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THE US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
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Contemporary Strategy & Landpower

In Focus: Senior Leader Dissent

Conrad C. Crane

Two Sides of COIN

*M. Chris Mason
Darren Colby*

Allies and Partners

*Jean-Yves Haine and Cynthia Salloum
Tongfi Kim and Luis Simón*

Strategy and Doctrine

*Austin C. Doctor and James I. Walsh
Ann Mezzell and J. Wesley Hutto
Robert S. Ehlers Jr. and Patrick Blannin*



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THE US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
QUARTERLY
PARAMETERS

Vol. 51 No. 2 • Summer 2021

5 From the Editor in Chief

FEATURES

In Focus: Senior Leader Dissent

**7 Matthew Ridgway and the Value
of Persistent Dissent**

Conrad C. Crane

Two Sides of COIN

19 COIN Doctrine Is Wrong

M. Chris Mason

**35 Toward Successful COIN:
Shining Path's Decline**

Darren Colby

Allies and Partners

**47 Europe: A Strategy for a
Regional and Middle Power**

Jean-Yves Haine and
Cynthia Salloum

**61 Greater Security Cooperation: US
Allies in Europe and East Asia**

Tongfi Kim and
Luis Simón

Strategy and Doctrine

**73 The Coercive Logic of
Militant Drone Use**

Austin C. Doctor and
James I. Walsh

**85 JDN 2-19: Hitting the Target
but Missing the Mark**

Ann Mezzell and
J. Wesley Hutto

**97 Integrated Planning and
Campaigning for Complex Problems**

Robert S. Ehlers Jr. and
Patrick Blannin

REVIEW AND REPLY

111 On "The Politics of Oath-Taking"

David J. Wasserstein and
Jimmie R. Montgomery

114 The Author Replies

Marybeth P. Ulrich

BOOK REVIEWS

Armed Forces and Society

117 *The Sexual Economy of War: Discipline and Desire in the US Army*

By Andrew Byers

Reviewed by Jennifer Mittelstadt

Irregular Warfare

121 *The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts of the Islamic State Movement*

By Haroro J. Ingram, Craig Whiteside,
and Charlie Winter

Reviewed by Robert J. Bunker

123 *Small Arms: Children and Terrorism*

By Mia Bloom with John Horgan

Reviewed by José de Arimatéia da Cruz

125 *Niche Wars: Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001–2014*

Edited by John Blaxland, Marcus Fielding,
and Thea Gellerfy

Reviewed by Russell W. Glenn

127 *Cities at War: Global Insecurity and Urban Resistance*

Edited by Mary Kaldor and Saskia Sassen

Reviewed by John P. Sullivan

Military History

131 *Brotherhood in Combat: How African Americans Found Equality in Korea and Vietnam*

By Jeremy P. Maxwell

Reviewed by Douglas Bristol Jr.

133 *Women of Empire: Nineteenth-Century Army Officers' Wives in India and the U.S. West*

By Verity McInnis

Reviewed by Jody M. Prescott

135 *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*

By Mary Beth Norton

Reviewed by Gerald J. Krieger

Regional Studies

137 *The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood*

By Shuja Nawaz

Reviewed by James P. Farwell

139 *China's Western Horizon: Beijing and the New Geopolitics of Eurasia*

By Daniel S. Markey

Reviewed by Andrew Scobell

141 *Moscow Rules: What Drives Russia to Confront the West*

By Keir Giles

Reviewed by Jake Shelton

Strategic Leadership

143 *The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy versus Autocracy from the Ancient World to the U.S. and China*

By Matthew Kroenig

Reviewed by Gerald J. Krieger

145 *The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush's Decision to Surge in Iraq*

Edited by Timothy Andrews Sayle,

Jeffrey A. Engel, Hal Brands, and

William Inboden

Reviewed by Steven Metz

Strategy

147 *Adaptation under Fire: How Militaries Change in Wartime*

By David Barno and Nora Bensahel

Reviewed by Zachary Griffiths

149 *Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World*

By Fareed Zakaria

Reviewed by Gerald J. Krieger

*Technology and War***153 Killer Apps: War, Media, Machine**

By Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves

Reviewed by Zac Rogers

ANNOUNCEMENT**Contemporary Strategy and Landpower Essay Award**

The annual Contemporary Strategy and Landpower Essay Award, formerly the Elihu Root Prize, recognizes and rewards authors outside the US Army War College for the most significant contributions on contemporary strategy and landpower in a volume of the US Army War College Quarterly, *Parameters*. The journal's editorial board selects winners based upon the article's analytical depth and rigor. The Contemporary Strategy and Landpower Essay Award is made possible by the generous support of the US Army War College Foundation.

WINNERS FOR VOLUME YEAR 2020**First Place**

Nina Jankowicz and Henry Collis

"Enduring Information Vigilance: Government after COVID-19"

Parameters 50, no. 3 (Autumn 2020): 17–32**Second Place**

Jason Healey

"A Bizarre Pair: Counterinsurgency Lessons for Cyber Conflict"

Parameters 50, no. 3 (Autumn 2020): 85–94**Third Place**

Ryan J. Scott, Odelle J. Means, and Patricia M. Shields

"The COVID-19 Enemy Is Still Advancing"

Parameters 50, no. 3 (Autumn 2020): 33–44

From the Editor in Chief

Our Summer issue's *In Focus: Senior Leader Dissent* features "Matthew Ridgway and the Value of Persistent Dissent." Author Conrad Crane contends there are times, be they rare, when senior leaders must strongly object to strategic or operational courses of action which they believe may put too much of the nation's blood and treasure at risk.

Our first forum, entitled *Two Sides of COIN*, offers opposing contributions to the ongoing debate on the efficacy of counterinsurgency approaches. In "COIN Doctrine is Wrong," Chris Mason maintains the central premises of counterinsurgency doctrine are flawed—based on evidence he deems quantifiable. In contrast, Darren Colby's "Toward Successful COIN: Shining Path's Decline" suggests some elements of counterinsurgency theories have indeed proven effective in Peru.

This issue's second forum, *Allies and Partners*, offers two essays. In "Europe: A Strategy for a Regional and Middle Power," Jean-Yves Haine and Cynthia Salloum discuss a way ahead for Europe post-COVID-19; Europeans must choose cohesion over inaction, policy over process, and regional imperatives over global ambitions. In "Greater Security Cooperation: US Allies in Europe and East Asia," Tongfi Kim and Luis Simón highlight opportunities for better cooperation between two geographically distant US alliance networks—which in turn would help address the threat of greater Sino-Russian coordination.

The third forum for this issue, *Strategy and Doctrine*, contains three perspectives. In "The Coercive Logic of Militant Drone Use," Austin Doctor and James Walsh argue the increased use of drones by militant groups does not add appreciably to the coercive power of such groups. In "JDN 2-19: Hitting the Target but Missing the Mark," Ann Mezzell and J. Wesley Hutto warn recent changes in Joint doctrine are distorting the logic of military strategy and thus opening the door to future ineffectiveness. In "Integrated Planning and Campaigning for Complex Problems," Robert Ehlers and Patrick Blannin suggest inefficiencies in traditional planning and campaigning can be rectified through new organizational structures and processes. ~AJE

Matthew Ridgway and the Value of Persistent Dissent

Conrad C. Crane

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ABSTRACT: Army General Matthew Ridgway's actions throughout his career provide a valuable example of the appropriate time and place for serious dissent by military leaders. Ridgway demonstrated the importance of selectively and pragmatically expressing open disagreement in response to operational decisions a military leader deems unnecessarily risk American lives and economic resources.

An article in a recent edition of *Parameters* described General Matthew Ridgway as a model of the traditional American approach to military advice to civilian authorities, an officer who provided unquestioning support for the final national security decisions of his civilian leadership. Ridgway's memoir states his civilian superiors: "could expect fearless and forthright expressions of honest, objective professional opinion up to the moment when they themselves, the civilian commanders, announced their decisions. Thereafter, they could expect completely loyal and diligent execution of those decisions."¹ In the memoir paragraph before, however, Ridgway notes: "civilian authorities must scrupulously respect the integrity, the intellectual honesty, of its officer corps. Any effort to force unanimity of view, to compel adherence to some political-military 'party line' against the honestly expressed views of responsible officers . . . is a pernicious practice which jeopardizes rather than protects the integrity of the military profession."²

Ridgway elaborated on this position in later pages. "I learned early in my career that it is not enough, when great issues are involved, to express your views verbally and let it go at that. It is necessary to put them down in writing, over your signature. In that way they become part of the historical record."³ Ridgway believed civilian leaders had the authority to disagree with military advice and take a different course, but he also believed they should bear the responsibility for any outcomes. He condemned "a deliberate effort to soothe and lull the public by placing responsibility where it did not rest, by conveying the false impression that there was unanimous agreement between the civilian authorities and their military advisers."⁴

1. John C. Binkley, "Revisiting the 2006 Revolt of the Generals," *Parameters* 50, no 1 (Spring 2020): 25, <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol50/iss1/1/>.

2. Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway as Told to Harold H. Martin* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 270.

3. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 287.

4. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 288.

Dr. Conrad C. Crane, chief of analysis and research at the Army Heritage and Education Center, is the author of *American Airpower Strategy in World War II: Bombs, Cities, Civilians, and Oil* (2016).

Here Ridgway was specifically referring to his open disagreements with the Eisenhower administration on its New Look defense policies, which led to his tenure as chief of staff of the Army lasting only two years. As he also stated in his memoir, “Under no circumstances, regardless of pressures from whatever source or motive, should the professional military man yield, or compromise his judgment for other than convincing military reasons.”⁵

He applied similar logic to his treatment of directives from his military superiors. In 1966, Ridgway gave an address at the US Army Command and General Staff College in which he counseled the assembly about opposition to orders. He acknowledged military services properly

deal harshly . . . with failure to carry out orders in battle. . . . Yet when faced with different situations from those anticipated, as well as in the transition from plans to orders, there sometimes comes the challenge to one’s conscience, the compelling urge to oppose foolhardy operations before it is too late, before the orders are issued and lives are needlessly thrown away.⁶

Ridgway asserted the hardest decisions to make were “those involved in speaking your mind about some harebrained scheme which proposes to commit troops to action under conditions where failure seems almost certain, and the only results will be the needless sacrifice of priceless lives. . . . For a battle commander to ever condone the unnecessary sacrifice of his men is inexcusable.”⁷ Quoting General George C. Marshall, he observed, “‘It is hard to get men to do this, for this is when you lay your career, perhaps your commission, on the line.’”⁸ For Ridgway, it did not matter if the “harebrained scheme” came from civilian or military leaders.

In his 1966 address, Ridgway cited two examples where he battled to stop “needless sacrifice[s]” while commanding the 82nd Airborne Division in Italy. In one case, he opposed a proposed attack by his division across the Volturno River, over open ground with enemy fire from both flanks and the front, which he considered a suicide mission with only a small chance of success. He initially discussed his opposition with General Lucien Truscott of the 3rd Infantry Division, who agreed with Ridgway’s assessment. Following that discussion, Ridgway took his complaints to his corps commander, and then to the Army commander, before finally getting the operation cancelled.⁹

And opposition based on best military judgment did not cease just because a decision had been made to execute the operation. In the second example, Ridgway’s division received orders to drop on Rome in September 1943 for Operation Giant II, in support of landings in Salerno. General Sir Harold Alexander, 15th Army Group commander, told Ridgway he should expect ground forces to link up with him “in

5. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 272.

6. Matthew B. Ridgway, “Leadership,” *Military Review* 46, no. 10 (October 1966): 44–45.

7. Ridgway, “Leadership,” 45.

8. Ridgway, “Leadership,” 45.

9. Ridgway, “Leadership,” 45.

three days—five at the most.”¹⁰ Assumptions included light opposition despite six German divisions near the city, and help from the Italians who were ready to sever their alliance with Germany.

Ridgway was appalled. The mission would place his division outside the range of supporting fighters and dive-bombers. Moreover, he knew ground forces would never reach the city in time to save his soldiers from a dreadful mauling. While his troops continued to prepare for the operation, Ridgway mounted his campaign to stop it. He reached out to a strong proponent of the operation, General Walter Bedell Smith, then chief of staff for the theater commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Bedell Smith recommended Ridgway approach Alexander. While he did not cancel the drop, Alexander did approve the dispatch of a clandestine delegation, led by Ridgway’s artillery commander Brigadier General Maxwell Taylor, to Rome to assess Italian preparations. Taylor was horrified by what he found and sent four cables supporting cancelling the operation, the last one mere hours before the first aircraft were to take off.¹¹

By this time, Eisenhower had received further intelligence about the lack of Italian capability and readiness, and after Taylor’s last message, Alexander sent an order to Ridgway cancelling Operation Giant II. But no acknowledgment was received. Eisenhower ordered Brigadier General Lyman Lemnitzer, Alexander’s American deputy, to deliver the cancellation order personally to Ridgway by air.

Sixty-two transports were already circling the airfield at Licata when Lemnitzer arrived, and he started frantically shooting flares to get everyone’s attention. The takeoffs stopped, Lemnitzer landed, and he found Ridgway wearing his parachute, preparing to climb into a C-47. Ridgway had spent the day reconciling himself to an operation that would destroy his division, after his failed attempts to dissuade his leadership from this course of action. Immediately, Ridgway recalled paratroopers in the air, while the rest were returned to their bivouacs. “Exhausted and relieved, Ridgway stumbled into a tent where one of his officers sat trembling on a cot. Ridgway poured two drinks from a whiskey bottle, and as darkness fell and calm again enveloped Licata South, they sat slumped together, silent but for the sound of their weeping.”¹²

Limits of Airpower

In his memoir, Ridgway expresses great pride in contributing to another of “that list of tragic accidents that fortunately never happened,” namely, an American intervention to bail out the French in Indochina in 1954, initially with major air attacks.¹³ The series of events that led to the

10. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 81.

11. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 80–82; and D. K. R. Crosswell, *Beetle: The Life of General Walter Bedell Smith*, American Warrior Series (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 502–3.

12. Crosswell, *Beetle*, 504; and Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2007), 194–95.

13. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 278.

death of Operation Vulture began in April 1951 when General Douglas MacArthur was relieved of his command of UN forces in Korea. Though UN forces and their airpower had been successful initially in destroying most of the North Korean People's Army and reaching the Yalu River, massive Communist Chinese intervention had driven MacArthur's command back down the peninsula in November and December. Only in February had the rejuvenated Eighth Army under Ridgway begun to regain the initiative.

By April, public anxiety was high in the United States. Public opinion polls revealed most Americans favored air attacks on Manchuria, and a third of those polled advocated general war with China. President Harry Truman ordered Strategic Air Command bombers with atomic weapons to Okinawa on April 6, 1951, in response to a buildup of Soviet forces in the Far East and ominous Chinese air and ground preparations for their spring offensive. MacArthur's firing raised fears the Communists might escalate the war to take advantage of opportunities created by the change in UN command to Ridgway. But in May the new commander's forces stopped the massive Chinese fifth-phase offensive and began a series of vigorous counterattacks. Ridgway's slow but inexorable advance was only stopped by the opening of armistice negotiations in July.¹⁴

After replacing MacArthur and stopping the Communist advance, Ridgway faced the challenge of negotiating with a difficult enemy while his military options for leverage at the peace table were limited. Once battle lines stabilized along an entrenched front and armistice talks began, he determined airpower would be his best option to exert coercive military pressure on the enemy. On July 13, 1951, he instructed his Far East Air Forces (FEAF) and naval air units, "desire action during this period of negotiations to exploit full capabilities of air power to reap maximum benefit of our ability to punish enemy wherever he may be in [Korea]."¹⁵

Though Ridgway believed ratcheting up bombing would produce results at the peace talks, he still had to deal with American leaders in Washington who did not want to escalate the war any further. They were particularly sensitive about attacks on major North Korean cities. On July 21, Ridgway informed the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) that a key part of his plan "for unrelenting pressure on Communist forces" was "an all out air strike on Pyongyang" with 140 medium and light bombers and 230 fighters, to be executed on the first clear day after July 24. This operation would "take advantage of the accelerated buildup

14. Mark Andrew O'Neill, "The Other Side of the Yalu: Soviet Pilots in the Korean War, Phase One, 1 November 1950–12 April 1951," (PhD diss., Florida State University, 1996), 273–74; Roger Dingman, "Atomic Diplomacy during the Korean War," *International Security* 13, no. 3 (Winter 1988–1989): 69–79; Roger M. Anders, "The Atomic Bomb and the Korean War: Gordon Dean and the Issue of Civilian Control," *Military Affairs* 52, no. 1 (January 1988): 1–3; and Conrad C. Crane, "Killing Vultures, Containing Communism, and Venting Pressure: International Impacts of the Korean War," *Annual War History Research Report* 10, no. 3 (2007): 90.

15. Ridgway to Hickey, message, UNC-071, July 13, 1951, file K720.1622, 1950–51, Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), Maxwell Air Force Base, AL.

of supplies and personnel” in the area, “strike a devastating blow at the North Korean capital,” and make up for the many recent sorties canceled by bad weather.¹⁶

Ridgway’s concerns about bad weather proved well founded. When the all-out attack on Pyongyang was finally mounted on July 30 after approval by the JCS, deteriorating weather conditions forced the diversion of light and medium bombers to secondary targets, while smoke and cloud cover made any assessment of the 620 fighter and fighter-bomber sorties very difficult. Results were deemed indecisive, so another full-scale assault on the capital by FEAF Bomber Command was carried out on August 14, 1951. Two Strategic Air Command B-29 wings had to use radar to deliver bombs through cloud cover. Ridgway was disappointed with the poor results and collateral civilian casualties, instructing FEAF to wait for excellent weather for any more major raids.¹⁷

Encouraged by his success in gaining JCS permission to bomb Pyongyang, Ridgway revisited a proposed attack of the port of Rashin, a city close to the Soviet border. Aerial reconnaissance revealed an extensive buildup of materiel and supplies that could be funneled south through the highway and rail complex there. In reply to queries about his specific plans, Ridgway assured the Joint Chiefs that he would not violate the border with air strikes.

