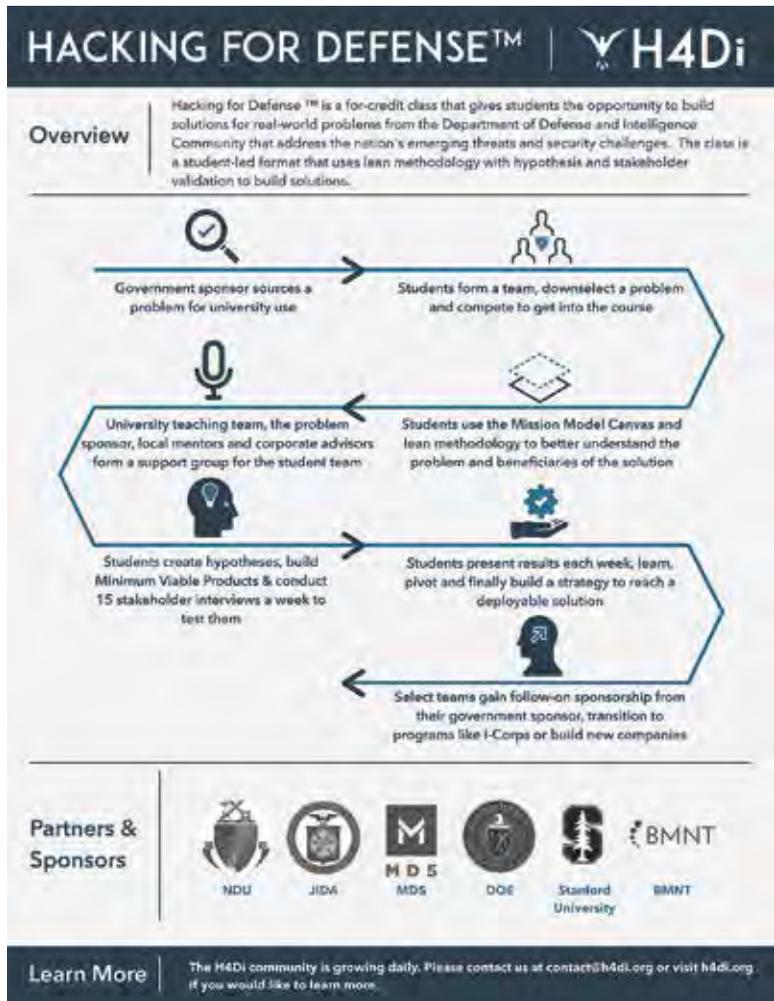
**On Tuesday 24th October three delegates from the British Army Intrapreneurs' Network (BrAIN) travelled to the University of Public Service in Budapest, Hungary to attend the NATO-sponsored Hacking for Defense (H4D) workshop. This was the first time that this problem solving methodology, which is now taught at 12 universities across the United States, had been brought to Europe, at the request of NATO's head of transformation.**

## **Background to H4D**

The H4D methodology was developed in the United States as a way of making innovation work for the Department of Defense (DoD) by widening the scope of those involved to include universities and civilian companies. The key tenet of the H4D methodology is 'problem curation'; good ideas alone are not enough for effective innovation, instead they must address specific problems, posed and curated by a sponsor. In the United States, these problem sponsors are various defence departments and the problem solvers are university students from a range of disciplines.

Colonel Pete Newell (retired), one of the founders of the methodology, came to see that the DoD needed this direction after he became head of the US Rapid Equipping Force toward the end of his career. This organisation had been born from the 'innovation in action' of its founder Colonel Bruce Jette. Colonel Jette had challenged General John Keane that he could deploy robots to Afghanistan to clear caves of potential IEDs within ninety days, rather than the five years the General had been advised. Through his own 'intrapreneurial spirit', using the system around him to best effect, he was able to design, test and deploy robots within eighty-six days. His reward was to become the first head of the Rapid Equipping Force.

When Colonel Newell took over eight years later this department had over 180 staff and a budget of millions of dollars, but had lost its usefulness and was creating products for products' sake, rather than solving problems first. Colonel Newell set about changing the focus of the organisation away from how many ideas and products could be churned out. Instead it would only produce a product for a specific problem. This foundation led Colonel Newell to develop the H4D methodology as a way of bringing this focused innovation to the whole of the DoD.



*This is the process that students work through in a Hacking for Defence class. After its inaugural course at Stanford, H4D is expanding to approximately 15 campuses in late 2016 and early 2017, and has the potential to grow to approximately 100 campuses. Graphic courtesy of BMNT Partners LLC  
Photo U.S. Army*

## The Workshop

### Day One - The Problem With Problems

Appropriately for a methodology that values the interaction of a variety of organisations to achieve innovation, the workshop was held at the National University of Public Service, where Hungarian military, police and public administrators are all educated and trained together. The attendees represented both military and civilian organisations from the UK, US, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Kosovo and Austria; a great opportunity for the BrAIN's three delegates to speak to those interested in innovation across the NATO spectrum.

After introducing ourselves we began looking at problems that we currently faced in our organisations, discussing these with those around us. What was initially an easy task became tougher as the H4D facilitators pushed us to make these problems clear and precise, something that is hard to do on a single pink post-it note. This initial activity set the tone for the three days; if you

can't make your intentions clear on a post-it note, then they aren't as useful as they should be. From here we had to identify the beneficiaries, need and desired outcome of the problems we were curating, again pushed every step of the way to make these as precise as we could.

This was the first big lesson of the workshop; to make innovation really work your thinking has to stay flexible all the time. You cannot get hung up on your first idea or solution, the 'sunk cost fallacy' haunts so much of what we do, but here we were forced to push it aside and get used to adjusting throughout the process, even when this represented a 180 degree turn. This thinking skill was key to the Stanford University team using the H4D methodology to solve a problem for the US Navy SEALs. The students were originally set the problem of creating a wearable 'vital-signs monitor' for the SEALs, however through their interviews the team found that the SEALs would never wear the devices as they may

stop them conducting missions. This meant the team had to completely change their focus and instead developed a GPS buoy that the SEAL teams could deploy from their submersibles. If they hadn't been agile in their thinking and willing to move on, they would have created a good product that its end users didn't want and therefore became useless, the dead-end of so much innovation.

The rest of the first day was spent looking at the key criteria the methodology requires problem curators to consider before the problem is presented. This ensures that the problem being put forward, and importantly the solution, will actually go somewhere. This was illustrated with a Venn diagram of desirability, feasibility and viability, where effective innovation sits in the middle and the ineffective good ideas, unwanted projects and impossible dreams sit around the outside. We were asked to consider whether the problems were technically solvable, designer-owned, critical for the organisation, and had funding and leadership buy-in. If these criteria were met, the problems could stay on the wall for the next day's activities.

### Day Two - Our First Problem

The first task of day two involved choosing one of the problems that had been written the day before. Our group chose 'Border patrols need a way to monitor the underwater environment', and, putting Day One's theory in to action, we then spent the first hour rewriting the problem.

The focus for the day was to analyse and evaluate the curated problems in order to consider boundaries for a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). For this we used H4D's Mission Model Canvas, an adaptation of the lean startup Business Model Canvas. First we considered our beneficiaries, limiting it to those who would directly be affected by the problem. By doing this we made sure that our thoughts remained practical rather than considering solutions that would have fourth order effects much further up the chain. We then analysed what those beneficiaries stood to gain from the problem being solved and how they would measure success, again focusing us on the tangible side of innovation.

At this point we were brought forward (the methodology is usually taught over ten weeks, we had three days) to interview our problem sponsors. For the students this phase would take weeks, with the course demanding 100 interviews of potential beneficiaries, key



*A US Army Corporal assembles a RQ-11 Raven unmanned aerial vehicle in order to conduct aerial tactical reconnaissance of insurgents in Taji. The Raven is one of many projects of the Rapid Equipping Force, an organisation tasked with providing innovative government and commercial off-the-shelf solutions for the military. Photo: Technical Sergeant Russell E Cooley IV, U.S. Air Force (Released)*

partners and sponsors. These are key as the methodology values data and evidence over wishful thinking throughout, but also on interviews rather than surveys to get the teams specific answers that they can work with. It was at this stage that the Navy SEAL team realised they were pursuing the wrong problem.

Conducting so many interviews is very time consuming, and requires lots of analysis of the answers to find patterns and links that the groups would otherwise not have made. These analytical skills need to be taught and cultivated through practice; this was a key takeaway for the BrAIN team as intrapreneurship is about harnessing skills such as creativity, resourcefulness and an ability to fail-fast and learn quickly. This is where BrAIN benefits the rest of the Army's innovation pipeline; in order to create a truly innovative learning organisation, we must invest in cultivating these thinking skills in all of our personnel.

During the interview process a number of barriers were thrown up such as the end users not actually seeing a problem in their working practices or currently working with very little technology. This meant the teams had to re-evaluate their beneficiary statements, their potential gains and what success would look like if the problem were solved. Putting lots of technology in the hands of someone who does not believe they have a problem would have potentially made us feel like we had succeeded, would have made the higher chain of command feel they were being 'future facing', and would probably have been totally ineffective as the end user wouldn't have touched it. This hammered home to us further the core principle here: innovate for the real problem and the real end-user, nothing else.

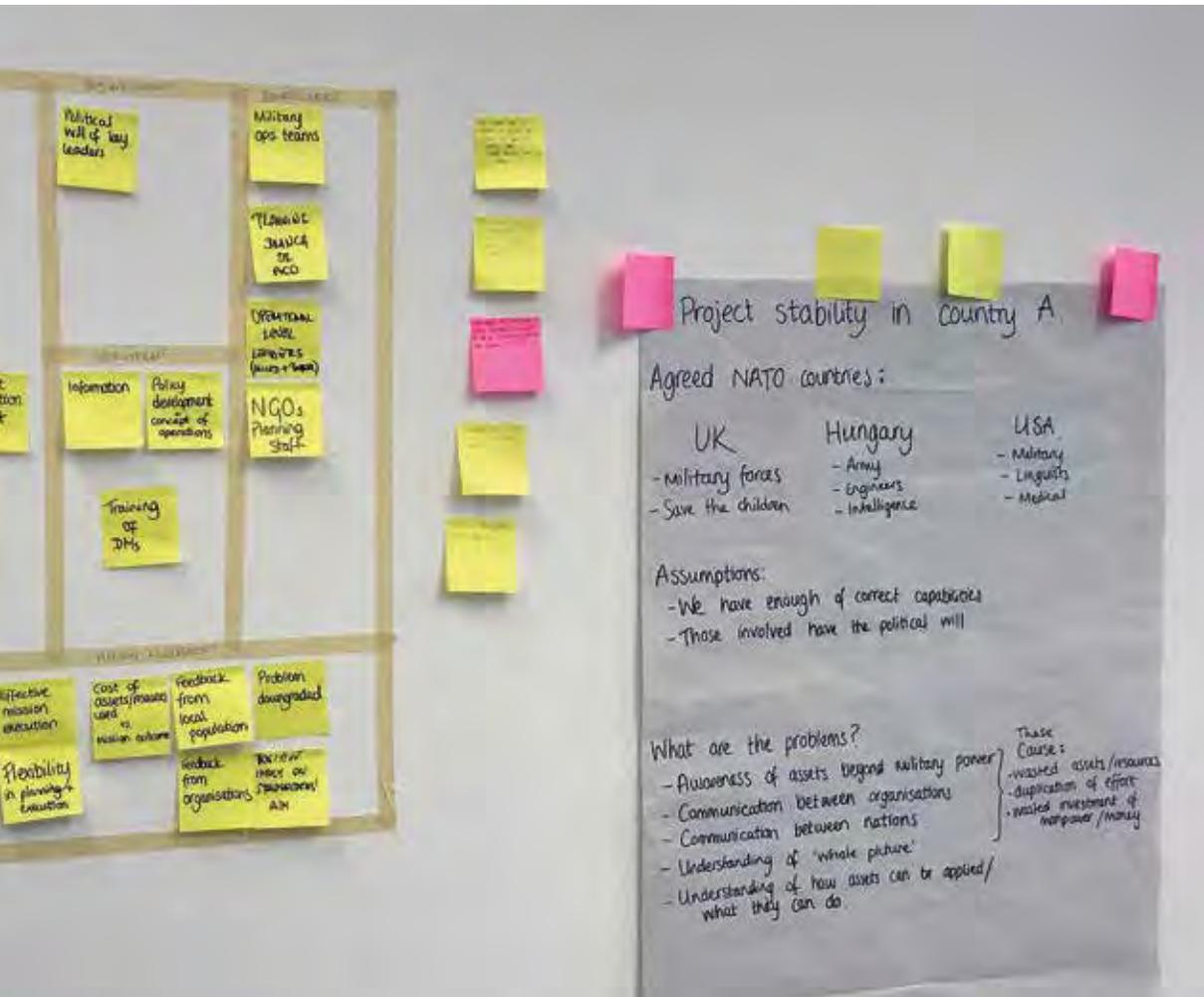
We moved on to complete our mission model canvas after the interviews, looking next at what we would need to consider for effective deployment of any solution. Here it was very hard not to look to solutions but the H4D team kept us on track. Instead we considered what would be needed for the deployment, for us it would be a solution that the border guards could all use, that would be simple and could easily be proved to be effective. These considerations gave us parameters for any solution, but we had to make sure we didn't jump ahead. Moving on we looked at the key activities we would need to carry out to take us toward a solution, researching current technology options, further interviews on issues the border guards faced or with their commanders to see where they felt the problem sat; these began to set the scene toward a solution.

Two other key elements to the mission model canvas were key partners and key resources. The latter would be those things that we would need to own to solve the problem; training, authority of the chain of command, communication networks etc. The former though looked at those resources that we would need from elsewhere but that we didn't need to own. Here was another key element that chimed with the ethos of BrAIN; we can get ideas and ask support from outside our direct organisation. This isn't a plug to outsource and privatise more of the military system, far from it; it is the understanding that even within the Army, not one organisation needs to own an entire project, we can be collaborative. The Army can speak to universities and companies through means other than contracts, we can foster personal relationships that are mutually beneficial



and that gets us a much bigger pool of people to help us solve a problem; exactly what BrAIN aims to achieve.

Day Two ended with us thinking up an MVP, this is the pinnacle of the ten week university course, so our eight hours on the problem was no match at all, but we gave it a good go. Despite a radical call for an 'out of the box' use of actual seals to patrol the water, the team went for a two pronged approach; a small sonar attached to the patrol boats, complemented by a basic communication system with the base on land and other agencies involved in the task. Our process had drawn us to a simpler solution than we first expected in order to fit in best with the end user. It now included elements we didn't even think we would be looking at, such as the communications, which had been drawn out of the interviews. Even in eight hours we had demonstrated to ourselves that we wanted too much to think of a solution rather than solve the actual problem, but we could redeem ourselves on the final day.



An example of the Mission Model Canvas completed by one syndicate to tackle the NATO problem, 'How might NATO collaboratively leverage Allied and Partner Nation assets projecting and sustaining forces whilst maintaining responsiveness?'  
 Photo from the author's personal collection

**Day Three - The NATO Problem**

For our final challenge we were posed a problem from NATO - 'How might NATO collaboratively leverage Allied and Partner Nation assets when projecting and sustaining forces while maintaining responsiveness'. Armed with our knowledge of the methodology from the first two days, we got started. Immediately our new skills kicked in, the problem posed was completely unworkable: confused, far too general and lacking any clear beneficiaries. Our first task then became curating the problem. After five rewrites, first individually, then as a group and then under the coaching of the H4D staff, we settled on a single problem statement. Of the six groups, everyone had boiled the original problem down to a different focus, demonstrating immediately that verbose and vague problems are unsolvable, not because the issue is, but because the problem is not understood.

With a workable problem in hand we set out to complete our mission model canvas. Our beneficiaries started off as too general, so we boiled them down twice. The beneficiary gain had to change as we eliminated beneficiaries from our calculations and our achievement went from several order effects to single order and measurable. Our key resources and key partners were full to bursting, especially the partners, with outside organisations or groups within our own that could support our decision-making and problem solving. The final key was the support and buy-in from the key personnel and potential saboteurs to ensure that any solution did not fall into the purgatory of the 'good ideas club'.

With a full mission model canvas we moved on to our MVP, sketching out our ideas as individuals first and then the group. We presented back our MVPs and the six groups had six diverse possible solutions. The

1. See Lt Kirsty Skinner's article 'Intrapreneurship: No It's Not A Typo', also in this issue.

H4D methodology doesn't usually have multiple groups solving a single problem, so this was a first, but there were clear benefits of having such diverse routes to solving the problem. Again this is something that the Army can consider for its innovation pipeline; diversity of thought and a little competition can be great positive drivers.

Our time at the Hacking for Defense workshop was genuinely enlightening. While it may be 'common sense' to solve problems not just give solutions, our three days showed just how hard that common sense can actually be to achieve. For the Army's innovation pipeline this is a key lesson to learn and is exactly where BrAIN sits; curating problems and developing the skills needed for innovation in all individuals. The whole of UK Defence could benefit from applying the Hacking for Defense methodology, by bringing in universities, civilian organisations and the other forces; our problem solving capacity would be significantly increased.

As for BrAIN, we represent the first part of the innovation pipeline, curating problems and creating a workable base from which we can create real and meaningful change, not just a good ideas club. If you are interested in helping to solve Army or Defence problems and you want to be part of the wider effort towards intrapreneurship<sup>1</sup>, please register your interest on the BrAIN website, [www.brainarmy.org](http://www.brainarmy.org).



*US Sailors assigned to Naval Special Clearance Team One (NSCT-1) prepare to enter the well deck aboard experimental boat ship Stiletto off the coast of San Diego. Members of NSCT-1 are participating in Exercise Howler. Stiletto is being tested for its usefulness in littoral combat warfare and interoperable environments. U.S. Navy photo: Photographer's Mate Airman Damien Horvath (RELEASED)*





*Royal Marines of 45 Commandos honing their skills alongside their Dutch and US counterparts at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Centre (MCAGCC) in 29 Palms, while taking part in the annual exercise Black Alligator. Photo: POA Sean Clee, Crown Copyright*

# Leadership vs Followership

*This article by Major Matt Nowak, 22 Field Hospital, looks at the differences between leading and following.*

*'He who has learned how to obey will learn how to command.'*  
*Solon (Athenian philosopher and statesman)*

**Leadership is CGS's Main Effort.<sup>1</sup> We put Leadership at the heart of what we do and how we act. We look for it, encourage it, and develop it in those we are responsible for. We have developed a Leadership Code<sup>2</sup>, which is commonplace on email signature blocks.**

But how can we all be leaders? To lead is to be a chief, to guide, to direct, be the first, hold precedence, to be *prima intra pares*. This sits comfortably with our well-defined hierarchical structure, and we combine appointment with leadership. But if we are to be a modern knowledge-based organisation, we require everyone to share the delivery and experience of leadership<sup>3</sup>; this is the paradox.

To make an analogy using physics, we have ordinary matter (leadership), which is tangible and observable, but is not enough to complete our model. Where is the dark matter, inferred and un-evidenced, that must exist in order to balance the equation and make things work? I believe the balance is achieved primarily through Followership. It is the reciprocal social process to Leadership, not the antithesis. We must know when to lead, and when to follow.

## A Career in Leading, Or Following?

To what extent is our career defined by how we follow, rather than lead? It would be doubtful if this question was given much thought by the majority of Army personnel. After all, we believe our leadership is central to our outputs and outcomes; this then determines how we perform in our post, and in turn the level of success we achieve against our personal objectives, which we are then reported against. The greater the level of success, the more potential we have demonstrated, and so the more likely we are to achieve that desired personal reporting effect that year and in the long term, be it a promotion, a particular post or assignment, contract change, or training.

But it could equally be argued that we promote those who follow best; the ability to follow is explicit and implicit to Mission Command. Those who understand and execute tasks on behalf of their first and second Reporting Officers the best will be the most successful; this makes sense; maybe those more emotionally in tune with their superiors are more able to attract favour through unconscious bias. So, surely those who follow best will succeed?

1. Army Command Plan 2016

2. The Army Leadership Code - The 7 Leadership Behaviours: L - Lead by Example, E - Encourage Thinking, A - Apply Reward and Discipline, D - Demand High Performance, E - Encourage Confidence in the Team, R - Recognise Individual Strengths and Weaknesses, S - Strive for Team Goals

3. Pearce, Craig L., and Conger, Jay A., *Shared Leadership Reframing the Hows and Whys of Leadership*, Sage Publications, University of Southern California, 2002

4. Fleenor, J.W., Prince, J.M., Using 360-degree Feedback in Organizations: An Annotated Bibliography, 1997

5. The NHS KSF and the Development Review Process Department of Health, 2004

6. Lee, Gregory G. Caution Required: Multirater Feedback in the Army, Military Review, July–August 2015

7. Crime and Punishment, Part 5, Ch 1 The quote describes a clerk, Andrey Semyonovitch, who is also described as ‘...anaemic, scrofulous...and rather stupid’, and as a man who’s greatest fear is to be shown up.

8. Kelley, Robert. E. (1988) In Praise Of Followers. Harvard Business Review, 66, 142-148

9. Ibid

Do we promote our best leaders? Certainly this is the aim, but how can we be sure we are achieving this if we do not ask those who are led? Three-sixty appraisals were conceived in principle by the German Army in the Second World War<sup>4</sup>, and although still used in some organisations (for example, the NHS<sup>5</sup>), have not gained wide acceptance due to their numerous drawbacks.<sup>6</sup>

We are assigned into posts by those we follow, not lead, therefore it is in our interests to follow them and in their interest to employ the best followers based upon experience or reputation, to increase the chances of their personal future success.

Is Leadership enough?

### The Problem with Followership

*He was one of the numerous and varied legion of dullards, of half-animated abortions, conceited, half-educated coxcombs...who caricature every cause they serve, however sincerely.*

*Fyodor Dostoyevsky*<sup>7</sup>

The above quote summarises many of the negative and unattractive stereotypes associated with Following: obsequiousness, a paucity of intellect, physically weak, and, perhaps most damningly, a lack of individuality. Perhaps this is why Followership research and theory attracts such little time, resource and attention; these are not character traits you would want in yourself or those you lead? Unfortunately, we view this through a cultural duality; you are a leader or follower; winner or loser.

### Followership Theory

The grip of Leadership can be demonstrated by searching on bookseller websites. The number of books about Leadership is many, and books about Followership are few (and fewer, once religious books are filtered out). This is an uninteresting fact; it could be argued (rather cynically) that this does not tell us anything other than people want to read and think about themselves as leaders, ergo, winners. More positively, that people actively seek to develop and strengthen their qualities, or gain new skills, or learn new ideas, which is wholly commendable.

To complement this, what would motivate someone to read on Followership given the negative associations?

Why would someone at the bottom of an organisation want to know more on how they can maintain their status quo? Why would someone actively seek to pursue a career trajectory down the ladder? These are separate issues to making the conscious decision to prioritise work-life balance, or accepting a ceiling has been reached, or even finding contentment and satisfaction in current employment, all of which are deeply personal, and one or more of each will come to all of us at some stage.

Robert Kelley is accredited with developing Followership Theory, and, while almost 30 years old, it remains the closest available to a seminal text. He described four key qualities<sup>8</sup>:

1. **Self-Management:** *The ability to think critically, to be in control of one’s actions, and work independently. It is important that followers manage themselves so that leaders are able to delegate tasks to these individuals.*
2. **Commitment:** *An individual is committed to the goal, vision, or cause of a group, team, or organization. This is an important quality of followers as it contributes to the Moral Component.*
3. **Competence:** *Individuals possess the skills and aptitudes necessary to complete the goal or task for the group, team, or organization. Individuals high on this quality often hold higher than average skills and show commitment to through life learning or continuous professional development.*
4. **Courage:** *Effective followers hold true to their beliefs and maintain and uphold ethical standards, even in the face of dishonest or corrupt superiors (leaders). Speak truth unto power.*

However, these are also qualities that we should demand of our leaders; who wants an incompetent leader who lacks moral courage and commitment? This does not help us understand what it takes to Follow. Further to this, Kelley also categorised Followers into five types<sup>9</sup>:

1. **The Sheep:** *Passive individuals who require external motivation. They lack commitment and require constant supervision.*

2. **The Yes-People:** Committed to the leader and the goal (or task) of the organization (or group/team). Conformist and do not question the decisions or actions of the leader.
3. **The Pragmatics:** These individuals remain in the background of the group and will only go with a majority decision.
4. **The Alienated:** Negative and often attempt to stall or bring the group down by constantly under-mining the decisions and actions of the leader. They often view themselves as the rightful leader and are critical of the leader and fellow group members.
5. **The Star Followers:** Positive, active, and independent thinkers. Can succeed without the presence of a leader.

The unflattering adjectives mentioned earlier would seem to be evidenced by the academic literature, less the Star Follower. If asked, which category would you put yourself in? You are led, so you are a follower by definition; this is how others see you. Is it?

#### **Leadership Versus Leaderful**

As leaders, when do we ask ourselves 'why should people follow me?' It would be surprising if no-one had at one time worked for someone who held a position of authority (and implicitly leadership), who displayed the unattractive qualities of leadership; arrogance, vanity, selfishness, and indifference to those they led. Why are they such a poor leader? I suggest they are not leaderful.

*A soldier from 1 Royal Regiment of Fusiliers takes direction during Ex SOUTHERN WARRIOR a Collective Training 2 dismounted exercise facilitated by HQ British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI).  
Photo: Corporal Si Longworth RLC, Crown Copyright*





*Soldiers from The 1st Battalion The Irish Guards take part in a company attack alongside Welsh, French and Spanish units during Ex IBERIAN STAR in Spain. Photo: Corporal Barry Lloyd RLC, Crown Copyright*

10. Raelin, Joe, *Creating Leaderful Organizations*, Berrett-Koehler, 2003

11. For example, the BBC, the NHS, PwC, AstraZeneca, Nestle, Ernst & Young, The British Red Cross, Phillips, Cadbury Schweppes, Coors Brewing Company and British Telecommunications

12. Goleman, Daniel., *What Makes A Leader*, Harvard Business Review, November-December, 1998

There are Four C's of being leaderful:<sup>10</sup>

1. **Concurrency** (more than one leader operating at the same time)
2. **Collective** (shared leadership)
3. **Collaborative Working** (empowerment and equality of individuals)
4. **Compassion** (preserving the dignity of others, valuing members)

What is the difference? In essence, leadership is about doing (objective), leaderful is about being (subjective). The difference is that being leaderful is a diffuse, organisational and inclusive approach. It implies inherent Values and Standards, situational awareness, understanding of teams, and flexibility of mind and task. From this, being leaderful translates successfully into followership. Perhaps then we should look at creating an organisation that is leaderful, rather than one that is led. This approach has been adopted by many and varied organisations<sup>11</sup>; the difficulty is in arguing their success.