In this endeavor, Ridgway had the strong support of the US Air Force Air Staff who thought the raids would hamper enemy supply buildup and pressure Communist negotiators at the armistice talks by proving “all of their sanctuaries [were] not privileged.”¹⁸ Rashin was also considered “the last major profitable strategic target in Korea.”¹⁹ The Air Staff discounted diplomatic concerns because the Soviets had not responded to similar attacks. The Joint Chiefs agreed and obtained presidential approval to authorize the bombing raid. Naval aircraft provided cover for 35 B-29s who pummeled the port with 300 tons of bombs on August 25 in good weather. No follow-up raids were necessary.²⁰

16. CINCFE to Subordinate Commands, message, CX 60410, April 19, 1951, section 45; CINCFE to Subordinate Commands, message, C 61367, April 30, 1951, section 46, box 31; CINCFE to Subordinate Commands, message, C 67474, July 21, 1951, section 54, box 33, geographic file 1951–53, 383.21 Korea (3-19-45), record group 218, National Archives II, College Park, MD; Ridgway to Hickey, message, UNC-071, July 13, 1951; and Crane, “Killing Vultures,” 91–92.

17. CINCFE to JCS, message, C 68064, July 31, 1951, box 1, incoming messages, May 29, 1950–August 3, 1951, RG 218; Terrill to Power, letter, August 16, 1951, file B-12789, box B198, Curtis LeMay Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; Matthew B. Ridgway, notes on conference with General Weyland, August 30, 1951, folder, special file April 1951–January 1952, Matthew B. Ridgway Papers, US Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC), Carlisle, PA.

18. Joseph Smith to General Vandenberg, memorandum, “Removal of Restriction against Attacks on Najin (Rashin),” file OPD 381 Korea (May 9, 1947), section 12, box 894, RG 341.

19. Joseph Smith to General Vandenberg, memorandum (May 9, 1947).

20. JCS 1776/244 with enclosures, “Removal of Restriction Against Attacks on Najin (Rashin),” August 10, 1951, section 57, box 33, geographic file 1951–53, 383.21 Korea (3-19-45), RG 218; Joseph Smith to General Vandenberg, memorandum (May 9, 1947); *United States Air Force Operations in the Korean Conflict, 1 November 1950–30 June 1952*, US Air Force Historical Study No. 72 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: US Air Force Historical Division, Air University, July 1, 1955), 145.

Ultimately, the increased use of airpower had no impact on the armistice talks. Even after his attempts to influence negotiations that summer, Ridgway's air priorities remained focused on coercing through interdiction, a difficult task in Korea in 1951, but the best he thought he could accomplish with the limitations on military operations imposed by the Joint Chiefs. The FEAF did not have enough aircraft or the proper technology to interdict at night, while the enemy had plenty of labor to repair damage to communication lines.²¹ Further, the reduced military activity during the armistice negotiations meant the Communist adversaries required fewer supplies.

UN air forces did their best to meet Ridgway's expectations. With US Navy air support, FEAF tried three different programs in 1951 to interdict the logistics of Communist armies, yet they all failed, and for different reasons. The first, Interdiction Plan No. 4, targeted North Korean rail lines but was too ambitious. Bomber Command successfully closed 27 of 39 assigned marshalling yards and took out 48 of 60 targeted bridges, but B-29 losses were heavy, and the rail system proved too resilient to be paralyzed effectively.

When the massive spring offensives showed the inadequacies of that approach, FEAF shifted to Operation Strangle, focusing primarily on the North Korean road network. US Navy, Marine, and Air Force aircraft were assigned different sectors to bomb. They cratered roads, dispersed tetrahedral tacks to destroy tires, and dropped delayed action bombs to deter repair crews, with more disappointing results. The enemy bypassed blockages, accepted casualties to complete repairs, and exploited the lack of effective UN night bombing capability by moving after dark. The FEAF came to regret the name of the operation, as it raised exorbitant expectations.

In August 1951, still another campaign was initiated, the Rail Interdiction Program, though many Air Force officers and the press still referred to it as Strangle. This effort was better organized and more effective. Carrier aircraft targeted east coast rail lines while Bomber Command attacked bridges. Swarming FEAF fighter bombers cut lines all over North Korea. Some rail lines were abandoned as enemy repair crews could not keep up with the pace of destruction. Far East Air Forces planners began to believe that limited Communist truck resources might force the enemy to pull back from its positions along the 38th parallel.²²

But that was not to be, as enemy countermeasures, such as building duplicate bridges at key crossing points and caching whole bridge

21. Eduard Mark, *Aerial Interdiction: Air Power and the Land Battle in Three American Wars* (Washington, DC: Center for Air Force History, 1994), 289–319.

22. Mark, *Aerial Interdiction*; O'Neill, "The Other Side," 281–85; US Pacific Fleet Commander in Chief, *Interim Third Evaluation Report, 1 May–31 December 1951* (Washington, DC: US Naval Historical Center), 10-45–10-46; HQ Far East Air Forces (FEAF), *FEAF Report on the Korean War, 25 June 1950–27 July 1953*, book 1, 77, file K720.04D, AFHRA; "The Aerial War during Operation Strangle," vol. 1, 12–17; and "Notes on Use of the Term 'Operation Strangle,'" vol. 3, appendix 2, in *History of the Fifth Air Force, 1 July–31 December 1951*, file K730.01, AFHRA.

sections for quick repairs, again turned the tide. Intelligence reports estimated as many as 500,000 soldiers and civilians maintained transportation routes. Increased antiaircraft defenses appeared around key targets, and enemy MiG jet fighters operating from Manchuria became more aggressive. By September 1951, Soviet and Chinese MiGs outnumbered F-86 Sabres in the theater 500 to 90. The enemy interceptors drove back FEAF fighter-bombers, shooting down enough B-29s by October to force Bomber Command from the daytime skies. These actions further reduced Ridgway's ability to maintain pressure effectively on enemy forces and supply lines and thus to influence negotiations.²³

Ultimately, Ridgway's hopes he could use airpower to prevent the enemy from building up supplies proved false, and he became disillusioned with Air Force capability claims. He once told his air commanders, "If all the enemy trucks you report as having destroyed during the past ten days or so were actually kills, then there would not be a truck left in all of Asia."²⁴

Further, the ineffectiveness of interdiction campaigns was not the only reason Ridgway disagreed strongly with Air Force claims of its decisive role in the Korean War. He noted ground forces accounted for 97 percent of battle casualties, and their performance "determined the success or failure of the United Nations effort, which in turn determined the course of United States and United Nations policy."²⁵ In his Korean War memoirs, he gave the Air Force credit for its essential support to ground operations and saving UN forces from disaster early in the war, but he also cautioned against expecting "miracles of interdiction" from airpower in future conflicts.²⁶

As the months passed, Ridgway's frustration with the armistice talks persisted. His battles with the Joint Chiefs over the bombing of Rashin and Pyongyang and the ineffectiveness of the interdiction campaigns had tempered Ridgway's initial determination to use airpower to coerce enemy negotiators. The Communist armies twice broke off talks, citing air attacks on the site of the talks—once due to apparently faked evidence and once because of an actual UN bombing error—and Ridgway was thereby reluctant to raise the stakes and risk further stalled negotiations. Accordingly, he would not approve orders to expand target sets to include hydroelectric dams along the Yalu River, courses of action his successor, General Mark Clark, would pursue.

23. William F. Dean, *General Dean's Story* (New York: Viking Press, 1954), 272–73; J. Lawton Collins, *War in Peacetime: The History and Lessons of Korea* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 313; Mark, *Aerial Interdiction*, 312–14; Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950–1953* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 176–81; and Brigadier General Joe Kelly to LeMay, letters, October 29, 1971 and November 7, 1951, file FEAF 1, box 65, Curtis LeMay Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

24. M. B. Ridgway to Colonel Paul Carter, letter, December 15, 1976, folder C, 1964–1983, post retirement A–G, Matthew B. Ridgway Papers, USAHEC.

25. Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War*, repr. (New York: Da Capo, 1986), viii.

26. Mark, *Aerial Interdiction*; M. B. Ridgway to Colonel Paul Carter, letter, December 15, 1976; and Ridgway, *Korean War*, 191, 244.

In May 1952 Ridgway left the Far East to become Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He retained a strong skepticism about the utility of airpower alone that would have a significant impact on his future actions.²⁷

As chief of staff of the Army from 1953–55, Ridgway’s disillusionment with the capabilities of airpower in limited war was evident in his attitudes about New Look defense policies favoring the Air Force and possible intervention in Indochina to assist the French. Upon learning the Eisenhower administration was considering air intervention alone to save the beleaguered French garrison at Dien Bien Phu and help them defeat the Viet Minh, he expressed fears the United States had already forgotten the “bitter lesson” from Korea “that air and naval power alone cannot win a war and that inadequate ground forces cannot win one either.”²⁸ He was determined to avoid “making that same tragic error” in Indochina.²⁹

Killing the Vulture

Planning for Operation Vulture (Vautour) began in earnest in mid-April 1954. On a routine liaison visit to Vietnam, FEAF commander General Earle Partridge was informed by the French that the aerial operation to save Dien Bien Phu had been cleared through diplomatic channels. Partridge had received no information regarding the approval of the operation; nonetheless, he ordered the chief of FEAF Bomber Command, Brigadier General Joseph Caldera, to prepare a contingency plan. Bomber Command still had its wartime contingent of B-29s for a mass strike, but Caldera foresaw many problems with the operation when he flew to Vietnam to confer with the French, including the fact there were “no true B-29 targets” in the area, and bad monsoon weather necessitated the use of radar guidance systems the French did not possess.³⁰

Opposition to Vulture, however, would soon obviate the need for such planning. Ridgway led the effort against it in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, galvanized by the fact that the chairman, Admiral Arthur Radford, supported the mission. Radford’s high-handed tactics to coerce Ridgway to accede to New Look policies had poisoned relations between the two men. Ridgway considered the New Look “a misguided policy that endangered the nation’s security.”³¹ He forthrightly expressed

27. Ridgway, *Korean War*, 200, 202, 244.

28. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 277.

29. Ridgway, *Korean War*, viii; Ridgway, *Soldier*, 277.

30. Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960* (New York: Free Press, 1985), 205–6; and George C. Herring, *America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam 1950–1975*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 1986), 31.

31. A. J. Bacevich, *The Pentomic Era: The U.S. Army between Korea and Vietnam* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1986), 22.

such opinions in congressional hearings, which pleased Democratic opposition and eventually made him *persona non grata* with Eisenhower.³²

Ridgway was just as forthright about his position on helping the French in March 1954 when the issue arose at a gathering for General Paul Ely, the French chief of the armed forces staff, at Radford's home. Ely was in Washington to garner additional aid due to the dire situations at Dien Bien Phu and in Indochina. When the supportive Radford asked if the French just needed more airpower for success, Ridgway challenged the assertion before Ely could reply. He noted in his diary afterward, "the experience of Korea, where we had complete domination of the air and a far more powerful air force, afforded no basis for thinking that some additional air power was going to bring decisive results on the ground."³³

Ridgway then mobilized the rest of the Joint Chiefs so when Radford advocated his proposition to support the French a few days later, they were unified in opposition to it. The chairman then asked for the written views of each chief. Ridgway's carefully crafted argument about the costs and strategic risks of possible involvement in Indochina was eventually sent to the secretary of defense. Ridgway also ordered his director of operations, Major General James Gavin, to send a team to the theater to gauge its conditions. They returned with a bleak report highlighting inadequate support facilities, massive logistic difficulties in the theater, the number of troops required for operations, and the impact on strategic reserves.

Implicit in these calculations was the assumption that airpower alone would not save the French and defeat the Viet Minh. Ridgway exploited his connections in France from his time as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe to monitor additional French requests for support, using the inside information to keep the other chiefs aligned with him, especially Air Force Chief of Staff General Nathan Twining. Eventually Ridgway prepared a briefing for the National Security Council and asked to deliver it with President Eisenhower in attendance. When Ely returned to make a final plea for support after the fall of Dien Bien Phu in May, Ridgway still did not trust Radford. Consequently, he convinced the other chiefs to agree that no member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff could meet with Ely alone.³⁴

Ridgway's arguments from the June 1954 National Security Council briefing, which could be summed up as "ten divisions and ten years"

32. Bacevich, *Pentomic Era*, 41; and A. J. Bacevich, "The Paradox of Professionalism: Eisenhower, Ridgway, and the Challenge to Civilian Control, 1953–1955," *Journal of Military History* 61 (April 1997): 303–33.

33. Matthew B. Ridgway, memorandum, "Conversation at Home of Admiral Radford, March 22, 1954," Matthew B. Ridgway Papers, USAHEC.

34. Arthur Radford, memoranda for the secretary of defense, March 31 and April 22, 1954; Matthew B. Ridgway, memoranda for JCS, April 2 and 6, 1954; James M. Gavin, "Military Consequences of Various Courses of Action with Respect to Application of U.S. Military Forces in Indochina"; Matthew B. Ridgway, memoranda for record, April 28 and May 17, 1954; and Matthew B. Ridgway Chief of Staff of the US Army to Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 7, 1954, "Projected Conversations Here with General Ely, French Army," Matthew B. Ridgway Papers, USAHEC.

to win in Indochina, even without Chinese intervention, appeared in an article in *US News & World Report* that same month. The article argued more soldiers would be necessary to fight in Indochina than in Korea, and defense budgets would skyrocket while draft requirements quadrupled. The lack of reliable allies and bases would complicate “almost insurmountable” logistic problems, while jungle warfare would nullify any American advantages in “mechanized, mobile equipment.”³⁵ Ridgway’s comments were probably leaked by members of Eisenhower’s staff, to use the arguments of another respected military commander to support the president’s decision not to intervene.

Ridgway was not the only leader in Washington strongly opposed to unilateral aid to the French. Key congressmen in early April 1954 also showed little confidence in the air option, warning, “once the flag is committed, the use of land forces would surely follow.”³⁶ They also demanded Great Britain and other Allies participate in a collective intervention. Democratic Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia led the congressional opposition to Operation Vulture. Ridgway viewed him as an ally in his efforts to stay out of Indochina, as Russell certainly remembered the acrimonious debates about inflated expectations of airpower when he chaired the May 1951 joint hearings following Truman’s firing of MacArthur.³⁷

The death knell for Operation Vulture was the refusal of Great Britain to be drawn into “Radford’s war against China.”³⁸ American and French talks on intervention continued after the fall of Dien Bien Phu in early May, but no serious plans resulted. Historians such as George Herring and Richard Immerman believe Eisenhower was more willing to intervene than he admitted later in his memoirs.³⁹ Others, such as Melanie Billings-Yun, think Eisenhower never wanted to intervene militarily but could not afford to take that position openly without weakening France’s motivation to win the war and without bringing into question America’s commitment to the security of Southeast Asia.⁴⁰

If Billings-Yun is right, lessons of the Korean air war were fresh enough in 1954 to help inspire a vocal opposition that reinforced the president’s inclination to avoid direct military involvement in Indochina. If Herring and Immerman are correct, then that opposition may have

35. “What Ridgway Told Ike—War in Indo-China Would Be Tougher Than Korea,” *US News & World Report*, June 25, 1954, 30–32.

36. George C. Herring and Richard H. Immerman, “Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu: ‘The Day We Didn’t Go to War’ Revisited,” *Journal of American History* 71, no. 2 (September 1984): 353.

37. United States Senate, “Constitutional Crisis Averted,” Historical Highlights, May 3, 1951, United States Senate (website), https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/minute/Constitutional_Crisis_Averted.htm; and Conrad C. Crane, *American Airpower Strategy in Korea 1950–1953* (Topeka: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 74–75, 179–80.

38. Herring and Immerman, “Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu,” 360.

39. Herring and Immerman, “Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu,” 346–63; and Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change 1953–1956* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963).

40. Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision against War: Eisenhower and Dien Bien Phu, 1954* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

changed his mind by demonstrating just how perilous and divisive even a limited aerial intervention would be. Ridgway wrote of his role:

When the day comes for me to face my Maker and account for my actions, the thing I would be most humbly proud of was the fact that I fought against, and perhaps contributed to preventing, the carrying out of some harebrained tactical schemes which would have cost the lives of thousands of men. To that list of tragic incidents that fortunately never happened I would add the Indo-China intervention.⁴¹

Leadership Legacies

A decade later when problems in Indochina again tempted American involvement, Ridgway was no longer in a position of responsibility or influence. His independence and outspoken ways as Army chief of staff led to his early retirement in 1955, his fate an echo of Marshall's warnings about strong dissent. Ridgway's only available option was to warn belatedly in articles and a book about unclear political objectives and caution about the limitations of airpower and difficulties of operations in Indochina.⁴²

It is ironic that the retired Army general who had the ears of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson was instead Taylor, Ridgway's successor and an enthusiastic advocate of intervention in Vietnam. As Army chief of staff, Taylor also opposed Eisenhower's New Look policies, but he was not as openly combative. Instead he let Gavin lead the opposition and had a clandestine group of colonels in the G-3 write articles and leak information to undermine the president's security initiatives. Eventually the officers were discovered, and Taylor was told to relieve them. He did, but he also gave them plum follow-on assignments, appreciating the fact they had taken the fall for him. Due to these firings and his more muted dissent, he was able to maintain his position in both Kennedy's and Johnson's inner circles when important decisions were being made about Vietnam in the 1960s.⁴³

In retrospect, US involvement in Vietnam may have proved more efficacious in 1954, when Communist forces were not as organized or well supplied and China was still reeling from the Korean War. But the United States was not prepared for a major conflict there. All Ridgway's arguments against intervention in 1954 remained valid 10 years later, but he was no longer in a position to make such a pitch to national leaders. One of the other cautions about persistent and career-risking dissent on important issues is that the effort can turn into "falling on your sword," and you can only do that once.

Yet there are times when such risks should be taken, especially in the face of significant risks to American lives and resources. In January

41. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 278.

42. Matthew B. Ridgway, "Pull-out, All-out, or Stand Fast in Vietnam?" *Look*, April 5, 1966, 81–84; Ridgway, *Korean War*, 244.

43. David T. Fautua, "The Inconsonant Culture: Ridgway, Taylor, and the Proper Role in Civil-Military Relations" (paper, Conference of Army Historians, June 19, 1996); Bacevich, *Pentomic Era*, 42–46.

2004, Michael O’Hanlon strongly condemned Army leaders for carrying out a plan to invade Iraq they knew was deeply flawed. He argued they knew the post-conflict preparations were lacking and were obligated to find some way to fix Operation Iraqi Freedom or refuse to execute it.⁴⁴ Even Ridgway would not have advocated that course of action, but perhaps General Eric Shinseki, who voiced his concerns about occupation forces in an infamous February 2003 Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, could have benefitted from adopting some aspects of Ridgway’s 1954 playbook.

As with any historical analogy, there are many key differences. Post Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, the Army chief of staff position has not been as powerful as it was in 1954, and in 2003, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld kept a tight rein on information flow in the Pentagon. But perhaps Shinseki could have mobilized the other chiefs in support of his position and prepared a strong memorandum about his concerns for the historical record. He also might have considered Senator Carl Levin—chair of the committee—who asked the hard questions during the February hearing, as an ally in his efforts to adjust force levels.

There might have been career implications, but Shinseki had already been all but fired and his successor designated. The Army chief, however, instead chose to follow the “traditional model,” and after the Senate hearing kept the rest of his concerns private even after scathing public rebuttals from the secretary of defense and his key subordinates.⁴⁵ We will never know whether more persistent and open dissent could have made a difference or not. It may have forced adjustments to the invasion plan, or such dissent may have soured civil-military relations further.

Too much dissent certainly has the potential to make the deliverer appear to be obstructionist or not a team player. Even Ridgway advocated strong resistance in only extreme cases. But there are times when a military leader’s responsibility to the nation and their profession to give best military advice and preserve precious lives and economic resources outweigh operational or political considerations. Such occasions are rare, but the consequences of weak acquiescence in these situations could be catastrophic. The careful allocation of dissent is yet another burden strategic-level leaders must bear as they rise in the ranks of national decision making.

44. Michael E. O’Hanlon, “Iraq without a Plan,” *Policy Review*, December 1, 2004, <https://www.hoover.org/research/iraq-without-plan>.

45. Binkley, “Revolt of the Generals.”

TWO SIDES OF COIN

COIN Doctrine Is Wrong

M. Chris Mason

ABSTRACT: Counterinsurgency does not increase the legitimacy of, or support for, central governments engaged in internal conflicts. Recent research shows quantifiable degrees of government legitimacy, national identity, and population security are necessary precursors and accurate predictors of a government's ability to outlast a civil uprising. Because the first two predictors—government legitimacy and national identity—can be measured and do not increase during a conflict, the probability of government failure in most cases can be accurately predicted when the conflict starts.

Although fighting against internal rebellions is as old as conflict itself, the term “counterinsurgency” (COIN) to describe such conflict originated only recently, first appearing in the English language in 1962. The Kennedy administration introduced the word as part of a new doctrine of limited war intended to contain communist expansion.¹ The basic premise of COIN holds that civil actions can be taken to increase support for a central government and thereby decrease support for an internal rebellion. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines counterinsurgency in straightforward terms: “military or *political* action taken against the activities of guerrillas or revolutionaries.”² The US Department of State expands upon this, defining counterinsurgency as “comprehensive *civilian* and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and *address its root causes*.”³ According to the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, a counterinsurgency campaign should

integrate and synchronize political, security, economic, and informational components that *reinforce governmental legitimacy and effectiveness* while reducing insurgent influence over the population. COIN strategies should be designed to simultaneously protect the population from insurgent violence; *strengthen the legitimacy and capacity of government institutions* to govern responsibly and marginalize insurgents politically, socially, and economically.⁴

As journalist and contemporary historian Fred Kaplan phrases it, “the premise of counterinsurgency is that insurgents arise out of socio-political conditions and, therefore, the point of a counterinsurgency campaign, or the goal of it, is not just to kill and capture insurgents, but to change the living conditions to help the government provide basic

1. *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “counterinsurgency (n.)” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/counterinsurgency>.

2. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “counterinsurgency (n.)” <https://www.oed.com/>. Italics added.

3. US Department of State (DoS), Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PMA), *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* (Washington, DC: PMA, 2009), 12, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf>. Italics added.

4. DoS, *Counterinsurgency Guide*, 12. Italics added.

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services to the people, so that support for the insurgency dries up.”⁵⁵ As recently as 2013, RAND Corporation published a study entitled *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* in which the authors purported to lay out the best practices to “help host-nation governments reform . . . and increase their legitimacy.”⁵⁶ In short, the basic principle underlying counterinsurgency doctrine is that civil actions can be taken to increase support for an embattled government and increase its legitimacy.

This premise seems logical and obvious: If a government makes its people safer and improves their lives, their support for the government will increase. Although rational, this assumption is untested, and as Columbia University professor Rita McGrath notes, the danger in suppositions of this type is to “take the untested assumptions that underlie the . . . plan and treat them as facts.”⁵⁷

In this case, the untested assumption upon which COIN doctrine rests—that actions can be taken to increase support for a government during an internal conflict—is wrong. A study conducted at the US Army War College from 2015 to 2020 found no empirical evidence that counterinsurgency means and methods increased either popular support for a government or the public perception of its legitimacy in any internal conflict since the end of World War II. Governments have been successful in defeating rebellions, and governments that used many of the methods and actions prescribed by counterinsurgency doctrine have successfully suppressed internal conflicts. But these victories have led to the erroneous claim that success is a result of “doing counterinsurgency right.”⁵⁸ This is a classic example of the logic fallacy known to the ancient Romans as *post hoc ergo propter hoc*: “after this, therefore because of this.”⁵⁹ But sequence is not causation.

Quelling Internal Rebellions

In the vast academic literature of internal conflict, the recognition that counterinsurgency doctrine is wrong is not new. For example, Gian Gentile observed anecdotally that counterinsurgency did not work in Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan. Without fully recognizing the reasons *why* this was the case, he nonetheless argued vociferously against COIN doctrine.¹⁰ The research study behind this article

5. A. C. Valdez, “A Decade at War: Afghanistan, Iraq and Counterinsurgency,” America Abroad Media, podcast, aired March and September 2013, <https://www.americaabroadmedia.org/radio/decade-war-afghanistan-iraq-and-counterinsurgency>.

6. Christopher Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), xxxv, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR291z1.html.

7. Rita Gunther McGrath, “The Dangers of Untested Assumptions,” MIT Sloan Management Review, October 26, 2009, <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/the-dangers-of-unchecked-assumptions/>.

8. For example, see Michael O’Hanlon, interview by Fareed Zakaria on Global Public Square, “What Will Obama’s Afghanistan Policy Be?” transcript, January 25, 2009, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0901/25/fzgps.01.html>; and Michael Crowley, “Obama versus Osama,” CBS News, December 8, 2008, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/obama-versus-osama/>.

9. John Woods and Douglas Walton, “Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc,” *Review of Metaphysics* 30, no. 4 (June 1977), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20126985>.

10. Colonel Gian Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America’s Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York: New Press, 2013).

identifies and enumerates the political science underlying the failure of counterinsurgency and, using quantifiable metrics, concludes precisely why governments succeed or fail against internal rebellions.

For the past five years, the Study of Internal Conflict at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College has systematically researched and analyzed the 53 internal conflicts since 1945 in which an internal rebellion sought either control of the government or the creation of an independent breakaway country, and in which at least 1,000 persons died in a 12-month period. The study used the Oxford University Armed Conflict and Correlates of War Project databases to identify all relevant internal conflicts.¹¹ Because there are many kinds of civil conflict (for example, wars between ethnic groups in remote areas that are not fought for control of the government), internal conflicts in the Correlates of War database to which the government was not a party were excluded from the study.

The study sought to identify all political-military factors that correlate with government defeat in at least 90 percent of all cases. Some factors were interrelated, as will be seen, and were often nested together. As in calculating probable medical outcomes across multiple morbidity factors, the presence of multiple negative political-military factors in one conflict decreased the likelihood of government survival to close to nil.

The study results show conclusively that governments fail against internal rebellions for five fundamental structural reasons, and the outcomes of internal conflicts are heavily dependent on these five preexisting political-military conditions. Each of the five factors was found in government failure in at least 94 percent of all 53 conflicts, and only two of the five are susceptible to military action. Further, two of the five factors are simple binary variables, while the remaining three factors are mathematically quantifiable to a useful degree of accuracy, creating thresholds that correlate to government defeat with a remarkable degree of consistency and accuracy.

Furthermore, the empirical data prove only two of the five factors can be altered in any meaningful way after the onset of hostilities. In essence, whether a government may be successful in suppressing an internal rebellion depends predominantly on whether these five factors are present at the start of the conflict. Thus, collectively, they constitute a predictive model of probable outcomes with a reliability that startled researchers. Cases of successful counterinsurgency often cited by proponents of COIN doctrine were found to be simply cases where all five political-military factors were already in favor of the existing government at the outset of the conflict.

The research shows the basic assumption behind “clear, hold, and build” (in Afghanistan), “pacification” (in Vietnam), or “nation building” (in Iraq), indeed behind all counterinsurgency, is wrong. No

11. The Correlates of War Project, data sets, <https://correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/>; and Oxford University Armed Conflict Database, <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/c.php?g=422808&p=2887072>.

evidence supports the contention that these lines of effort increased government legitimacy—one of the five factors—and a number of studies found such efforts did not. For example, an independent before-and-after study conducted during the war in Afghanistan showed a mathematically 0 percent increase in either support for the local government or the government in Kabul after the completion of hundreds of civil affairs projects.¹² A similar study produced the same results during the Iraq War.¹³ In his study of the massive US Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) effort in Vietnam, British historian Andrew Gawthorpe also concluded the effort to increase support for and the legitimacy of the South Vietnamese government did not work.

Nation building had failed. . . . CORDS failed despite its attempt in the latter years of the war to emulate the successes of the Vietnamese Communist movement through the village system. Through the village system CORDS had abandoned the attempt to build rural support on the basis of an imagined community of the South Vietnamese nation, and instead had shifted to the idea of communalism which the communists had used so successfully. . . . But it was precisely the political contents of CORDS's programs, and its attempts to forge a network of pro-GVN village communities that failed. The GVN never managed to become . . . legitimate enough to demand the sacrifices needed to win the struggle against the Communist movement. As outsiders both in understanding and in influence, American nation builders could hardly do so either. . . . Nation building was an unavoidable condition of victory. . . . It was also almost certainly preordained to be impossible.¹⁴

In many cases, as a result of poorly understood local village economies, aid projects were found to have increased local conflict.¹⁵ A study focused on the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services program in the Philippines, for example, found the “program exacerbated violent conflict in eligible municipalities.”¹⁶

Civil War or Insurgency?

Before proceeding further, a note on etymology is needed to explain why the study used the terminology “internal conflict,” or “internal rebellion,” instead of insurgency or civil war. Conflict naming conventions are fraught with political considerations and are often driven

12. Jennifer Brick, *The Political Economy of Customary Village Organizations in Rural Afghanistan* (report prepared for the annual meeting of the Central Eurasian Studies Society, Washington, DC, September 2008), <https://www.bu.edu/aias/brick.pdf>.

13. Barnett Koven, “Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence” (PhD diss., George Washington University, May 21, 2017).

14. Andrew J. Gawthorpe, *To Build as Well as Destroy: American Nation Building in South Vietnam* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 185–90.

15. Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian, “US Food Aid and Civil Conflict,” *American Economic Review* 104, no. 6 (June 2014): 1630–66, <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.104.6.1630>.

16. Benjamin Crost, Joseph Felter, and Patrick Johnston, “Aid under Fire: Development Projects and Civil Conflict,” *American Economic Review* 104, no. 6 (June 2014): 1833–56, <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.104.6.1833>.

by participant perspectives and politics.¹⁷ The dictionary definitions of civil war and insurgency are basically the same: two groups of citizens of the same country fighting each other for political power.¹⁸ There is nothing in the dictionary definition of either term regarding the size of the conflict, its duration, or other characteristics. The difference in the applications of these terms is thus primarily political.

Governments fighting against internal rebellions generally avoid using the term “civil war” since it reflects badly on the government and possibly legitimizes the opposition. Instead, these governments prefer terms like “rebellion” and “insurgency,” and they may even use words intended to delegitimize the rebelling group as a whole, such as “bandits” and “malcontents.”¹⁹ Following this pattern, when foreign powers intervene in internal conflicts on the side of governments, they too, usually use the term “insurgency” to refer to the fighting. Thus, when the United States intervened in Vietnam and Afghanistan in support of those governments, the conflicts were consistently referred to as insurgencies and rarely, if ever, as civil wars.

In contrast, in cases where the United States opposes the government in power, such as the ongoing conflict in Syria, the fighting is typically referred to in official statements and policy documents as a civil war. Conversely Russia, which has intervened heavily on behalf of the al-Assad government of Syria, refers to the conflict there as an insurgency and never uses the term civil war.²⁰

A hermeneutical reading of US government-produced documents that define insurgency, such as Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, the aforementioned *US Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, and the CIA’s *Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency*, shows the definitions inherently privilege the existing governments with terms like “constituted government” and “established government” and identify rebel political activities as “illegal,” so the use of the term “insurgency” effectively means the speaker has taken the side of the government.²¹ Of note, the United Nations tellingly avoids both terms, preferring neutral language such as conflict and violence. The characterization of an internal conflict as an insurgency or a civil war is usually driven by which side of the conflict the speaker is on; hence the term is best avoided.²²

17. Edward Wong, “A Matter of Definition: What Makes a Civil War, and Who Declares It So?” *New York Times*, November 26, 2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/26/world/middleeast/26war.html>.

18. *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “civil war (n.),” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/civil%20war>; and *Cambridge Dictionary*, s.v. “insurgency (n.),” <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/insurgency>.

19. Michael V. Bhatia, “Fighting Words: Naming Terrorists, Bandits, Rebels and Other Violent Actors,” *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (2005): 5–22, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3993760?refreqid=excelsior%3A259cbe2857da1aae6100f9a2d5d06073&seq=1>.

20. Madeline Conway, “Timeline: U.S. Approach to the Syrian Civil War,” *Politico*, April 7, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/04/timeline-united-states-response-syria-civil-war-237011>; and Wong, “A Matter of Definition.”

21. US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: CIA, 2012), 28–29.

22. Wong, “A Matter of Definition.”

Five Determinant Factors of Internal Conflict

In addition to the criteria of legitimacy of governance identified above, the other determinant factors identified or confirmed by the study as corresponding to government defeat in at least 94 percent of all 53 conflicts are: national identity (the percentage of the population that locates its personal identity at the level of the nation), the percentage of the population adequately safeguarded by internal security services, and two binary variables already broadly known in the literature of internal conflict—external sanctuary for rebels and the preexistence of sustainable security forces. The latter two criteria require little additional amplification except to note the study research bears out these two recognized factors without exceptions.

The study was able to quantify the levels of national identity and population control necessary for a government to prevail as 85 percent—the same as for government legitimacy. The parameter of national identity, in the accepted political science sense, was defined as at least 85 percent of the population locating their personal identities at the level of the nation.²³ In cases where less than 85 percent of the population claimed a unified national identity, 96 percent of governments facing internal rebellion as defined above suffered defeat. The national identity factor usually coincided or nested with that of legitimacy of governance, especially in cases where the majority ethnic, linguistic, or religious national group comprised more than 85 percent of the population and also predominated in the country's government.

The factor of population security was defined as the government securing and isolating at least 85 percent of the people from meaningful contact with or violence from guerilla elements. It is usually impossible to prevent a single guerilla or a small group of guerillas, either openly or in disguise, from infiltrating a populated area and from avoiding detection by security forces for a brief period—for example, to prevent every suicide bomber from getting through security measures. Security is rarely airtight, but successful governments create firewalls between at least 85 percent of the civilian population and guerillas; such barriers prevent meaningful political contact, such as proselytizing, leafleting, and public addresses, as well as virtually all targeted violence against government leaders and supporters.

Governments that failed to secure 85 percent of their populations lost in 94 percent of the 53 case studies. The 85 percent threshold recurred throughout the research and was almost a magic number in government survival. The criticality of population security to defeating internal rebellions is well established. Mao Zedong, for example, recognized the threshold in 1937 in his treatise, *On Guerrilla Warfare*: “Historical experience suggests that there is very little hope of destroying a revolutionary guerrilla movement after it has survived the first phase and has acquired the sympathetic support of a significant segment of

23. Omar Dabbour, “National Identity: An Argument for the Strict Definition,” *Public Affairs Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (January 2002): 17–37, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40441311?seq=1>.

the population. The size of this ‘significant segment’ will vary; a decisive *figure might range from 15 to 25 per cent.*²⁴ The data derived from the Study of Internal Conflict more precisely pinpoint this number at a minimum of 15 percent.