### Do Leadership And Followership Differ?

Having looked at the conceptual aspects of followership qualities and the concept of being leaderful, perhaps there isn't much difference between the two on a daily practical level?

Goleman's<sup>12</sup> Five Components of Emotional Intelligence (EI or EQ), outline the hallmarks of Emotional Intelligence. I would argue these hallmarks are leadership, and also define the qualities of following well. Maybe it is all just Emotional Intelligence?

### Conclusion

Anecdotal evidence supports the perception that leadership is all in the British Army.

We pay little to no attention to Followership throughout our training and education.

What is evident is that there are shared qualities; important qualities that transcend both Leadership and Followership. However, we know from our own experiences that one can be a great leader and a poor

	Definition	Hallmarks
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	The ability to recognise and understand your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others	Self-confidence Realistic self-assessment Self-deprecating sense of humour
<b>Self-Regulation</b>	The ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods The propensity to suspend judgement—to think before acting	Truthfulness and integrity Comfort with ambiguity Openness to change
<b>Motivation</b>	A passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status A propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence	Strong drive to achieve Optimism even in the face of failure Organisational commitment
<b>Empathy</b>	The ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people Skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions	Expertise in building and retaining talent Cross-cultural sensibility Service to clients and customers
<b>Social Skill</b>	Proficiency in managing relationships and building networks An ability to find common ground and build rapport	Effectiveness in leading change Persistence Expertise in building and leading teams

Figure : Daniel Goleman's Five Components of Emotional Intelligence

follower, or vice versa, and equally good or bad at both.

Rather than being two sides of one coin, perhaps Followership should be viewed as one end of a personality sliding scale, with Leadership at the other, with the individual's perception of where to sit on that scale in a given situation being the critical skill, and their ability to judge where to sit is directly linked to their Emotional Intelligence.

We pride ourselves on leading. The RMAS motto is 'Serve to Lead'. The latter part has been discussed, analysed, theorised and practised, and will continue to do so for absolutely the right reasons, and in order for us to be better leaders, we must also define, invest and understand what we mean by 'Serve'.

Members from the First Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment from 4th Mech Brigade based in Catterick train with the 2nd Regiment the French Foreign legion in wind-swept Otterburn training area the first time the regiments have trained together during Exercise BORDER STORM.  
Photo: Sergeant Brian Gamble, Crown Copyright





*The Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Force of Russia. Photo: Vladimir V. Burov, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license, Wikimedia.*

# How Russia 'Plays' at War

*Dr Steven J Main, Russian Military Studies Office, looks at how the Russians go about war gaming.*

**Earlier this year, an announcement appeared concerning the re-opening of the War Games Centre in the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces.<sup>1</sup> According to the interview of the Commandant of the Academy, Lieutenant-General Sergei Kuralenko:**

*...after refurbishment, in the Military Academy of the General Staff is the Centre of War Games. It is a multi-media complex and, thanks to the latter, the Centre of War Games will be able to conduct inter-service war games, as well as [other] measures of an operational training nature.<sup>2</sup>*

In an earlier statement on the work of the War Games Centre, Kuralenko noted that:

*...the reconstructed War Games Centre has all the latest achievements in the area of information technology, all the training and strategic and operational strategic command posts have been re-equipped. The conduct of command staff and military-practical games at the aforementioned command posts to the fullest extent possible ensure the practical training of the students to assume high office in the Armed Forces, or other forces of the Russian Federation.<sup>3</sup>*

Thus, from the moment the first war game was held in Russia in 1824, both the theory and practice have been developed ever since.<sup>4</sup> Needless to say, at the highest level, there is more than one body involved in war gaming. Within the Military Academy of the General Staff, another Centre, the Centre of Operational-Strategic Training, also exists. This particular Centre began operating in May 2003 and, at its formal opening, the contemporary Mayor of Moscow, Yury Luzhkov, stated:

*...taking into account the growing demands for training our military leaders, the appearance of computerised systems of command and control in the operational and strategic planning system, the necessity of improving the teaching process at the Academy on the basis of the wide scale use of computers, the creation of systems of graphic visualisation of information...all are combined in the Centre of Operational-Strategic Training.<sup>5</sup>*

Unfortunately, there is, as yet, no further information publicly available concerning the leadership of the two Centres, or exactly how the work of either of them is integrated into the Academy's teaching system. However, there is another important organ involved in the area of computer war gaming, namely the 27th Central Scientific Research Institute, (hereinafter simply referred to as the

1. 'V akademii Genshtaba poiaivilsia tsentr voennykh igr, 24 marta 2017, (<https://russian.rt.com/Russia/news/371695-genshtab-centr-voennykh-igr>)

2. 'V akademii...', 24 marta 2017, *ibid.*

3. Lieutenant-General S Kuralenko, 'Tsentri voennoi mysli', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 6/12/2016.

4. Alpeyev, O.E., 'Istoriia poiaivleniia i razvitiia voennoi igry v Russkoi Armii (1824-1905 gg.)', *Voenna-istoricheskii zhurnal*, No. 6, 2014, 28-32; 28.

5. 'V akademii Genshtaba VS RF otkrylsia tsentr voennykh igr, 17/5/2003,' (<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=26021&cid=7>)



Wargaming.net. Photo: Marco Verch, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License, Wikimedia

6. 'Pozdravliaem iubiliiarov', *Voennaya Mysl'*, No.7, July 2004

'27th'). In other words, at the uppermost levels of the Russian strategic thought process, war-gaming would appear to form an integral part. This being the case, it can be safely assumed that all three organs were involved in the planning process in relation to events in the Crimea in 2014 and in Russia's air campaign over Syria.

In relation to both the personnel and work of the 27th, there is much more publicly available material not least because, over decades, it has been very closely involved in developing the theory and use of systems of 'automation' ('computerisation') in the command and control organs of the country's Armed Forces and, still more recently, 'in the creation and application of computer war games in the operational training of staff HQs.'<sup>16</sup>

In commemorating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the 27th, the leading academic journal of the Russian MoD, *Voennaia Mysl'*, (*Military Thought*) summarised the main work of the 27th over the decades:

*... the origin of the Institute was the creation in the Ministry of Defence on 3rd August 1954... of Computer Centre No.1. Thanks to the successful mastering of the domestic computers, by the end of 1955, [the*

*Institute] was already training highly qualified specialists in programming, able... to fulfil difficult scientific work in the interests of the country's defence interests. The Centre carried out initial scientific work in laying the basis for designing computer complexes and determining the fundamental direction of using computers in the Armed Forces. The Centre worked out the calculations for the flight programme... of the satellites and ensured the successful launch of the first artificial Earth satellites, the space flights of Yu A Gagarin and the missions to the Moon, Mars and Venus. In 1961, the Computer Centre was reformed to become the 27th Central Scientific-Research Institute of the MoD USSR. In the 1960s-1970s, the Institute's scientific collective worked on the theoretical foundations for the use of computers in troop control, [also] began strong development in areas associated with modelling of operations and military actions... The theoretical work was widely used in practice... in terms of the [further] creation and development of*

*computerised systems of [command and] control, the introduction of mathematical modelling and methodology in operations of staff HQs...particularly in the General Staff... In the middle of the '70s, the Institute's collective developed the methodology of the programme development of weaponry and military technology [emphasis in the original].*<sup>7</sup>

Of course, as wars and conflict changed, so too did the work of the 27th:

*..in the '80s-'90s, the further scientific and practical development of automating [computerising] troop command [and control] continued, further academic work was carried out, laying the basis for reforming the Armed Forces...At this time, a new scientific direction ['napravlenie'] was born in the Institute - **the creation and use of computer war games in the operational training of Staff HQs, which now occupies a worthy place in the Institute's scientific work.***<sup>8</sup>

Despite the existence of the other two Centres, the 27th is the General Staff's lead organisation in computer war-gaming. Currently headed by A.A. Protasov, in an article commemorating the 55th anniversary of the creation of the Institute, Protasov detailed the more recent work of the 27th, particularly in relation to planning the use of forces in the field:

*...at the present moment in time [article was published in 2014], the Institute...is developing the conceptual basis for [further] developing the command [and control] systems for the AFs of RF [Armed Forces of the Russian Federation], the mathematical and programmable means for the further development of groups of forces of the AFs of RF...ensuring the operation of the General Staff of the AFs of RF in planning the use of troops (forces), supporting the decisions in managing the troops (forces), organising and conducting operational training measures.*<sup>9</sup>

7. *Ibid.* For more information on Computer Centre No.1 MoD USSR, see Kitov, V.A., Prikhod'ko, A.Ya., '60 let Vychislitel'nomu tsentru No.1 Ministerstva oborony SSSR,' (<http://www.computer-museum.ru/articles/materialy-mezhdunarodnoi-konferentsii-sorucum-2914/563/>)

8. *Ibid.*

9. Protasov, A.A. 'Institut avtomatizatsii i upravleniia voiskami (silami): istoriia i sovremennost' (k 55-letuiu sozdaniia 27 TsNII Minoborony Rossii)', *Voennaia Mysl'*, no.7, 2009, 2-5; 5.

*World of Warships wargaming. Photo Marco Verch, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License, Wikimedia*



10. Protasov, 'Institut avtomatizatsii i sovershenstvovaniia upravleniia voiskami (salami): istorii i sovremennost', 'Voennaia Mysl', no.7, 2014, 3-8; 6.

11. Saifetdinov, Kh. M. 'Komp'iuternye formy operativnoi podgotovki: problem sovershenstvovaniia i puti ikh resheniia', 'Voennaia Mysl', No.7, 2004, 2-11; 4.

As weapons continued to become more sophisticated and the development of military computer systems gathered apace, the timeous receipt and processing of information from and about the battlefield became increasingly important. This meant more work for the 27th:

*Analysis of the experience of local wars and military conflict at the end of the XX and beginning of the XXI centuries shows that one of the main criteria in effective troop control in modern operations is the timeous receipt of information about the enemy... Thus, in all the armed forces of the developed states, without exception, one of the main areas of direction is designing effective methods of automating [computerising] the development of information coming in, creating the intelligence and information means [necessary] for supporting command decisions in the military area...In the conduct of its military research work, the Institute devotes a lot of its time to solving such*

*issues, including...forecasting the course and outcome for both warring sides in potential military conflict.*<sup>10</sup>

Under the leadership of one former Head of the 27th, Kh. I. Saifetdinov, the latter developed what became to be known as 'computerised forms of operational training' (CFOT) defined by Saifetdinov as:

*Forms of training for military organs of command [and control] and professional-post training of generals, admirals and officers, in which the organisation and methods of conducting operational training are based on computer technology for training.*<sup>11</sup>

According to Saifetdinov, a 'game modelling system', testing out the new training technologies, was first tried out in bilateral computer war games in 1997-1998 and then, involving senior officers from the higher Staff HQs, operating at the operational-strategic level between 1997-2000:

*First demonstration of the main battle tank T-72B3 at the Tank biathlon 2013 competition at the Alabino training ground of 2nd Guards Tamanskaya Motor Rifle Division. Photo: Vitaly Kuzman, Creative Commons-Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License, [www.vitalykuzmin.net](http://www.vitalykuzmin.net)*



...as a result, the basic format for the conduct of...operational training of the AF of the RF between 2000-2004 [the article was published in 2004] has been command-staff exercises at the operational-strategic level with the wide scale use of modern information and computer technologies.<sup>12</sup>

In his opinion, the fundamental advantage of the adoption and use of this new form of training is that 'it ensures that the command [and control] organs have a surer decision-making base as regards the use of troops (forces) and the effective management of the latter in the fulfilment of their pre-arranged tasks, based on operational and tactical calculations and mathematical modelling of operations...in a unified information-modelling environment.'<sup>13</sup>

He concluded by saying:

*CFOT - are forms of training, in which those being trained, develop and adopt decisions, based on modelling of combat operations of the opposing sides, and where the leadership [of the training process] can evaluate [decisions adopted] by means of forecasting the course and outcome of the operations (combat actions) by the method of modelling, realistically, the decisions taken by both sides.<sup>14</sup>*

This led to further ground-breaking work in the development of mathematical modelling for Front- and Army-level operations, with particular emphasis being placed on updating the model for Front-level operations:

*In the period 2000-2014, the Model for Front Operations (MFO) has been constantly improved, taking into account more data concerning the inter-service nature of contemporary operations (combat actions) and the possibilities of new means of warfare. In the current version of the mathematical model, measures have been taken concerning the methodology of modelling deep, distance, non-contact, strike means aimed at groups and targets of the*

*enemy, with the use of geo-informational systems, depending on the peculiarities of the theatre of military activities.<sup>15</sup>*

### Computer Military Games

In July 2015, an adviser to the Russian Ministry of Defence, A. Il'nitsky, publicly bemoaned the fact that so many Russian kids were playing foreign-produced themed war games where, as he put it, the Russian gamer 'fights... but not for our truth.'<sup>16</sup> He further stated that creating and designing Russian-themed war games was both an issue of 'state importance' and a task 'of the highest order' for Russia.<sup>17</sup> This would also seem to be an issue of increasing interest on the part of the Russian MoD and one which is going to become ever more important with the passing of time, as the Russian MoD seeks to take on board the potential of computer games being used in the overall teaching/training process of ordinary service personnel.

Of course, there is also a propaganda element in the design and production of such games. As a number of Russian specialists have pointed out over the past few years, many of the games that are played by Russia's youth are almost 'genetically' anti-Russian and do not encourage positive feelings either towards Russia's past or its present. Critiquing a number of Western-produced Russian-themed games, one expert stated: 'recently, we see an increase in anti-Russian propaganda not only in the mass media, or on the Internet, but also in computer games.'<sup>18</sup>

The author also made the point that, willingly or otherwise, the 'gamer' was, to all intents and purposes, a 'victim of information attack' and, on the whole, was fearful of the potential consequences for Russia:

*Contemporary foreign computer games are... one of the strongest elements of propaganda (influence) on mass consciousness...The designers of many foreign computer games, by means of propaganda, manipulate [both] the technologies and banal lies to form a negative image of the USSR and Russia in the consciousness of both the foreign and Russian gamers, undermine the foundations of patriotism and pride in one's Motherland and also belittle the feat of the Soviet people, achieved in the Great Patriotic War [1941-1945 Soviet-German War]. Such 'brain washing' may provide a very good basis to*

10. Protasov, 'Institut avtomatizatsii i sovershenstvovaniia upravleniia voiskami (salami): istorii i sovremennost', 'Voennaia Mysl', no.7, 2014, 3-8; 6.

11. Saifetdinov, Kh. M. 'Komp'iuternye formy operativnoi podgotovki: problem sovershenstvovaniia i puti ikh resheniia', 'Voennaia Mysl', No.7, 2004, 2-11; 4.

12. Saifetdinov, *ibid.*, 3.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, 5.

15. Vypasniak, V.I., Gural'nik, A.M., Tikhanychev, O.V. 'Modelirovanie voennykh deistviy: istoriia, sovremennoe sostoiianie i perspektivy', 'Voennaia Mysl', No.7, 2014; 28-37; 29.

16. Minoborony RF: Rossiyskie komp'iuternye voennye igry - vopros gosudarstvennoi vazhnosti, 8/7/2015 (<http://www.securitylab.ru/news/473229.php>. Accessed - 11/11/2016).

17. *Ibid.*

18. Zorina, E.G. 'Komp'iuternye igry kak istochnik antirossiyskoi propagandy (na primere igr 'Company of Heroes', 'Operation Flashpoint' i 'Command and Conquer: Red Alert', 'Informatsionnye voyny, No.1 (37), 2016, 81-85; 81.

19. *Ibid.*, 84. This undermining of USSR/Russia's role in WW2 was very much a key point in a recent article published in the journal of the Academy of Military Science - Mikriukov, V.Yu., *Voeno-istoricheskoe protivoborstvo (Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk, No2 (59), 2017, 141-146)*

20. 'Paper looks at how Russian kids are taught World War II', (BBCM, 8/5/2017).

21. Beliantsev, A.E., Gershtein, I.Z., 'Obraz strany cherez kom'piuternuiu igru: istoriko-politicheskiy aspekt', *Vestnik NNGU im. N.I.Lobachevskogo, No.6, 2010, 279-283; 279.*

22. *Ibid.*, 280.

23. *Ibid.*, 281.

24. Beliantsev, *ibid.*, 282.

*re-examine the results of the Second World War and undermine Russia's state interests.*<sup>19</sup>

Since the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Russia has been particularly sensitive at any attempt to revise any of the fundamental aspects of the victory of the USSR in WW2.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, in May 2009, Putin took the decision to create a presidential commission, charged with combatting efforts to use history in order to demean Russia's national interests.<sup>21</sup> The article's authors further argued that:

*... the computer game, through its subject matter, the graphics, the sound track, is able to impart to the player additional information, having absolutely nothing in common with the game. Under such conditions, computer games are a considerable channel to transmit ideological stereotypes and images.*<sup>22</sup>

In fairness, in their article, they were also critical of one particular Russia-designed and themed war game namely, 'Protivostoianie. Prinuzhdenie k miru', ('Opposition. Forced to peace') about the 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict. In their opinion, the latter game was too heavy in its ideological content, arguing that 'in the consciousness of the gamer (player), political ideas must be introduced quietly, at the level of the sub-consciousness.'<sup>23</sup>

In terms of Russian-themed future games development, they proposed that the state should fund a series of games on Russian history, targeted specifically at the young, designed to promote both 'civil consciousness' and 'feelings of patriotism'. If such a series was funded and produced by the state, then this could only spell good for Russia's future:

*Based on subjects from the history of the Fatherland, [the games] would develop a feeling of patriotism amongst the players, pride in one's country, a better understanding of the history and culture of Russia and could become a real mechanism for political socialisation and strengthen the national-state identity of Russia.*<sup>24</sup>

Although such games would be marketed at the civilian, rather than the military market, nevertheless the long-term implications are clear: by encouraging a more positive image of, say, the role of the Soviet Army in WW2, the bravery and steadfastness of both its civil and civil population in uniform – reminiscent of the old Soviet slogan, 'the Army and People are One!' - the gamer would consequently feel much better disposed to serving in the Russian Armed Forces as and when called to serve.



For its part, the Russian MoD is also looking at ways of how best to introduce computer games in the training process. At the current moment (2017), through the official website of the Russian MoD, one can play 4 computer games - 'Tetris', 'Sea Battle', 'Military rank test' and 'North'.<sup>25</sup> In a statement, released in the middle of last year, the Russian Ministry of Defence's Main Department for the Development of Information and Telecommunication's Technology stated:

*Computer games, in the action, 3D-Shooter, car- and aeroplane-simulators genre, are most popular amongst the youth, they [the games] allow the development of skills and methods in handling weapons, create a team spirit, teach the basics of tactics, make [the player] familiar with the tactical-technical characteristics of weapons and military technology.*<sup>26</sup>

25. [Http://multimedia.mil.ru/multimedia/games.htm?fid=null&\\_print=true](http://multimedia.mil.ru/multimedia/games.htm?fid=null&_print=true). Accessed 5/12/16)

26. Stepanov, A. 'Komp'yuternye 'strelialki' stanut chast'iu podgotovki rossiyskikh voennykh. Armia beret igry na vooruzhenie', (<http://www.mak.ru/politics/2016/04/26/kompyuternye-strelyaki-stanut-chastyu-podgotovki...>) Accessed-11/11/2016

*Soldiers from the Royal Artillery inside the FST Simulation tent, which uses 360 degree technology to assist in training during Exercise Steel Sabre. Photo: Sergeant Si Longworth RLC, Crown Copyright*



27. Haynes, D., 'Video gamers answer the call of duty', *The Times*, 29/8/2017.

28. Nekrashenko, A.N., 'Komp'iuternaia voennaya igra: otsenka resheniy, primimaemykh dolzhnostiami litsami organov upravleniia', *Voennaia Mysl'*, No.4, 2004, 27-30; 27.

29. Nekrashenko, *ibid.*, 27.

30. Kupin, S., Kiselev, V., Ryzhov, V., 'Komp'iuternaia igra kak osnova vyrobotki pravil'nogo resheniia', *Armeyskiy sbornik*, No.7, 2017, 78-83; 80.

31. Saifetdinov, *ibid.*, 4.

This may be slightly overstating the case, but it does show that the Russians are now thinking about, mirroring developments both in the USA and Britain, using computer games to help train military personnel. Judging by a recent newspaper report, it would appear that the US military is going one step further: using feedback from US soldiers, 'playing' kit in a game as a further test of its suitability on the battlefield.<sup>27</sup>

In an analysis of the use of computer war games in both the Russian and Belarusian Armed Forces, the experts noted that a number of civilian war games, like 'Il-2 Fighter Bomber', 'Blitzkrieg', 'Opposition. Forced to peace', 'World War 2', 'Sea Hunter', 'In the rear of the enemy', 'MiG-29', 'The Black Berets', 'Al'fa', 'Operation Bagration', etc., had been adapted for the military and were now being used in the training process of service personnel in a limited number of units.

In an article, concerning the use of computer war games in relation to the Missile Troops and Artillery, the author opened citing cost as a driver behind the use of computer war games:

*...in conditions of restricted financing of the Armed Forces and a reduction in the number of troop exercises, computer war games have become particularly significant in the operational training of the command and control organs, allowing [us] to increase the professional training of the officers, as well as develop modern methods of command and control of forces.*<sup>28</sup>

Moving on from economic/financial considerations, the author outlined what he considered to be the main function of the computer war game in relation to his Service:

*The fundamental aim of the computer war game is training the personnel by clearly pointing out their mistakes, [thereby allowing] the leadership of the computer war game [CWG] the possibility of operationally, and objectively, evaluating the decisions taken; assess the quality of the work of the command and control organs, both as a whole and in relation to specific individuals;*

*on a stage-by-stage level, assess the work of those being trained. In order for the above to be carried out, a very thorough preparation of the CWG is necessary, working out the appropriate evaluation methods [to be used] in relation to the command and control organs being trained and individuals being trained.*<sup>29</sup>

Pointing out where mistakes have been made should allow corrective steps to be taken, thereby reducing the number of bad decisions in the future by improving the overall standard of quality decision-making in the future.

A more recent analysis of the use of the computer game in the decision-making process in another Service branch of the Armed Forces was published in the Army's main theoretical and practical journal, *Armeyskiy Sbornik*. With specific reference to the country's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF), the authors highlighted the significant role of the computer game in protecting the critical information infra-structure of Russia's nuclear deterrent force:

*Among the imitation [modelling] methods, good results are given by the games conducted at the ranges (testing grounds) of the training centres, designed to develop the operation of the complex systems... Computer games, based on the theme of defending the critical information structure of the SMF from information-technical attack are also tested at a good level at the training centres. Thus, the most viable form for the future training of the modern specialist in defending the critical information infrastructure of the SMF...is in the form of the computer game (specialised software).*<sup>30</sup>

As the former head of 27th, Saifetdinov, stated back in 2004:

*One can conclude that in forming knowledge, abilities and practices necessary for the military specialist to carry out his professional functions, today it is already inconceivable [that this can be done] without the use of computer technology.*<sup>31</sup>

There can be little doubt that, as outlined above, both in theory and practice, in the use of computer technology in the overall war-gaming process, the senior Russian military-operational leadership is not far behind, if at all, their contemporary Western (or Chinese) counterparts, making the Russian military an ever more dangerous presence on not just the simulated battlefield, but also on the real one.



*Pictured is an SU27M3 in flight during the 100th Anniversary of the Russian Air Force held at the Zhukovskiy LII airbase. Photo: Vitaly Kuzman, Creative Commons-Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License, [www.vitalykuzmin.net](http://www.vitalykuzmin.net)*



*Paratroopers from Support Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment's Anti-Tank Platoon demonstrate the firepower they can bring to bear as part of the British Army's Airborne Rapid Reaction Force during Exercise BLAZING STEEL. Support Company packs the most firepower carried by 2 PARA's airborne infantry enabling them to conduct the full range of military operations anywhere in the world. Photo: Corporal Georgina Coupe, Crown Copyright*

# The Haldane Reforms: A Model For Restoring Strategic Depth?

*Colonel Martin Todd CHACR looks at the Haldane Reforms in the context of how they enabled the Army to cope with the demands of the First World War in 1914 and how the reforms proved their worth in helping the Army build greater strength in depth.*

**As the British Army addresses how it might generate the means to fight a war 'at scale' with diminishing resources and from a shrinking regular structure, it is perhaps timely to look again at how a similar conundrum was resolved under comparable circumstances in the lead up to the First World War. This article considers the reforms<sup>1</sup> conceived and implemented by Richard (later Lord) Haldane, the Liberal Secretary of State for War from 1906 to 1912, and how they enabled the Army to cope with the initial demands of a major continental war in 1914.**

In essence, Haldane's reforms sought to match the design of the Army to clear strategic purposes. It was this design that enabled the generation of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in August 1914 and the 'regeneration'<sup>2</sup> of the second wave of auxiliary forces that sustained the British war effort into 1915, which in turn bought time for Britain to 'reconstitute'<sup>3</sup> the New Armies by mobilizing its full manpower and industrial capacity. In the process, the Army went from a small professional force of c.250,000 Regulars in August 1914, to mobilize most of its establishment of 800,000 by October 1914

and, ultimately, a citizen army of over two million men by June 1916, all without recourse to conscription. While this was not achieved without considerable friction, it is argued that the Haldane reforms proved their worth by equipping the British Army with greater strength in depth.

## Context

As with all military reforms, the Haldane Reforms had several motive forces. First and most obviously, there was the issue of efficiency. The Army's manifest failings in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) had created significant pressure for its reform<sup>4</sup>, which the previous Unionist administration had failed to deliver. Second, was strategy where the prevailing 'blue water' strategic consensus was that 'home defence' could be assured by the Royal Navy, meaning that the primary purpose of the Army was to operate overseas, by maintaining a network of colonial garrisons. For this purpose, the extant 'Cardwell system' was increasingly un-balanced.<sup>5</sup> Third and perhaps most significantly, there was the perennial issue of economy: wider imperial defence commitments had caused the size and cost of the Army to spiral, which appeared to Liberal minds to contradict

1. Haldane also refined existing designs for, and then established, the Army's first General Staff, but this process and its importance to the Army's conceptual component will be addressed in a subsequent article.

2. The restoration of existing formations or units to combat readiness.

3. The growth of new capabilities, formations or units.

4. Articulated in the reports of the Elgin Commission (1903) and the Esher Committee (1904).

5. In 1871, Edward Cardwell had restructured the infantry by pairing battalions, with one based at home providing trained drafts for one overseas. By 1905, commitments had grown such that the structural balance was lost with 72 home battalions sustaining 84 overseas battalions.



Portrait of Richard, 1st Viscount Haldane. Wikipedia, Released

6. This was exacerbated by the launch of HMS Dreadnought in 1906, which rendered existing capital ships obsolete and prompted an urgent re-equipment programme to maintain the Royal Navy's dominance, especially over Germany.