The first of the two binary variables, the existence of militarily significant external sanctuary available to rebel forces, was defined for the study as the persistent ability of insurgents to cross a neighboring border in numbers that would impact the outcome of a conflict and to obtain sanctuary there from government forces. Defining militarily significant numbers seemed at first to be problematic for the study designers. In actuality, however, the existence or lack of external sanctuary was clear-cut in virtually all of the 53 conflicts—there were few marginal calls to be made in assessing whether rebels had cross-border sanctuary. Rebel movements on islands, for example, could not have external sanctuary in any significant numbers. Conversely, most international borders are very difficult to secure completely, even for developed countries with almost unlimited resources (for example, the US borders with Canada and Mexico).

In all 53 conflicts, governments were unable to defeat rebel movements that maintained external sanctuaries. The sole ambiguous case in this regard was the second stage of the Greek Civil War from 1946 to 1949, in which the leftist National Popular Liberation Army, or *Ethnikós Laikós Apeleutherotikós Strátos* (ELAS), initially had sanctuary and external support from bordering Albania and Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extent, from Bulgaria. But the UN General Assembly began to criticize severely the three communist countries for their role in the war, and in 1949 Yugoslavia broke with Russia and closed its frontier with Greece. The loss of sanctuary in Yugoslavia was a severe blow to ELAS as was greatly diminished help from and refuge in Bulgaria and Albania—Stalin backpedaled from his proxy support through Bulgaria while the United States surged aid to the Greek government. While ELAS made many tactical blunders, this early case study in the postwar record remains an asterisk in the factor of external sanctuaries.²⁵

The second binary variable factor was defined for the study as the preexistence of sustainable, reasonably competent government security forces at the onset of internal violence. The study found no government since 1945 facing an armed rebel movement that did not have existing security forces survived the conflict. In other words, the lack of an established army at the beginning of an internal conflict was fatal for the government in every case. But because virtually all countries

24. US Marine Corps (USMC), *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, Fleet Marine Force Reference Publication 12-18, transl. Samuel B. Griffith (Washington, DC: Headquarters, USMC, April 5, 1989), 27, <https://www.marines.mil/Portals/1/Publications/FMFRP%2012-18%20%20Mao%20Tse-tung%20on%20Guerrilla%20Warfare.pdf>. Italics added.

25. See “Greek Civil War,” HistoryNet, website, <https://www.historynet.com/greek-civil-war.htm>; Amikam Nachmani, *International Intervention in the Greek Civil War: The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, 1947–1952* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1990); and Andre Gerolymatos, *Red Acropolis, Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of the Soviet-American Rivalry, 1943–1949* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).

since 1945 have had standing armies under the control of their central governments, this factor did not often come into play and therefore had a relatively minor impact on the research findings. Nonetheless, there are significant exceptions, including the US phase of the Afghan conflict from 2001–21 and the anti-government rebellion in Iraq after 2003.

Table 1. Conflict parameters

Factor	Metric	Fail Rate
National Identity	<85%	96%
Government Legitimacy	<85%	94%
Population Security	<85%	94%
Existing Security Forces	No	100%
External Sanctuary	Yes	100%

South Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Colombia, and Malaya

Brief executive summaries of case studies where counterinsurgency doctrine was applied are useful for illustrating how these five basic parameters are situated within and applied to historical conflicts. The counterinsurgency efforts in Vietnam and Afghanistan stand out among America's wars for the tragedy and futility surrounding them. Considerable time has been spent identifying lessons learned from both wars, and these lessons learned were the genesis of the Study of Internal Conflict Research Program in 2015.

At a fundamental strategic level, the two conflicts are structurally similar. In both cases, the United States effectively created and supported a government in a country that was not a nation in the political science usage of the word. In both cases, the United States attempted to create a democracy as the basis for the government's legitimacy where no previous tradition of democracy existed.²⁶ In both wars, anti-government forces received existential support from a nuclear-armed neighbor and had cross-border external sanctuaries in two neighboring countries (Laos and Cambodia in the Vietnam War, Pakistan and Iran in the Afghanistan War), which the United States and the central governments of South Vietnam and Afghanistan respectively could do little to disrupt.

In both conflicts the central governments, which were largely created and supported by the United States (with some degree of additional international support), were not broadly seen as legitimate by a majority of the population (again in the political science usage of the term).²⁷ Moreover, opponents of the regimes in both cases were able to mobilize narratives that established a greater claim to legitimacy from other sources, in the Weberian sense.²⁸ In Vietnam and Afghanistan, the United States built a comprehensive,

26. Dahbour, "National Identity."

27. See *Princeton Encyclopedia of Self-Determination*, s.v. "legitimacy," Princeton University, <https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/516>.

28. Max Weber, "IV. Politics as a Vocation: 'Politik als Beruf,' *Gesammelte Politische Schriften*," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 77–128, <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/stille/Politics%20Fall%202007/Readings%20--%20Weeks%201-5/Weber%20-%20Politics%20as%20a%20Vocation.htm>.

top-down model of governance (central government to provincial government to district government), while the opponents of the regimes worked from the bottom up to control the village populations in the rural areas, where approximately 80 percent of the people of both countries lived.

In both Vietnam and Afghanistan, US war planners made a conscious choice to rely primarily on police or local paramilitary forces to protect villagers against guerilla infiltration and violence—forces that were demonstrably unequal to those tasks in both conflicts—while conventional military forces were used to conduct large “cordon and sweep operations” intended to drive guerilla forces from an area and confiscate or destroy weapons and materiel useful to the enemy.²⁹ Leaders of local governing bodies, established at the district levels in South Vietnam and Afghanistan, were often chosen by the central governments in Saigon and Kabul on the basis of graft pyramid schemes or palace politics and were frequently unacceptable to local populations as a result—a counterproductive effort that made the rebel’s local political work easier.³⁰

In both Vietnam and Afghanistan, there was a trifurcation of lines of effort. As the main conventional Army defaulted to conventional operations, the smaller civil affairs components conducted pacification and reconstruction programs, which were often at odds with frequently corrupt central government planning efforts. At the same time, special operators increasingly sought to eliminate high-value targets with CIA oversight through the Phoenix Program in Vietnam and similar high-value-target operations in Afghanistan. In both conflicts, these targeted kill-or-capture missions were not coordinated with the conventional forces and were often conducted on the basis of flawed intelligence, sometimes neutralizing the intended target, but often arriving too late or arresting or killing the wrong man. These operations upset villagers, upending the patient work of the civil affairs components, and played into enemy propaganda.

Tragically in both conflicts, the overuse and sometimes indiscriminate application of the US advantages in fire support resulted in extensive civilian casualties. An estimated 220,000 South Vietnamese civilians were killed by forces fighting for the South Vietnamese government from 1962 to 1975, and at least 135,000 civilians have been killed and wounded in Afghanistan since 2001, where claims about responsibility often conflict.³¹ Such civilian casualties alienated the rural population not just from the United States but from the central government it was known to be supporting.

29. See for example, David Pearson, “Low-Intensity Operations in Northern Ireland,” in *Soldiers in Cities: Military Operations on Urban Terrain*, ed. Michael C. Desch (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), 106.

30. Gawthorpe, “*To Build as Well as Destroy*.”

31. Charles Hirschman, Samuel Preston, and Vu Manh Loi, “Vietnamese Casualties during the American War: A New Estimate,” *Population and Development Review* 21, no. 4 (December 1995): 783–812, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2137774?seq=1>; Neta C. Crawford, *Update on the Human Costs of War for Afghanistan and Pakistan, 2001 to mid-2016* (Boston: Watson Institute, Brown University, August 2016); “Afghanistan: Civilian Casualties Exceed 10,000 for Sixth Straight Year,” UN News, February 22, 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/02/1057921>; and UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Afghanistan: Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Annual Report 2020* (Kabul, Afghanistan: UNAMA, February 2021), 11, https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/afghanistan_protection_of_civilians_report_2020_revs3.pdf.

There are many other operational parallels between the wars, such as the marginalizing of the advisory mission until far too late in the conflicts, infantry tactics that instilled systemic overreliance on US-provided air support among the South Vietnamese and Afghan armies, and the inability to develop a functional language capability to obviate the persistent failure of communications via interpreters. In another parallel, the United States and the host governments, while attempting to build stable armies in Vietnam (the Army of the Republic of Vietnam) and Afghanistan (the Afghan National Army), were largely unable to overcome debilitating problems with desertions (attrition rates in Afghanistan never dropped below 30 percent per year), enemy infiltration of the ranks (resulting in widespread lack of information security), pervasive drug use, and getting recruits into the training pipeline.³²

South Vietnam

While the basic building blocks of a separate South Vietnamese national identity—a common ethnicity, culture, and language shared by more than 85 percent of the population—arguably existed in the mid-1950s, the government of Ngo Dinh Diem squandered the social capital, which did exist for creating a South Vietnamese nation, by exacerbating the religious fault line between the Catholic minority government and the country's Buddhist majority, effectively creating a body of resistance to the government that remained a key factor in South Vietnamese politics throughout its brief existence.³³ Diem also alienated the nonethnic-Vietnamese peoples living in the south, such as the Nung, Hmong, Chan, and Hoa, further eroding his legitimacy. Rather than trying to build consensus and a broad nationalist movement, Diem chose to focus on repressing his political rivals in the south and waging war against competing anticommunist sects such as the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao at the expense of national cohesion.³⁴

Thus, none of the governments of South Vietnam had 85 percent legitimacy, and South Vietnam could not be considered a nation (less than 85 percent of the population self-identified specifically as South Vietnamese as opposed to simply Vietnamese). While the communist movement in the South, which became known colloquially as the Viet Cong, was initially weak, by 1958 the South Vietnamese government could no longer claim full population security of and control over 85 percent of the population of the south.

Moreover, this figure continued to erode throughout the course of the conflict until by 1972, the Viet Cong controlled or influenced the majority of the rural population of the country south of the demilitarized

32. M. Chris Mason, *The Strategic Lessons Unlearned from Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan: Why the Afghan National Security Forces Will Not Hold, and the Implications for the U.S. Army in Afghanistan* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press, 2015), <https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/2340.pdf>.

33. Jessica M. Chapman, *Cauldron of Resistance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and 1950s Southern Vietnam* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

34. Chapman, *Cauldron of Resistance*.

zone. Enemy forces could and did make massive use of external sanctuaries and supply corridors in bordering Laos and Cambodia, which the United States and South Vietnam were not able to interdict effectively. Of the five factors defined by the study, only the preexistence of a sustainable and reasonably competent army applied. South Vietnam did possess the basic elements of a capable military force with some very good fighting elements, particularly its ranger and paratrooper battalions. But these capabilities were largely crippled by central government corruption and political appointments to military leadership positions that prioritized loyalty to Saigon over military competence.

Table 2. Conflict parameters: South Vietnam

Factor	Metric
National Identity	No
Government Legitimacy	No
Population Security	No
Existing Security Forces	Yes
External Sanctuary	Yes

Afghanistan

Not only is Afghanistan not a nation (less than 85 percent of the population places their personal identities at the level of an Afghan nation), it is one of the most segmented and fragmented countries on the earth.³⁵ For example, more than 40 first languages are spoken in Afghanistan, 17 in Nuristan Province alone—more languages than are spoken in all of Western Europe. These languages are largely determinant of identity, as civil conflict has raged in Afghanistan since the 1970s between the Pashto-speaking plurality of the population and shifting coalitions of the other ethnic and linguistic groups.³⁶ Adding to the fragmentation is the hostility between the Sunni Muslim majority and the Shia minority, which is predominantly but not exclusively of the Hazāra ethnic group.

The status of the two binary factors necessary for government success—the existence of a sustainable and reasonably competent army in 2002, when the Taliban were driven from power and began to build a rebel movement, and the existence of cross-border sanctuary to a militarily significant degree—is well known.

The mathematical odds against success were rendered insurmountable by the imposition of popular democracy—a form of government which had never been practiced in Afghanistan—that is not widely accepted as legitimate governance in the Weberian sense. Less than 30 percent of the voting-eligible Afghan population voted

35. Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Metin Gurcan, *What Went Wrong in Afghanistan? Understanding Counter-Insurgency Efforts in Tribalized Rural and Muslim Environments* (Solihull, UK: Helion & Company, 2016).

36. Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, “No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier,” *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 41–77; and Bernard Comrie, ed., *The Major Languages of Western Europe*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2015), v–vi.

for Hamid Karzai, and less than 5 percent voted for Ashraf Ghani in 2019. The return of the Afghan king Mohammed Zahir Shah from exile in 2001 as a ceremonial monarch and a figure of national unity, similar to the role played by the royal families in Great Britain and Japan, could have conferred popular legitimacy on a parliamentary government. The return of King Zahir Shah, however, was rejected by the George W. Bush administration, and the Afghan monarchy was eliminated against the wishes of three quarters of the official delegates to the Emergency Loya Jirga in what amounted to a CIA coup d'état.³⁷

Traditional legitimacy in the form of a Pashtun king has always been the predominant source of legitimacy of governance in Afghanistan.³⁸ The absence of the legitimacy and stability provided by this monarchy in Afghan society created a vacuum, and the Pashtun Taliban movement essentially filled this legitimacy vacuum with a religious source of legitimacy understood by the population. Although the Taliban initially enjoyed little support among the Afghan people as a result of its failures in governance, draconian social policies from 1996 to 2001, and harsh Deobandi interpretations of Islamic law not native to Afghanistan, their support has increased. Today the Ghani government maintains full control of less than 54 percent of the Afghan population.³⁹

Table 3. Conflict parameters: Afghanistan

Factor	Metric
National Identity	No
Government Legitimacy	No
Population Security	No
Existing Security Forces	No
External Sanctuary	Yes

Iraq

Many of the same problems were faced in the nation-building effort in Iraq after 2003. As defined by most political scientists, Iraq was—and is—not a nation.⁴⁰ Following World War I, in the wake of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the boundary lines drawn across the sand by Gertrude Bell

37. Mason, *Strategic Lessons Unlearned*, 143; Pamela Hess “Afghan Council Postponed, King Steps Aside,” United Press International, June 10, 2002, www.upi.com/Business_News/Security-Industry/2002/06/10/Afghan-council-postponed-king-steps-aside/UPI-62001023745673/; and Camelia Entekhabi-Fard, “Accusations of American Meddling Mar Afghan Council,” Eurasianet, June 12, 2002, <https://eurasianet.org/accusations-of-american-meddling-mar-afghan-council>; and author interviews with two eyewitness participants.

38. Roy, *Islam and Resistance*; and Carlo J. V. Caro, “Afghan Kings and the Failure of U.S. Military Intervention,” RealClearDefense, February 12, 2020, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2020/02/12/afghan_kings_and_the_failure_of_us_military_intervention_115034.html.

39. Bill Roggio, “Analysis: US Military Downplays District Control as Taliban Gains Ground in Afghanistan,” Long War Journal, January 31, 2019, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/01/analysis-us-military-downplays-district-control-as-taliban-gains-ground-in-afghanistan.php>.

40. Dahbour, “National Identity.”

in 1922 to create Iraq's current boundaries made no political sense.⁴¹ By the beginning of the twenty-first century, only Saddam Hussein's brutal police state held the country together. Following the US invasion, the government installed by the United States was not seen as legitimate by 85 percent of the Iraqi population, and it was never able to provide full security to at least 85 percent of the total population. Thus, none of the three 85 percent parameters of government success against insurgency existed after 2003. Because the standing Iraqi army was disbanded before the start of the internal rebellion and some rebels were able to find sanctuary and support to some degree across international borders, none of the five political-military factors established by the research study as necessary for government success in quelling an internal rebellion existed in Iraq in 2003.

Table 4. Conflict parameters: Iraq

Factor	Metric
National Identity	No
Government Legitimacy	No
Population Security	No
Existing Security Forces	No
External Sanctuary	Yes

Colombia

The Marxist insurgency in Colombia, known at first as “*La Violencia*,” began in the 1920s and was waged by a number of rebel groups, most notably since 1960 the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*). This internal conflict, suppressed in 2016, makes a fascinating case study within the context of the five parameters of the research project. Colombia can be defined as a nation, as at least 85 percent of the population self-identifies as Colombian. Colombia is multiethnic, but its people share a language, religion, and culture that are almost universal throughout the country.

Colombia's governments in the twentieth century were seldom broadly popular but were accepted as legitimate in the sense that the government's laws were recognized and its right to govern was accepted by at least 85 percent of the population.⁴² Colombia's rebels could not gain cross-border sanctuary in militarily significant numbers; Colombia's border regions with Venezuela and Ecuador are remote and uninhabitable jungles, a deadly “green desert” in which daily survival

41. James Buchan, “Miss Bell's Lines in the Sand,” *Guardian*, March 11, 2003, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/mar/12/iraq.jamesbuchan>; and Robin Wright, “How the Curse of Sykes-Picot Still Haunts the Middle East,” *New Yorker*, April 30, 2016, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-the-curse-of-sykes-picot-still-haunts-the-middle-east>.

42. See for example Marco Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence: A History of Colombia 1875–2002* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Abbey Steele, *Democracy and Displacement in Colombia's Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017); and Summer Newton, ed., *Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare—Colombia (1964–2009)* (Fort Bragg, NC: US Army Special Operations Command, undated), https://www.soc.mil/ARIS/books/pdf/ARIS_Colombia-BOOK.pdf.

even for experts is a struggle. At the outbreak of *La Violencia*, Colombia's standing army was sustained by the government, and the army was reasonably competent as defined by the study.

But one of the five factors—population security—was initially missing from the equation, allowing a succession of rebel movements to survive at a level that stressed Colombian society at times. Beginning in the 1920s, government forces could not isolate the guerrillas from at least 85 percent of Colombia's population because at least 70 percent of the country's population at the onset of *La Violencia* was rural. During the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, Colombia underwent a dramatic demographic shift—by 2018, just under 80 percent of the population was urban. Because cities are much easier to secure, Colombian security forces were eventually able to reach the magic number of more than 85 percent population security and control.⁴³ The steady construction of all-season roads linking Colombia's rural regions to its cities also made the movement of security forces easier and faster, as did the advent of helicopters for military transport.