7. In 1905, total commitments were 279,828 with 123,605 overseas; by 1912 the respective figures were 245,860 and 111,580.

8. Later re-designated the Expeditionary Force.

its reduced strategic role. Radical Liberals were set on savage retrenchment, while moderates demanded savings for reinvestment in the Royal Navy, upon which the security and prosperity of Britain and her Empire was deemed to depend.<sup>6</sup> Finally, and perhaps largely in the mind of Haldane, there was philosophy. Although a lawyer by profession, Haldane had read philosophy at the Universities of Edinburgh of Gottingen, and espoused a Hegelian view that a citizen's supreme duty was to be a member of the state, and, by extension, to defend it. This shaped his idealised conception of an army as 'a nation in arms'.

Despite arriving in office without prior detailed knowledge of the Army, Haldane worked fast to analyse these challenges and conceive of means to address them.

### The Reforms

The first imperative was to address the growing clamour for retrenchment in the Army estimates (c.£30 million), which the radicals felt must return to pre-Boer War

levels (c.£20 million). While the Regular Army was small its professional, rather than conscript, nature made it expensive for its size compared with continental armies. While acknowledging the need for economy, Haldane emphasized the need for efficiency above all else, astutely presenting himself to the Army Council as something of a saviour. This gave him sufficient traction to carry through unwelcome cuts, reducing Army commitments by some 35,000 (c.12%) by 1912<sup>7</sup> and reducing the force structure by ten battalions. This helped ensure that by 1908 the estimates were below his target of £28 million, which they did not exceed for the rest of his tenure. While Haldane claimed subsequently that his reforms were driven by strategic foresight, historians such as E.M. Spiers have argued convincingly that the principal driver was economy.

The second challenge was to reform the Regular Army to meet its revised strategic purposes and to balance its structure to match its commitments. Hitherto, the three roles of the Army as set out in the *Stanhope Memorandum of 1888*, had been 'home defence', the defence of India and manning colonial garrisons. By 1905 this view had been challenged by the idea that the Royal Navy could guarantee 'home defence', thus depriving the Army (and particularly its auxiliaries) of a primary role. On the other hand, since 1888 Britain's Empire had expanded, bringing new garrison commitments and widening the range of threats to British interests. Those threats identified by the General Staff included rebellions in India or South Africa and war with the United States, Russia, France or, most significantly, an increasingly assertive Germany.

The Boer War had revealed Britain's inability to generate an effective expeditionary force from its 'home army'. From these factors, Haldane deduced that the structure of the Regular Army should be driven by the demands of assuring sufficient forces to meet standing colonial commitments, but that the secondary role of the home Army should be to generate a 'highly organized and well-equipped striking force<sup>8</sup>', sufficiently flexible to meet an increased range of threats overseas. Through cuts to both commitments and structure Haldane established a balanced establishment of 14 cavalry regiments and 74 infantry battalions overseas, sustained by an equal number at home. While much of the dividend was taken as financial savings, some reinvestment was achieved in supporting arms, principally engineer units,

for an expeditionary force. The latter was based upon six infantry divisions<sup>9</sup> and a cavalry division, with a full complement of supporting arms and services. While continental armies had adopted a corps structure, a modular divisional framework offered greater flexibility, especially where the expeditionary commitment was likely to be of a strictly limited nature. Even so, the totality of this force could not be generated entirely from the 'Home Army', first because the primary role of sustaining standing commitments would mean that home-based units would always be under-strength and, second because an expeditionary force would demand a greater scale of supporting services than that required by the colonial garrisons and the additional Regular capacity required could not be met within the estimates limit. Accordingly, Haldane looked to provision these elements from the auxiliary forces.

It was Haldane's reorganizing of the auxiliary forces that represented his most enduring legacy. In 1905 these forces comprised: the Militia, an under-strength infantry force of questionable military capability; the Yeomanry, a recently reorganized cavalry force based in the shires; and the Volunteers, a legacy of the French invasion scares of 1859-61. While their *raison d'être* was to be a non-deployable 'home defence' force, many of them had volunteered to serve in South Africa, but their utility was ill-defined and their efficiency doubtful. However, Haldane saw in them the means to realise his vision of 'a real national army formed by the people', while also giving them clearer purpose and greater utility in offsetting gaps in the Regular force. This set the stage for the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907.

9. These divisions would be modelled on the larger independent model employed by the Indian Army rather than the smaller divisions within a Corps system employed in Continental armies.

*French troops watching the arrival of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 109th Inniskilling Brigade, 36th Division in Ham on the Somme as they come to take over the section of the line from the French, 15 January 1918 © IWM (Q 10656)*



10. The SR comprised 74 Special Reserve infantry battalions, 27 'Extra Reserve' battalions, 33 artillery and two engineer regiments. Typically, the third battalion of each infantry regiment was an SR battalion, while the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers also incorporated SR units.

11. Typically, each infantry regiment had seven Territorial battalions, which were designated as the fourth to tenth battalions of that regiment. Within these, Regular officers of the regiment would fill key appointments such as Adjutant and Training Major, affirming the familial regimental link.

12. The Territorial Force comprised 14 Territorial Divisions, 14 cavalry brigades and Corps Troops.

13. Haldane's proposals for largely independent and elected Territorial Associations were resisted vigorously by unit commanding officers and had to be watered down to ensure safe passage through the House of Lords.

14. Hansard, Volume 169 column 1321, 25 February 1907.

15. In 1909 the first Field Service Regulations were issued by the Directorate of Staff Duties encapsulating the tactical and organizational lessons distilled from the Boer War.

The first step was to reform the Militia as the Special Reserve (SR), a high-readiness force that could be deployed readily overseas. It was designed to back-fill under-strength regular units, fulfil non-front-line roles such as artillery ammunition columns and provide reinforcements to sustain an expeditionary force in a prolonged conflict. This increased utility and level of deployable commitment would be under-pinned by rigorous initial and annual training, regular rates of pay and retention bonuses. SR units were closely integrated with the regular structure as component parts of regiments and corps.<sup>10</sup>

Haldane's next target was to modernise the Yeomanry and Volunteers into a 'Territorial Force', which, again closely integrated with the Regular structure<sup>11</sup>, would give the Army a closer connexion with the nation through a network of locally-based units. However, these units were not subject to command or administration by the Regular Army, but were raised and funded by independent local Territorial Associations and organised into Territorial divisions<sup>12</sup>, only coming under War Office command in time of war.<sup>13</sup> In that contingency, the Territorial Force, like its Yeomanry and Volunteer predecessors, was ostensibly for 'home service', but in light of the experience in South Africa and the assumption that 'home defence' was assured by the Royal Navy, a clear mechanism was established for 'territorials' to volunteer for overseas service.

Next on Haldane's agenda, was to address a crippling dearth of officers; in 1906 the Army could muster just 60% of the 10,666 officers required to sustain an expeditionary force. Part of Haldane's response was to expand the few existing cadet corps into a wider structure of Officer Training Corps (OTCs), albeit one limited to public schools and universities. Over time, these would provide a steady stream of officers trained to a basic scale, principally for the Special Reserve and Territorial Force. Like the Territorial Associations, the OTCs met with political opposition from radical elements who felt that they would perpetuate the narrow social base of the officer class and would encourage a spirit of militarism. However, here Haldane felt he was on firmer political ground and he was able to dismiss objections by noting wryly that *'the spirit of militarism already runs fairly high there [in the public schools] and at the universities'*<sup>14</sup>.

In sum, these structural reforms provided the ability for a regular establishment of 256,000 that could

be rapidly augmented, initially by an Army Reserve (145,000) and a Special Reserve (80,000). Beyond these, a Territorial Force (316,000) would provide strategic depth. This meant that, in theory at least, Britain would be able to call upon some 800,000 trained soldiers to meet its defence requirements.

The reforms were supported by concomitant revisions of terms of service, the mobilization system, doctrine and training.<sup>15</sup> These initiatives were driven by the newly established and steadily expanding General Staff, which would itself be sustained by extended training of enlarged courses at the Staff College. However, one aspect of the British Army's military culture remained unaltered by Haldane's reforming zeal: the voluntary principle. On the Continent, emergent national identities and liberal concepts of a citizen's obligation to the state had shaped mass citizen armies generated by conscription. However, in Britain, despite some pressure for compulsory service from a vocal conservative minority in the National Service League, the voluntary principle remained politically unassailable. It remained so through nearly two years of war of steadily escalating intensity, before the nation finally bowed to the strategic necessity of conscription in June 1916. Clear though this popular will was, it is evident that in 1914-16 Britain paid a heavy price for its inability to leverage and direct its full manpower capacity to the business of fighting a major continental war.

### 1914: The Structure and System Tested

Through his reforms, Haldane aimed to ensure that the Army could generate a fully-manned, trained and equipped expeditionary force, which could be sustained on operations overseas for a prolonged period, augmented by territorial divisions. However, inevitably, conceiving of reform proved a lesser challenge than implementing it, with political expediency somewhat undermining the integrity of the model. Moreover, despite his later claims Haldane's reforms had been driven by fiscal concerns and not by his foresight of impending continental war. Nevertheless, it was this contingency in 1914 that would subject his reforms to the sternest test possible.

While 1914 saw an enthusiastic 'rush to the colours', up to that point the public had shown little enthusiasm to join the Regular Army or its reserves. This meant that in 1914 the Army's total force structure was some



*2nd Battalion, Scots Guards testing a hastily dug trench at Ghent, October 1914 © IWM (Q 57173)*

60,000 below establishment, with particular fragility in the 74 home-based regular infantry battalions, the Special Reserve and Territorial Force. In generating the BEF, the integrated Army structure managed this deficit by drawing significantly upon reserves, but this had consequences in the longer-term. It has been estimated that up to 60% of the infantry strength of the four infantry divisions dispatched to France in August 1914 were Reservists.<sup>16</sup> By October 1914, roughly 200,000 men (or 95%) of the Army and Special Reserves had been mobilized to the war effort. However, this call on the Special Reserve in turn placed demand upon the Territorial Force before it could be brought up to strength and training standards. This mattered rather less for those deployed to relieve regular units in overseas garrisons, than it did for those deployed to France late in 1914.

This pressure on the Territorial Force, itself 15% below establishment, explains in part Kitchener's early decision not to entrust the mobilization of the New Armies to the Territorial Associations, which represented the most obvious localised structure for doing so, but instead to the War Office, which drew upon civic and private enterprise to recruit and equip the mass of volunteers. One upshot of this decision was that the Territorial Force had to compete for manpower and equipment with the New Armies, whose novelty rather overshadowed their own appeal, despite their need being more pressing. It took the War Office far longer than it should to prioritise resources appropriately.

Overall, despite its shortfalls in manpower the Haldane structure and mobilization system can be judged to have coped well with the crisis of 1914. In line with Haldane's aims, the British Army mobilized, and deployed an immediate expeditionary force<sup>17</sup>, which was quickly augmented by further regular and reserve formations. The British Official History famously concluded that 'The Expeditionary Force of 1914 was incomparably the best trained, best organized and best equipped that ever went forth to war.'<sup>18</sup> However, this laudatory judgement needs to be qualified. The capability deficits in heavy artillery and infantry firepower were explicable given the new character of warfare revealed to the BEF in 1914, but there were structural weaknesses over which Haldane can be justly challenged. The over-riding priority accorded to maintaining overseas garrisons at full strength and the lack of inherent resilience in its structures, placed significant over-reliance upon reserves in generating the BEF, which reduced its combat effectiveness significantly. If anything, the BEF's performance in August 1914 appears all the more remarkable given that it was made up in significant numbers by mobilized reservists. Had Haldane's structure been fully-manned and had less risk been taken against the composition of an expeditionary force as opposed to colonial garrisons, then the qualitative balance of forces in 1914 could have been different and the Official Historian's epitaph notably more valid. Even so, it is fair to conclude that the Haldane reforms, by enabling a rapid three-fold increase of the land force, were fundamental to ensuring

16. Source: *Order of Battle of the British Army in 1914* by Richard Rinaldi, 2008. They were drawn principally from the Army (i.e. Regular) Reserve and Special Reserve battalions.

17. *Albeit one smaller than planned, as in the event confidence in the Royal Navy's ability to secure the home base evaporated resulting in two Regular infantry divisions being held back while the Territorial Force was mobilized.*

18. Edmonds J.E. (Editor) *Official History of the War: Military Operations in France and Belgium. Volume 1* page 10.

that Britain was in any way ready to fight a continental war in 1914. Its structure provided the immediate depth for Britain to maintain its commitment to her allies and avoid defeat until such time as it could translate its latent economic and human resources to the task of building the New Armies.

### **Conclusions**

So why should we return to an analysis of the Haldane Reform over a century on from their inception? For a start, there is clear resonance in the strategic challenge that faced the Army in 1914, with that faced today: a need for a shrinking regular force to meet a wide range

*The first wounded of the 7th Division, October 1914 © IWM (Q 57209)*



of standing commitments and contingent tasks at limited scale, while being capable of generating, at limited notice, an expeditionary force capable of warfighting 'at scale'. In Haldane's eyes this could only be achieved by a supporting structure of auxiliary forces at tiered scales of readiness, each with assigned roles on mobilization. This was realized through a planned mobilization system and deployment plan (*the War Book*); remarkably, both worked much as they had been conceived. This suggests that there would be much wisdom in a reinvigoration of the modern Regular Reserve to provide an immediate source of backfill, and in resetting the readiness of the Army Reserve, with a small high readiness component to fill designated specialist roles in an expeditionary force and a larger lower readiness element to provide a basis for regeneration and reconstitution. This could go some way to offsetting current fragilities in the

regular force structure, not least the recent reversion to historically usual levels of under-manning, and might also provide a more credible offer to prospective reservists and their employers. Similarly, as the Army's footprint across the nation recedes and, as CGS has noted, public understanding of the British Army has never been so poor, it is worth considering the beneficial effects that a reinvigorated reserve component can play in reconnecting the nation to its Army. Finally, two of Haldane's achievements should attract our attention. The first was matching the Army's structure to its strategic purposes. The second was providing the impetus for wider mechanisms and plans to enable the structure to generate and sustain a much-expanded warfighting force at scale. Today, a similar planned approach to maximizing our strategic depth might enable the Army to provide a more credible contribution to modern deterrence.

*A Sergeant of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, crouches in a communication trench, near Rue Petillon, near Fleurbaix, December 1914 © IWM (Q 57386)*





*Earthrise from Apollo 8. Copyright NASA*

# The Strategic Significance of the Population Pyramid

*David A Rew, University Hospital Southampton, looks at the Strategic significance of the Population Pyramid.*

**Those readers of BAR who take time to look up from their Ordnance Survey maps to the heavens, will know that we occupy a very small planet in a very large, cold and relatively empty Universe. 70 per cent of the Earth is sea water, for occupation by plankton, by cruise liners and by the Royal Navy, and the top and bottom of the Globe are very cold indeed. The habitable surface of the globe spans approximately from 60 degrees of Latitude above to 60 degrees below the Equator.**

Even within those boundaries, large areas such as the Sahara Desert, the Amazonian Rain Forest and the Siberian Plains are not suited to continuous human habitation. Moreover, over millennia, climatic patterns changed the habitable zone substantially. It is sobering to consider that it is only around 10,000 years since the last Ice Age, when everything north of Watford Gap Services was a kilometre deep in Ice.

Therefore, at this present moment in galactic time and space, the British peoples are fortunate to occupy a green and pleasant land, with a mild, oxygenated climate, abundant fresh water, productive soil and a maritime moat. Our geographic location has been conducive to a remarkable flourishing of intellectual, commercial, scientific and creative thought, and of progressive political liberalism over many centuries. These characteristics make the British Isles and the European

Land Mass in general to be among the most desirable pieces of real estate on Earth and across the Milky Way.

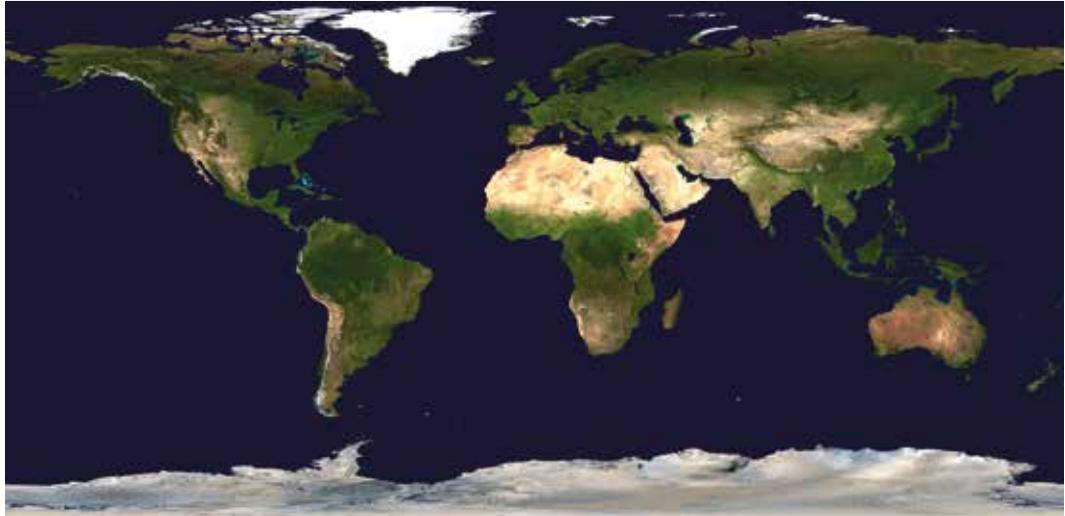
## **Controls on Human Populations**

The surface of the Earth has a finite capacity to support life. Human populations in earlier millenia have been severely constrained by access to resources of food and fresh water in the habitable areas of the planet.

Human beings and societies are not immune from the laws of the natural world. We are in ceaseless competition for the resources to survive and develop as individuals and as a society, and the security of our real estate is paramount to this survival.

Numerous factors in human organisation and technological advancement have allowed us to circumvent many of the earlier constraints to population growth, and over the past century in particular, there has been an unprecedented worldwide population expansion to around seven billion people. The ceiling for human population expansion has not yet been reached, and various estimates of the capacity for habitable land, water for agriculture and food production place the upper limit at around 12 billion souls.

The human capacity for population expansion is enormous. Over her reproductive life, a woman could produce as many as 15 to 20 live children. Of course, this level of fertility is now very uncommon in the Western



Satellite Imagery: The Visible Earth project. Copyright NASA <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=57752>

world. However, just out of living memory, the Victorian age often saw families of 10-12 live births, even though many children did not survive to adulthood.

On a planet of unconstrained resources and unconstrained fertility, human population growth would rapidly reach unimaginably high levels, and crowding would match the dystopian predictions of the most imaginative science fiction artists. In practice, many social, economic, cultural and security factors in different countries and geographic regions ensure that population growth rates vary considerably from one place to another. For example, the agricultural Green Revolution in the mid 20th Century was a major contributor to dietary security and to population growth in India.

Even where human populations are suddenly diminished by war, pestilence and famine, populations are capable of rapid recovery when the constraints are removed, as after the First and Second World Wars.

In practice, a human society must achieve an average live birth rate of just over two children per woman, to maintain a steady state population. There are many constraints to higher birth rates, but critical factors now appears to be the economic well being, consequent self determination and access to effective contraception of the female population.

Premature death of mothers and infants has traditionally imposed major constraints on population growth. Dramatic improvements in healthcare for these

groups, including (for example) immunisations, clean water, anti-malarial strategies and better perinatal care for mothers can transform the population growth rate.

Conversely, where women have reproductive choices, birth rates fall significantly. In many parts of the Northern Hemisphere, birth rates of indigenous populations have fallen below societal steady state replacement rates and national populations are shrinking. This is generally the case across Western Europe, but particularly so in Germany and Russia.

### **The Population Pyramid as a Strategic Descriptor and Predictor**

Human beings follow a natural cycle of birth, aging and death over (at best) a century, and over much shorter periods in many adverse circumstances. This cycle is absolutely predictable, and its understanding has strategic significance. By knowing the age and sex distribution of a human population in each and every country; by understanding the socio-economic norms in that population; and by making reasonable predictions about reproductive behaviour; it is possible to deduce quite remarkable insights with profound significance for national defence and national political strategy to the end of the 21st Century and beyond.

The population pyramid is well used and standardised graphical tool for describing the size and shape of a population in any one country, region, continent or in

global terms. It comprises two back to back stacked histograms, with the male population on the left and the female population on the right. The numbers of people of each sex are counted along the baseline (X axis) of the graphic, either in absolute numbers or in percentages. The age distribution in five year blocks is plotted on the vertical (Y) axis of the graph.

The population pyramid is not a static structure. In reality, it changes minute by minute and hour by hour with births and deaths, and it is continually moving and reshaping. Its accuracy is constrained by the frequency with which statistics are collected and collated, as for example through birth and death registrations in each country.

Moreover, the fertility of the population is generally defined by the cohort of fertile females in the 15-35 age ranges in poorer countries, and in the 15-45 age group in wealthy countries, where fertility is generally shifted to the later years of reproductive life.

The population pyramid is a very powerful descriptive tool because it describes both the past reproductive behaviour of the population over 100 years, and it predicts the likely future population for many decades ahead. It also indicates where there have been major upheavals to a population over time leading to decline or expansion in particular age groups, for example through famine, migration or government policy.

The population pyramid also demonstrates the life expectancy of the population. Countries with advanced health systems will generally have much taller pyramids, describing longer life expectancy, than poor countries with shorter life expectancies. Where there has been rapid improvement in the food supply, and reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates, population expansion in the younger age groups at the base of the pyramid can be dramatic.

Thus, for example, the population pyramid for China now reflects the consequences of the one child policy over past decades, in that there are relatively few children to support an aging population. Conversely, the green revolution and economic liberalisation of the past few decades on the Indian subcontinent have led to a substantial expansion of the young population.

The web sites 'populationpyramid.net' and Index Mundi are very valuable resources for the understanding of global population patterns and contemporary population pyramids for every country and continent on the Globe, with historic data and future trends.(refs)



Figure 1: Diagram of the structure of a population pyramid (copyright Wikipedia)

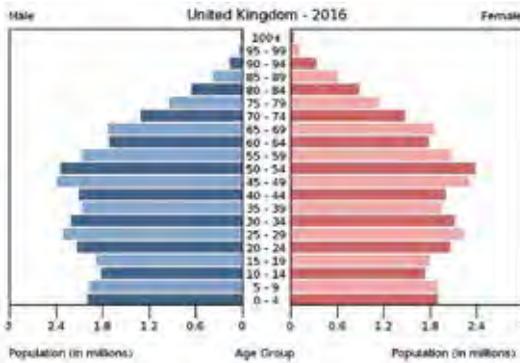


Figure 2: Population pyramid of the UK 2016 Source Index Mundi: It demonstrates an aging population with the post Second World War 'baby boomer' bulge in their 50s-70s, supported by a smaller younger population. The 'youth deficit' is now being made up in part by the numerous arrivals of "New Britons" in the past two decades.

### The Strategic Significance Of Population Patterns For The UK

There are some very notable lessons from population pyramids as they impact upon UK security, domestic and international policies and long term strategic planning.

One lesson is that the population of Western Europe is now reasonably stable out to 2100 at around 190 million (M) people, while that of Eastern Europe shows a significant decline from present levels of around 310M people to 210M by 2100.

Conversely, that of the Russian Federation predicts a significant decline, from around 150M at present to around 117M in 2100 on present trends.

Further afield, the Indian population is currently around 1300M, and it peaks at around 1700M in 2100.

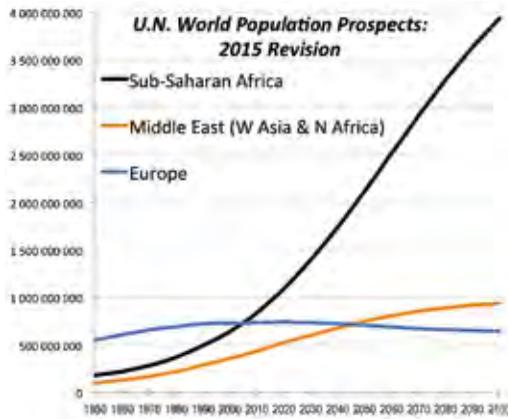


Figure 3: The Chinese population declines from 1350M now to around 1000M in 2100, subject to no changes in the one child policy, the need for which has now been recognised in China. Steve Sailer iSteve blog; UNZ Review. <http://www.unz.com/liste/el/the-graph-that-explains-the-2015-migrant-crisis/>

However, much closer to us in strategic terms, the most dramatic population growth is on the continent of Africa, where the current population of 1200M is predicted to grow to 4400M by 2100. As but examples, the population of Egypt will grow from around 100M today to around 200M in 2100, while the population of Nigeria grows from around 180M to around 750M.

**The Strategic Significance Of Migration**

Population pyramids are clearly susceptible to modification by a number of factors, including war, famine, and government interventions. Migration can have an important and beneficial role in rebalancing ageing population pyramids. It brings younger workers and taxpayers into the economy, where indigenous populations are falling below reproductive sustainment. However, where migration is uncontrolled, it can create the conditions for social and political destabilisation. One of the unwritten rules of immigration is that immigrants will accept and adapt to the social and cultural norms of the host country. Where there is a rapid influx of migrants, the recipient population can feel that their social and cultural norms are under threat.

In the absence of catastrophic upheavals and in the relatively benign global reproductive environment of the current century, one of the most important strategic factors in population change will be that driven by the migration of populations from one region to another, and explicitly from Africa and the Middle East to the economically and climatically attractive global land mass that is Northern Europe.

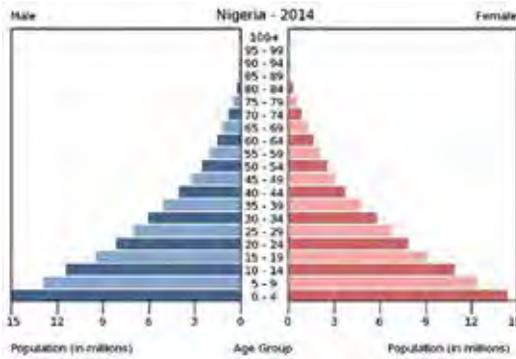


Figure 4: Population pyramid for Nigeria 2014 from Index Mundi, demonstrating the huge expansion of the young population and the relatively small numbers living to late old age. Such pyramids are typical for sub-Saharan African countries.



Figure 5: Image: From Project for Democratic Union Blog <http://www.democraticunion.eu/2014/10/mediterranean-sea-migrants-danger/>

In strategic terms, the challenges of a politically resurgent Russian Federation and its steadily declining population, or of Chinese machinations in the South China Sea, pale into insignificance when we consider the possible consequences of the search for a better life by four billion as yet unborn or recently born Africans over the next 80 years.

We have seen the start of this process in the past few years. European Border Force data dramatically shows how, while the media focus has been on Middle Eastern migration patterns and Islamic fundamentalism, the true challenge lies to the South of the Mediterranean Sea, where migration rates (and tragic drownings) are already hugely in excess of other sources of migration.

**Strategic Lessons From The Population Pyramids And The Migration Maps**

It is clear that mass migration presents major political challenges to European nations, and serious concern to national electorates. Notwithstanding the unresolved questions around the UK Brexit referendum in the summer of 2016, it is obvious from a glance at the maps and from a basic study of population dynamics that the fundamentals of UK Defence Policy remain intimately linked to Europe and to the Mediterranean and South Eastern borders of Europe.

It is also clear that while the issue of refugees from Syria and North Africa is the most immediate concern, resolution of conflict in Syria and Libya will not resolve the migration challenge from Sub-Saharan Africa, which is now established and evident from the migration routes and from the numbers travelling along them.

We must therefore recognise and plan clear-sightedly for the real possibility that huge numbers of living and as yet unborn Africans will seek a better life in the relatively prosperous and well-governed states of Europe over the remainder of this century.

Such potential volumes of immigration in a compressed timescale are hugely challenging for European countries and carry a risk of discontent that can be seen in the political and homeland security spheres.

The logic of the situation directs us to a rigorous analysis of why Sub-Saharan African migration is increasing, and in large numbers, when sub-Saharan Africa is fertile and has huge economic potential. We are repeatedly brought up against the issue which is understood by all but which is not openly confronted, of

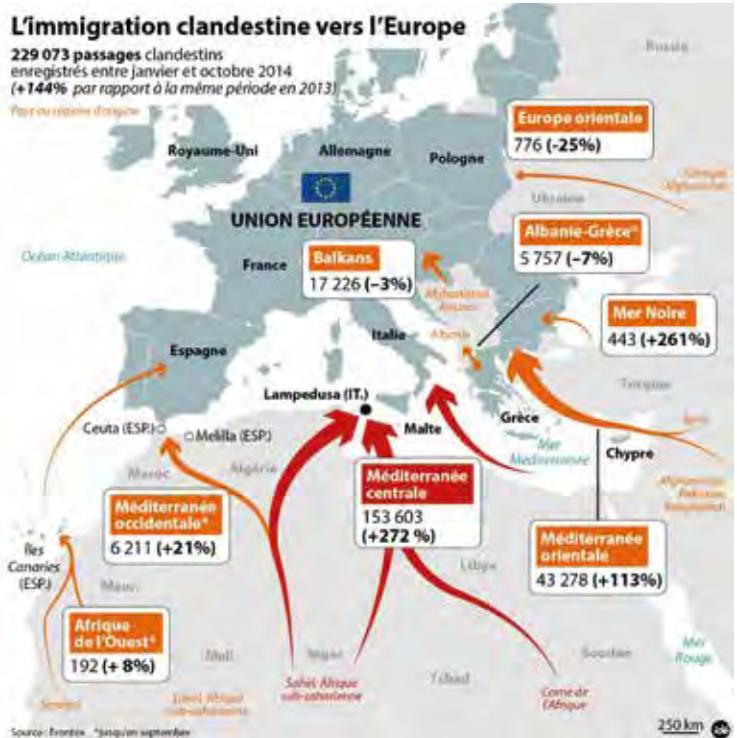


Figure 6: Clandestine migration towards Europe: Frontex Data for January to October 2014 (reproduced in the Blog of the European Association for the Study of Geopolitics and Strategy, based in Romania, 3rd December 2015 <http://aesgs.ro/page.php?id=13&s1=46&s2=316>)



Figure 7: Migrant routes from sub-Saharan Africa: Map created by the Fletcher School and Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, from data from the ICRC, Frontex, and the UNHCR. Source: WNYC New York Radio website <http://www.wnyc.org/story/the-perils-of-migration-out-of-africa/> Copyright 2015 NPR. <http://www.npr.org/>

woefully poor governance, graft and corruption in many African states (ref).

### **UK Defence Engagement in Africa**

The management of a challenge on this scale requires widespread political effort and coordination across Europe and Africa, with the engagement of many agencies and organisations. The UK Government is a significant player in this strategic geopolitical game. While the bulk of the heavy lifting will be done through diplomatic, commercial and civilian efforts, the UK Armed Forces provide a number of key enabling capabilities to any future government plan. A clear-sighted view of the challenge from UK Senior Military Officers will play into the national strategy and indirectly into the international debate.

The critical strategic direction must be to improve the standards of governance and government in every African country, such that money is not siphoned off or misdirected on an industrial scale through corruption and graft. Africans must come to believe that their economic and social prospects in life are as good or better through staying in their home countries and regions as through attempted migration to Europe, with all the risks that it entails.

To this effect, UK Defence Engagement in Africa allows us to understand the regional and political landscape, and to shape our future thinking about how best to resolve the issue. It makes sense that our focus should be on those countries of Anglophone Africa where we have long historic ties, while other European countries facing the same challenge can draw upon their own ties to build a coalition of the willing, as for example with the French in West and Central Africa.

Here is one example of this process in action: the Medical Operational Support Group of Central Reserve Headquarters Army Medical Services deployed to Freetown, Sierra Leone in June 2016 for its two week annual collective training programme. The seniority, maturity and breadth of experience of this unit led to an unexpectedly broad engagement with the local civilian and military health sectors to the top of Government. This informed, sustained and lubricated our relationships with one African country with a shared history, and it also was profoundly educational for the 50 reservists and regular staff of 2 Med Brigade who participated in the exercise.

### **Conclusion**

The study of Population Pyramids of countries, regions and continents provides profound insights into the Global Strategic issues, which are of huge importance to

the UK. Human reproduction and population dynamics are a force of nature and the essence of human life on Earth. Collectively, they have far greater influence on the form and fates of nations over time than do the most destructive of wars. The huge reserve reproductive capacity of the human race rapidly and collectively replaces those killed in conflict.

Where the governance of countries is poor and worse, people will tend towards better-governed and more stable and successful countries, as represented in particular by the modern states of Western Europe.

From the data on population dynamics and migration flows, we can draw helpful insights into our continental competitors to the East of the European landmass, where the population is in long term decline and where the attractions of immigration are seemingly very limited.

However, the scale of population dynamics and of migration data from North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East demonstrates clearly where our principal efforts in Defence Engagement must be directed in future.

The understanding of population pyramids and migration dynamics should be a significant element in the higher professional education of all military officers.

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*Lt Colonel Robbie McDermott RAMC of the Medical Operational Support Group, CRHQ AMS, engages with a large number of excited Sierra Leonean schoolchildren during a visit to Magbeni Village in June 2016. Photo credit: personal collection Col David Rew*



*Images of British Army Warriors and Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks thundering across Salisbury Plains Training Area during an Armoured Fighting Vehicle Commanders Course undertaken at Warminster. Photo SAC Lee Matthews, Crown Copyright*

# Not (Quite) Re-Inventing The Wheel... The Junior Staff Centre

*Lieutenant Colonel Rob Lindsay JSC, examines the training and role of the Junior Staff Centre and asks if, as far as training is concerned, it is something new and different or are we simply re-inventing the wheel.*

**With all the changes taking place in the Army it should come as no surprise that officer education and training is also changing, at a pace that at times can be rapid and challenging. A case in point is the change, in January 2017, where the Land Warfare School (LWS) became the Junior Staff Centre (JSC). So how has officer training changed?**

Over the previous 2 years the LWS had reduced in size, with the Reconnaissance and Armoured Tactics Division (RATD) moving under command of the Armour Centre (ARMCEN) and the Senior Officer Training Division (SOTD) moving to become the basis of the General Staff Centre (GSC) and the LWS itself coming under the command of Commandant RMA (Comdt RMA), as part of the Sandhurst Group (RMA Gp).<sup>1</sup> As a result, Comdt RMA is the Training Delivery Authority (TDA) of some 85% of the comprehensive officer training and education (T&E) through Officer Career Stage 1 (CS1), from the end of the Commissioning Course through to attendance on the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land) (ICSC(L)).

These changes bring a much greater ability to deliver the right training and education at the right stage in

an officer's career. Commandant LWS has now become Colonel Training (Col Trg) RMA Gp, with a remit to bring coherence to training and education delivered across UOTCs and the Commissioning Courses as well as CS1. The new set-up does not completely mirror the 1990s model of the Army Junior Division (AJD), but there are certainly similarities in core output and emphasis, in particular with the development of the Junior Command and Staff Course (Land) (JCSC(L)). With Junior Direct Entry Officers attending 12 weeks of education at the JSC as Lieutenants and Captains rather than the 19 of AJD, the formation of the JSC is not (quite) re-inventing the wheel, but the wheel is, in many ways, still recognisable!

The JSC is based in Warminster, delivering the Junior Officer Tactics and Awareness Course (JOTAC) and JCSC(L) - the new name for the Captains' Warfare Course, with the Late Entry Officers' Course (LEOC) as the third main element, although this course will continue to be delivered at RMA. With a remit to: 'Deliver tactical command and staff education to officers in CS1 and prepare them for future employment,' the JSC has a mantra of 'Reputation, Relevance and Retention.' The courses must have a strong external reputation,

1. Sandhurst Group consists of the Academy itself, AOSB, the OTCs, the JSC and the GSC, thus providing delivery coherence and ownership across CS1 and into CS3.



*Both JOTAC and JCSC(L) include BC2T Execute exercises, forcing students to live with their plans and 'fight' against each other. Crown Copyright*

2. *Looking at the delivery of Doctrine; the Combat Estimate; Leadership; Thinking and Staff Skills; Acquisition and Business Skills, G1 and MS.*

adding value to the Army and RM units, which must see the benefits of course attendance in improved individual and collective capability; the courseware must be realistic, current and relevant (with Warfighting, not Stabilisation Operations, as the core *raison d'être*); and finally, with students often approaching a personal Decision Point about staying or departing from the Army, courses must, as much as possible, be enjoyable, rewarding and retention positive.

JOTAC has now been running since the initial Review of Officers' Career Courses (ROCC) but with the development of the CWC and now JCSC(L), it is more focussed on preparing subalterns to be junior captains, with JCSC(L) providing the additional knowledge required for Adjutants, Ops Officers and SO3s. Both courses are underpinned by Combined Arms Manoeuvre and planning and decision making through the Combat Estimate. JOTAC is focussed at Sub Unit and Battle Group levels, although the course is much broader than just Tactics – an important element is the wider professional development and awareness provided. As the first major comprehensive course undertaken by junior officers, it provides an excellent opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Profession, supported by personal experience.

CWC was developed when too many Post Training and Post Operational Reports were identifying a gap in capability at senior captain level. Now at 8 weeks long, much of the focus of JCSC(L) remains on the battlegroup and brigade levels, but the change of name better reflects the broader remit. While warfighting remains core, with a number of tactical planning cycles and TEWTs, the course also contains modules on Staff Skills, Thinking Skills, Business Skills and Technology, Command and Leadership, history and broader knowledge to prepare Army and RM captains for their future careers on the staff and in command. The students also benefit from personal reflections and updates from COS Field Army, RF and AF brigade commanders, COMARRC, CGS' Briefing Team and an ECAB Member who closes off the course - an indication that this specific cohort of officers is highly valued by the Army and Chain of Command.

With greater emphasis and ownership of courseware delivery, a number of thematic Delivery Coherence Working Groups have been set up, reporting to Col Trg, ensuring that the progressive delivery of the right level and standard of training and education is achieved throughout a young officer's career. These working groups<sup>2</sup> look at the coherence of what is being

delivered on the Commissioning Courses (Regular and Reserve), through the distributed residential courses of JOLP 3 and Military Analysis, the centralised residential courses of JOTAC and JCSC(L) as well as the Distance Learning Military Knowledge (MK) programme. The key is to ensure that when there is repetition of concepts or learning outcomes, this is done consciously and that at each stage of education greater complexity - as appropriate - is included.

The MK packages have recently been refocused to cover the right preparation for the relevant residential course for junior officers. This should provide a welcome reduction in duration, while other changes, such as the requirement to pass the MK Summative Assessments within 6 months of attending the relevant course, will assist in providing a more standardised Start State. The varied Start State of students is certainly noteworthy. While it is clear that a number of Commanding Officers take their mentoring and subordinate professional

development seriously, evidence suggests a significant number fail to do so. It is also noteworthy that there is little correlation between those units who are busy or of a specific cap badge and the preparation of their junior officers - the key requirement is good and conscientious leadership, not time. It is always gratifying to hear a student reflect in syndicate on a seminar or unit TEWT that they have attended, but equally it is worrying to hear of junior officers who have not done anything similar since the Commissioning Course or Phase 2 Training.<sup>3</sup> It is obvious when students have been invested in by their chain of command, especially in preparation on subjects such as the Combat Estimate, with a corresponding improvement in their performance (and no doubt in many cases subsequent retention).

Like many organisations, manning challenges mean that there are DS gaps and this impacts on the number of students who can attend courses, and so some students end up attending at too senior a level for JOTAC (within

*3. It is even more concerning to hear the difference in approach between units towards JOLP 2. Based on JOTAC student feedback, far too many units are paying lip service to the early development of unit level knowledge and application.*



*Both JOTAC and JCSC(L) include a number of TEWTs at Battlegroup and Brigade levels, highlighting the impact of geography, capabilities, command and time and space issues. Crown Copyright*

4. All LE Officers will attend LEOC and 1x Military Analysis Module. A very few will attend JCSC(L) and only 18% will attend ICSC(L) – a thin offer compared to the DE cohort, especially at a time when more LE Officers are undertaking 'mainstream' SO3 and SO2 appointments which was not the case a few years ago.

5. Under the Training Governance Review, the Officer training remit of Comdt RMAS is due to increase with the additional responsibility of Recruiting and Soldier Basic Training, allowing for greater coherence and linkage across these areas.

3 years of commissioning) or JCSC(L) (between 1-3 years as a captain). The backlog of LEOC students, who require the course for commissioning as well as developmental purposes, is also a concern. However, units also have a role to play, as best they can, in medium term succession planning for their young officers. The importance of getting the right Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel (SQEP), especially as Adjutant and Ops Officer, at the right time, is core Commanding Officer business.

To complement the delivery coherence working groups there are a number of policy and delivery developments which will continue to enhance our output – including the intention to accredit CS1 courses towards a Masters' qualification, building on the PG Certificate achieved on the Commissioning Course, as well as looking at the paucity (compared to their DE contemporaries) of the Late Entry T&E opportunities and the Reserves T&E interventions. Reserve Officer attend JOTAC (the middle 2 weeks with a week-end either side, achieving 14 days out of a 20 day course). But there is as yet no decision on Reserve attendance on JCSC(L) (or any defined requirement), an area which is under development.

There is no doubt that Junior Officer time away from Regimental Duty (RD) is hard felt by units, but individual education is a key element of personal development and subsequent collective capability. While education is not a panacea in itself, it does provide much of the depth, preparation and professionalisation that junior officers require for their careers, on both the staff and in command. With ICSC(L) providing excellent comprehensive education at the start of CS2, together with greater coherence and appropriate levels of delivery throughout CS1 by RMAS Gp and other T&E deliverers, the officer education pipeline seems to be delivering well.

While the current model of delivery of a number of education interventions programmed little and often across CS1 is very different to our previous system, the focus on the understanding of Combined Arms Manoeuvre and military decision making on warfighting operations, at the tactical level, together with a smattering of broader subjects, is certainly recognisable from the past. Further change and refinement is always inevitable - including some of the changes to the role and remit of Comdt RMAS<sup>5</sup>, but there is no doubt that the preparation of our junior officers is better now than it has been for a number of years.





*Image shows Officer Cadets from Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) waiting to charge mock protesters on Public Order training as part of Exercise Templer's Triumph on Longmoor Training Area that, part of a 44 week commissioning course, tests the cadets' suitability to become junior officers in the field army. The skills and drills the Officer Cadets have learned over the previous terms are brought together, forcing the cadets to work in an arduous environment whilst thinking about more than just basic soldiering. Photo: Corporal Mark Larner RY, Crown Copyright*



*All entry points to Kidal are controlled by UN Peacekeepers. Located in the remote corner of the Sahara desert, Kidal is a last stronghold to rebel Tuareg groups that overran the entire north of Mali in early 2012. Since July 1st, the African-led military mission has become the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Mali. The logistic task of supporting such heavy military presence in this remote location is daunting. UN Photo: Blagoje Grujic, UN*

# Mali and the Limits of the UN Peacekeeping Operations

*Lieutenant Colonel James Palmer RA argues that MINUSMA lacks the capacity to form a successful military strategy to defeat the terrorist threat in Mali and considers the evidence of MINUSMA's ability to use force more effectively orchestrating ends, ways and means.*

**In February 2016, a suicide attack against the UN super-camp in Kidal killed seven Guinean peacekeepers.<sup>1</sup> This was not the first such attack on Kidal; it was not even the first on a UN installation that month. With 70 fatalities from 'malicious acts' since 2013, the UN's Multidimensional Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) remains one of its deadliest operations.<sup>2</sup> In 2014, MINUSMA's then Force Commander told the Security Council he was in 'a terrorist-fighting situation without a terrorist-fighting mandate or adequate training, logistics or intelligence to deal with such a situation.'<sup>3</sup>**

While the Mission's most recent mandate instructs it to adopt a 'more proactive and robust posture,'<sup>4</sup> is this realistic? Not only could military counter-terrorism operations compromise the UN's cherished principles of consent, impartiality and the non-use of force, there is a question over the extent to which its troops could mount them effectively. Indeed, a UN report in 2015 concluded that such operations 'should be undertaken by the host Government or by a capable regional force or an ad hoc coalition authorised by the Security Council.'<sup>5</sup>

The question is can MINUSMA form a successful military strategy to defeat terrorists given it lacks the capacity to do so? Does it have the ability to orchestrate ends, ways and means to be able to use force more effectively? Diverting military resources to defeat terrorist groups will not address the underlying causes of the conflict and may be counter-productive. While UN missions must defend themselves and their mandates, offensive counter-terrorism operations are indeed best left to states and regional military alliances.

Events in Mali since 2012 are well documented. The insurgents' initial gains were reinforced by links to transnational terrorists, the return of Tuareg fighters from Libya and a political crisis in Bamako. France intervened in 2013 as the African Union-led mission stalled. Since then, African troops have been subsumed into MINUSMA and the French intervention has adopted a more regional orientation. Despite a resurgence of violence in 2014, in 2015 rebel groups signed a peace agreement with the Government and opposing militias. But while cooperation between compliant militias has improved, Islamist terrorists have increased their attacks, and a worrying new front has opened in the central

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11. UN, *UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (2016)

Mopti region. MINUSMA is thus typical of missions in less permissive, more ambiguous environments where peacekeepers are themselves targeted.<sup>6</sup> The 2015 review noted the widening gulf between what is asked of these operations and what they can deliver.<sup>7</sup> While there have been apparent successes in other African missions, the review struck a cautious note, warning that operations to 'degrade, neutralise or defeat a designated enemy... should be exceptional, time limited and undertaken with full awareness of the risks and responsibilities for the United Nations mission as a whole.'<sup>8</sup>

Of course, terrorism is itself a contested term, although most definitions agree that it comprises

politically motivated violence against those who would not normally be considered legitimate targets: the UN claims that this applies to its peacekeepers as they are not active participants in the conflict.<sup>9</sup> Counter-terrorism 'consists of actions or strategies aimed at preventing terrorism from escalating, controlling the damage from terrorist attacks that do occur, and ultimately seeking to eradicate terrorism in a given context.'<sup>10</sup> Of note, the UN already has an endorsed counter-terrorism strategy comprising four pillars: addressing the underlying causes; preventing and combating terrorism; capacity building; and ensuring respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law.<sup>11</sup> The question is whether a UN Force can form a



strategy to contribute to the second, which has generally been concerned with judicial reform and information sharing. Colin Gray defined strategy as 'the direction and use made of means by chosen ways to achieve desired ends';<sup>12</sup> hence we will consider whether MINUSMA can orchestrate the necessary ends, ways and means to defeat terrorism in Mali.

*Chadian UN peacekeepers patrol the area as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Herve Ladsous, visits one of the MINUSMA check points in Tessalit, North of Mali.  
Photo: MINUSMA/Marco Dormino, United Nations*



### Robust Peacekeeping

In terms of its ends, MINUSMA's mandate directs it to stabilise the key population centres, which includes the central Mopti region.<sup>13</sup> Increasing the UN's military presence in that region, which marked the 2012 rebellion's limit of exploitation rather than its source, is a key consideration. The mandate also tasks it to support the authorities in bringing to justice 'those responsible for serious abuses or violations of human rights,'<sup>14</sup> and endorses French and regional efforts to combat terrorism. Importantly, there is now a formal peace to keep. Terrorist groups are outside of this process, and therefore MINUSMA should be able to act against them without compromising the principles of consent and impartiality. Moreover, the latest mandate explicitly instructs the Mission 'to take robust and active steps to counter asymmetric attacks against civilians or United Nations personnel.'<sup>15</sup>

The Mission's Rules of Engagement (ROE) should ensure force is used in a way that is consistent with political, legal and operational considerations. Offensive action is an essential principle of defensive operations, and MINUSMA can employ lethal force not only in self-defence, but also to strike pre-emptively to safeguard its own forces or anybody subject to its protection. The multidimensional nature of the Mission should ensure that political primacy is uncontested and that the military effort is integrated with the civilian sections under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). This ensures the Mission can more readily call upon civilian expertise and bridge the gap with NGOs that militaries find notoriously difficult. It is able to form effective relations with local politicians and communities, having substantive sections devoted to understanding political and civil affairs, gender, environmental and cultural issues. Such synergy should be of great assistance in forming strategy.

Finally, MINUSMA is authorised to use 'all necessary means' under Chapter VII of the UN Charter,<sup>16</sup> and in this regard it is uniquely enabled. It is the first UN peacekeeping operation to have its own intelligence unit, comprising Dutch, Swedish, German and other European intelligence assets and analysts. The Western contribution also has teeth, with helicopters and Special Forces providing the means to strike more surgically against targets identified by the enhanced intelligence function. The Force's conventional troops should also be

12. Gray, Colin, *The strategy bridge: theory for practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18

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16. UN, 'UNSCR 2295,' 6.

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18. UN, 'UNSCR 2295,' 11.

19. Smith, *The Utility of Force*, 380.

20. *Ibid.*, 380.

21. Pugh, Michael (ed), *The UN, peace and force* (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 90.

22. Anderson, Noel, *Peacekeepers fighting a counterinsurgency campaign: a net assessment of the African Union Mission in Somalia. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol 37, No 11 (2014): 946.*

a source of strength. Of its nine infantry battalions, eight are from West Africa and over half are from nations that share a land border with Mali. Rupert Smith highlights the importance of linguistic and cultural understanding that these regional troops should bring.<sup>17</sup> At the Force Headquarters level, the mix of Western, African and other Military personnel should ensure a balanced approach, while the African continent is similarly well represented amongst the civilian component. Overall, the diverse composition of the Mission provides a mix of first world military capability with regional expertise and peacekeeping experience.

### Restricted Ends, Ways And Means

The opposing view is that counter-terrorist operations mounted by peacekeeping troops will not succeed. Without fundamentally transforming the available resources, the UN could fall into a similar trap as the UK in Iraq and Afghanistan, where British policy did not set appropriate or achievable ends, or take account of whether the military force had the necessary ways and means to deliver. The latest mandate recognises that improvements are needed, calling on states to enhance intelligence capabilities, force protection and medical support, along with safety and security arrangements.<sup>18</sup> So what improvements are needed?

Establishing attainable ends is fundamental. Rupert Smith identified four purposes for the use of force: to contain, ameliorate, deter or coerce, and to destroy. The first two are easy to achieve but do not by themselves lead to a decisive outcome. The latter two are more likely to be conclusive, but require a degree of consensus and resilience, which is likely to be absent from any broad coalition.<sup>19</sup> Smith cautions against overreacting when one's initial strategy of containment or amelioration is challenged. Where establishing the rule of law is an essential objective, any use of force that is perceived to be arbitrary or unlawful will be counter-productive.<sup>20</sup> Even its selective use could undermine the UN's impartiality: 'the moment a peacekeeping force starts killing people it becomes part of the conflict it is supposed to be controlling.'<sup>21</sup>

Clearly the way in which force is used must be consistent with wider policy and satisfy the principles of distinction, necessity, proportionality and humanity. However, the efforts of the (mainly Western) intelligence unit are not well integrated with the (mainly African)

battalions, the latter lacking sufficient G2 staff and a culture of effective reporting. Furthermore, there is no formal targeting process to assure the leadership that lethal force is appropriate, legal and policy compliant. For example, the UN is reluctant to involve itself in offensive Counter-IED activities, despite the fact that most militaries agree that attacking networks is an essential component of any successful strategy. Efforts are therefore piecemeal, half-hearted and inadequately resourced. Moreover, the Mission lacks the Information Operations capacity to turn offensive action into influence, both over the terrorist groups and the population, or fully consider non-lethal options for targeting. There are also surprisingly few integrated bodies within the Mission.

Throughout 2016 there were no military staff embedded full-time in MINUSMA's Strategic Planning Unit, or in any of the substantive civilian sections, including Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). In short, no credible attempt has been made to reconcile low-level UN peacekeeping doctrine with its practical application in the modern era.

The Mission arguably lacks the means to broaden its role significantly or increase its presence around Mopti. The widely accepted ratio to secure a population in stabilisation operations is 20 security personnel per 1,000 inhabitants.<sup>22</sup> Applied to Mali, MINUSMA's military footprint in the northern regions would seem sufficient. UNSCR 2295 did increase the ceiling of UN military personnel by over 2,000 to 13,289, but this is not enough to expand operations into the more populous central or southern regions significantly, including Mopti, without diluting its military presence in the north. The Force is already inextricably fixed by static tasks and convoy escorts, and can bring only a fraction of its combat power to bear, made worse by the slow progress of infrastructure builds, poor project management and lack of coordination of the supply of contingent owned equipment. Finally, the strategic agility to surge troops into Theatre at short notice, which was instrumental to US success in Iraq and Afghanistan, is unthinkable given the UN's tortuously slow force generation process. The result is a Force which is too constrained and inflexible to consider supporting ambitious new policy objectives.

### Back To Basics: The Principles Of War

As Colin Gray notes, 'policy is only hot air and wasted ink if the troops cannot do what they are asked to attempt.'<sup>23</sup> The Mission's military component simply does not have the capacity to act in the surgical and discrete way that counter-terrorism requires, and the UN's political leadership must take sufficient account of these limitations. But the challenge of terrorism cannot be ignored. In this final section, we will consider how the UN Force might pursue a more robust approach without encroaching into areas best left to others. To do so it will need to embrace three principles of war: selection and maintenance of the aim, concentration of force and cooperation.