In short, all five political-military conditions existed by 2016 to starve the last of the guerrilla forces, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* movement, of sufficient recruits and sources of popular support, and the survivors agreed to a cease-fire.

Table 5. Conflict parameters: Colombia

Factor	Metric
National Identity	Yes
Government Legitimacy	Yes
Population Security	No → Yes
Existing Security Forces	Yes
External Sanctuary	No

Malaya

The Malayan Emergency is another notable case study that confirms the parameters identified in the research project. This 1950s conflict, in what was then the British colony of Malaya, is often cited as proof that counterinsurgency works if “done right.” In fact, it does not. In the context of the identified political-military parameters of government success, all five elements necessary to defeat an internal rebellion were in place at the start of the conflict.

First, Malaya was a nation as defined by political science: at least 85 percent of the population identified itself as Malay—of the Malay ethnic group—which comprised and still comprises approximately 90 percent of the country's population.⁴⁴ The Malay speak a common language understood throughout the country and share a common culture. Significantly, during the 1950s conflict and subsequent outbreaks

43. Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE), *Población ajustada por cobertura - Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2018* (Bogotá, Colombia: DANE, 2018).

44. Dabhour, “National Identity.”

of violence in Malaya since then, virtually all the rebels were ethnic Chinese, who comprise just 10 percent of the country's population. Not all ethnically Chinese citizens were rebels, but essentially all rebels were ethnically Chinese.

Furthermore, the Chinese minority, who faced economic discrimination and a permanent underclass status within the country, lived in an apartheid society in which they were clustered almost entirely in segregated villages and towns and did not usually venture into Malay settlements. Because the physiognomy of the two ethnic groups is quite distinct, this separation was relatively easy to enforce. As a result, the government secured more than 85 percent of the population—the 90 percent of the population which was Malay—and excluded anyone who might have been a guerilla from Malay areas. The ethnic Chinese rebels were easily spotted and detained in most of the country, and they could find little or no support or sympathy among the majority Malay population.

The British faced no problems with a host-country government, unlike the United States in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. For example, they could make any rules or laws they pleased, and they did not have to beg an intransigent president to make needed reforms. In addition, the British publicized they would return the country to the ethnic Malay majority as soon as the rebellion was quelled. This move incentivized the Malay people to work even harder to suppress a minority group they already disliked intensely and enabled the government to claim sufficient legitimacy to conduct the counter-rebellion with the support of at least 85 percent of the people.

The ethnic Chinese rebels were unable to gain meaningful external support or cross-border sanctuary, and British Malaya had well-disciplined and competent military and police forces sustained by the British government in London. Thus all five essential political-military factors permitting government success were in place at the start of the conflict and remained there until the conflict ended, which took many years to accomplish, even with every advantage favoring the British.

Table 6: Conflict parameters: Malaya

Factor	Metric
National Identity	Yes
Government Legitimacy	Yes
Population Security	Yes
Existing Security Forces	Yes
External Sanctuary	No

The eventual victory in Malaya had nothing to do with military skills or tactics peculiar to counterinsurgency or with specialized cultural knowledge the British possessed beyond the ability to discern the difference between the Malay and Chinese citizens of the colony. Instead, this victory had everything to do with national identity, population protection, legitimacy of governance, and the lack of

cross-border sanctuary for rebel soldiers in any significant numbers, all of which existed before the conflict started.

Conclusion

The most critical lessons drawn from Vietnam, Afghanistan, and other internal conflicts are: 1) in no case since 1945 has either a sense of national identity or the legitimacy of the central government increased during the conflict period, and 2) the levels of national identity, legitimacy of governance, and population security necessary to suppress an internal rebellion are all 85 percent or more. In the 53 conflicts meeting the study criteria for intensity and rebel goals and in which any of these parameters were not met, government mortality was close to 100 percent. Moreover, no instances were found in the 53 conflicts where counterinsurgency efforts to increase the legitimacy of or support for an existing government had such an effect. Because no increase in national identity or legitimacy of governance was found during the course of the conflict in any of the 53 case studies, their levels *at the onset of conflict* are determinant of outcomes. In other words, these factors predict the probability of government failure with a remarkable degree of accuracy.

In October 2001, when asked by a reporter if the United States could avoid Afghanistan becoming another quagmire like Vietnam, then President George W. Bush replied, “We learned some very important lessons in Vietnam.”⁴⁵ Over the intervening 20 years, the political goals of the campaign, the military conduct of the conflict, and the implementation of the nation-building efforts of the war in Afghanistan have shown the United States did not learn the most important lessons. With the US Army now pivoting again from small wars to planning for near-peer conflict as it did after Vietnam, the true lessons of the wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan, and about counterinsurgency in general, are in danger of being lost once more.⁴⁶

45. Nayanima Basu, “When Bush, Top US Officials Compared Afghan War to Vietnam War—a War America Lost,” *Print*, December 11, 2019, <https://theprint.in/world/when-bush-top-us-officials-compared-afghan-war-to-vietnam-war-a-war-america-lost/333657/>.

46. Michael T. Klare, “The US Military Is Preparing for a New War: After Years of a Fruitless War on Terror, the Pentagon Is Turning Its Focus to China and Russia,” *Nation*, June 5, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/us-military-is-preparing-for-new-wars-china-russia/>.

TWO SIDES OF COIN

Toward Successful COIN: Shining Path's Decline

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ABSTRACT: The rapid decline of the Peruvian left-wing insurgent organization Sendero Luminoso was not only the result of the arrest of its leader. An analysis of the precipitous weakening of the organization using two social movement theories finds other factors were involved in the demise of the organization as well. These factors—participatory politics, support for the military among the rural population, and alienation of the population by Sendero Luminoso—provide insights to effective counterinsurgency tactics.

Leading scholarship on the decline of the Peruvian left-wing insurgent movement Sendero Luminoso (SL) attributes the group's eventual weakening to the loss of its charismatic leader.¹ While the arrest of the group's leader may be one reason for its dramatic virtual defeat, this article engages two social movement theories—state-centric and framing—to argue decapitation alone cannot account for SL's decline. Three factors in particular account for the weakening of Sendero Luminoso: 1) the participatory nature of Peruvian politics provided citizens with left-wing ideologies the ability to exercise political power without resorting to violence; 2) the military was moderately successful at building credibility with and separating peasants from SL; and 3) SL alienated potential supporters. These circumstances combined to ensure the group's effectiveness and influence would rapidly wane with the arrest of its charismatic leader. Throughout this article, SL will be conceptualized as a social movement—a group engaged in collective action to achieve a particular goal. Sendero Luminoso, however, will also alternately be referred to as an insurgency—a particular type of social movement engaged in “subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region,” and a terrorist group—an organization that “instill[s] fear and coerce[s] individuals, governments or societies” to achieve its goals.²

1. Robert B. Kent, “Geographical Dimensions of the Shining Path Insurgency in Peru,” *Geographical Review* 83, no. 4 (Oct. 1993): 441–54; Sandra Woy-Hazleton and William A. Hazleton, “Sendero Luminoso and the Future of Peruvian Democracy,” *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (April 1990): 21–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436599008420232>; and Michael L. Burgoyne, “The Allure of Quick Victory: Lessons from Peru's Fight against Sendero Luminoso,” *Military Review* XC, no. 5 (September–October 2010): 68–73.

2. Department of Defense (DoD), DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, s.v. “insurgency,” (Washington, DC: DoD, January 2021), <https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/dictionary.pdf>; and DOD Dictionary, s.v. “terrorism.”

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Background

In 1970, a charismatic philosophy professor named Abimael Guzmán founded SL at San Cristóbal of Huamanga National University in the city of Ayacucho. The name Sendero Luminoso, which translates to shining path, is a reference to the writings of José Carlos Mariátegui. Mariátegui proposed replacing Peru's feudal land ownership system with a socialist agrarian system that would not subordinate indigenous sharecroppers to a minority of mestizo landowners.³ Mariátegui referred to the path from sharecropping to socialism as the Shining Path, which Guzmán used as the name for his insurgency. The group referred to its philosophy as "Gonzalo Thought" in honor of Guzmán's nom de guerre, Comrade Gonzalo, and in addition to Mariátegui, it drew inspiration from the writings of Karl Marx and Mao Zedong. Gonzalo Thought advocated for imposing a communist dictatorship in a Maoist-style campaign originating in Peru's countryside.

On May 17, 1980, residents of Chuschi, Peru, went to vote after the transition from a military to a civilian regime and found SL had burned ballot boxes.⁴ Following this initial act of rebellion and while President Fernando Belaúnde Terry's administration still underestimated its strength, SL quickly gained territory, employed indiscriminate violence, and assassinated public officials and members of moderate left-wing political parties. In 1982, Belaúnde deployed the army and marines to set up emergency zones. Under his and the subsequent administrations of Alan García and Alberto Fujimori, the military and police acted with little restraint. Most violence occurred before Guzmán's arrest and SL's rapid atrophy in 1992 and resulted in over 69,000 deaths caused by both sides.⁵

Leadership Decapitation

Some scholars contend the decline of SL came about because the group could not function without its charismatic leader, finding positive links between leadership decapitation and the mortality of terrorist organizations including Sendero Luminoso.⁶ Other scholars argue the unpredictability of leadership succession in war makes it difficult to identify leadership decapitation as the reason for a group's weakening, or they propose the removal of a group's leadership is outright ineffective

3. José Carlos Mariátegui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, rev. ed., trans. Marjory Urquidí (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), 22–61.

4. Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Truth Commission: Peru 01*, July 13, 2001 to August 28, 2003, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2001/07/truth-commission-peru-01>.

5. Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Peru 01*.

6. Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 14–34; Bryan C. Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists: How Leadership Decapitation Contributes to Counterterrorism," *International Security* 36, no. 4 (Spring 2012): 9–46; and Patrick B. Johnston, "Does Decapitation Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Targeting in Counterinsurgency Campaigns," *International Security* 36, no. 4 (Spring 2012): 47–79, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00076.

against terrorist organizations with bureaucratic structures and high levels of popular support.⁷

An important limitation to the statistical analysis that is implied but never mentioned in the literature is that any causal link between leader decapitation and the survival of terrorist organizations only applies to the aggregate level. Given the possible range of ideologies, organizational structures, and resources available to terrorist organizations across geographies and time, it is impossible to say if a single case of leadership decapitation, such as the arrest of Guzmán, fits the aggregate-level findings. Moreover, while leadership decapitation may increase the likelihood terrorist groups will cease to exist, such an increase is no guarantee this will happen.

Even in studies that found leadership decapitation increased the likelihood a terrorist organization would be eliminated, other factors almost certainly influenced the amount by which the likelihood of such an outcome increased. Some scholarship determined leadership decapitation was effective against SL, but these studies also suggest if terrorist organizations can weather the period of turmoil immediately following the loss of key leaders, they can regroup and continue to be viable. “Sendero has failed to revive itself as an ideological organization, although a blossoming connection to cocaine trafficking has some Peruvian officials worried the group could become a resurgent threat.”⁸ Similarly, a survival analysis model shows the mortality of terrorist organizations that suffer leadership decapitation decreases over time as the organization continues to exist.⁹

At the time of Guzmán’s capture, SL had been in existence 22 years and had been fighting for 12 of those years, making it more likely to survive than a younger insurgency. Since at least 2002, SL has been increasing its cocaine trafficking and attacks on the military, which suggests SL survived Guzmán’s capture and successfully reorganized.¹⁰ Although there is an undeniable link between the survival of terrorist groups and leadership decapitation, this link alone is insufficient to account for SL’s decline. Among others, the example of the Taliban in Afghanistan and its continued survival after significant leadership losses calls into question the notion leadership decapitation alone guarantees a terrorist organization’s downfall, including that of Sendero Luminoso.

Social Movement Theories

While political scientists have examined variations in the types and causes of insurgent violence, this article examines SL as a social

7. Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 55–87; and Jenna Jordan, “Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark: Why Terrorist Groups Survive Decapitation Strikes,” *International Security* 38, no. 4 (Spring 2014): 7–38, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00157.

8. Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 20.

9. Price, “Targeting Top Terrorists,” 43.

10. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Peru: Shining Path—Slowly Regrouping* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, August 3, 2003).

movement—a group of people engaged in collective action through formal organization to achieve a goal.¹¹ Although the Shining Path is often referred to as a terrorist or insurgent group, terrorism and insurgency, as defined above, align with the definition of a social movement. Two theories of social movement explain revolutions—social movements that replace existing power structures as SL tried to do—in terms of the political participation of opposition groups and the ability of movements to craft narratives that resonate with potential recruits.

The state-centric view posits revolutions should fail in systems that allow citizen participation in politics and succeed in personalistic regimes that do not afford citizens political power.¹² But these polities do not have to be democracies: some scholars find revolution to be unlikely in semi-authoritarian regimes that maintain some ability for opposition groups to participate and address grievances within the political system.¹³ Whereas the only option to exercise political power in a personalistic regime is through violence, an open political system enables potential guerrillas to exercise political power within the existing system.¹⁴ Moreover, the behavior of such regimes can enable revolutions: the regime in question can marginalize the very elites whose support it needs to remain in power, or by intentionally weakening the military to avoid a coup, the regime can diminish military capabilities to the point its armed forces are unable to quell a rebellion.¹⁵

A weakness of the state-centric view is that it does not afford agency to individuals. In contrast, framing theorists emphasize the importance of how leaders of social movements can deliver their messages, through words and actions, to garner support.¹⁶ They argue revolutionary movements cannot gain material support or sow discontent without using effective messaging to attract this support or change opinions.¹⁷ Framing theory holds individuals have an attitude toward an object—a policy or action—that constitutes the sum of their beliefs about that object. Different individuals may have different criteria that shape their beliefs, and those criteria constitute a frame. If a social movement can craft its message in a way that changes peoples' frames, it can change

11. Jason Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?: Evidence from Chechnya," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (June 2009): 331–62, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002708330881>; Laia Balcells, "Rivalry and Revenge: Violence against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars," *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (June 2010): 291–313, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2010.00588.x>; Reed M Wood, "Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (September 2010): 601–14, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343310376473>; and Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy," (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2000), 26.

12. Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945–1991* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 25.

13. Jeff Goodwin and Theda Skocpol, "Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World," *Politics & Society* 17, no. 4 (December 1989): 495.

14. Goodwin and Skocpol, "Explaining Revolutions," 493.

15. Jack A. Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3 (May/June 2011): 10.

16. David A. Snow, "Framing and Social Movements," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, ed. David A. Snow et al. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 2.

17. Snow, "Framing and Social Movements," 3.

their attitudes and, in turn, their willingness to support or join the movement. According to this perspective, in order to be successful, a movement must craft a message that inspires people to view that movement positively.¹⁸

In addition to theoretical arguments, more recent work on the role of messaging in social movements has taken advantage of the availability of quantitative data to provide more concrete evidence of the link between framing and the success or failure of social movements. In a study of insurgent group networks and their attitudes toward their targets, researchers, using a news database, found evidence that rhetoric emanating from leaders of insurgent groups was associated with the political entities these groups were fighting against.¹⁹ Using data from Twitter, another study showed how misinformation from right-wing news sites changed peoples' opinions ahead of the 2016 presidential election.²⁰ A third, survey-based study found some rebel movements positively influenced observers' attitudes about them by using a gendered frame to highlight females' contributions to the movement's goals.²¹

Sendero Luminoso as a Social Movement

Both social movement theories—state-centric and framing—help explain the decline of SL. The state-centric perspective explains how systemic factors—democratization and the availability of peaceful alternatives within the political system and improving civil-military relations—pulled people away from Sendero Luminoso. The framing model shows how an individual-level factor—lack of popular support—pushed potential guerrillas away from SL. These circumstances combined to ensure Sendero Luminoso's organization would be a glasshouse easily broken and requiring years to reassemble.

Democratization and Peaceful Alternatives

From 1968 to 1980, Peruvians who embraced left-wing ideologies had options to exercise political power within an increasingly democratic system instead of joining SL. During this period, Peru was ruled by a military junta that gradually built open political institutions, “peasant federations, and rural cooperatives.”²² These initiatives cultivated a well-organized polity committed to social reform, incorporating

18. Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, “Framing Theory,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10, no. 1 (June 2007): 104, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.10.072805.103054>.

19. Michael Gabbay and Ashley Thirkill-Mackelprang, “A Quantitative Analysis of Insurgent Frames, Claims, and Networks in Iraq,” (American Political Science Association (APSA) 2011 Annual Meeting Paper, APSA, 2011): 37, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1900770.

20. Yochai Benkler et al., “Study: Breitbart-Led Right-Wing Media Ecosystem Altered Broader Media Agenda,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, March 3, 2017, 14.

21. Devorah Manekin and Reed M. Wood, “Framing the Narrative: Female Fighters, External Audience Attitudes, and Transnational Support for Armed Rebellions,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64, no. 9 (2020): 1638–65.

22. Susan C. Bourque and Kay B. Warren, “Democracy without Peace: The Cultural Politics of Terror in Peru,” *Latin American Research Review* 24, no. 1 (1989): 7–34; and James Ron, “Ideology in Context: Explaining Sendero Luminoso’s Tactical Escalation,” *Journal of Peace Research* 38, no. 5 (September 2001): 579.

left-wing groups into the political system, most of which merged into the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) and United Left (IU).²³ Democratic reform reached a crescendo with the transition to civilian rule in 1980.