Selection and maintenance of the aim means not becoming distracted by other tasks. In Mali it is the marginalisation of the northern population in

Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal, along with slow political reform and economic development, which has driven conflict since independence. Previous accords failed partly because the government did not keep its side of the bargain, and old wounds festered and resurfaced. The UN must encourage cooperation and hold Bamako to account, especially in terms of economic and political reform. The vital ground must be the northern regions where the 2012 insurgency started. Overseeing measures to build trust between the government and compliant armed groups there, including mixed patrols and the cantonment of irregular combatants, is a key task for the UN Force, because it is this which will enable reform in a way that is not perceived to be the arbitrary re-imposition of control from Bamako. Securing the population and humanitarian effort in places where the government cannot (principally north and east of

<sup>23</sup> Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, 144.

*The Senegalese Battalion Force of MINUSMA patrols the city of Gao every night to reassure the population. Patrolling like this helps them understand the security situation in the area as they talk to the people about what is going on.*  
UN Photo: Harandane Dicko, United Nations





*Chief of DPKO, USG Jean-Pierre Lacroix along with MINUSMA SRSG, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, visit UN troops and staff in Timbuktu Super Camp which was targeted twice by rocket attacks since the beginning of the month, Timbuktu the 16th of May 2017 © MINUSMA/Sylvain Liechi*

the River Niger) is equally important, and this must be geographically focused to have any hope of success: significantly expanding military operations in Mopti would be an unwelcome distraction.

This concentration of force needs the UN's components to act in unison. Western troop contributions must not see their efforts as being separate from the Sectors and infantry battalions. If anything, it is the battalions that are the operational centre of gravity, as only they have the mass and reach to secure population centres and implement the security aspects of the peace agreement. Crucially, the G2 capacity of the sector and battalion headquarters must be increased. This should be underpinned by a greater capacity at Sector, Force and Mission level to plan and execute joint action, orchestrating manoeuvre, fires, information operations and outreach. Mission Support arrangements must also be harmonised to a greater extent, and civilian-military planning must be stepped up across the board, led by a truly integrated strategic planning unit at Mission level, to release the Force headquarters to focus on operational and tactical matters. Finally, high level reviews and good intentions will not deliver coherent outcomes unless they are brought under a doctrinal framework that

incorporates the targeted employment of military force.

Cooperation between the UN and others like the EUTM, France and Regional bodies is essential. To some extent, France and others have seen a more robust UN Force as part of their exit strategy, but this must not be the case. Where there is an incomplete or contested peace, the delineation between a UN Force and others with a more partisan mandate (even one endorsed by the Security Council) must be clear, and the UN should not take on responsibility for more robust measures like training teams and offensive operations. It must also not be expected to supplant the state in areas where the Malian government can and should deliver greater security, including Mopti. Ultimately, blue-helmets are not a substitute for a capable and accountable state security sector, or the wider security, which the Malian government must provide its people. Nevertheless, the UN cannot shut itself off in a doctrinally-pure peacekeeping bubble. Awareness of these issues and boundaries is inadequate, and more energy is needed to understand legal issues at the tactical level and explain how the UN Force should interact with other missions from a support or intelligence-sharing perspective. By not being drawn into a wider counter-terrorism effort in

the centre or south of the country, and by concentrating on those tasks where impartiality is key and that it alone can undertake, the UN Mission should fulfil its tasks more effectively.

### Conclusion

As put by the UN Secretary General: 'the successful stabilisation of Mali ultimately depends on the Government.'<sup>24</sup> If MINUSMA's military component was to embark on offensive military counter-terrorist operations the effect will be a widening gap between its doctrine and the reality on the ground. This would undermine troop contributors' confidence and places its humanitarian effort and the local population in greater danger. The UN Force must be able to defend itself and those who reasonably hope to fall under its protection, and this requires improvements in matching focussed ends, new ways and adequate means underpinned by doctrine to cover strategic planning, integrated action (including targeting), force preparation, sustainment,

force protection and capability management. But a UN Force will always have its limits, and a lowest common denominator that is less willing or able to use force than a more homogenous military alliance. As unpalatable as it may be for some, the UN is not a substitute for state-led or regional military intervention. The terrorist groups are a real threat to the UN and Malian state, but the most prevalent danger for lasting peace is that, disillusioned with a process that is not seen to deliver an adequate dividend, the currently compliant militias reject it and take up arms again against the state. This must be avoided at all cost, and for MINUSMA that means an unwavering focus on the peace process it is there to support. The UN must embrace the principles of war if it is to keep the peace.

24. United Nations, 'Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Mali,' MINUSMA (2016)

*MINUSMA Camp in Kidal was targeted by intensive rocket / mortar fire. A dozen shells of various calibres targeted the camp, according to preliminary information. Five MINUSMA personnel were slightly injured; some shells landed in the areas surrounding the MINUSMA Camp. Soon after, a MINUSMA Force position was attacked outside the camp. Three peacekeepers were killed and three others wounded, Kidal the 8th of June 2017 © UN Photo Sylvain Liechti*



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*Soldiers from the Gloucestershire-based 1st Battalion The Rifles (1 RIFLES) deployed to Mali for 6 months as part of the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) to train soldiers of the Malian Army. The 21 Riflemen, all volunteers, successfully trained two full companies, more than three hundred soldiers in total, in combat and counter insurgency operations as well as more conventional military tactics such as patrolling, guarding bases and reassuring the local population. The aim of the mission is to build the capacity and capability of the Malian Armed Forces, to maintain security and to build long-term stability in the West African country and wider region. Photo SAC Derek Taylor RAF Crown Copyright*

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## Education



*Joint Movements Unit (JMU) personnel work slowly and carefully to load a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter onto an RAF C17 aircraft to be sent back to the UK as part of the drawdown of Operation Herrick. JMU staff were kept very busy sending kit and equipment back to the UK for future use, as it became surplus to requirements in Afghanistan. Photo: Corporal Daniel Wiepen RLC, Crown Copyright*

# The Practical Application of the 'Common Sense' Test

*Major Sergio Miller SGMI examines the 'common sense' lesson from Op Herrick and how well the Army has learned the lessons by looking at examples of the Army's recent past.*

**Post the withdrawal from Helmand, retired Brigadier Ed Butler, commander of the controversial Operation Herrick 4, wrote a lengthy piece for the Royal United Services Institute. It was entitled, *Setting ourselves up for a fall in Afghanistan: Where does accountability lie in the decision-making in Helmand in 2005-2006?*<sup>1</sup> He concluded the piece with these thoughts:**

*History and the practical application of the 'common sense' test would have told them [the Helmand decision-makers] that bringing better governance, some development objectives and sustainable security were always highly unlikely in southern Afghanistan - and impossible within three years and not without a high cost in blood and treasure.<sup>2</sup>*

The aim of this article is not to revisit the Afghanistan War. Nor is it to question decision-makers or protagonists in the eight year campaign in Helmand. Rather it is to examine Ed Butler's 'common sense' lesson from the campaign and to do so via a tour of the Army's recent past, which hopefully the reader will find thought-provoking.

The British Army is a formidable lessons-learning machine and it has got much better over the years. Allegations to the contrary are unfounded. It is a matter of fact that from the Second Boer War, through the Great War and in the Second World War, the British Army demonstrated an admirable capacity to learn from its early setbacks and mistakes and to adapt tactics and methods. This is not to deny that innovation had to overcome reactionary obstacles and personalities but overall, for the last century, the British Army has been a learning institution, not a dumb machine.

The same pattern was repeated in Helmand. Literally hundreds of lessons learned documents were generated. Tactics did evolve. By the end, Task Force Helmand had become very good at its business but there were frustrations along the way. However, the learning processes worked, mostly well, but on occasions unevenly.

A major lesson-learned, both from Afghanistan and Iraq, was the importance of 'understanding'. Some profit may be gained by asking: what does the Army mean by the need for 'understanding'. We can say that it does not mean Butler's 'common sense'. In no lessons-learned document will a reader find 'More common sense is required' as a lesson learned. This is not a facetious point or the illegitimate mixing of two different concepts.

1. Butler, Ed, (2015) *Setting Ourselves up for a Fall in Afghanistan*, *The RUSI Journal*, 160:1, 46-57, DOI:10.1080/03071847.2015.1016742

2. *Ibid*, p57016)

3. Ledwidge, Frank, *Losing Small Wars: The British Military Failure in Iraq and Afghanistan*, Yale University Press, 2011, p244

Common sense implies making a judgement. You have to display common sense about something. If the necessity for good judgement is stripped out, then you are left with just the knowledge and this, at root, is what the Army today means by 'understanding'. If only we had had better knowledge of Helmand tribal politics. If only we had had better appreciation of the corrosive levels of corruption in Afghanistan. We must develop better understanding of potential adversaries now to avoid potential blunders in the future. The 'understand' industry, for this is what it has become, has been an undeniable beneficiary of the unhappy experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

One of the most impassioned pleas for better understanding was made in Frank Ledwidge's *Losing*

*Small Wars: The British Military Failure in Iraq and Afghanistan*. The entire work was a frustrated hand grenade thrown at the MOD, but he makes his case especially strongly in chapter 11, *Opening Networks*. In it, he contrasts the British and US experiences and writes:

*The general intellectual hinterland of the US armed forces is far richer and deeper than that in the UK. There is a constellation of military universities, colleges and academies... Some of these institutions are of the highest calibre. West Point Military Academy... was named by Forbes magazine and the Center for College Affordability and Productivity... as 'America's 'best college' in 2009.'*<sup>3</sup>

*Infantry dismounting from a Warrior Armoured vehicle. The vehicles are taking part in an Armoured Fighting Vehicle Commanders Course undertaken at Warminster. New officers and crew commanders (Cpls) are trained on 3 platforms. Photo: Corporal Tom Evans RLC, Crown Copyright*



He goes on to contrast the US system of encouraging senior military officers to gain advanced degrees at civilian universities (roughly 400 army officers every year), and makes the arresting observation that in British universities there are more American officers studying for research degrees than British officers.

Ledwidge is too intelligent an interlocutor not to recognise that a simplistic promotion of the idea of creating 'soldier-scholars' is not necessarily the panacea. He readily acknowledges that senior British officers today are both well-educated and intelligent. He notes that the US armed forces also failed in Iraq (and later in Afghanistan). His point is one of culture: 'The purpose here is to compare the intellectual culture of the British military establishment and that of the US'<sup>4</sup>, arguing that

in the United States academic endeavour is 'respected and supported' in a way that is not replicated in Britain.

This is true to a point (which Ledwidge also acknowledges) but the panorama has changed. There are many visible and successful examples illustrating how the army has grasped the nettle of better understanding. Notable initiatives include the Land Intelligence Fusion Centre (LIFC) and the Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research (CHACR). This journal, *British Army Review*, has also contributed importantly to raising levels of understanding, notably in the recent series on the armed forces of the Soviet Union, and today the Russian Federation. So far so good, but a more interesting question may be raised: was Ledwidge right anyway? Is a cohort of academically superior officers, brimming with 'understanding', an at least desirable, if not necessary prerequisite for operational success?

Roughly 85 percent of British Army officers are graduates, including officers commissioned from the ranks. Graduate intake at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst is a similar percentage. This mostly reflects changes in British society and the education system. When this author was young, roughly one in ten school children attended university and a small proportion were awarded first class degrees. Today, half of all school leavers attend a university or higher education institute and roughly one third gain first class degrees. The graduate officer with a good degree is now the norm.

For contemporaries, it is worth underlining that this represents a total reversal of the British Army's experience until very recently. In 1960, the Adjutant-General argued: 'The army, like any other profession, must have a proportion of its officers with good brains.'<sup>5</sup> It was in this same year that the Army Council finally agreed to offer short-service commissions to graduates direct from civilian life, but only if they had an OTC certificate. Simultaneously, the Council also agreed to sponsor a small number of regular officers to read for arts degrees at Oxford (a scheme which this author benefited from in the following decade).<sup>6</sup> However, the numbers were disappointing. Almost ten years after opening up officer recruitment to graduates, the Army was attracting less than half of the 65 to 76 graduates it had hoped to recruit per annum.<sup>7</sup> Just over ten years down the road the numbers were still unimpressive. The author's group photograph outside Victory College shows less than one hundred graduate officer cadets. The 'real' army officers were still viewed as the boys in New College.

4. *Ibid*, 250

5. French, David, p198, citing NA WO 163/654/ ECAC/P(60)38. Adjutant-General, Arts Degrees for regular officers, 9 June 1960; TNA WO 163/654/ ECAC/M(60)12. Minutes of the 673 meeting of the ECAC, 19 August 1960

6. There was already a separate scheme in place where technical officers (RE, REME and RCS) could take an honours degree at Cambridge or at the Royal Military College at Shrivenham. As many as 100 places were on offer but by the early 1950s only half were being taken up due to the lack of suitable candidates.

7. French, p198, citing TNA CAB 129/135/C(68)29. Healey, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1968, 29 January 1968; TNA CAB 129/140/C(69)14. Healey, Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1969, 24 January 1969





*Somme Company senior cadets 1961: not one of these young gentlemen would have boasted a higher educational qualification. Source: Wikipedia Commons*

8. French, p193

9. French, p161

10. French, p182; Between 1953 and 1956 the number of applicants to Sandhurst had dropped from 659 to 569. In 1958 it was estimated that the all-regular army would need 620 subalterns from Sandhurst annually, and predicted that by 1963 it would only secure half that number. By 1960 the number was already down to 480 annually and by 1964 there was a shortfall of 1,050 officers. The situation did then begin to improve, but in 1971, even after the Healey reforms had cut the army's requirements, there was still a shortfall of 100.

In the early 1960s the entry level qualification for an officer cadet at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst was just five GCEs, or more or less what is expected of soldiers today. Concerned that even this standard might undermine required officer recruitment, the Sandhurst entrance examination was abolished in 1963, and in the following year the requirement that two of the GCEs should be at Advanced level was also dropped. If you fancied the life, you could breeze into Sandhurst on the strength of just five Ordinary level passes at GCE (and the necessary self-confidence assumed in the troop of mostly public schoolboys who took the Queen's shilling).<sup>8</sup> The course lasted two years and included academic work but this was held in low regard both by officer cadets and staff.

Step back a few years and the contrast with the modern Army is even more arresting. In the immediate post-war period, a quarter of the British Army's officers were predominantly supplied by just two schools - Eton and Harrow. The number only declined to around 10 percent in 1967.<sup>9</sup> These boys - personalities like Wellington in the previous century - were judged too dim to succeed in more profitable walks of life and thus were hived off to the army where they might redeem themselves. Many did. The stereotype of the 'thick toff' is unfair. The 1950s-60s were replete with first class commanders who served their country admirably. Wellington, of course, ended up as prime minister. This

good record was achieved despite the fact that the Army did not even rate them on entry. In 1956, only 45 percent of officer candidates actually passed Regular Commission Board (RCB) (National Service officers attended the separate War Office Selection Board (WOSB)). The Army was so desperate for applicants it could not afford not to take the failures and accepted them anyway.<sup>10</sup>

There is an irony to the fact that the Army first opened its doors to arts graduates from Oxford. The Army Council was not particularly fretting over its officers' understanding of Shakespeare's sonnets but rather their familiarity with the internal combustion engine. At the time, just two hours in the two year Sandhurst course was devoted to this subject. This had to change because the great shibboleth of the period was 'modern equipment'. Modernisation was not just a good idea in its own right, it was political necessity. Every post-war government was faced with the insuperable problem of insufficient manpower in the army. This problem was made acute by Britain's treaty-commitment to NATO that stipulated that the country would commit a minimum 55,000 strong force to BAOR (the Paris Agreement of October 1954). The reality was that no British government met this commitment except by fudging the figures and throwing sand in Washington's face whenever American administrations questioned the numbers.

It may be difficult for a contemporary to believe, given the size of the British Army then and now, but



A British Army 82mm mortar team (possibly of the Irish Guards) pause briefly during a summer training exercise in the late 1970s.  
© Crown copyright. IWM (CT 1247)

in 1961, the army was so stretched, there were just six infantry battalions left on mainland Britain, each comprising a single rifle company!<sup>11</sup> In BAOR, a full seven infantry battalions were actually only comprised of two companies, a fact that British Secretaries of State were assiduous in hiding.

The answer to this constant manpower crisis was 'modern equipment' and, in extremis, the tactical nuclear weapons furnished to the Royal Artillery by the United States Army.<sup>12</sup> Successive British secretaries of state deflected American criticism by arguing that the lack of British 'boots on the ground' would be made up by better, modern equipment. This created the splurge of procurement in the 1960s and equipment that is still in service today, such as the CVR(T) series vehicles. But manning this equipment needed more 'technical officers', not just good chaps from public schools. This need had already been identified by the *Whistler Report* in 1958 and subsequently by a committee established under Sir James Grigg, a former Secretary of State for War. Whistler argued that Britain's officer corps needed better understanding - not as it is being promoted today - but rather understanding of science and technology.<sup>13</sup> To achieve this he recommended that cadets considered capable of gaining a technical degree should be sent either to Shrivenham or to a civilian university. At Staff College, students without a degree, or with a degree in a non-scientific subject, would spend a year at Camberley undertaking general war studies, and three months at Shrivenham, acquiring 'technical common sense'. Technically qualified officers would follow the opposite path: they would spend a year at Shrivenham, deepening their technical knowledge, and three months at Camberley, acquiring 'military common sense'. Note the use of the term 'common sense'.

Staff College did recognise that future senior officers needed 'understanding', in the sense that it is being used today, and this meant study of past campaigns and battles as well as broadening general knowledge of world affairs. From the mid-60s the course was divided into three modules: nuclear war, conventional war, and counter-insurgency war. But in the verdict of one contemporary, the attributes that secured you good favour (and a good future appointment) were still the traditional British values of 'the good chap' leavened with some diligence: 'Articulate, nice, common sense [note, again], initiative, hard work, attention to detail, accuracy, all those things moulded into one.'<sup>14</sup>

The point about this army of the 1950s-70s, sketched briefly above and struggling with problems that make today's claims that the world has become an ever-more complex and dangerous place somewhat stretched and less than credible, is that it did rather well. The non-graduates, the apparent Blimps, and the 'chinless wonders' proved seriously good soldiers. This was a generation that won its wars. It did this without doctorates - the overwhelming majority of the Army's senior officers didn't have a single degree between them.

Montgomery, CIGS in the post-war period, went from St Paul's School to Sandhurst (where he was almost chucked out for rowdy behaviour), before commissioning in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. His successor Slim was a primary school teacher and clerk at a metal-tube maker. He also originally commissioned in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and did not attend university for



The Second World War: 1939 - 1945: Montgomery wearing his bush hat decorated with the badges of some of the units which served under him. A characteristic of his leadership was the ability to communicate with and inspire his troops and he developed a clearly defined image, partly by wearing distinctive hats, and partly through his relationship with the press. © IWM (E 19699)

11. French, p196, citing TNA WO 163/645/P(60)5. Adjutant-General and DCIGS, The infantry other-rank manning problem, 3 March 1960; TNA WO 163/645/M(60)5. Minutes of the 231 meeting of the Army Council, 11 March 1960; TNA WO 163/645/P(60)11. Adjutant-General & DCIGS, The strength of infantry battalions, 21 April 1960; TNA WO 163/645/M(60)7. Minutes of the 233 meeting of the Army Council, 28 April 1960; TNA DEFE 7/1686. ? to PUS and Minister of Defence, 26 September 1961

12. Chaparal, *Honest John, Lance and the 203mm atomic artillery SP gun.*

13. French, David (2012), *Army, empire and Cold War the British Army and military policy, 1945-1971*, Oxford University Press, p175 citing TNA WO 163/640/AC/G(58)28. Note by the Secretary, Committee on the New all-Regular Army (*Whistler Report*), 12 May 1958

14. French, p194, citing WMSA. Accession No. 18802. J. Cowan, reel 17

reasons of family poverty. Alan Brooke, who completes the trio of statues that now stand in front of MOD Main Building, was sent off to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich before commissioning in the Royal Artillery. Gerald Templer attended Wellington College, then a production factory for officer cadets, before joining his father's regiment, the Royal Irish Fusiliers. Frank Kitson went straight into the army as a second lieutenant on

an emergency commission in the Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own). Nigel Bagnall was another boy from the Wellington College production line who commissioned in the Green Howards. Tony Jeapes (22 SAS, Oman) offers the example of the grammar school boy. He attended Raynes Park Grammar School before signing up with his local regiment, the Dorsets. The list goes on and on. All these are officers to whom the country owes a



debt of gratitude and not one of them could boast an educational qualification worth its name. On retirement some demonstrated that they were not just good soldiers but serious, reflective authors as well.

What conjoined all these officers, one may hazard, is that they all passed Butler's common sense test. This was a practical, plain-speaking, no-nonsense generation. They were steeped in military culture from a very early age and

they undoubtedly benefited from extensive operational experience. Their mentors, the senior officers on the eve of war were no slouches either: the top 168 officers in the British Army boasted 187 brevet promotions, 13 Military Crosses, 126 Distinguished Service Orders, 5 Victoria Crosses, 96 Companions of the Bath, 87 Companions of the Order of St Michael, a brace of Legion d'Honneur and even one Order of the Rising Sun (fifth class) awarded to a Major-General C.D.H. Moore for capturing a German naval base in China.<sup>15</sup> Soldiering was their life.

This generation did have 'understanding', first and foremost of their trade. They demonstrated that you do not need a PhD to understand a local conflict, and nor do you need a degree to win a war. They appraised the situations they found themselves in using the old-style 'Appreciation' (today superseded by the US Intelligence Preparation of the Environment (IPE) and Combat Estimate), and cut their cloth accordingly using their experience and common sense. Every British 'small war' and post-war operation was different and tackled differently. There was no template. Doctrine was not followed slavishly such as it existed. The first formal 'counter-revolutionary warfare' doctrine was not promulgated until the late 1960s. Very probably, as Wellington drily observed, not many read it anyway as British Army officers tended to view doctrine as an amusing novel. They displayed flair, irreverence, and plenty of humour. There is much to admire in our immediate antecedents.

If this is the legacy from this generation, where does this leave us? Has 'understanding' become overblown, an exaggerated over-reaction to the two most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan? Are we overdoing academia? The answer to these questions is obviously 'no'. The raft of initiatives these conflicts spawned is to be applauded and supported into the future. The intellectual grist mill of an army must continue to turn. But equally we should not forget Ed Butler's admonition. No amount of 'understanding' can rescue a mission if it does not pass 'the practical application of the 'common sense' test'. This is less a matter of academic qualifications or 'soldier-scholars' and more a matter of sensible military judgement.

15. French, David and Reid, Brian Holden, *British General Staff: Reform and Innovation 1890-1939*, Ch 10 'An Extensive use of weed-killer', Cass Series, *Military History and Policy*, 2002



A CVRT on OP HERRICK 14 being used by the 9/12 Royal Lancers in Lash Durai Junction, Helmand. Photo: PO (PHOT) Hamish Burke, Crown Copyright



*The dreaming spires of Oxford. Photo: Major Mike Butler, author copyright*



# From the Coal Face - External Placements (Academic)

*In response to the articles on external placements (HDSP) by Major Marcus Duggan and Brigadier Suzanne Anderson, published in BAR 170, Major Mike Butler recounts his experience as a full-time external academic placement, one of the most rewarding and privileged years of his career.*

**After a brief introduction to current policy this article focuses on the application process, conduct and potential benefits associated with an academic placement, both personal and professional. My belief is that improved policy for academic placements means that they represent improved (and improving) organisational value, including for talent development. My hope is that other officers - but also more *soldiers* - might, after reading this article, consider applying for what is a truly outstanding opportunity with significant potential for long-term benefit.**

## Context

It was after Staff College, during my Initial Grade 2 (IG2) job, that I spotted the opportunity to apply for an external academic placement – then known as the ‘Higher Defence Studies Programme’, or HDSP. An email had come in to Army HQ regarding plans for a UK equivalent of the US ‘Foreign Area Officer’ programmes. The thrust of the email was that this was something the

British Army should be considering and that there was ‘much to discuss’. After some initial research, however, it became clear that independent academic consideration of the US programmes was extremely limited. What did they aim to achieve for US interests? Had they been effective? How were their outputs measured? What could reasonably be transposed to a UK model? What couldn’t? These questions led me to think that an academic study might be of real value to the Army, not to mention personally very interesting and rewarding.

## What Is An External Academic Placement?

The HDSP policy has now been updated and rebranded as ‘External Placements (Academic)’, aligned to its sister policy ‘External Placements (Industrial)’. Both policies are owned by the Individual Development Branch at Army HQ and the key reference (as at September 2017) is *Army Command Standing Order (ACSO) 3231 - External Placements (Academic and Industry)*. On the *academic* programme, six full-time Masters degree placements are available each year, in addition

to opportunities for PhDs, Fellowships and Degree Apprenticeships. Each year there are two Masters places at the University of Cambridge (MPhil in International Relations), two at the University of Exeter (MA in Applied Security Strategy), and two 'others', allowing prospective applicants to apply to any university provided they can justify to the Army's External Placements (EP) Board the benefit of their chosen course.

### **Shaping The Opportunity**

Having identified an Army requirement for academic study I set about identifying how that requirement might be served. A search of various university courses immediately drew me to one in particular: the Diplomatic Service Programme (DSP) at the University of Oxford. The course, which you can find online with a quick search, combines academic study with vocational training in



diplomatic practice and leads to a 'Master of Studies' (MSt) degree in Diplomatic Studies. With a former FCO diplomat as its Director, the course is designed principally for diplomats; 19 of the 24 participants on my course were mid-career diplomats from countries including China, Ghana, Jordan, Poland, the Philippines, Singapore and Turkey. I therefore felt that not only would participation on the DSP provide a vehicle for the

academic research itself, but that it would also build a network for the Army that could offer value in the future, in addition to connections with other people encountered during the course (FCO officials, other government departments, NGO staff, academics etc).

*Outside the Magdalen College library, University of Oxford, - an inspiring place to study. Photo: Major Mike Butler, author copyright*





A visit to the UN Human Rights Council, Geneva. Photo: Major Mike Butler, author copyright

1. There is potentially a debate to be had here on deferring mandatory training and education (T&E) interventions if the benefit is deemed to outweigh the cost. I was fortunate that this didn't affect me personally.

2. Available on the Individual Development Branch Defence Intranet site as at Sep 17.

3. Telecon with AH CHACR Sep 17 confirms CHACR are in agreement.

### The Application Process

Detailed in *ACSO 3231*, the first step in applying is to ensure that the *timing* of any application is right, and that an individual's MS position is clearly understood; participation should clearly not prohibit attendance on a mandatory career course, for example. I felt extremely well supported in my application, both by my immediate chain of command at Army HQ and by my desk officer at APC, something for which I remain extremely grateful.

Once approved in MS terms, applicants must complete an application form<sup>2</sup> and a detailed research proposal that should clearly demonstrate the value of the research to the Army. An academic reference and a reference from the applicant's military sponsor are also required. I asked GOC 1XX to be my sponsor and he agreed. I would strongly recommend that people aim high in seeking out a sponsor. Not only should this increase the validity of the research proposal, but it should help to ensure the research output is valued and used to develop current thinking or practice.<sup>3</sup> I bolstered my application even further by securing contacts at the FCO and at RCDS, each of whom wrote a letter to state how they were willing to assist in my research. Having stated above that I hope more soldiers might consider

this opportunity, the Army Sergeant Major represents an excellent potential conduit into securing a senior sponsor for a soldier understandably reluctant to approach a 2\*. Indeed, the Army Sergeant Major may him or herself be an excellent sponsor of future research.

### The Course

Once accepted for an external placement (and subsequently accepted by the University and Magdalen College - an inspiring place to study) I started at Oxford on 3 October 2016. You can read about the DSP in detail online, but in broad terms it consists of an academically rigorous year of lectures, seminars, essay-writing, tutorials and exams structured around four modules: International Politics; Public International Law; International Trade and Finance; and Diplomatic Practice. It also included a range of visits within the UK and Europe. To offer a few examples of the privileged access the Programme enjoys, the 24 of us were briefed by the Ambassadors from four of the five P5 nations in Geneva in the same morning, questioned NATO staff on Russian activity in Eastern Europe during a visit to Brussels and spent two days at the key EU institutions (plus the UK Mission to the EU).



The Course also visited the UN Human Rights Council, World Trade Organisation, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, plus a series of institutions closer to home. We visited Stormont in Northern Ireland (more Brexit discussion as well as lessons on conflict resolution), the FCO (where we were briefed by the FCO Permanent Under Secretary, amongst others), the Commonwealth Secretariat, the BBC, BP, the House of Commons (a visit to FCO questions and an intimate briefing on Brexit from Hilary Benn.) The course also provided practical training in media interviews, multilateral negotiation and crisis management, plus a training day with the latest batch of FCO Diplomatic Service Fast Streamers. Overall, therefore, the DSP presented an outstanding opportunity with huge value to bring back and share within the Army.

### **Workload And Daily Routine On An Academic Placement**

Academically the DSP was high-quality and rigorous. The workload was unsurprisingly high given the institution

concerned, but I found it no more challenging than the busiest jobs I had completed up to that point; success was mostly about being organised. Indeed, it was important to me that the course was busy. I tended to leave home at about 0630hrs, arriving in Oxford 0730hrs (missing the commuter traffic) and giving me time to do PT prior to my first lecture (0900hrs). I would then squeeze in as much work as I could until approximately 1630hrs, drive home (again, missing commuter traffic), and then usually read/write for a couple of hours in the evening after putting my children to bed. This routine proved sufficient to earn a distinction, plus it was excellent for my family. For those based closer to their university the opportunities are likely to be even greater, enabling access to guest speaker events and dinners, for example.

### **Squeezing The Value From The Experience**

It remains open to debate how effectively EP(A) graduates are being subsequently employed to harness their experience. When I applied I was optimistic enough that any necessary changes to Army HQ policy (and APC practice) were in train, not least given what I had heard/read from CGS on the importance of external placements. I was also content that participation might not necessarily determine the assignment immediately following my placement, provided it did have a bearing subsequently. I saw the experience as a feather in my cap that could open doors to certain opportunities in the Army/Defence. As one example, on arrival in my current organisation I was tasked by the 2\* Commander to conduct some specific analysis for his HQ, and have been invited to speak at a number of events related to my research. This suggests that the academic value of my placement has been recognised not only for the subject matter expertise it has given me, but also for the enhanced analytical capability it offers the organisation. The subject matter knowledge I have gained is also being used in my role as an Army education officer, eg. shaping CLM teaching in the field of Defence Policy. This has been extremely rewarding and has offered a practical mechanism for giving back to the organisation. Most importantly, however, is the fact that my research was presented to the policy makers who requested it, and who will write my appraisal report for the year. To my mind this is where the return on investment is either gained or lost, and was clearly an additional motivation throughout the year. Though I can't control what will

be done with my work I have nevertheless ensured that the lead policy makers in MOD (2\* and 1\* officers) received a high-grade product which can be used to inform strategic discussion and future policy. I have also stayed very much in touch with the diplomats from my course, and am also now in contact with the large and diverse DSP alumni network (many of whom are now Ambassadors representing their countries overseas). Appropriately exploited (eg. by a future role in Defence Engagement, on attachment to another government department or in an overseas post) this network at least offers the potential for further value to be gained from the investment; it is ultimately career management process that will determine whether or not it is exploited.

Complementary to 'tuning up' the future employment of external placement candidates, the creation of CGS' 'Soldier Scholars Network' seeks to enhance the return on investment of external academic placements and provide individuals with another opportunity to apply their newly-developed KSE. Tasked by Army HQ's Directorate for Strategy (D Strat) via the Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research (CHACR) in Camberley, acceptance into the Network is expected of those having completed an external academic placement. Its members ('CGS Scholars') will be expected to formally support thinking on a wide range of strategy, policy and force development issues, with D Strat transmitting focussed questions across the Network



Inside the UN Security Council, New York, on a research visit prior to the start of the academic placement. Photo: Major Mike Butler, author copyright



*Stormont, Northern Ireland, where we were briefed by ministers from the DUP and Sinn Féin. Photo: Mike Butler, author copyright*

for comment (via CHACR). I am pleased that there is an opportunity for EP(A) graduates to remain engaged and I hope the Network can help to ensure the valuable knowledge and academic skills acquired/honed via external placements are not wasted.

### **A Final Thought**

I fully expect that participants on external placements will always be referred to as 'lucky'. This is true to an extent – we are lucky that the opportunity exists and that many people support and promote the opportunity. But old perceptions of 'standard' career paths may at times continue to harm, rather than help, EP(A) graduates; more than once I have had the experience referred to as my 'year off'. I hope this situation improves over time as it certainly holds back the potential value of external placements, both for the organisation and for those individuals who decide not to apply for fear of 'non-conformity'. I certainly don't intend to talk down

the opportunities or benefits afforded by an academic placement in order to conform to out-dated career messaging; it was unashamedly stimulating, challenging, rewarding and fun. I also know how hard it was to secure a place, that I didn't apply for in order to take some kind of 'career-holiday', and that I worked hard to secure the best possible result for the organisation, and for myself.

### **Finding Out More**

I am more than happy for people to contact me should they, or one of their subordinates, wish to consider an external academic placement. Though I won't attempt to be a substitute for the up-to-date policy, nor attempt to offer misplaced or under-informed MS advice, I will gladly give people a sense of what the process was like from a 'user' perspective. Please feel free to send me an email via [Michael.butler304@yahoo.com](mailto:Michael.butler304@yahoo.com).

# History



*Military equipment leaving the country. Withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. Photo: RIA Novosti archive, image #825492 / Miroslav Luzetsky / CC-BY-SA 3.0, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 licence, Wikimedia*

# Lessons From History

*Historian and author Charles Dick argues that history can be used as a vehicle for instruction if done with care with particular emphasis on the Soviet Union and Russia.*

**The philosopher Georg Hegel wrote that the only thing we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history. He undoubtedly had a point, but mostly because people so often do not make the effort to use history as a vehicle for learning lessons. Of course, history is not usually written with a didactic purpose in mind and it is generally read selectively for the myths it propagates or refutes. Many use it to prove their prejudices about which future courses of action to pursue, and to demonstrate that their opponents or rivals are mistaken; false analogy is perhaps the most common form of argument. I believe, however, that history can be used as a vehicle for instruction if done with care. That is why I have written my book.<sup>1</sup>**

The genesis, and *raison d'être*, of the book is to be found in army intelligence work I started doing in 1975 and later experience, which came with accumulating knowledge, advising BAOR HQs on 'the threat' and playing the Soviet enemy during command post exercises (CPXs). It became clear to me that, in the late seventies and early eighties, NATO and the Soviet Army were preparing for very different wars. *It was evident that certain dangerous preconceptions, even illusions were accepted as givens by British and other allied generals on the central front.* Like most stereotypes, there was an element of truth in some of them. Others were more akin to truthiness. The more egregious of these conceptual errors, on which planning was based, included the following.

The Soviets, it was believed, placed almost total reliance on numerical superiority for victory. For this

reason, no Soviet offensive could or would be mounted before mobilisation and forward concentration and deployment were very far advanced. Largely for this reason, our generals mostly discounted the possibility of being surprised. The voluminous Soviet literature on the importance of surprise and how to achieve it was left unread or regarded as of purely historical interest. This was especially true of its stress on achieving victory in 'the initial period of a war', that is, by Soviet definition, the period of mobilization, concentration and deployment. Of course, there were other factors. There was a dangerous reliance on the certainty of intelligence providing timely warning of both the nature and scale of enemy preparations and, still more dubiously, of their *raison d'être*. This error was compounded by an assumption that such warnings would immediately be acted on by NATO governments, which would unanimously initiate timely counter-measures. In every CPX, supposed warning time (something actually recognised only in retrospect by historians) would be translated into adequate preparation time. There would be no question of a failure of political understanding or will to deter such as that shown by the Israeli government in the run up to the Arab attack in 1973, or the US before the Iraqi conquest of Kuwait in 1990. Quite probably, different perceptions in one or two allied governments on the central front would have acted in somewhat laggardly fashion and this would have created gaps or lightly held sections.<sup>2</sup>

When the blow fell, the Warsaw Pact was routinely portrayed as attacking relatively evenly across the front, like the legendary but somewhat mythic 'Russian steamroller' of the Second World War. This reflected the assumption that the Soviets had an essentially attritional

1. Dick, Charles J., *Decisive and Indecisive Military Operations*, vol 1 *From Victory to Stalemate, the Western Front Summer 1944* and vol 2 *From Defeat to Victory, the Eastern Front Summer 1944* (University Press of Kansas, 2016)

2. *There was much resistance to the idea that the Soviets could achieve surprise in the face of modern reconnaissance and surveillance means (despite the fact they did just that when invading Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979). The issue is dealt with, amongst other places, in C.J. Dick Catching NATO Unaware. International Defence Review 19, 1 (1986) and more recently in C.J. Dick, From Defeat to Victory, pp 270-272.*

approach. Every exploitable axis would be used in frontal attacks by forces deeply echeloned so that the exhaustion of leading formations would not lessen the weight of the offensive or even lead to an operational pause. More cynically, this might also reflect a perceived need, both in appreciations (estimates) and on exercise, to give each central region corps a 'fair' share of the enemy. Certainly such simplistic teaching ignored the exhaustive Soviet analysis of the issues of force ratios and densities appropriate in various situations.

Most NATO corps were responsible for frontages that they considered uncomfortably wide. There was, thus, a temptation towards considering axes and obstacles where the going was difficult as being too problematic for an enemy that was obsessed by the need for tempo. Such areas were usually merely screened. This inevitably created vulnerabilities, especially if the enemy achieved partial surprise. Again, Soviet historical studies repeatedly emphasised the exploitation of unexpected axes as a method of wrong-footing their opponents.

*A testimony to the accuracy of close support missions flown by the US Fifth Air Force fighters are these destroyed North Korean tanks, blasted out of the path of the advancing 24th Infantry Division units near Waegwan, Korea. Photo: US Army, Air and Space Museum #77799 AC, Released, Wikimedia.*



On exercise, the Soviets were routinely portrayed as attacking prepared positions using hasty attacks mounted from the line of march. Such tactics were appropriate only on a fluid battlefield, where the situation was frequently and rapidly changing - circumstances often resulting from the attacker achieving surprise. Because NATO wanted a relatively static FEBA battle its armies mostly understood only imperfectly and did not train for the essential concept of the tactical meeting battle, let alone the operational level meeting engagement.<sup>3</sup> This was what the Soviet Army, by definition holding the initiative at the outset, expected to be the typical form of combat, perhaps even at the operational level if surprise were achieved and one or more allied contingents had not completed their deployment and fully occupied their FEBA positions. It

devoted much training time to the meeting battle and produced a steady flow on the subject in books and articles in military journals.

Seduced by a comforting stereotype of the enemy as subject to a rigid top-down command and control system the allies denigrated Soviet flexibility and asserted that their officers were generally incapable of exercising meaningful initiative. All that could be expected, of tactical commanders especially, was the mindless application of rigid tactical drills in all circumstances, however inappropriate. Furthermore, it was believed that attacks would be persevered with long after their culmination. For a defender facing superior numbers, this was a cosy piece of received wisdom that suggested his superior skill would carry the day. It was confirmed by only a very selective use of history.

3. When General Sir Rupert Smith took 1 (BR) Armoured Division to the Gulf in January 1991, he told me that he anticipated fighting meeting battles and urgently needed to teach and train the division for this unfamiliar form of combat. I sent him material on the Soviet concept and the following article: C.J. Dick, Soviet Battle Drills, International Defence Review 18, No.5 (1985)

*U.S. Soldiers with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard repel an attack by opposition forces during a situational exercise in Latvia, June 4, 2013, during NATO exercise Saber Strike 2013. Saber Strike is a U.S./European Command-sponsored Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed regional and multilateral command post and field exercise designed to increase interoperability between the United States and partner nations. Photo: Staff Sergeant Tom Bourke, U.S. Department of Defense, Released, Wikimedia*





*Two infantrymen of the Irish Guards, wearing disruptive pattern material uniforms for camouflage, take cover in a shallow depression during an exercise in Germany, 1975. One man carries a Self-Loading Rifle while the other aims a General Purpose Machine Gun. Both weapons have wooden rather than plastic stocks and grips. © Crown copyright. IWM (CT 1224)*

4. There was a tendency to underestimate the effectiveness of Soviet air defence as a whole because of the relative lack of sophistication of many individual systems. This was to downplay the effect of sheer numbers. Although each weapon may have a low kill probability individually, quantity will tell; within a week, the RAF lost five of the 45 Tornados it took to the 1991 Gulf War to old weaponry manned by Iraqis.

Since the 1930s, a critical facet of the Red Army's concept of the offensive was deep battle at the tactical level and deep operations at the higher level. Convincing themselves that they could win the attritional struggle for the FEBA and constrained by an arbitrary 'no withdrawal behind line' a very few tens of kilometres to the west, NATO exercise scenarios did not allow for any but small scale, local, tactical penetrations that were always contained. The fact that shifting the focus of combat into the rear areas of the defence was the essence of Soviet operational art seemed merely to prove to western minds a lack of realism in Soviet thinking.

The ability of Allied airpower to provide close air support at will, to compensate for Soviet numerical superiority, was largely taken for granted. So too was its ability to penetrate into the enemy's operational depth to interdict his 'follow-on forces'.<sup>4</sup> Enemy air interdiction, complemented by special forces actions, was generally seen to be containable. It may well be true, as NATO air commanders asserted, that the alliance would have overcome superior Soviet numbers and won air

superiority, over the course of time. It would probably not have been achieved in the, to the Soviets, critical initial period of the war.

The origins of these misconceptions can be traced to misinterpretations of the Russo-German war 1941-1945. As the Cold War took shape, western armies sought guidance on how to defeat Red Army offensives. They sought the advice of the vanquished about how to defeat the victor. Studies were commissioned examining tactically successful Wehrmacht battles and its generals were consulted and their memoirs read. Their common refrain was accepted, that their army was greatly superior qualitatively and doctrinally but unable to cope with the consequences of overwhelming enemy numbers and Hitler's mistakes. Too little attention was paid to the frequent, latterly routine way in which tactically successful German formations were consumed in vast operational-level catastrophes.

In the early 1980s, the Army Staff College at Camberley held up as an example to follow the XLVIII Panzer Corps' defence of the River Chir in November-

December 1942. The Staff College instructors were apparently unaware that the attacking Red Fifth Tank Army's mission had intentionally morphed into a pinning action while Operation Little Saturn was accomplishing the destruction of Eighth Italian Army in a surprise offensive and thereby sealing the doom of even more German forces than those already encircled in Stalingrad. It was in their concepts of operational art and its execution, not in tactics or solely in numbers, that Soviet superiority lay. If the assumptions that underlie a doctrine are suspect, the doctrine must be questionable. Only objective analysis of the material available for study can lead to better conclusions.

When NATO moved from the doctrine of massive, nuclear retaliation to the notion of flexible response, its ability to fight conventionally became a crucial issue - at least when the Soviets too (and rather later) moved away from the belief that war with the West would be nuclear from the outset. Having embraced the belief that there could be at least a conventional phase in a war with the USSR, western armies continued down a conceptual *cul-de-sac* in their preparations to fight it. A major reason for this was the failure of its armies adequately to study and understand contemporary Soviet doctrinal writings.

To focus in on the British case, there were several reasons for this lacuna. The end of empire saw an increasing hollowing-out of the Army resulting from inflation combined with ongoing fiscal restraint and rising costs. Although the Army's principal focus was theoretically on BAOR, from the early 1970s Northern Ireland proved a constant drain on manpower, money and intellectual effort and there were other distractions such as the Falklands war. There was little enthusiasm to provide resources for the study of Soviet military writings. It is clear, however, given the trivial financial cost of such study, that the real issue was lack of interest. The Army was comfortable with its stereotype, not least because it knew no better.

Being unfamiliar with an often very un-British approach to the conduct of battle and operations, the Army tended to squeeze Soviet concepts into the familiar moulds of British ones and then point up the resulting bad fits as weaknesses. One example will make the point. The Soviet attack from the line of march was intended for meeting battles in which the enemy too was on the move or had only just transitioned to hasty defence. In British teaching and on exercise, the enemy was made

to use the tactic against well-prepared defences and suffered accordingly. Where the Soviets manifestly did things completely differently, it seemed self-evident that they must be wrong — after all, we were the ultimate in professionalism and therefore, by definition correct. The proof of this contention was plain from the great superiority shown over the Red Army in combat by the *Wehrmacht*. Western ideas were better.

At the root of this problem of incomprehension and consequent arrogant dismissiveness was the great hole in British (and American) military doctrine. Neither had an understanding of the concept of operational art, the conduct of war at the levels of theatre, army group and army in order to achieve the goals set by strategy. This was the bedrock of the Soviet design for victory. It was superior operational design that enabled the Red Army to eviscerate a usually tactically superior *Wehrmacht*. Of course, an army's success was a product of cumulative tactical successes, but the conditions that made these possible, including surprise, the generation of required force ratios, etc., were created at higher levels. A reverse for a division, let alone a regiment, would be a minor matter recoverable through effective action by the army. Defeat of an army, at least on an important axis, could seriously impact the campaign and failure by an army group would likely be fatal to it.

The British and US militaries became conscious of operational art only in the 1980s, half a century after the Soviet establishment of the General Staff Academy to develop, refine and teach the subject.<sup>5</sup> That they did so was due primarily to the work of the Soviet Studies Research Centre in Camberley and its American counterpart, the Soviet Army Studies Office in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The former was created in 1973 and developed thanks to the vision of a handful of far-sighted generals, especially Anthony Farrar-Hockley, Michael Gow and Nigel Bagnall. Bagnall was particularly important as he reached the highest positions and by the mid-eighties was driving through radical reform to make the Army both manoeuvre-minded and capable and thus ready to take on the Soviets at their own game. The US Army noted the British developments and accepted their rationale. It created SASO, about a decade after SSRC was founded, to replicate and build on the work being done at Camberley.<sup>6</sup> It was not long before the American military was going faster and further down the road to transformation.

5. *The relationship between the levels of war was succinctly described by AA Svechin as early as the 1920s: 'Tactics makes the steps from which operational art leaps; strategy points out the path.'*

6. *Israeli Brigadier Shimon Naveh traced the development of British and American operational thinking in his seminal study In Pursuit of Military Excellence — the Evolution of Operational Theory (Frank Cass, 1997), 273-274. In it he wrote: 'Comprising talented scholars like C Donnelly, P Vigor, CJ Dick and John Erickson, the British research group, concentrated in the Centre for Soviet Studies [sic] exercised great impact on the perception of Soviet operational theory held by the American school of reformers. Being far ahead of their American colleagues in the study of Soviet deep operations, the British analysts managed to illuminate essential issues such as echeloning, operational breakthrough, simultaneous deep strike, momentum, deception and surprise. Moreover, aware of the conditions characterizing the Central European theatre, they managed to translate the abstract principles of Deep Operations theory into operational scenarios understood by the military planner. The organizational form and patterns of work that were developed by the British group later served their American counterparts as a model for both the establishment of the Soviet Army Study Office (SASO) in Fort Leavenworth, and the training of a talented generation of analysts who successfully researched Soviet operational theory.'*

As I reflected on our flawed understanding of the Soviet way in war, I went back over military history that I had read and came to see it in a new light. I realised how consistently, throughout history, so many armies have theorised about and trained for the wrong war and consequently achieved at best expensive and often indecisive victories or suffered catastrophic defeat. This was not always the result of a lack of professionalism. It was often the result of cultivating the wrong sort of professionalism for the war with which an army ended up. This is arguably what the British (and the Americans) have seen most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan where false analogies contributed to sub-optimal approaches: the British saw their successes in Malaya and Northern Ireland as providing models for counter-insurgencies in the 2000s, though the historical background, contemporary conditions and socio-political make up of Iraq and Afghanistan bore little resemblance to those of Malaya or Ulster.

There is a lesson for the future lurking here. In comparing and contrasting British, American and Soviet understanding of and approach to operations in the summer of 1944, it is clear that, like all armies, they were prisoners of their own experience. In the period roughly July to September 1944, when linear/attritional, indecisive battle was succeeded by operational manoeuvre to potentially decisive effect, strategically decisive results were indeed achieved in the East. They were not achieved in the West.

Contrary to popular myth, Soviet-German force ratios were not overwhelming; indeed, they were not generally more advantageous than Allied-German and were not, therefore, an explanation of greater Soviet success. Compare two contemporaneous operations in the West and in the East: the US Cobra and the British Bluecoat, starting respectively on 25 and 30 July, and the Red Army's Belorussian and L'vov-Sandomir which

*Soviet troops of the Voronezh Front counterattack behind T-34 tanks at Prokhorovka during the Battle of Kursk.  
Photo: Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, Wikimedia.*



commenced on 22 June and 13 July. The two Soviet offensives both yielded great dividends, especially the larger Belorussian, quickly translating tactical into operational and then strategic success. The Americans, having (temporarily) abandoned their linear-attritional approach, and aided by German logistic failure as a result of air interdiction, achieved operational success with unexpectedly far-reaching consequences. The British, having by contrast made no provision for deep exploitation, made only a limited impact.

The Soviets recognised that operational surprise to wrong-foot the Germans was all but a prerequisite for decisive success, not least because it enabled the concentration of superior forces, and they consistently put great efforts into achieving it. By 1944, deception and concealment routinely caused the Germans to miss over 50% of the Red Army's offensive concentration: consequently they underestimated the build-up by 25-40%. This in turn meant that Soviet superiority estimated at an acceptable 2-3:1 was in fact up to 5:1 operationally and 8-10:1 tactically.<sup>7</sup> After their brilliant achievement at the very start of the Normandy campaign, the Anglo-Americans were more intermittent in their efforts to achieve surprise and very often did not enjoy the benefits of this force multiplier.

*For the Soviets in the nuclear era, surprise was to become not just important but a sine qua non; deep and rapid penetration of the defence in a conventional phase would be vital to neutralise NATO tactical nuclear weapons.*

This would be accomplished by driving deep and fast, disrupting alliance command and control and logistics and by reducing the number of targets offered by a combination of shock, speed and intermingling of forces.

The Red Army consistently pursued the destruction of the enemy as the principal aim and therefore focus of operations. The capture and holding of ground would be an important by-product of the ruination of key enemy formations but not the primary mission. From its early days the Red Army's obsession was to generate operational manoeuvre to decisive effect in order to escape from the indecisive, attritional battles that had characterised the period 1915-17 (especially in the west): twenty years of rich doctrinal debate culminated in *Field Regulations, 1936* that systematised revolutionary

concepts for war-fighting. The enemy's cohesion was to be disrupted on a large scale, depriving him of his ability to react effectively to a rapidly changing situation by breaking up his organisation and control of large formations. Destruction of large groupings, the paramount aim of a strategic offensive operation, would follow from the disruption of his plans, timetables and ability to organise over wide areas and in depth, forcing him into a generally reactive posture. In other words, Soviet operational art was not seen as merely a matter of teeing up and fighting battles. The Soviets did not move in order to fight. They fought usually in order to move, in order to generate and then maintain operational manoeuvre to force the enemy into a hopeless situation where his annihilation could be rapidly accomplished.

By the end of the summer 1944 campaign, the Red Army had eviscerated three German army groups. When the Allies invaded France in June 1944, the mission given to the supreme commander was to focus on the destruction of the German armed forces. By the end of August, the principal army group in the West had been very severely mauled. Thereafter, however, the aim was somewhat lost in practice as various territorial objectives offered prizes attractive to British and American commanders.<sup>8</sup> Forces and increasingly scarce logistic resources were dissipated in various directions until their offensives ran out of steam short of strategically decisive objectives and with the German defence reviving.

The Soviets recognised the critical importance of the destruction of key enemy groupings of tempo and deep battle and, even more, deep operations penetrating without pauses 250-500 kilometres beyond the tactical zone of defence. Of course, before this became possible they had to break through usually well-developed, skilfully and tenaciously defended positions. They focussed their efforts and demanded heavy sacrifices to achieve these complementary goals. Once the conditions were created for converting tactical success into operational success, exploitation echelons were committed to drive deep, to hollow out the defence from within by disrupting German command and control and logistic support and seizing depth defence lines before they could be defended. By way of compensation for losses to the first echelon during the penetration of the tactical zone, the Soviets found that exploitation forces had an easier ride: when the rate of advance rose from 4-10 to 20-50 km per day, daily personnel losses fell by 30% and tank losses by 65% (and

7. Glantz, David M., *Soviet Military Deception* (Frank Cass, 1989), 565.

8. Interestingly, the most important geographical objective for the longer term viability of the whole campaign, the Scheldt estuary, was neglected by the high command until too late to achieve its timely capture. Consequently, this vital port was opened 85 days after its capture (facilities intact).

9. Radzievskiy, A.I., *Tankoviy Udar (Tank Shock) (Voenizdat, 1977)*, 228.

ammunition and fuel consumption fell dramatically as well).<sup>9</sup> For the Red Army, the breakthrough battle was the most difficult and expensive phase of an operation and the exploitation was the payoff.

By contrast, shifting the centre of gravity of combat into the enemy's depth had no place in either British or US doctrine. Neither army created formations for this purpose at the operational level, nor worked hard or consistently to achieve it. While both accepted the desirability of achieving momentum, both saw casualty limitation as more important than unbalancing the enemy. Gnawing through the defence with the aid of overwhelming firepower was usually considered preferable to trading lives for time and tempo. Caution was generally seen as a virtue to be prized in Allied generals and George S Patton's boldness troubled his superiors.

At the critical theatre and army group levels, the Allies were hampered by the weaknesses endemic in coalition war. American and British doctrinal differences vitiated mutual understanding and cooperation. So, too, did competition for resources.