After the transition to democracy, Peruvian politics became increasingly open to Marxist-leaning opposition groups, and the success of the APRA and IU illuminated a less violent and more desirable alternative to Sendero Luminoso. During Belaúnde's administration, parties of all stripes mobilized and ran for public office. Congress was comprised primarily of IU and APRA politicians, who won a combined 67 percent of the popular vote in national parliamentary elections in 1985 and had similar outcomes at the municipal level.²⁴ "Unlike the Sandinistas or the FMLN, a Sendero victory was rarely viewed by commentators on the left or the right as an improvement over the existing Peruvian regime, deeply flawed as it was."²⁵

While this history paints an optimistic picture of Peruvian politics, skeptics may point to unpopular structural readjustments to the economy, human rights violations caused by the military, and low public approval ratings.²⁶ It is also true that after taking office in 1990, Fujimori censored the press, allowed the military to detain citizens arbitrarily, and created secret courts to try insurgents. In 1992, he sent the military into the streets of Lima, dissolved congressional and judicial powers, and ruled by presidential decree. While these actions dealt a severe blow to democratization, they received considerable public approval and did not force citizens to resort to insurgency to exercise political power. For example, one 1992 poll showed 73 percent of respondents supported Fujimori's actions, and two months later, that approval rating had increased to 83 percent.²⁷ Less than a year after the coup, Fujimori called a constitutional referendum and restored legislative and judicial powers.

Improving Civil-Military Relations

Improving civil-military relations also helped pull would-be guerrillas into peaceful political organizations. At the end of the 1980s, the Belaúnde and Fujimori administrations pursued a more population-centric counterinsurgency strategy, codified in the Peruvian army manual *Unconventional Countersubversion Warfare*, ME 14-7. The manual directed the military to organize civilians into *rondas* (patrols) to fight the insurgents and to refrain from using indiscriminate violence. The

23. Bourque and Warren, "Democracy without Peace," 16.

24. Ron, "Ideology in Context," 584.

25. Ron, "Ideology in Context," 571.

26. Gordon H. McCormick, *The Shining Path and the Future of Peru* (Santa Monica CA: RAND Corporation, 1990).

27. María Teresa Quiroz, "Medios de comunicación y opinión política de los jóvenes en la ciudad de Lima, (coyuntura del 5 de abril de 1992)," *Contratexto*, no. 7 (January 2, 1994): 133, <https://revistas.ulima.edu.pe/index.php/contratexto/article/view/1943/1945>.

manual also required the military to pay fair prices for items it acquired from civilians and respect their “fundamental rights.”²⁸

Some high-level commanders implemented the population-centric approach and saw considerable success. After assuming command of the Upper Huallaga Valley, Brigadier General Alberto Arciniega Huby quickly realized indiscriminate violence “did not lead to favorable results” and ordered antidrug police not to “engage in repressive operations against coca growers.”²⁹ Huby gained support with coca growers by telling them he realized selling coca was their only way to eke out a living and “they were not considered delinquents but participants in the informal sector.”³⁰ Though likely exaggerated, Huby recounts after that meeting, the coca growers fought alongside the army in 60 battles and killed 1,000 SL members.³¹

The city of Ayacucho also experienced some success in improving civil-military relations. In 1990, US officials visited Ayacucho and concluded the number of deaths and disappearances by the military and police had decreased.³² Ayacucho’s district attorney and the special prosecutor for human rights spoke of increased cooperation from the army in prosecuting human rights violations, and others, including the local Catholic bishop, spoke of General Petronio Fernandez-Davila Carnero’s efforts to improve civil-military relations.³³ Similarly, during a SL strike in Ayacucho City, the police abstained from repression because they believed such behavior would elicit SL retaliation against civilians.³⁴

Aside from reducing indiscriminate violence, the military began to work closely with the communities it protected. The military established, trained, and equipped *rondas* in indigenous communities and began distributing shotguns to them in 1991. The following year, Fujimori codified the rights of these citizens to bear arms into the constitution. This action had a symbolic effect because Peruvian law had prohibited indigenous people from owning firearms since the colonial period.³⁵

Lack of Popular Support

Sendero Luminoso alienated potential supporters in words and actions. It used slogans such as, “if we do not understand Maoism as the

28. Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, “Tomo II,” 287–89, https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/commissions/Peru01-Report/Peru01-Report_Vol2.pdf.

29. Alberto Arciniega Huby, “Civil-Military Relations and a Democratic Peru,” trans. Patricia Radu and Michael Radu, *Orbis* 38, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 115.

30. Huby, “Civil-Military Relations,” 116.

31. Huby, “Civil-Military Relations,” 116.

32. US Embassy Lima, *In the Eye of the Storm: An Ayacucho Trip Report, Part I* (Lima, Peru: US Embassy Lima, December 20, 1990), 4, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB64/peru25.pdf>.

33. US Embassy Lima, *Ambassador’s Human Rights Calls in Ayacucho* (Lima, Peru: US Embassy Lima, December 11, 1990), 8–9, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB64/peru23.pdf>.

34. US Embassy Lima, *In the Eye*, 5.

35. Orin Starn, “Villagers at Arms: War and Counterrevolution in the Central-South Andes” in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru 1980–1995*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 224–258, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822398059-010>.

new, third and higher stage of Marxism, it is impossible to understand anything.” Instead of linking its cause with the marginalization of indigenous people by the state or highlighting the rural-urban divide, Gonzalo Thought reduced the plight of rural indigenous communities to class warfare.³⁶ Initially, SL received reluctant support from indigenous peasants marginalized by exploitative sharecropping arrangements and racism because the organization provided education and redistributed land from wealthy plantation owners.³⁷

But the movement lost the allegiance of the indigenous population by forcibly replacing indigenous leaders with its own leaders, forcing farmers not to grow crops, banning indigenous social and religious practices, and enslaving some indigenous people.³⁸ In areas controlled by Sendero Luminoso, residents faced brutal punishments for infractions such as adultery, drunkenness, and complaining about the movement.³⁹ Some communities formed *rondas*, but SL violently retaliated. In the village of Lucanamarca, SL insurgents hacked up approximately 70 peasants with machetes and hatchets and attacked other left-wing groups.⁴⁰

Though indigenous communities bore the brunt of SL violence, the group did not attack these communities out of racial or ethnic hatred but instead attacked them to achieve the goal of installing a communist dictatorship. A key pillar in Gonzalo Thought was the notion that “human rights are contradictory to the rights of the people.” Using brutal tactics against innocent civilians was therefore necessary and justified.⁴¹ Accordingly, SL assassinated an official from the US embassy, stoned a *ronda* commander to death in Lucanamarca, and killed dogs and hung them from telephone poles in Lima.⁴²

Moreover, Guzmán denounced President García, the IU mayor of Lima, and the Soviet Union, and SL assassinated leaders in other left-wing organizations.⁴³ Between 1983 and 1992, the group assassinated 268 union leaders, politicians, and community organizers that could

36. James F. Rochlin, *Vanguard Revolutionaries in Latin America: Peru, Colombia, Mexico* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2020) 31–36.

37. Lewis Taylor, *Shining Path: Guerrilla War in Peru's Northern Highlands, 1980–1997* (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2006).

38. Lewis Taylor, “Counter-Insurgency Strategy, the PCP-Sendero Luminoso and the Civil War in Peru, 1980–1996,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 17, no. 1 (January 1998): 35–58; and “Peru Rescues 39 ‘Slave Workers’ from Shining Path Farm,” BBC News, July 28, 2015.

39. Carlos Ivan Degregori, “A Dwarf Star,” *North American Conference on Latin America Report on the Americas* 24, no. 4 (December 1990): 14–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.1990.11723187>.

40. Edward Schumacher, “Insurgency in Peru: The Unarmed Are Dying,” *New York Times*, June 8, 1983, <https://www.nytimes.com/1983/06/08/world/insurgency-in-peru-the-unarmed-are-dying.html>.

41. Author translation; original: Partida Comunista de Perú, “Sobre Las Dos Colinas: Documento de Estudio Para El Balance de La III Campaña,” 1991, <http://www.cedema.org/ver.php?id=699>.

42. Degregori, “A Dwarf Star,” 11.

43. Author translation; original: Partido Comunista de Perú—Sendero Luminoso, “Línea de Construcción de los Tres Instrumentos de la Revolución,” 1988, http://www.solrojo.org/pcp_doc/pcp_lpg.ci.htm; and José Luis Rénique, “Apogee and Crisis of a ‘Third Path’: *Mariateguismo*, ‘People’s War,’ and Counterinsurgency in Puno, 1987–1994,” in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980–1995*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 318, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822398059-010>.

have been supporters.⁴⁴ Members also assassinated journalists from Lima that could have helped SL gain support.⁴⁵ Ultimately, without a political system to repress people to the point they would support Sendero Luminoso and without an effective strategy to gain new supporters, the capture of Guzmán dealt a serious, though not deadly, blow to the movement.

Recommendations

Drawing on the analysis above, this section proposes three recommendations essential to successful counterinsurgency: building and strengthening civil society organizations, improving civil-military relations, and driving a wedge between insurgents and potential recruits. These recommendations are intended to deprive insurgents of their ability to generate popular support and thus differ from traditional counterterrorist operations undertaken to prevent the successful employment of terrorist tactics.

Civil Society Organizations

The participatory nature of the political system and the presence of civil society organizations gives citizens the ability to exercise political power without resorting to violence. In situations where a robust civil society exists during an insurgency, counterinsurgents should work with civil society leaders to strengthen these organization and their appeal to potential guerrillas and to moderates within the rebel movement itself. If a functional civil society is nonexistent during an insurgency, counterinsurgents must identify influential people to build civil society organizations that can function as alternatives to taking up arms against the state.

Although counterinsurgents are generally military or police forces, diplomatic and development organizations such as the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, and the National Endowment for Democracy, or their international equivalents, are better suited to execute and coordinate counterinsurgent efforts working in concert with military and police operations.⁴⁶ Indeed, building and strengthening civil society organizations without military operations will not resolve an insurgency and may facilitate insurgent assassinations by making more identifiable targets. (Just such a scenario resulted in the SL killings of APRA and IU leaders.) But as was the case in the ethnic conflict in Serbia (1991–99), separatists clashes in Northern Ireland (1968–98), the anticommunist struggle in Nicaragua (1981–90), and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front insurgency in the Philippines

44. Ron, "Ideology in Context," 583.

45. Bourque and Warren, "Democracy without Peace," 21.

46. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Interorganizational Cooperation*, Joint Publication 3-08 (Washington, DC: JCS, October 16, 2017), https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_08pa.pdf?ver=2018-02-08-091414-467.

(1977–2014), civil society organizations can have a pacifying effect that complements military and police operations.⁴⁷

Civil-Military Relations

The military's shift to population-centric counterinsurgency, restraint against wanton violence, and the creation of *rondas* helped boost its credibility and legitimacy in the emergency zones it controlled. With greater credibility and legitimacy, the military was able to win over peasants and more selectively target SL insurgents. Improving civil-military relations by refraining from indiscriminate violence and building relationships with civilians isolates civilians from insurgents and makes targeting insurgents easier. For example, Dotan Haim found civilian aid in the Philippines was more effective at countering insurgent influence and reducing violence in villages where civilians perceived the army as being a more credible institution than in villages where the army had less credibility.⁴⁸

Practically, counterinsurgents will often be a mix of local security forces and foreign military forces that provide training and logistical support to the local force, as is the case in Afghanistan and Iraq. In such cases, foreign counterinsurgents should train local forces to build positive relationships with civilians and condition support for these forces on refraining from indiscriminately targeting civilians. When only one country's security forces act as counterinsurgents, they should gain credibility by liaising with civilians, protecting the civilian population from insurgent violence, and minimizing civilian casualties.

Insurgents and Potential Recruits

Counterinsurgents should also deprive insurgents of potential support. Sendero Luminoso was unable to garner popular support because its rigid ideology and brutal tactics alienated the population from which it needed support.⁴⁹ When rebels use brutal tactics against civilians, counterinsurgents should capitalize on the opportunity to portray the rebels in a negative light.

Counterinsurgents can also exploit differences in ethnicity, religion, social strata, or economic class between insurgents and their support base. Recent research demonstrates the least inclusive armies have been the least effective because they sow distrust and infighting; there is no reason to think this would not also be the case with rebel movements.⁵⁰ To create and highlight divisions between rebels and potential supporters, public affairs, psychological operations, public diplomacy,

47. Catherine Barnes, *Agents for Change: Civil Society Roles in Preventing War & Building Peace*, Issue Paper 2 (European Centre for Conflict Prevention/International Secretariat of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, September 2006), <https://www.gppac.net/files/2018-11/Agents%20for%20Change.pdf>.

48. Dotan A. Haim, "Civilian Social Networks and Credible Counterinsurgency" (working paper, University of California San Diego, 2019).

49. Ron, "Ideology in Context," 586.

50. Jason Lyall, *Divided Armies: Inequalities & Battlefield Performance in War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).

and information operations experts must work together to identify differences between insurgents and their support base and develop a coherent messaging campaign to highlight those differences.

Conclusion

One of the most popular explanations for the decline of Sendero Luminoso is that the group was ineffective without its charismatic leader. But leadership decapitation theory does not fully account for this decline because the evidence for leadership decapitation generalizes across space and time. Such broad generalization ignores the political and social contexts that lead to the decline of individual groups such as the Shining Path. Accordingly, leadership decapitation does not explain why SL could not survive without Guzmán, only that it could not survive without him. Social movement theory instead provides a more thorough explanation for the group's sudden demise.

State-centric theory maintains revolutionary movements are unlikely to prevail in political systems where citizens can exercise political power without resorting to insurgency, and framing theory emphasizes the importance of the messaging rebels use to gain support. Peru offered citizens who embraced left-wing ideologies the ability to exercise political power. The country had been democratizing since 1968, there were political parties with Marxist orientations, and starting in 1990, the military worked to improve civil-military relations. Sendero Luminoso itself failed to attract the support of citizens because of the rhetoric and brutality it employed against other leftist groups and against indigenous communities. To be successful in future conflicts, counterinsurgents must build and strengthen civil society organizations, improve civil-military relations, and drive a wedge between insurgents and their popular support.

Europe: A Strategy for a Regional and Middle Power

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ABSTRACT: As the European Union deals with yet another crisis—the COVID-19 pandemic—it must adopt a grand strategy based on unity, policy, and proportionality: cohesion over inaction, policy over process, and regional imperatives over global ambitions. An analysis of past strategy documents and a study of current international trends stress the need for a Union capable of shaping its own environment rather than reacting to it. The pandemic should accelerate Europe’s journey toward power maturity and responsibility.

By nature and temperament, the European Union (EU) is not well suited for grand strategy. Norms and rules are its vocabulary, not power and interests. Yet the evolution of the international system toward a loose, multipolar configuration compels Europeans to assume more responsibilities, notably in security and defense. In this endeavor, the EU should build internal legitimacy, seek proportionality between ends and means, retain some modesty in ambition, and prioritize its neighborhood before advancing its interests among distanced great powers.

As a cluster of supranational institutions, the EU is indeed a very special entity: a monetary union, partial thus suboptimal; a classic alliance, at least in the Treaty of Lisbon; and a permanent forum for managing a substantial portion of the daily lives of 450 million people. The Union is designed for rule-based consensus, cooperative behaviors, and prudential decisions. Collectively the EU remains a strategic dwarf.

Will the coronavirus pandemic represent one crisis too many, or, on the contrary, will it trigger successful reform efforts toward a more integrated and efficient Union? Between a terminal stage of irrelevance and a federal union, the most likely scenario, as is often the case with the EU, will probably be another kick of the can further down the middle road—enough to keep the Union alive, not too weakened but not too ambitious either.

According to polls, Europeans are more aware of the need for a stronger EU, yet they remain highly doubtful of its capacity to deliver.¹ Thirty years after the end of the Cold War, the essential challenge remains roughly similar: moving from a recognition of weakness to

1. Ivan Krastev and Mark Leonard, “Europe’s Pandemic Politics: How the Virus Has Changed the Public’s Worldview,” Policy Brief, European Council on Foreign Relations, June 24, 2020, https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/europes_pandemic_politics_how_the_virus_has_changed_the_publics_worldview.

a position of strength. Notable improvements—painful for some—have been made in economic and monetary governance. Progress has been slower, however, in the security and defense sectors in which the historical division of labor—some nations adopt hard power while the EU as a whole relishes soft power—has remained largely untouched.

Preexisting Conditions

The EU was built on three models: solidarity, democracy, and economic governance. All three models have been in crisis for most of the last decade. Europe's 2015 migrant crisis nearly broke the European modus operandi of solidarity. Europe's democratic foundation has been threatened by the rise of populist political movements, and in some cases, by increasingly autocratic governments discarding independent judiciaries or refusing to safeguard respect for minority rights. The past few years have shown economic growth to be distributed unequally among Europeans, not only within societies characterized by increasing social inequalities, but also among Eurozone member states, with a widening chasm between the south and the north.

Through recurrent drama, hurried improvisation, and all-too-rare leadership, the EU has overcome these crises. In the process, however, three corresponding liberal beliefs have been shattered: economic integration will lead to a political union; economic governance will ensure Europe's prosperity; and a union of democratic countries will be the best guarantee against the return of violence and conflicts to the Continent.

These liberal principles were born and implemented under the American security umbrella of the 1950s. The EU did not make peace; the American peace—both the Marshall Plan and the American security guarantee—made the EU possible. In Brussels, technocrats often get that part of history wrong. American hegemony suited many European countries, even after the end of the Cold War. The involvement of the United States allowed a primarily civilian Europe to continue apace. The US presence also gave Europe the ability to postpone difficult strategic choices and suspend international responsibilities.