Above all, differences over strategy, exacerbated by rivalries between commanders, meant that unity existed at only a superficial level. Not only were operations not always linked to produce synergies, they were frequently the product of rival British and US operational concepts. The result was dispersal of effort and a failure to keep the Germans under such sustained pressure on critical axes that their defeated army group collapsed completely under the strain. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that the British and American logistic systems were separate and both were designed to support linear-attritional rather than manoeuvre operations. While there was some cooperation between them, there was failure to ensure that clear alliance goals would determine priorities in meeting future logistic needs as the campaign progressed. There was dissipation of effort similar to that of combat forces that meant that ultimately, the Allies were unable to bring to bear their full combat power to complete the destruction of the enemy. The Soviets were not plagued by the need to accommodate allies and their totalitarian system

*A destroyed T-34-85 tank at the M6ricz Zsigmond Square. Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 3.0 Unported License, Wikimedia*





*Soviet T-55 tanks in front of Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin on 28 October 1961.  
Photo: Central Intelligence Agency, Wikimedia, Released*

kept rivalries between generals within tight bounds. In campaign design and in the setting up and conduct of each operation, best military judgement guided decisions and determined the need for switching of effort and logistic support between axes.

I hope I have said enough to demonstrate that my study of the theory and practice of war 70 years ago is not merely an academic, historical exercise. There are enduring lessons to be learned about such issues as surprise and working within an alliance context. But the most important of these is the central importance of evolving correct doctrine for the war that an army will actually face rather than the one it would like. From doctrine flows equipment design and procurement, organisation and training - how we propose to fight. Thus, for instance, the French went into battle in 1940

with utterly inappropriate doctrine and were speedily and comprehensively smashed. British and American doctrines were flawed and in 1944 this lengthened the struggle and raised the price of victory. Soviet doctrine at the start of their war was fundamentally sound but with lacunae. With modifications, it enabled them to survive horrendous initial defeats and then come back strongly to win convincing victories. Which armies today are producing doctrinal concepts that will provide the least wrong answers to the problems posed by the latest, greatest revolution in military affairs? Which have the mental and psychological flexibility best to adapt to the unanticipated mutations that war will undergo? The questioning study of history will not tell them what to think, but it will help them how to think. It might even help them to prove Hegel wrong.



*Indian troops of the 20th Division search for Japanese at the badly damaged station in Prome, 3 May 1945. © IWM (SE 4081)*

# Wars Do Not Come to a Clean End<sup>1</sup>

*Major Mike Tickner looks at the operations of the 20th Indian Division in French Indo-China directly after the Second World War ended as the basis for the Vietnam War.*

In July 1945 Lord Louis Mountbatten returned to Headquarters South East Asia Command (SEAC) in Ceylon from the Potsdam Conference. With the defeat of the Japanese in Burma nearly complete, his staff were preparing for Operation ZIPPER which was to be an amphibious invasion of Malaya by 182,000 troops in late September 1945. However, the Supreme Allied Commander had two important pieces of new information to brief. Firstly, he told his staff to prepare for a sudden capitulation of the Japanese forces. Mountbatten had been briefed about the use of the nuclear bomb against mainland Japan but he was unable to explain this to his staff. Secondly, SEAC's area of operations was to be expanded to include French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies because neither recently liberated France nor Holland were able to immediately re-establish control of their south-east Asian colonies.<sup>2</sup> These factors led to the 20th Indian Division's deployment to French Indo-China and the conduct of warfighting operations with the Imperial Japanese Army against Vietnamese Communists or Viet Minh.

## Surrendered Enemy Personnel

The Japanese 15th Army had been decisively defeated in Burma and the Americans in the Pacific and the Australians in Borneo and New Guinea were achieving

significant success, but most of the Imperial Japanese Army across south-east Asia was fully functioning, disciplined and most importantly it was undefeated. Some Japanese refused to believe the surrender order while others planned to go to Sumatra where it was rumoured that a last ditch stand was to be made. Lieutenant General Seishiro Itagaki, the regional commander in Singapore, planned to conduct a guerrilla campaign against the Allies and only agreed to surrender after he flew to HQ Southern Command in Saigon to receive the Emperor's order from Prince Haruhito Kanin. Itagaki returned to Singapore to relay these orders and over 300 officers committed suicide following his announcement, some in the lounge of the Raffles Hotel where the briefing had just taken place.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile some concentrated on hiding their plunder while others, like members of the secret police or *Kempeitai*, killed witnesses to their wartime atrocities.

Taking the surrender of 5 million Japanese officers and soldiers within SEAC's area of operations would be complex. Communications between Tokyo and the field commanders were erratic and the Allies were unsure as to the Japanese response to the order. Humbled by the atomic bombs, the majority proved to be polite and cooperative although some Japanese soldiers were mutinous towards their own officers. Most importantly, the Japanese did not see themselves as a defeated army and so their sensitivities needed to be considered by the Allies. Because they had surrendered rather than

1. Allen, Louis, *The End of the War in Asia*, London: Hart-Davis MacGibbon, 1976, p. 267.

2. Jeffreys, Alan and Rose, Patrick, *The Indian Army 1939 – 47: Experience and Development*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2012 p. 160.

3. Bayley, Christopher and Harper, Tim, *Forgotten Wars: The End of Britain's Asian Empire*, London: Alan Lane, 2007, p. 6.

4. Bayley and Harper p. 144.

5. Cross, J.P., *First In, Last Out: An Unconventional British Officer in Indo-China 1945-46 and 1972-76*, London: Brassey's (UK), 1992, p. 6.

6. Grainger, John, *Traditional Enemies: Britain's War with Vichy France 1940-42*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2013, p. 171.

been captured, they were designated as Surrendered Enemy Personnel (SEPs). This technicality was seen by the Japanese as less humiliating than being prisoners of war. It also meant that they were not covered by the Geneva Convention, which ironically was of concern to the Japanese.

The overarching plan was that the Japanese would be disarmed, they would hand over facilities to the Allies, e.g. military hospitals and barracks, and then return to Japan at their own government's expense. This would be planned and executed by the Japanese army but under the supervision of SEAC. The Japanese were also expected to provide resources such as vehicles and also manpower for:

*... labour tasks such as reconstruction, rehabilitation and general maintenance as required by commanders.*<sup>4</sup>

SEAC Notes on Relations with Surrendered Japanese Forces.

Detailed direction was issued on the conduct of Allied troops when dealing with the Japanese:

*... There will be no fraternisation whatever between Japanese and Allied forces. In dealing with the Japanese your behaviour will be guarded and coldly polite. You will, in the case of senior officers, use their correct titles. You will not shake hands with them ... In no case will British and Japanese officers feed in the same room, nor will tea be offered at any meeting. Any Japanese who come to receive orders or report should be kept at arm's length, eg with a table between you and them, and they should not be allowed to sit at the same table ..*<sup>5</sup>

### Vichy France and Colons

Under the surrender agreement in 1940, 40% of metropolitan France and all her colonies were to be governed by the Vichy government under German suzerainty.<sup>6</sup> Stretching from the Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa, to Madagascar to French Indo-China, the Vichy government had minimal control over her colonies and was unable to prevent the Japanese occupying French Indo-China in 1940. Held in contempt by the Japanese for being a defeated nation, General George Catroux, the

*Japanese prisoners of war working to repair the taxiing strip at Saigon airfield, Vietnam, December 1945. Photo: Leading Aircraftman Ashley, Released, Wikimedia*





*The uprising in Hanoi on August 19, 1945. The image is from the film August's star made in 1976. Photo: Do Manh Hung, Released, Wikipedia*

French army and the 100,000 French expats or *colons* offered little resistance and they complied with Japanese orders.<sup>7</sup> HQ Southern Command was established in Saigon and the country became a spring board for the Japanese invasion of Malaya and Burma.

Even after the liberation of France in 1944, the *colons* continued to cooperate with the Japanese and to conduct combined operations against Nationalist, Communists and the Allies' Special Forces. The relationship between the *colons* and the Japanese became progressively strained and the French began covertly contacting the Allies. On 9 March 1945 Japan ordered the Vichy government to place all French forces under their control. When they refused, the Japanese imprisoned the Vichy Government and interned French civilians and the armed forces who received harsh treatment at the hands of their Vietnamese prison guards. Japan then installed a Vietnamese puppet leader, Tran Trong Kim, who was a secret Communist sympathiser.

A major famine in 1943-44 and the poverty resulting from the economic mismanagement by the Japanese led to a wartime growth in Vietnamese nationalism. The Communists, or Viet Minh, had been active pre-war and had received training and arms

from a US Office of Strategic Services during the war.<sup>8,9</sup> This training, the weapons, their jungle hides and supply routes<sup>10</sup> would be the bedrock to Viet Minh operations for the next thirty years.

As a final act before surrendering and to hinder the re-establishment of a post-war French government<sup>11</sup>, the Japanese recognised a more radical government under Ho Chi Minh. Other Nationalist and religious groups vied for power but Ho Chi Minh and the Communists began to secure their hold on power. On 16 August 1945 the Viet Minh staged the largely peaceful August Revolution where public buildings were seized while the Japanese looked on. The Vietnamese now believed themselves as an independent country.

### Operation MASTERDOM

Following from the Potsdam Conference, the Chinese Nationalists would disarm the Japanese north of the 16th Parallel. Hungry, diseased and ragged 200,000 Chinese troops deployed and were predominantly interested in plundering the country.<sup>12</sup> The British were to deploy to the south of the Parallel and their area of operations would also include Cambodia and parts of Laos, although operations mainly concentrated around the Saigon area.

7. Bayley and Harper p. 142.

8. The precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency.

9. Lieutenant Colonel Peter Dewey was a member of this team and he was the first American serviceman killed in Vietnam in September 1945.

10. These supply routes would eventually join together and expand to become the Ho Chi Minh Way.

11. The Japanese did the same in the Dutch East Indies by installing Dr Surkano a pro-Japanese Nationalist leader of an independent country.

12. Karnow, Stanley, Vietnam: A History, The First Account of the Vietnam, London: Century Publishing, 1983, p. 151.



*The Viet Minh during the August Revolution. Wikimedia*

13. ALFSEA Operational Directive No 12 Op MASTERDOM dated 28 August 1945.

14. ALFSEA Operational Directive No 8 dated 23 August 1945.

15. Lieutenant Colonel Peter Dewey was a member of this team and he was the first American serviceman killed in Vietnam in September 1945.

16. Bayley and Harper p. 147.

17. Marston, Daniel, *The Indian Army and the End of the Raj*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, p. 162.

Known as Operation MASTERDOM<sup>13</sup>, Major General Douglas Gracey and 20th Indian Division deployed and were designated as Allied Land Forces French Indo-China (ALFFIC). Gracey was ordered to assume control of Japanese HQ Southern Army, supervise the Japanese surrender, relay SEAC orders to the Japanese, obtain information on Japanese dispositions and supplies, control Japanese communications, study the recovery of Allied prisoners of war and internees and render all possible aid and to report on Indo-China's lines of communication, airfields and the port of Saigon. He was also to reduce the size of Japanese HQs as soon as possible using Japanese resources, maintain liaison with French local government and to keeping Mountbatten informed.<sup>14</sup>

The Japanese announced at the peace negotiations in Rangoon that they were unable to control French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies. Therefore the British needed to deploy quickly but were hampered by shortages of transport. 1/19 Hyderabad Regiment flew into Saigon's Tan Son Hut airfield on 6 September 1945 with Japanese troops securing the airstrip with the bulk of the Division arriving by ship from Rangoon by 13 September.<sup>15</sup> The Japanese had been ordered to fly black rather than fly white flags to denote their surrender

and the Vietnamese also hung banners, although the messages were not always completely welcoming:

*Welcome British and Americans but we have no room for the French*<sup>16</sup>

### **The Unintended Coup d'état**

The Viet Minh had secured their position against other Vietnamese factions and their relationship with the British was deteriorating rapidly. On 19 September, SEAC ordered Gracey not to interfere with local affairs but then ordered him to seize Saigon Radio and to censor all Viet Minh propaganda in the media.<sup>17</sup> With the rapidly deteriorating security situation and general strikes, the Viet Minh were now seen as a threat to law and order by Gracey who declared martial law on 21 September 1945. Over-matched by the scale and the breadth of tasks, under-resourced, expected to operate in the political sphere and hindered by contradictory direction, martial law appeared as a way to wrestle back the initiative from the Viet Minh. Mountbatten was shocked and historians have criticised this decision. Although the use of martial law may be shocking to the 21st century reader, martial law was commonly used in extremis in British India. Gracey was a seasoned and respected Gurkha officer

and his previous experience would have led him to see temporary martial law as the most appropriate action given the circumstances.

Gracey then re-armed French former PWs who rapidly captured Viet Minh controlled government buildings.<sup>18</sup> The French had been humiliated twice in Indo-China, firstly by the Japanese and then by the Vietnamese and now they took their revenge. While the French PWs imprisoned and hanged some of the Viet Minh People's Committee, the *colons* cheered and participated in mob violence, savagely beating Nationalist and shaving the heads of French women who were pro-Nationalists. Gracey had allowed the French to stage a coup d'état.

The Viet Minh responded by calling a General Strike that paralysed Saigon and they quickly established armed vehicle check points, which exchanged fire with British patrols. Meanwhile, the released French PWs engaged in a bout of drinking, rape, violence and wanton destruction that included the National Museum where they destroyed priceless artefacts. The Viet Minh responded violently, for example in the Saigon suburb of Cité Héroult, the Viet Minh slipped past the Japanese guards and murdered 150 *colons*<sup>19</sup> and there were similar incidents across the country.

Gracey was now tasked by the commander of Allied Land Forces South East Asia, General Bill Slim, to broker a political solution between the Viet Minh and the French to allow the British to extract. However,

Gracey was now conducting combat operations against the Viet Minh. The new French commander, General Philippe Leclerc, arrived on 5 October 1945 but the 9e *Division d'infanterie Coloniale*<sup>20</sup> would not be able to conduct a relief-in-place until at least the end of November 1945.<sup>21</sup> Admiral Thierry D'Argenlieu, the new High Commissioner, was also installed in October 1945 that should have reduced some of Gracey's political responsibilities. However, this former Carmelite monk and loyal supporter of de Gaulle also believed that he had an evangelic responsibility in Indo-China, leading his staff to describe him as *the most brilliant mind of the 12th century*.<sup>22</sup>

### Fighting the Viet Minh

The Viet Minh viewed the 20th Indian Division as being complicit with the French *coup d'état* and launched attacks against the Division kidnapping, torturing and murdering off-duty Indian soldiers.<sup>23</sup> The Viet Minh also tried, with limited success, to subvert Japanese SEPs to fight with them against the British. Although the Division had under command the 16th Light Cavalry<sup>24</sup> and a squadron of Spitfires deployed in support, the final brigade<sup>25</sup> did not arrive until mid-October. Force levels would remain insufficient for the task. Gracey then made the controversial decision of extending the role of the Japanese beyond guarding key locations and used them in operations against the Viet Minh.<sup>26</sup>

18. Jeffreys and Rose p. 160.

19. Karnow, p. 149.

20. A French colonial infantry Division comprising or Moroccan and Senegalese troops..

21. Jeffreys and Rose p. 167.

22. Bayley and Harper p. 158.

23. Cross p. 22.

24. An Indian armoured regiment.

25. 32nd Indian Brigade.

26. Due to insufficient force levels in the Dutch East Indies, Japanese troops were re-armed conducted combined operations with the 5th Indian and 23rd Indian Divisions, participated in fierce fighting. .

Lack of Allied troops led to some trusted Japanese prisoners of war being armed for guard duty. Here a Japanese sentry salutes the occupants of a passing British jeep. © IWM (SE 6914)



27. Cross p. 11.

28. *Ibid.*

29. Jeffreys and Rose p. 176.

30. Marston p. 165.

31. Bayley and Harper p. 153.

32. Cross p. 20.

33. Marston p. 171.

34. Karnow, p. 153.

35. Marston p. 170.

36. Jeffreys and Rose p. 176.

Company Groups now began deploying to remote forward operating bases that were regularly attacked and had to be resupplied by armed convoys known as *Atlantics*.<sup>27</sup> The Viet Minh demonstrated that they were able to conduct well-planned, well-executed and sustained operations against mobile and static targets. Although local success was achieved by the British and ceasefires negotiated at various times, this became the character of operations long after the Division had left. John Cross was a Company Commander from 1/1 Gurkha Rifles and had two Japanese battalions under command. With only nine months commissioned service, he had the unusual experience of being very politely coached by two battle-hardened Japanese Commanding Officers.<sup>28</sup> By November the situation had been stabilised enough to re-start the disarming of the Japanese. However by January 1946, only 54,000 of the 300,000<sup>29</sup> Japanese SEPs had been disarmed because Japanese troops were still essential to operations against the Viet Minh.

As more French troops arrived in country, combined British, French and Japanese operations were conducted. While the 20th Indian Division established a good working relationship with the Japanese, the relationship between the French and the Japanese progressively deteriorated. The Japanese refused to see the French as victors and would not comply with French orders unless relayed through 20th Indian Division. On 5 November 1945, Gracey wrote to Slim:

*It is most necessary that I should continue to run the whole Japanese side of things. The Japanese will take anything from us but will do nothing for the French.*<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, French indiscipline and their attitude towards Indian and Gurkha troops dismayed both the soldier and his chain of command. Gracey was forced to write to Leclerc in the following terms:

*Our men of whatever colour are our friends ... They expect and deserve to be treated in every way as first class soldiers, and this treatment should be, and is, exactly the same as that of white troops.*<sup>31</sup>

On 30 November 1945, Mountbatten visited Saigon and received the surrender of Field Marshall Count

Hisaichi Terauchi, C-in-C Southern Army Command. The ceremony was deliberately low key, partly in recognition of Japanese sensitivities but also because Terauchi was still recovering from a stroke the previous year. There were other ceremonies across the country and many of the surrendered swords were complete with their provenance. John Cross received a 300 year old sword.<sup>32</sup> Ten days later, 1/1 Gurkha Rifles re-issued the swords to the Japanese to cut back undergrowth in potential ambush sites.

On 14 January 1946, a parade was conducted where Gracey presented to Leclerc the two swords which he had received during the Japanese surrender ceremony. Gracey formally handed over on 28 January 1946 and left Indo-China on the same day. The majority of Indian troops left during February and March and Japanese troops lined the route to say farewell when 9/12 Frontier Force Regiment departed from Cap St Jacques on 29 March 1946.<sup>33</sup> Elements of 2/8 Punjab Regiment remained until May 1946 to guard the British Mission and to complete the repatriation of the last Japanese.

## Conclusion

Ho Chi Minh was pragmatic about the situation at the beginning of 1946. With a long history of Chinese invasions of Vietnam and China's continued influence north of the 16th Parallel, he saw continued French rule across the country as the better option for the moment:

*The white man is finished in Asia ...but if the Chinese stay now, they will never leave. I prefer to sniff French s\*\*t for five years than Chinese s\*\*t for the rest of my life.*<sup>34</sup>

By contrast, Gracey was pessimistic about the future and wrote to Slim on 5 November 1945:

*The French troops are leaving a trail of destruction behind them which will result in such resentment that it will be progressively difficult for them to implement their new policy, and, I am convinced, will result in guerrilla war, increasing sabotage and arson as soon as we leave the country.*<sup>35</sup>

40 Indian and British soldiers were killed and 100 injured and it is estimated that 2,000 Viet Minh were killed during Operation MASTERDOM.<sup>36</sup> Hampered

by a poorly defined strategy and contradictory orders, Gracey was required to broker a political solution while conducting concurrent warfighting, counter-insurgency and stability operations with insufficient troops. Under-

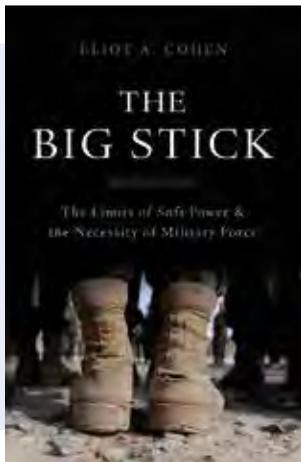
resourced and over-committed, 20th Indian Division was never going to succeed and was constantly on the back foot. Operation MASTERDOM's failure set the tone for a war that would continue until 1975.



*The aircraft carrier HMS WARRIOR evacuates 1,455 refugees from Haiphong, North Vietnam to Saigon during Operation PASSAGE TO FREEDOM, 4 September 1954. Refugees transfer from a French LCT landing craft to HMS WARRIOR at the port of Haiphong. © IWM (A 32999)*

## The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power & the Necessity of Military Force

Eliot A. Cohen



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ISBN 978-0465044726

**'The price of greatness is responsibility.'** In the opening pages of his new work Cohen turns to Winston Churchill to set his thesis that suggests that the U.S. must be prepared to use military force to ensure its security, the maintenance of its principles and to promote international stability. An abrogation of this charge could be of great cost to the U.S. and the international community.

*The Big Stick* explores the use of 'hard power' by analyzing the actions of the U.S. politically and militarily in the last 15 years; identifying emerging threats and how the U.S. may respond; and offering broad ideas as to how and when military force should be used.

Cohen is renowned for his ability to communicate both in verbal argument and through the written word. His previous

work, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime*, is a testament to this. This is no less the case with *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power & the Necessity of Military Force*.

The reader is treated to a first class analysis of why the U.S. is still required to 'step up to plate' to meet the challenges presented by the international order (or maybe disorder). Cohen terms this analysis - 'a study of the statecraft of hard power' - noting its fundamental importance; as military force remains 'the last argument of kings.'

The U.S. faces the ongoing challenge of reconciling its aims and interests with the demands of existing in a complex global environment. To achieve balance, the U.S. must employ all elements of its national power. Within this should be an explicit acknowledgement that the use of hard power remains a viable option in accomplishing the nation's strategic ends.

Cohen notes that this debate is apposite as there is a lack of confidence, both domestically and internationally, in the U.S. ability to use force well. He suggests that this is as a result of the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and the methods by which America is dealing with the Jihadi global threat. The world needs to restore its confidence in the ability of its greatest power to use that power wisely. The debate is pointed today as a seemingly isolationist U.S. president grapples with the more challenging demands beyond the domestic agenda.

Cohen notes that it would be unwise to draw absolute conclusions as to the utility of military power from the last 15

years of conflict. To do this would be to 'misunderstand the U.S. strategic challenge.' There are some interesting parallels between this proposition and that of General Sir Rupert Smith in his insightful work *The Utility of Force*.

Cohen's suggestion that the U.S. 'edge is diminishing' with the rise of other powers is both brave and honest. This recognition demands a response - that being a robust defence of the importance of U.S. military power and a requirement that this capability grows. No doubt Cohen is relieved by President Trump's commitment to invest.

The author remains a master of 'throwaway' yet insightful phrases. 'Military power is ultimately a reflection of the society and polity that produce it,' is but one. This statement goes to the heart of an enduring debate as to the relationship between the U.S. population, its military and its elected officials. Cohen does not explore this in any detail, but his recognition is evidence of the fact that this growing separation - between the electorate and that most grievous political decision of authorizing military force - should be of concern.

In exploring the global environment Cohen is clear that NATO remains a cornerstone for U.S. and global security. Equally, that the U.S. is the only nation that has the capacity to make the alliance credible. Two deductions fall out of this. Firstly, that the U.S. needs NATO and NATO the U.S. And secondly, even if members fail to contribute fairly, a responsibility falls to the U.S. to make the alliance work. Whilst this premise would not be well received in all the corridors of Capitol Hill, it is a truth.

China, Jihadism, dangerous states and the global commons are identified by Cohen as the wicked problems the U.S. now faces. Importantly, he posits that to counter each requires a different approach. This new approach should not be grounded in the theories of deterrent Cold War posturing nor necessarily through traditional diplomatic or military means. To meet the Jihadi problem the U.S. must first accept that this will be a long war then 'the challenge will be manageable.' In terms of dealing with dangerous states he produces an argument of which Sun Tzu would have been proud - utilizing subversion and exploiting weakness. As to the ungoverned space a strategy is required that does not focus on control but how to avoid a 'chaos' that could threaten U.S. interests.

It is from this that Cohen develops his most interesting argument. He suggests that the military and politicians of this age need to learn to think differently. He targets with some vehemence academic institutions and educational practices whose methods have resulted in leaders throwing around misunderstood terms to make complex problems seem 'more manageable.' Strategic concepts such as 'containment', 'exit strategy' and 'end states' he considers to be 'pixie dust' and 'dangerously misleading.' He has a point. As we enter a new chapter in global threats, one must ask - is there a requirement to review what is really meant by strategy and how this applies in the modern context of hard power? This sounds like a great research topic for any Staff College student.

Cohen concludes by offering a framework for considering when military

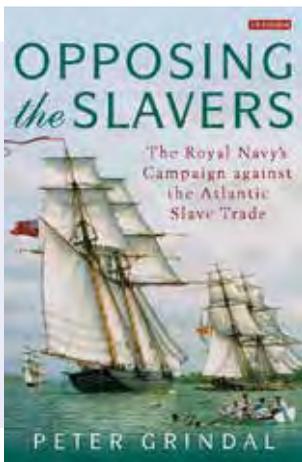
power should be used. He does this after attacking the 'stone tablets' of U.S. political - military doctrine, the Weinberger Rules. There are only a handful of scholars who would dare suggest that these rules 'fall apart' under examination. Cohen is one, and his analysis certainly stimulates thought. He also offers some recommendations. Rather than expand on them here I would recommend that the reader consider them, then reflect.

His suggestions are - 'not a checklist but a prudent set of reminders' - to consider when debating the use of force. And this is why this book is worthy of study. He is not providing answers but rather asking questions about the use and utility of America's 'Big Stick.' This is a discussion that cannot be ignored. History suggests the stick will be required again, and as such the U.S. needs to understand when and how it is to be wielded.

**Colonel Andrew Maskell, ABCANZ  
Armies' Program**

## Opposing The Slavers: The Royal Navy's Campaign against the Atlantic Slave Trade

Peter Grindal



*I.B. Tauris, (25 April 2016),  
Hdbk, pp 896, £75,  
ISBN-13: 978-1784533878*

**Many amateur historians see the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar as the decisive and concluding naval action of the Napoleonic era. Decisive it may have been, but France was still not finally defeated until ten years later during which time she still had some 70 ships of the line. However, by 1813 the Royal Navy was at its largest in terms of ships and manpower, which is fortunate as apart from blockading and constraining French shipping it had also to ensure adequate supplies reached the various British and Allied forces opposing Napoleon's armies. It is against this backdrop that the Royal Navy, the executive arm of the British state, took on another task, this one more onerous and against a far less honourable foe.**

On the 25 March 1807, in the face of a growing humanitarian campaign and after several centuries during which Great Britain had been in the forefront of the exploitation of slaves from West Africa, Parliament declared the trade in slaves illegal. Thus began a sustained campaign by the Foreign Office and the Royal Navy, a rather lonely, costly and essentially a thankless task against this evil trade, a campaign which was to last over sixty years and cost the Royal Navy dearly.