But this rather limited engagement with hard security issues carried significant costs for the credibility and moral standing of the Union: its inaction in Srebrenica, Rwanda, and Darfur contributed to humanitarian disasters that tainted a record of self-claimed righteousness and integrity in foreign affairs.² The EU seemed to reach for an impossible ideal of absolute purity in world politics, a “divine goodness in history that it is impossible to symbolize in any other way than by complete powerlessness or rather by a consistent refusal to use power in the rivalries of history.”³

2. James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and Hugo Slim, “Dithering over Darfur? A Preliminary Review of the International Response,” *International Affairs* 80, no. 5 (October 2004): 811–28.

3. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation, Volume I: Human Nature* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 72.

This attitude—a mixture of idealist moral stance and realist restraint—proved an untenable international position.

Problems are deeper than a lack of ambition and capabilities. The European Union suffers from two contradictions in its approach to power. First, the Union has neglected power politics because it has been militarily weak, but equally, it has been militarily weak because it abandoned power politics. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, EU leaders started to understand their priorities needed to change: Brussels, historically hard on its soft power and rather soft on its hard power, needed to become softer on its soft power and harder on its hard power.

Still, the soft power of expanding rules and norms was not always perceived as particularly benign by the affected countries. The normative power was in essence much more imperial than suspected, however “post-modern, lite or sane” it claimed to be.⁴ Furthermore, this soft power often hid the lack of a real EU foreign policy—a definition of preferences that would enhance its interests. Last, when it came to the use of force, the Union had limited itself to a narrow set of liberal missions, from peacekeeping to state building.

Even in these endeavors, the EU regularly confused ends and means—an operation was successful because it existed. The Union also repeatedly refused to take the necessary risks—a zero-casualty caveat seemed to be attached implicitly to concepts of operations. Finally, leadership often failed to understand the strategic stakes at hand—by sticking to neutrality and impartiality, it made its humanitarian interventions largely ineffective.⁵ European soldiers are often used as Red Cross personnel, sometimes as instructors, and on occasion as *gardien de la paix* (police officers), but nearly never as embodiments of coercion. To kill and to die for the European flag is still largely a political taboo.

The second contradiction is related to power distribution at the international level. Since its creation, the Union has persisted through two stages of international polarity and into a third—a relatively stable bipolar order, a unipolar world, and now an emerging multipolar system. Vis-à-vis Washington, the first configuration meant a protectorate where the cause was common, the second stage involved balancing or supporting the unilateral decisions of the United States, and the third stage implies emancipation in the face of diverging interests. This change, which emerged during US President Barack Obama’s second term, is the most fundamental reason why Europe had to stop outsourcing its security and embrace a Gaullist posture.⁶

4. Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Atlantic Books, 2003); Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004); and David Boucher, “‘Sane’ and ‘Insane’ Imperialism: British Idealism, New Liberalism and Liberal Imperialism,” *History of European Ideas* 44, no. 8 (2018): 1189–1204.

5. Jean-Yves Haine, “The European Crisis of Liberal Internationalism,” *International Journal* 64, no. 2 (June 2009): 453–79.

6. Jean-Yves Haine, “A New Gaullist Moment? European Bandwagoning and International Polarity,” *International Affairs* 91, no. 5 (September 2015): 991–1008.

Yet Europeans, by and large, remain reluctant to shift toward strategic autonomy. “This general inclination to leave the strategic problems to others is probably the consequence of having lived with American leadership for so long and so well.”⁷ But a more cynical reason can also be seen: autonomy entails responsibilities that demand choices and risks and thus portend less solidarity. The American hegemon was also a “pacifier,” a comfortable framework in which internal competitions could be subdued, relative gains did not really matter, and the imbalance among partners was harmless.⁸ Without the Washington hegemon, the power of Germany—or lack thereof—becomes essential but also controversial. In sum, by 2020 the EU presented serious preexisting conditions; it was process oriented, fragmented, and inward looking.

Resilience

Health care remains a national prerogative; in their combat against the virus, states inevitably sidelined the European institutions. Throughout the crises, Brussels was neither able to coordinate national lockdown calendars, nor was it able to keep borders open and prevent single-market violations. The EU witnessed an increasingly nefarious lack of cohesion, especially when Italy, devastated by the first wave of the pandemic, asked for help and received nearly none. Resentment set in, nationalism rose, neighbors became suspicious, and borders closed. At the same time, the poor management of the pandemic by other great powers including China and the United States did, by contrast, reinforce several common European characteristics: public health service, scientific expertise, political transparency and accountability, the democratic decision-making process, and international aid and assistance.⁹

For Europeans, the negative economic impact from the pandemic is likely to be unprecedented. With a simultaneous supply and demand shock, according to the International Monetary Fund, the gross domestic product of the Eurozone will be almost 10 percent lower in 2021 than in 2019.¹⁰ The effects within Europe are not equally distributed. European countries with economies dependent upon manufacturing and tourism are disproportionately affected by lockdown measures and travel restrictions. Moreover, these countries often have weaker fiscal reserves to compensate for unemployment and boost economic activities. This asymmetry of effects will lead to further long-term economic divergence between southern and northern Europe.

7. Christoph Bertram, “Europe’s Best Interest: Staying Close to Number One,” *International Politics and Society* 6, no. 1 (January 2003): 65. Original in German.

8. Josef Joffe, “Europe’s American Pacifier,” *Foreign Policy* 54 (Spring 1984): 64–82, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1148355?seq=1>.

9. Richard Youngs, “How the Coronavirus Tests European Democracy,” *Carnegie Europe*, June 23, 2020, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2020/06/23/how-coronavirus-tests-european-democracy-pub-82109>.

10. *World Economic Outlook Update, June 2020: A Crisis Like No Other, an Uncertain Recovery* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2020), <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2020/06/24/WEOUpdateJune2020>.

Important decisions were taken in 2020, however. First, as early as March 2020, the European Central Bank agreed to fund the 750 billion euro Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme—a quantitative easing operation of government bond purchases. Although it kept market worries about debt sustainability in check, this program encountered the wrath of the German constitutional court, which demanded a “proportionality assessment” to ensure it did not illegally finance governments or expose taxpayers to potential losses.¹¹

Second, on July 21, 2020, member states agreed on a recovery fund composed of 390 billion euros in grants and 360 billion euros in loans to help countries affected by the pandemic. This aid that Brussels would borrow on the market added to the 1.074 trillion euro seven-year budget (the Multi-annual Financial Framework). The July agreement was the result of painstaking negotiations—not quite a “Hamiltonian moment” but a significant step toward a transfer EU. The scheme is not a permanent system of fully mutualized debt, but Olaf Scholz, the German finance minister and vice chancellor, was quick to use the American analogy.¹² There was a clear recognition the survival of Europe was at stake. As French President Emmanuel Macron argued, Europe “faced a moment of truth,” warning without solidarity, Europe “as a ‘political project’ would collapse.”¹³ German Chancellor Angela Merkel decided to act quickly and decisively. As she has acknowledged: “Europe needs us, just as we need Europe. . . . The EU won’t survive without more forceful German leadership.”¹⁴

Third, it was also decided the European Commission would manage a collective procurement program for future vaccines to make sure all Europeans, beyond their nationalities, would be covered.

These decisions had positive effects. They decreased populist and nationalist movements throughout Europe.¹⁵ The massive economic aid program alleviated economic divisions between northern and southern Europe and political tensions between eastern and western Europe. Brussels ceased to be the usual scapegoat for everything that goes wrong internally. Yet drawbacks emerged. The collective approach in vaccine procurement emphasized solidarity and equality, but mistakes were made and the rollout throughout Europe was delayed. A blame game

11. “Seeing Red: Germany’s Highest Court Takes Issue with the European Central Bank,” *Economist*, May 7, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2020/05/07/germanys-highest-court-takes-issue-with-the-european-central-bank>.

12. Guy Chazan, “The Minds behind Germany’s Shifting Fiscal Stance: Jörg Kukies and Olaf Scholz Key in Reshaping Berlin’s Hawkish Attitude towards Europe,” *Financial Times*, June 9, 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/2503ce9c-cde9-4301-bba0-8301f7deaf3b>.

13. Victor Mallet and Roula Khalaf, “Macron Warns of EU Unravelling Unless It Embraces Financial Solidarity,” *Financial Times*, April 16, 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/d19dc7a6-c33b-4931-9a7e-4a74674da29a>.

14. Matthew Karnitschnig, “What Merkel Wants,” *Politico*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/what-angela-merkel-germany-wants-eu-influence>.

15. Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Carisa Nietsche, “The Coronavirus Is Exposing Populists’ Hollow Politics: As the Crisis Worsens, Even More Extreme Groups May Prosper,” *Foreign Policy*, April 16, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/16/coronavirus-populism-extremism-europe-league-italy/>.

inevitably arose between states, the Commission, and pharmaceutical groups. The recovery fund has market credibility because it is supported by Germany. Berlin will likely have a preponderant voice in its management, and this position may trigger unease, especially in France. A Europe without German leadership runs the risk of division; a German Europe runs the risk of resentment.

Between Brussels' missteps and German dominance, the equilibrium is thus fragile. Yet economic solidarity remains a prerequisite for cohesion at the foundation of European security. Crises necessarily change priorities, affect interests, and call past decisions into question. It is too soon to tell if this will be the case with defense budgets in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, but the scenario is likely.

The European Defense Fund, launched on January 1, 2021, was established to strengthen the defense industrial base and develop innovation. Initially it was given a 13 billion euro budgetary envelope (2021–27), but this amount was reduced to 8 billion euros in the Commission's latest proposal.¹⁶ As for the long list of projects decided under the Permanent Structured Cooperation scheme established in December 2017, it is highly unlikely all will survive unscathed. As the new director of the European Defence Agency, Jiří Šedivý, acknowledged, “we can expect an additional strain on resources, it is already looming.”¹⁷ Yet despite the unprecedented impact from the pandemic and potential weakening of the EU security foundations, the political and economic underpinnings of the Union have the potential to remain relatively resilient.

Global Distancing

In a matter of months, the coronavirus has affected every great power, revealing obvious vulnerabilities: a chaotic American presidency, China's one-party, opaque decision making, and Russia's one-leader discretionary policies. The international community seems to be back to “competitive decadence,” where great powers compete with one another in their attempts to solve mounting internal problems.¹⁸ In this context, the international society of states has become more fragmented and less responsive; international cooperation, from humanitarian concerns to collective security issues, is more difficult. Our multipolar world is more heterogeneous and distant. The most likely configuration that will emerge is a world disorder—not necessarily more violent, but essentially power regulated rather than rules based.

16. Raluca Csernatoni, “EU Security and Defense Challenges: Toward a European Defense Winter?,” Carnegie Europe, June 11, 2020, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2020/06/11/eu-security-and-defense-challenges-toward-european-defense-winter-pub-82032>; and European Commission, “Commission Welcomes the Political Agreement on the European Defence Fund,” European Commission, December 10, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2319.

17. Robin Emmott, “On Budget Eve, EU Defence Money at Risk from Coronavirus,” Reuters, May 12, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-eu-defence/on-budget-eve-eu-defence-money-at-risk-from-coronavirus-idUSKBN2201BU>.

18. Pierre Hassner, “Cold War to Hot Peace,” *New York Times*, October 16, 1973.

In such a world, where will Europe stand? First, the United States has moved from friend to stranger, if not outright competitor. The pandemic has deteriorated the already poor relations between Washington and Brussels. US President Donald Trump, the first American president to be overtly hostile to the EU, framed the relationship as a zero-sum game. “Trump saw Europeans as adversaries, not America’s closest allies, and often told advisers different versions of the idea that ‘the EU is worse than China, only smaller.’”¹⁹ Certainly rifts have happened before, from the Suez to Iraq. With the Biden presidency, a more constructive agenda will be possible, yet the last several years have left many Europeans with mixed feelings toward the United States, and significant differences remain.

Recent history suggests the United States is increasingly moving away from the Atlantic and the European theater to focus more on the Indo-Pacific theater. The categorical nature of transatlantic relations has been subsumed by multipolarity. A common perception of friend and foe is at the basis of a functioning alliance; with today’s rapidly changing threats and situational relationships, a broad Alliance such as NATO cannot maintain consensus in every contingency. US President Joe Biden reaffirmed “the faith” in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, yet strategic foci and threat perceptions among Allies vary.²⁰

Second, China has moved from stranger to rival. The pandemic has reinforced several negative characteristics including China’s unreliability, lack of transparency, and disinformation efforts. In addition to the crisis, the increasing authoritarianism of China’s leader President Xi Jinping, further restrictions of basic freedoms, and the poor prospect of any liberalization have pushed Europe toward a more cautious approach vis-à-vis Beijing.

The crisis has also underlined the asymmetry in EU-China economic relations, including the Union’s vulnerability in some crucial sectors. Europe is not in a position to decouple, yet many European governments are actively promoting supply chain diversification for a wide range of products to other producers like Vietnam and India.²¹ But few European governments, first among them Germany, are willing to engage in an economic battle with Beijing. Under German leadership and amid strong criticism from human rights groups and unambiguous opposition from Washington, the EU signed the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment with China in December 2020. Merkel believed it was “right

19. Susan B. Glasser, “John Bolton’s Epic Score-Settling,” *New Yorker*, June 18, 2020.

20. David E. Sanger, “Biden Declares ‘America Is Back’ on International Stage,” *New York Times*, February 23, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/19/world/g7-meeting-munich-security-conference>.

21. Archana Chaudhary, “EU to Focus on Diversifying Crucial Supply Chains, Says Borrell,” *Bloomberg*, July 14, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-14/eu-to-focus-on-diversifying-crucial-supply-chains-says-borrell>.

and important to strive for good strategic relations with China.”²² By strategic, she essentially meant a growing trade relationship.

Moreover, with worldwide deflation, Chinese economic growth will suffer. The temptation, already clear, is for the Chinese Communist Party to compensate domestic weakness with a more assertive affirmation of Chinese power. Thus far, the EU seems divided on how to react. After a new security law was imposed on Hong Kong, Europeans condemned the move but were unable to agree on any punitive measures.²³

Under domestic pressure and growing evidence of massive human rights violations against the Uighurs in the Xinjiang region, the EU decided in March 2021, for the first time since 1989, to impose targeted sanctions on four Chinese officials involved in operating internment camps in Xinjiang. In the EU 2019 Strategic Outlook, China was defined “as a negotiating partner, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival.”²⁴ With an increasingly assertive China and after the departure of Merkel this year, partnership might become more challenging. Economic competition and political rivalry will thus continue, albeit in a more distanced form.

Third, Russia remains an enemy but a weaker one. Russia has been affected by two major crises simultaneously—the pandemic and the collapse of oil prices. Russian President Vladimir Putin gambled with Saudi Arabia and lost. Both crises will have a significant impact on Russian state resources. In 2019, income from oil and gas accounted for nearly 40 percent of Russia’s federal budget revenues. The Central Bank of Russia estimated a 6 percent fall in gross domestic product in 2020, and fiscal measures to support people and businesses affected by the pandemic add up to just 40 billion US dollars or 2.8 percent of gross domestic product. By comparison, Germany had a 130 billion euro rescue package for its economy.²⁵

Yet Putin is unlikely to moderate his foreign policy approach—any analogy with the mid-1980s is misguided.²⁶ With economic difficulties, the country can be expected to take a nationalist and conservative turn that will include increased repression against domestic political opponents and scapegoating of foreign intruders. Russia’s main lesson from the pandemic may well be confirmation of the superiority of self-reliance in a globalized world. Moscow will continue to interfere in US and European politics—it is cheap and carries few risks—and

22. Hans von der Burchard, “Merkel Pushes EU-China Investment Deal over the Finish Line Despite Criticism,” *Politico*, December 29 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-china-investment-deal-angela-merkel-pushes-finish-line-despite-criticism/>.

23. Ian Bond, “The EU Must Be Prepared to Be Critical of China. It Can Start with Hong Kong’s Security Law,” *Euronews*, June 24, 2020.

24. European Commission, *EU-China: A Strategic Outlook*, March 12, 2019.

25. See Henry Foy, “Russia: Pandemic Tests Putin’s Grip on Power,” *Financial Times*, May 4, 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/d4d61de4-8aca-11ea-9dcb-fe6871f4145a>.

26. Eugene Rumer, “The Coronavirus Won’t Make Putin Play Nice,” *Quick Take* (blog), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 14, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/04/14/coronavirus-won-t-make-putin-play-nice-pub-81555>.

the value gap with Brussels will increase. The current sanctions regime is likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future and with it the absence of meaningful dialogue. The 2021 imprisonment of Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny and the mass arrest of protesters have only increased moral revulsion among many Europeans. The prospect of a reset button appears as remote as ever.²⁷

Global distancing within the international system leaves the EU in an unprecedented position—mostly alone. Sidelined by its traditional US ally, contending with an assertive China, and confronting a hostile Russia, the Union's responsibility is a strategic reality. The EU must learn the language of power politics and the new vocabulary that comes with it—force and coercion, balance of power, and zone of influence. In a loose, multipolar system, every major power has to think for itself.

Understandably, the United States is shifting its focus toward the Indo-Pacific region and is worrying about the rise of China. The EU has to confront instability in its eastern and southern neighborhoods, and overall interests common to Europe and the United States are decreasing in number. In short, Europe remains a middle power *in size*. With a population larger than the United States and with the second largest nominal gross domestic product, and despite the considerable defense capabilities of some of its members (one a nuclear power), it is still unable to compete militarily as a world power. Moreover, the EU has become a middle power *in position*: the EU finds itself increasingly torn between Beijing and Washington. From a sociological and historical point of view, the Union's situation has evolved—it is further apart from Washington. This shift does not imply a rapprochement with Beijing, yet the EU's autonomy and concomitant responsibility has increased.