At the Vienna Congress of 1815 and thereafter, Britain made major diplomatic efforts to encourage all other nations to sign treaties abolishing the trade and whilst many nations signed treaties to that effect most were unwilling or unable to effectively impose the laws on their subjects. Furthermore, slavery itself did not become illegal in the British colonies until the 1830s and later elsewhere. With the developing sugar plantations in Brazil and Cuba there was a continuing need for slaves until about 1867 when the requirement effectively ceased.

The author Peter Grindal focuses primarily on the first 32 years of the campaign and would, I am sure, have maintained that focus through to the effective end of the Atlantic slave trade. But the loss at the time, by neglect, of almost all the Admiralty archives for the period 1840-55 and the disappearance of the relevant Vice-Admiralty court records rendered that impossible. However, this volume provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the campaign, a campaign during which the Royal Navy was never going to be able to stop the

trade, not least whilst open markets existed in the Americas. But what it did achieve was to force the slave traders to work harder to achieve their objectives, to invest greater sums in their modus operandi, to develop more complex and faster ships, to require more manpower and more confusing paper trails in their efforts to outwit the authorities.

The book is in three main parts, Part One sets the context and gives a brief history of two centuries of Atlantic slave trading before Britain's declaration in 1807. It describes in detail the seas and African coastline along which most of the slaving took place. Part Two entitled *The Suppression Campaign* examines in minute detail the Royal Navy's anti-slaving operations and activities in the Atlantic, the coasts of West Africa and the Americas - North, South and the Caribbean. Much of the information has been drawn from primary sources - reports and despatches written at the time by commanding officers, senior officers as well as from the records of the various courts dealing with slaving cases. The author served and commanded in the Royal Navy and he brings an authoritative, sympathetic and detailed understanding of the young officers and men who conducted the campaign.

Part Three summarises and assesses the events of the first 32 years and gives an overview and analysis of the latter half of the campaign.

Finally there is a comprehensive selection of appendices and a glossary, most helpful to the landlubbers amongst us. The appendix also includes a list of all Royal Navy vessels and those suspected slave vessels detained between 1807-39.

*Opposing the Slavers* is a thorough, detailed, comprehensive analysis of one of the hitherto least publicised campaigns undertaken by the Royal Navy. It is an outstanding achievement and testimony to the quality of those officers and seamen who served during this period, to their resourcefulness, with inadequate resources, frequently in the face of corrupt governments, fast and often violent adversaries, with tropical disease rife.

It is estimated that about 12 million slaves entered the Atlantic slave trade between the 16th and 19th centuries and about 1.5 million died on board ship due to the appalling conditions in transit. The author has exhaustively trawled the archives to produce an extraordinary book which is not only very informative but also highly readable. It is a lasting testimony to the efforts and sacrifices made by a small, dedicated group of servicemen to bring this trade to an end.

**Nick Smith**

## Hitler's Fremde Heere Ost: German Military Intelligence on the Eastern Front 1942-1945

Magnus Pahl (translated by Derik Hammond)



Helion Books, 2016, Hdbk, pp 410,  
Maps 28/4, £45.00,  
ISBN: 978-1-910777-08-4

**Many questions remain about the decision of Germany to attack the Soviet Union in 1941; one of the most compelling was how did the Germans underestimate so significantly the size and depth of the Soviet military and industrial capability? Accusatory fingers have traditionally been leveled at a failure on the part of the military intelligence organization to accurately predict this. Pahl's book addresses this and many other questions by analyzing the German military intelligence organization from the ground up; its strengths, weaknesses, operating environment (political and operational), leadership and mandate.**

There are two concurrent tracks that the author follows in his analysis. The first focuses upon the establishment and

development of the intelligence service within the German military and the State and its relationship with the RHSA (Reichssicherheitshauptamt – Senior Bureau of Reich Security) and the Abwehr. Compartmentalisation was one of the means by which Hitler maintained control over the Nazi state/war machine and intelligence was no exception. Thus it was that although given a mandate to undertake all forms of intelligence gathering including strategic, the FHO was never given the resources nor access to undertake the strategic level effectively; nor did the various elements of the intelligence services (state and Nazi party) cooperate willingly.

The second element that the author traces is the role of Major General Reinhard Gehlen in professionalizing and developing the effectiveness of the FHO. He commanded the organization from 1942 onwards and was instrumental in transitioning it from an ad hoc to a structured and far more proactive and engaged organization. Pahl clearly shows the role that Gehlan played in this as well as his vision of the future. Such was his impact that, as the author relates, he was able to not only maintain the integrity of his organization as the war effort collapsed, but was also able to ensure that the most effective members, gathered information and networks developed against the Soviets were able to be made available to the Americans and the German state following the surrender. That this was accomplished within weeks of the end of the war is testament to his vision, preparation and organisational skills.

This is a comprehensively researched

book that paints a picture for the reader of the deep competence as well as structural and ideological weakness of the wartime German state. It contains many lessons for modern intelligence organizations relating to development, interoperability and doctrinal requirements to meet a mandate. Pahl's work delves into both the complex structure as well as the doctrine related to the German intelligence services and the challenges that it faced. Within the German military there was a professional bias against the kind of clandestine work associated with spying and it was only with great difficulty that Gehlen was able to recruit and establish a formal training regime to meet the needs of the military. However, as Pahl clearly shows, while Gehlen was able to very effectively provide for the operational and tactical needs of the military, he was never able to overcome the bureaucratic friction inherent in the structure of the State.

Pahl's work provides an outstanding bibliography and notes section offering a plethora of additional reading material and sources. There is an error in the publication of the book where a map is reproduced in place of the FHO structure; however, this is minor when taken as a whole. It is also somewhat of a technical read more geared toward the ardent historian or those with an interest in the intelligence services during the war. Nevertheless, Pahl's work definitively answers the questions of how and why the Germans had such difficulty building an in-depth appreciation of the Soviets and is well worth the time to read.

**Maj Chris Buckham RCAF**

## Voices From The Past: Armistice 1918 - The Last Days of the First World War

Paul Kendall



Frontline Books, 2017, Barnsley, Hardback, Pp 388, £16.30 Amazon, ISBN: 978-1-84832-461-9.

**This book aims to provide an account of the events during the final days of the First World War using personal accounts, letters, official reports and minutes from cabinet meetings and Allied war conferences. In this endeavour it succeeds in a very readable, interesting, and informative way aided by its structure of four parts: the path to peace; final battles; armistice; aftermath. The text of 356 pages is extensively referenced.**

The book describes well the final military and political actions; the differing agendas of, and the outcome for, each nation; the wording of acceptable terms; how and when to disseminate this to troops still fighting trying to achieve military objectives if the armistice was not signed. The importance of the revolutionary fervour and political

upheaval in Germany influenced by the Russian Revolution and fuelled by years of privation lays bare how events sowed the seeds of National Socialism and the next world war.

There are accounts of close quarter combat in the final hours and details of the last soldiers to die, some after the armistice came into effect, which in retrospect seemed both poignant and tragic given all they had been through. It identifies the start of the flu pandemic, which eventually killed more individuals than the war managed, the challenged faced by demobilised troops, returning prisoners of war, disabled veterans, conscientious objectors, bereaved families, working women etc.

The book illuminates personal and societal expectations and problems for every level of the social order as well as industry and government by the sudden cessation of hostilities. It also covers the political and military machinations, narcissism and posturing that provide a fascinating intellectual backdrop, but the real pleasure of this book are the words of those who were there at the time.

For example, on the day of the Armistice Major Thomas Gowenlock wrote: ... *after the long months of intense strain, of keying themselves up to the daily mortal danger, of thinking always in terms of war and the enemy, the abrupt release from it all was physical and psychological agony ... all were bewildered by the sudden meaninglessness of their existence as soldiers ... their minds were numbed*

*by the shock of peace. The past consumed their whole consciousness. The present did not exist - and the future was inconceivable.*

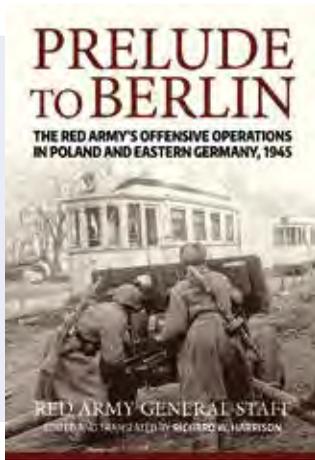
On the same day Sapper Granville Hampson wrote ... *millions who had been killed and literally slaughtered and you feel entitled to say for what? And the answer to that was a very thin one, was it worth it? Well of course the answer is no, it was not worth slaughtering all those human beings. ....*

Numerous books examine the antecedents and prosecution of war, this book helps us understand how the world addressed armistice and peace from 1918 onwards.

Ian Palmer

## Prelude To Berlin. The Red Army's Offensive Operations in Poland and Eastern Germany, 1945

Richard W. Harrison



Helion & Company Ltd., 2016,  
Hdbk, pp 636, £20 (Amazon),  
ISBN-13: 978-1910777169

**Edited and translated by one of America's foremost experts on the pre-WW2 history of the Red Army, this work – in one volume – is a translation of 7 original pieces of work, published in the USSR pre-1991, detailing various aspects of the military campaign waged by the Red Army prior to the final assault on Berlin in May 1945. As such, through no fault of Harrison, parts of this work were a lot easier to read than others – particularly the book's opening essay penned by Colonel-General S M Shtemenko, former CGS. On the whole, probably the first time for a non-Russian reading audience, the book makes available a wealth of particularly interesting and valuable data covering a wide range of aspects of the Red**

**Army's military operations on the Eastern Front in the final stages of the Second World War e.g. command, control, communications; operational planning; Party-political work in the units, etc. Thus, there is a great amount of both useful and interesting material not only for military historians, both professional and amateur, but also for the professional war-gamer-designer, keen to develop a more factually-based game of the battles on the Eastern Front in 1945.**

Since the work is a compilation of translated works, the editor/translator has no independent 'voice', there is no single, authorial theme running through the work. However, the book still displays a remarkable degree of uniformity both in style and approach and, when the reader becomes accustomed to that, it is a fairly straight-forward and easily understood work. As the Russian works were all written and published during the Soviet era, the influence of Communist ideology is very prevalent in the text. For instance, in the first few opening sentences of the work, describing the preparations undertaken by the Armies of the Second and Third Belorussian Fronts to re-take East Prussia, there is the following passage:

*'East Prussia was historically a seat and springboard for German imperialism in the East, a nest of Prussian Junkers and militarists, who long occupied leading posts in the government and army. In the military-geographical sense,*

*East Prussia is a broad springboard and favourable for attacking the USSR. This springboard has repeatedly been used by German imperialists for aggressive purposes in the east (for example, in 1914-1915 and 1941),'* (101).

In concluding the section on the East Prussian offensive operations, in similar voice, the work simply states:

*'The Red Army occupied all of East Prussia, having for all time eliminated the nest and outpost of German imperialism in the east and the nest of Prussian militarism...East Prussia ceased to exist,'* (270).

East Prussia is now better known to the world as Kaliningrad oblast' a formal part of the Russian Federation.

Much space is devoted to examining the work undertaken to enhance the fighting spirit of the ordinary soldier. Thus, in one passage, analysing the 'political support' for an actual operation, there is the following passage, outlining what steps were taken to increase the men's desire for revenge:

*'Meetings were widely held [amongst the rank-and-file] on the theme of 'Ruthlessly reeking revenge on the German-Fascist Aggressors for their criminal deeds.' The inculcation of hatred and revenge for the enemy was one of the most important tasks*

*of our agitation and propaganda work while preparing the troops for the offensive.' (176-177).*

Although the work is replete with statistics concerning expenditure of shells, medical support facilities, food and forage supplied, etc., one of the more interesting aspects of the work, as a whole, and one which betrays and underlines its Soviet-era roots, is the amount of space given in the original works - and here in translation - to the role of the Red Army's political apparatus, in general, and Party-political work, in particular, in the Red Army in the build-up to, and conduct of, live combat operations during the War. It is commonly said that the Second World War was a war of ideologies, a fight between the Western democracies against the Fascist dictatorships. In its own way, this book underlines the ideological nature of the War on the Eastern Front, in particular, the time and effort devoted by the Red Army to political work being carried out amongst combat troops, an area which, even after all this time, still awaits a comprehensive and detailed analysis in Western historiography of the war on the Eastern Front. This work helps to throw some light on this too long-neglected topic.

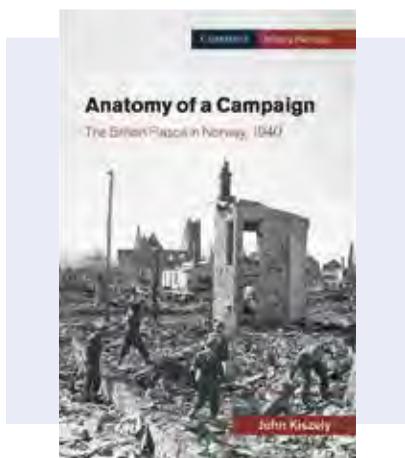
Although the work is a translation, it helps to show how, formally, the Soviet High Command in the post-War era, analysed and examined the experience of combat operations in the Second World War and the relevance of that experience in the post-War reconstruction of the Soviet Army. One can see, reading through the text, that the authors

were concerned to use the actual combat experience of WW2 as a tool for making a more combat effective fighting force ready, as and when, once more to defend the gains of the October 1917 Revolution. This book greatly assists in our understanding, not only of the Red Army's planning and conduct of military operations during the War, but it also provides the reader with an insight into the thinking of the Soviet General Staff in the immediate post-War period.

**Dr Steven J Main**  
**Russian Military Studies Office**

## Anatomy of a Campaign: The British Fiasco in Norway, 1940

John Kiszely



Cambridge University Press, 2017,  
Hdbk, pp 375, Price £34.99,  
ISBN-13: 978-1107194595

**Anyone who thought the Crimean War was the nadir of British ineptitude in war should study Sir John Kiszely's fine analysis of the Norwegian campaign of April-June 1940. As they do so they may find some echoes in Britain's recent as well as more distant past.**

By mid-December 1939, there was a groundswell of opposition to the Anglo-French strategy of strategic defence against Germany until such time as economic blockade had gravely weakened Germany's ability and will to continue the war. In the governments of both countries, there were demands that 'something must be done'. In Britain, these were led by Winston Churchill at the Admiralty. He believed that interrupting the export of Swedish iron ore via the port of Narvik would be a critical blow to Germany's war economy: indeed,

he was to champion not only an invasion of northern Norway but also of Sweden to seize the mines themselves. Riding roughshod over doubts and objections, the proposed violations of neutrality and the resultant consequences internationally, Churchill cajoled and bullied Prime Minister Chamberlain, the War Cabinet and the initially unenthusiastic Chiefs of Staff into falling in behind the scheme. The Soviet invasion of Finland added weight to the demand for intervention. In late March French prime minister Reynaud, was to propose an even more ludicrous project to cripple the German economy; the destruction of its ally Russia's Caucasian oil wells, a task which the Allied Air Forces said could be largely accomplished by 177 bombers (flying from unspecified bases).

There was much discussion and argument, lasting for about three months, within political and military circles about the scope and scale of the Scandinavian expedition. There was no questioning the wisdom of the policy, nor agreement on the strategy by which it was to be accomplished and the enemy's capabilities were hardly considered. The one voice of realism, that of the Joint Planning Staff, was ignored. Then, following the surrender of Finland, the operation was cancelled. That was not the end of the matter. Political pressure for action again built up and before long the Narvik operation was on again. Unfortunately for the British, the Germans struck first. On 9 April, they simultaneously invaded Denmark and Norway.

Apart from some initial work in

December, German planning took less than four weeks. It was done on a joint basis, grounded in good intelligence. It envisaged a concurrent seizure of key ports from Narvik to Oslo by forces tailored to the task and a rapid build up, especially in the air. Faced with overwhelming British naval superiority, it relied on surprise, boldness, speed, agility and inter-service cooperation within a simple and clear chain of command acting according to an effective doctrine. Pre-emption and surprise conferred the initiative and the Germans retained it throughout in a high tempo operation in which they enjoyed air superiority from beginning to end.

Throughout the seven week campaign, British reactions were belated and strategically inept. Their forces were inadequate both in strength and capability. They acted according to plans that were largely improvised. Having failed to contest southern Norway and lost the battle for the critical centre, they persisted with their efforts in the north long after the strategic rationale had disappeared. The campaign was only aborted as the evacuation from Dunkirk was beginning.

Such is a precis of events that John Kiszely sets out with admirable clarity and economy. His explanatory detail reveals the full awfulness of the blunders and incompetence that the British, especially the Army, displayed. While the catalogue of British failure and German success is interesting in and of itself, the more compelling aspect of the story is the exploration of why the contrast is so stark. It highlights the frequent and deleterious

effects that a period of peace, even a short one, often exercises on a democracy's ability to understand and wage war. And it explores an oft-repeated failure of the British military to adjust its ideas to the changing nature of war and to ensure that adequate leaders are at the helm of the three armed services.

The author adduces various reasons for defeat, most of them inexcusable. The essentially dubious nature of the policy objective was not challenged and the strategy for achieving it was ill-considered because it was formulated without taking into account either the friction inevitable in war or the fact that the (grossly underestimated) enemy had a vote too. Then there was the poor state of the armed forces after two decades of neglect. Worse, their inadequacies were not taken into account in decision-making. Worse still, the British never took a holistic view of the campaign, regarding it instead as a series of separate and discrete operations without prioritising clearly and consistently between them or even, until too late, creating a workable, properly staffed, chain of command. This latter problem existed at the highest level, with decisions left to an overly bureaucratic, ponderous system of committees that guaranteed that they would be arrived at late after much futile, often acrimonious discussion that exhausted their members.

Who was responsible for the shambles? The prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, did not understand military matters and did not choose a war cabinet that made up for his deficiency. Each of the chiefs was ignorant of evolving German capabilities and intent

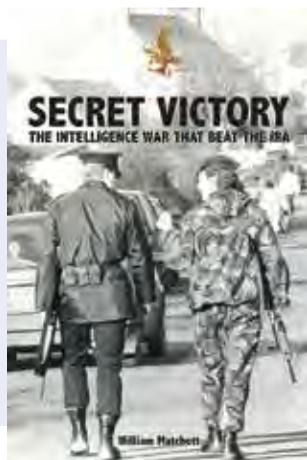
on pursuing their single service interests. There was a voice of informed opinion available in the form of the Joint Planning Staff. It was consistently ignored by the chiefs. Consequently, the government lacked sound and coherent advice based on understanding and foresight. Political and military decisions alike were based on a pervasive unreality.

John Kiszely subjects all these issues and more to penetrating and dispassionate analysis. In doing so he brings to bear the judgement of a soldier with both experience of combat and real understanding of the demands of strategy and the difficulties of working at the highest levels of the political/military machine. Moreover, he explores this catalogue of catastrophe with clarity, economy and refreshing flashes of sardonic humour. He has written something far more important than a mere history of a campaign, though it is excellent as such. This book is a warning to the current and future generations about the consequences of failure to understand the nature of contemporary war, of strategy or the enemy. His penultimate paragraph makes the point. 'In sum, as so often after a long period of peace, British military capacity, in its widest sense, faced the audit of war and was to be found wanting. The result was a fiasco - a textbook example of how not to plan and conduct a military campaign.' The British intervention in Norway was not only a sorry tale but also, as the author so tellingly points out, a cautionary one.

**Charles Dick**

## Secret Victory: The Intelligence War that Beat the IRA

William Matchett



*Hiskey Ltd, 2016, Pbk, pp 272,  
ISBN 98-1-5272-0205-4, £ 12.95*

**This is a good read and a most unusual account of the role of Special Branch (SB) in Northern Ireland throughout the 'Troubles' between 1969 and the present. It is based on 30 years spent by the author with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).**

In addition, Matchett spent time in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is the product of his PhD at Ulster University and credit to him for bringing this to the fore. It is, of necessity, a police officer's view and not surprisingly, other agencies of HMG, such as the Army, take second place, apart from our Special Forces. He does not ignore, however, the service and sacrifice of the 'green' Army, taking time to describe a number of incidents, such as the murder of Paratrooper James Borucki (19) in 1976. In a passage that will irk Irish republicans,

he writes: 'The British Army took a hammering and it is testament to their restraint and professionalism there was only one Bloody Sunday.'

Loughgall sets the scene, and then, gradually the story unfolds, with references to the Easter Rising, the Irish war of liberation 1919-21 and so on up to the present. Matchett points out that in creating its Human Intelligence cell, the military in the shape of the Force Reconnaissance Unit (FRU), was in direct contrast to the role of SB, which could and should have held all the cards. The author shows that in the very dark days of the early 1970s unprecedented levels of violence had overwhelmed the police and its SB. Civil policing at this stage was not up to the task. The Army needed to take the lead. This bought the police valuable time to reform and regroup. By 1976 and the introduction of Police Primacy, the Army's Human Intelligence element was no longer a valid premise, yet the FRU aka Joint Security Group (JSG) continued. This ensured an unhelpful division of crucial intelligence up to and including the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) of 1998.

Action on intelligence by the Army was equally vapid. The Army invented the Military Reaction Force (MRF), a disaster in every respect. However, in fairness it gradually improved and was transformed into the Intelligence and Security Group, Northern Ireland. This was itself transposed to the Joint Communications Unit Northern Ireland and now the Special Surveillance Regiment (SSR). Matchett sees Army Surveillance as a revolutionary development in the intelligence war against the IRA.

I was the MOD technical sponsor during the period 1986 and 2002 - some 6 years with the advice and support of Britain's top scientific bodies, together with a very 'fast stream' MOD procurement department, all of which delivered to the front line of counter terrorism in extremely fast turnaround between 'problem' and 'solution'.

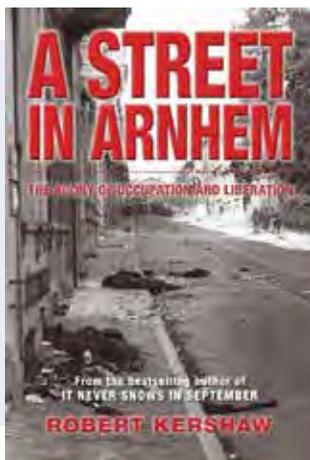
In the penultimate chapter, 'A Rigged Game,' the author illustrates the one-sided nature of historical inquiries since 1998. Retired police officers have lost confidence in such inquiries, regarding them as politicised witch-hunts uninterested in justice. Given recent revelations about soldiers being investigated for incidents in the Troubles, it is a timely warning to veterans.

My more personal involvement was in September 1996 when I took command of the South Armagh battle group, some 1,000 men and women from all parts of the Armed Forces. I paid a visit to the Regional Head of Special Branch and was surprised that he had no notion at all of my predecessor in command. My exact words were that 'I have 1,000 men and women under my military command - in effect, they are under your command. Tell us what you want or do not want, provided your 'order' is legal'. We got on rather well thenceforth, my 'duty' to be present at almost non-stop SB parties leading up to Xmas 1996. Yes, on behalf of 2 PARA, I drank quite a lot of whisky, ably assisted by my Intelligence Officer - the outcome was a sealed bond of trust, which was out with my own brigade command - sorry boys!

**David Benest OBE**

## A Street in Arnhem: The Agony of Occupation and Liberation

Robert Kershaw



Ian Allen, 2014, HDK, pp 368, ISBN 978-0-7110-3828-8, £16.00

**There are many very good accounts of all that took place in Arnhem in September 1944 and Bob Kershaw is no stranger to this wealth of output, having himself researched the German side of this immense battle back in 1994 published as *It Never Snows in September*. To this I would include accounts by Martin Middlebrook, John Frost and Geoffrey Powell as other very fine accounts. I would now suggest that *A Street in Arnhem* should now come top of this list, providing an overview of the battle from the three dimensions of British, German and Dutch memories. This is not, then, any attempt at any analysis of the arguments for and against this failed Allied venture, simply its consequences.**

The photographs were taken by both British, German and Dutch media

representatives and civilians of the time and the front cover features Sergeant Larry Ansell, of 6 Platoon, B Company of the 2nd Parachute Battalion, taken by a local, Sam Presser, encapsulating both the confidence of British airborne forces, surprise at the German reception and determination against impossible odds to continue, come what may.

The 'street' is the Urtechtseweg, a main west - east route into Arnhem and thus the main axis for the German troops during the blitzkrieg of 1940 and also in 1944 for the paratroops of 1st Airborne Division. They were attempting to join John Frost's 2nd Parachute Battalion, which had seized the main road bridge in the centre of Arnhem, employing a riverside axis on minor roads and thus avoiding the main German defensive blocking position that was rapidly established. One is bound to wonder how if Frost could do this, then why not the other two battalions of 1st Parachute Brigade? But this was not the case, with German reinforcements quickly making the northern routes impassable. Eventually, HQ 1st Airborne Division, much depleted, withdrew to the Hartenstein Hotel, where it continued to 'hold' the Oosterbeek perimeter for several days. The arrival of the Polish parachute brigade to the south of the main road bridge most certainly 'unhinged' the German defenders, thus extending the survival of the 'cauldron' and begs the question as to how and why this much closer DZ was not used on the first day? The Dutch civilians caught between the opposing forces had little option other than to seek shelter in the cellars of some imposing mansions, themselves 'trashed' so as to provide near

perfect defensive 'fortresses', much to the advantage of the British defenders and death traps for the advancing Germans.

The human dimension to all that followed is really the focus of this account. The psychological impact of intense and sustained combat was ever present. The strict code of civilian behaviour was gradually eroded as families were forced to share in the most basic of sanitary conditions. Most young men involved had never experienced combat of such intensity as this. Calls for surrender were met with rude insults. 1st Airborne Division simply held out, though with ever increasing casualties and eventually, the realisation that 30 Corps was unable to relieve them. Perhaps most poignant was the mood of the Dutch civilians, for a while believing that Liberation had finally come, only then to realise that it was to be short lived, with a harsh winter to follow, which included appalling treatment by the Germans in retaliation.

This is military and social history of warfare at its very best. Bob Kershaw has examined all sides of these intense, momentous short-lived events and is able to form judicious opinions. I much hope that the outcome might be a film, a 'drama-documentary' that could replace the existing mythology of 'A Bridge Too Far' with a more human account of what it was to be in Arnhem in September 1944.

David Benest



## **British Army Review**

The Review is intended to provide a forum for the discussion of all matters of professional interest to the soldier. Articles and letters are invited from all ranks and from others having a special knowledge of military affairs. Controversy is the lifeblood of any professional journal designed to promote thought and discussion and is therefore welcomed. Descriptions of recent or current operations and imaginative ideas on doctrine, tactics, training or equipment are of particular interest.

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