A Grand Strategy

Any grand strategy is fraught with difficulties. Complexity makes prediction impossible, contingencies make it useless. For Europeans, there is the added dimension of bringing together a group of countries with vastly different power dynamics, strategic cultures, and security traditions. Some countries may be tempted to consider that any grand strategy exercise is doomed to fail because Europeans do not share a sense of community that would allow for such an instrument to be relevant and meaningful. Yet at its core, a grand strategy translates an understanding of what we are and where we act and reveals intentions regarding what we have and what we want. Around this core, unity, policy, and proportionality form the necessary basis of an EU grand strategy.

Unity

Unity is the first prerequisite. A grand strategy is a declaration of intentions, and in the case of the EU, the initial audience is domestic. The

27. Carl Bildt, "Why the West's Attempts to Reset Relations with Russia Have Failed Again and Again," *Washington Post*, February 18, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/02/18/carl-bildt-russia-reset-putin/>.

first attempt at a grand strategy occurred after the 2003 Iraq crisis, and the assumption was a Europe divided was powerless.²⁸ In 2009, Europe was too fragmented to contemplate an update. In 2016, after the terrorist attacks, the immigration crises, and the Brexit vote that took place a week before its publication, a new document emphasized resilience in capacities and in politics, underlining the need for a concerted EU role.²⁹ For Europeans today, however, unity is more difficult than ever.

First, as mentioned before, the US umbrella ceased to protect the EU against its own discord. Second, at 28 members, the club is too large to make timely and effective decisions and actions in foreign and security policy. Attempts to build a limited core group or vote with a qualified majority have been a fiasco; consensus building seems the only way to move forward.³⁰ Third, and most importantly, Europe has to position itself around issues and in areas that are largely unfamiliar. Too often the result has been Europe's absence or its refuge behind empty formulas or paycheck diplomacy.

But unity cannot be only a matter of a top-to-down process run by a foreign policy elite. Unity must include a European forum where issues can be debated and decisions accounted for. Too often, foreign policy is decided behind closed doors in a world of classified documents and internal memos. The EU needs to hold hearings and establish parliamentary oversight, including at the national level—a necessary step toward legitimacy. Transparency is not only a democratic imperative, it is a strategic necessity, adding a crucial but missing dimension to the Union's arsenal—public opinion, a formidable force multiplier. After the pandemic, temptations of inward-looking, protectionist, and isolationist measures will increase. Keeping the EU's ambition intact begins with promoting the saliency of international politics in all-too-often parochial European debates.

Policy

The second component of a grand strategy is policy—a daunting task for the EU. At the most fundamental level, the institution has to replace process with policy. For too long, the enlargement framework was the only lens through which the Union perceived its neighborhood—membership for those who would join, association for those who could not. The enlargement framework was perceived as benign, but as the fiasco in Ukraine demonstrated, it was not. Moscow saw the expansion of rules as the essence of an imperial policy and decided to draw the line.

28. Alyson J. K. Bailes, *The European Security Strategy: An Evolutionary History*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Policy Paper No. 10 (Stockholm: SIPRI, February 2005).

29. Nathalie Tocci, "From the European Security Strategy to the EU Global Strategy: Explaining the Journey," *International Politics* 54, no. 4 (July 2017): 487–502; and Wolfgang Wagner and Rosanne Anholt, "Resilience as the EU Global Strategy's New Leitmotif: Pragmatic, Problematic or Promising?," *Contemporary Security Policy* 37, no. 3 (2016): 414–30.

30. Leonard Schuette, "Should the EU Make Foreign Policy Decisions by Majority Voting?," Centre for European Reform, May 2019.

For the EU, expansion was not geopolitical but technocratic. Of course, that Europe was mistaken does not justify the Russian reaction.³¹

The first lesson is about framing issues and thinking strategically. A key merit of the 2003 document was its attempt to define threats, even in very generic terms. What is needed, however, is a more demanding and challenging definition of interests and identification of friends and enemies. Europeans may be averse to thinking this way, but it is a prerequisite for genuine strategic behavior. As Raymond Aron, following Carl Schmitt, described it, the identification of friends and foes is “the first task of political responsibility that cannot be avoided, it is the supreme political act.”³²

Designing strategies to face hostile acts, either by deterrence, coercion, or negotiation, is the second step. In the rare instance when the EU has identified an enemy, it has done so from a normative point of view and put its identity as a liberal entity before its strategic interest, thus making dialogue impossible. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is a war criminal, yet he is also a critical participant in peace talks. Putin may indeed be a brutal autocratic leader, but Russian cooperation is needed to tame Iranian nuclear ambitions. In a multipolar world where gray zones will replace clear lines of identification, the task may be difficult but must not be avoided. Postponing this debate constitutes abandoning strategic purposes.

The third step involves the EU prioritizing itself. On several important issues—trade, climate change, and nuclear proliferation—American and European interests do not align. On security issues, Europeans have rarely acted for themselves. In Ukraine, the Minsk II peace process, albeit fragile, is a European solution to a European problem where the absence of the United States was a condition for progress. With Iran, Europeans are working to salvage an agreement they deemed in their interests while Washington is still hesitant on lifting sanctions and opening talks.³³

Overall, the EU maintains a strange but not surprisingly myopic view of world affairs, based on an excessive focus on the hegemon—the United States—despite an expected incongruence between US global interests and Europe’s regional security. In European capitals, there is a tendency to hide behind the storm and hope for quieter times. The past cannot be the prologue; in the increasing antagonism between China and America, the EU will have to choose sides according to its interests.

31. See John J. Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin,” *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September/October 2014): 77–89; and Stefan Auer, “Carl Schmitt in the Kremlin: the Ukraine Crisis and the Return of Geopolitics,” *International Affairs* 91, no. 5 (September 2015): 953–68.

32. Raymond Aron, *Penser la Guerre, Clausewitz, 2: L’Age Planétaire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 119.

33. Colum Lynch, “Europeans Fear Iran Nuclear Window Closing,” *Foreign Policy*, March 26, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/26/europe-us-biden-iran-nuclear-deal-lift-sanctions/>.

Europe so far has displayed no intention to unite with Washington against Beijing.³⁴

Proportionality

Considerations of proportionality—the delicate balance between ends and means—follow considerations of unity and policy. Not surprisingly, for the last 20 years the EU has focused on the latter rather than the former, and since the process has been capability driven and not strategy led, inadequacies, disconnect, and mismatch have abounded. The founding act of the Common Security and Defence Policy in 1999 was an agreement to rearm Europe for autonomous action, which at the time was translated as a military objective of 60,000 troops. This target was rapidly abandoned in favor of small, deployable battle groups of around 2,500 troops.³⁵

Military budgets were drastically decreased after the 2009 financial crisis, and the pandemic crisis may again further reduce overall defense funding. This lack of funding narrowed potential military operations to a limited band of the security spectrum—low-intensity peacekeeping missions. Needless to say, planning for potential military operations should be approached in the opposite manner. What is the EU ready to do and where?

As stated in the 2016 document, the EU views security as global; it has interests, stakes, and options everywhere. This perspective is the result of normative thinking—universal values—and security traditions—France is a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The strategic reality, however, is different: the scope of Europe's ambition should be regional. In a multipolar world, regional responsibilities are essential. Ignoring these responsibilities invites foreign interventions and contests.

The EU has refused to act in Syria, but Moscow did. In Libya, the EU disagreed and Turkey has moved in. France decided to intervene in Mali, then in the entire Sahel at great cost. Several other European air forces are operating in Iraq and Syria against Daesh. Does Mali belong to a European perimeter? If so, why not Libya? Or Tunisia? What about Turkey? Is Georgia part of the European zone of influence? Without proper focus and care, the Balkans will certainly be subject to increasing Russian or Chinese pressure. What are the risks and responsibilities of the exclusion or inclusion of Tbilisi? What kind of middle ground is achievable and with whom? These conversations need to be initiated at the EU level before national decisions are made. The strategic imperative in a loose multipolar system is to protect a zone of interests, defining lines, even redlines. Europe is an idea; it also needs to become a geographic, and thus strategic, entity.

34. Philippe Le Corre, "Europe's Tightrope Diplomacy on China," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 24, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/03/24/europe-s-tightrope-diplomacy-on-china-pub-84159>.

35. See Sven Biscop, "Battalions to Brigades: The Future of European Defence," *Survival* 62, no. 5 (2020): 105–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2020.1819654>.

Once the scope of interests has been defined—flexibility is wiser than dogmatism—then the level of capabilities can be determined. For the EU, two fundamentally different contingencies must be addressed: protection and projection. The first contingency requires high-tech and heavy weaponry, sophisticated air defenses, and substantial and combined joint forces. The second contingency requires light and deployable units, strategic airlift, and a lead nation. Europe today is unprepared for either one. The first contingency is left to NATO, namely the US military; the second contingency is shouldered mainly by France and the United Kingdom.

The EU's current lack of readiness is as alarming as its lack of a meaningful strategic culture. While significant investments were decided before the pandemic, it remains to be seen whether they will be maintained. Modernization is one step, lethality is another step. Kinetic weapons, with trained personnel and maintenance and training budgets, must be the principal investment. Primarily, the EU needs to understand the strategic landscape and change its mindset from a liberal community intent upon forgetting past wars to a strategic actor prepared to deter or wage future conflicts.

A call for arms is not a call for war. Proportionality is about creating and using the means appropriate to the chosen end. Precisely because Europe is weak, restraint and moderation must be its guide. The EU must take responsibility for its backyard—the Balkans and the Mediterranean shore—and create its own environment rather than react to an environment not of its choosing. In his second inaugural address, US President Woodrow Wilson announced Americans were “provincials no longer.”³⁶ Europe, out of retirement as the result of the rise of a multipolar world and the end of US hegemony, needs to be precisely that: provincial.

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36. John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy* (London: Penguin Random House, 2018), 270.

Greater Security Cooperation: US Allies in Europe and East Asia

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ABSTRACT: Growing Sino-Russian coordination necessitates greater security cooperation between US Allies in Europe and East Asia. US Allies in both regions face remarkably similar threats requiring similar operational concepts, capabilities, and technologies. Further, these Allies must hedge against the specter of US abandonment. An exploration of the links between the two geographically distant US Alliance networks illustrates the Allies' perspectives on US extended deterrence and highlights opportunities to devise better policies for cooperation.

Over the last decade, strategic links between East Asia and Europe have grown rapidly. Consequently, the analysis and management of US Alliances require an interregional perspective that explicitly assesses the connections between the security and geopolitical dynamics in both regions. As they have in the past, US Alliances must play a central role in today's era of renewed great-power competition.¹ After all, one of the advantages the United States enjoys vis-à-vis either China or Russia is its possession of a strongly institutionalized alliance system. If the United States and its Allies remain complacent, however, China and Russia could coordinate to divide US attention and resources and drive wedges within and between existing US Alliances.

Leveraging synergies between US Alliances in both regions would benefit the United States in the context of its competition with Russia and China. But this is not a debate confined to Washington. America's European and East Asian Allies must proactively engage in interregional dialogues to remain cohesive in the face of greater Sino-Russian coordination and to counter skepticism in the United States about the value of Alliances.

The Stage

On July 23, 2019, Russia and China jointly flew warplanes near island clusters called Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan respectively, driving a wedge between two US Allies that dispute the

1. Elbridge A. Colby and A. Wess Mitchell, "The Age of Great-Power Competition: How the Trump Administration Refashioned American Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 99, no. 1 (January/February 2020): 118–30.

sovereignty over these islands.² And security coordination between Moscow and Beijing is not limited to East Asia: in July 2017, China's People's Liberation Army Navy and the Russian Navy participated in a joint exercise in the Baltic Sea.³ According to a Chinese military expert, China and Russia "need to lean on each other for support to deal with hostilities from different fronts."⁴ In January 2019, then US Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats told Congress, "China and Russia are more aligned than at any point since the mid-1950s, and the relationship is likely to strengthen in the coming year as some of their interests and threat perceptions converge."⁵

Moreover, the Biden-Harris administration's references to a global struggle between democracy and authoritarianism implicitly assume an alignment between Russia and China and thus lower expectations Washington will try to create fissures between the two nations.⁶ Indeed, the Biden White House's *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* alludes to the fact that Russia and China represent a threat to US Allies and interests in the critical regions of Europe and the Indo-Pacific.⁷ The prospect of deeper security coordination between those two powers in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and elsewhere threatens to complicate America's global strategic picture.

In contrast, US Allies in Europe and Asia continue to display rather tenuous security ties, despite repeated promises of further cooperation. For decades, these distant groupings of US Allies have enjoyed a quasi-alliance with each other, a term used by some scholars to designate the relationship between those states who share alliance ties with a common third party but not with each other.⁸ Despite such long-standing quasi-alliance ties, US Allies in Europe and East Asia have had a limited security interaction with each other due to resource scarcity, geographical distance, and the need to prioritize threats in their respective regions.⁹ Yet US European and East Asian Allies now

2. Brad Lendon, "Why Russia and China Are Wading into a Centuries' Old Dispute over a Tiny Island Cluster," CNN, updated July 27, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/07/26/asia/south-korea-russia-japan-china-warplanes-analysis-intl-hnk/index.html>.

3. Richard Weitz, "Assessing the Sino-Russian Baltic Sea Drill," *China Brief* 17, no. 12, Jamestown Foundation, September 20, 2017, <https://jamestown.org/program/assessing-the-sino-russian-baltic-sea-drill/>.

4. Ni Lexiong quoted in Tommy Yang, "Strategy Behind China Joining Russia 'on NATO Doorsteps' in Baltic Sea," Sputnik News, July 21, 2017, <https://sputniknews.com/politics/201707211055763714-china-drills-russia-baltic-sea/>.

5. Daniel R. Coats, *Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2019), 4, <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf>.

6. Joseph R. Biden Jr., "America's Place in the World" (remarks, US Department of State Headquarters, Washington, DC, February 4, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/04/remarks-by-president-biden-on-americas-place-in-the-world/>.

7. Joseph R. Biden Jr., *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* (Washington, DC: White House, March 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>.

8. Victor D. Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

9. Stephan Frühling, "'Key to the Defense of the Free World': The Past, Present and Future Relevance of NATO for US Allies in the Asia-Pacific," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 17, no. 2 (March 2019): 238–54.

have good reasons to develop more robust security relationships with each other. At least three sets of interrelated developments underscore this point.

The first development, already mentioned, relates to improving security cooperation between China and Russia.¹⁰ Greater coordination in security policies can allow these two powers to maintain a cohesive front, outflank the United States, and undermine the security of America's European and East Asian Allies. Notably, through arms transfers and greater military coordination, Russia and China have strengthened each other's capabilities, while mutually learning from best technological and operational practices.

Moreover, Russia and China appear to be engaging in coordinated probing in Europe and East Asia, executing incremental, self-restrained actions designed to test the reactions of the United States and its Allies and better gauge the boundaries of their freedom of action while staying below the threshold of traditional military activity.¹¹ Coordinated Sino-Russian actions against US interests and Allies in Europe and East Asia could force Washington into a long and resource-draining two-flank competition and compel it to make difficult choices. Such coordinated activities could lead to tensions between the United States and its Allies regarding which threats to prioritize, but could also lead to tensions between US Allies in the two regions as they compete for US resources and attention.

The second development pertains to the similarity of the regional threats US Allies in Europe and East Asia face. Through their advances in precision strike and missile modernization programs, Russia and China seek to undermine the local military balance in northeastern Europe and in the Western Pacific. Relatedly, as they strengthen their local military positions relative to that of the United States and foster the perception they may enjoy local military superiority in certain parts of Europe or the Western Pacific, Moscow and Beijing can more confidently engage in nontraditional forms of probing. Conceptually, US Allies in Europe and East Asia face a similar problem, namely, how to counter the threat posed by Russian and Chinese military modernization and hybrid or gray-zone activities. To address such similar threats, US Allies must draw on similar operational concepts, capabilities, and technologies, which will reveal opportunities for collaboration.

The third development concerns persistent uncertainty about US security commitments to either region. This problem became particularly pressing in the face of US President Donald Trump's "America First" vision and mixed signals about the value of Alliances.¹² Even under the Biden-Harris administration, recovering the damaged trust in

10. Alexander Korolev, "How Closely Aligned Are China and Russia? Measuring Strategic Cooperation in IR," *International Politics* 57 (2020): 760–89.

11. Jakub J. Grygiel and A. Wess Mitchell, *The Unquiet Frontier: Rising Rivals, Vulnerable Allies, and the Crisis of American Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

12. Mira Rapp Hooper, "Saving America's Alliances: The United States Still Needs the System That Put It on Top," *Foreign Affairs* 99, no. 2 (March/April 2020).

US Alliances will require the efforts of all parties to those Alliances. Although the Biden-Harris administration has put Alliances at the center of its foreign policy, US Allies cannot rule out the possibility of a less Alliance-friendly president in the future.

Concerns about US security commitments also include questions about how the United States will prioritize between Europe and East Asia at a time when America faces two great-power challengers simultaneously, and when the power gap it enjoyed during the so-called unipolar era appears to be diminishing.¹³ The specter of US retrenchment from their regions incentivizes Allies to hedge, either by investing in strengthening their own autonomy or diversifying their portfolio of security partnerships.¹⁴ Greater ties with each other can be part of that package. To be sure, such ties cannot be seen as an adequate alternative to their existing Alliances with the United States, because no group of countries can match US power-projection capabilities. Rather, these ties can strengthen the bargaining position of Allies in both regions vis-à-vis the United States and can hedge against uncertainty surrounding the future of US foreign policy.

Similarities

US Allies in Europe and East Asia are part of an extended deterrence success story. Although adversaries have conducted large-scale military attacks against countries with close security ties to the United States—South Korea in 1950, Taiwan in 1954, and Pakistan in the Indo-Pakistani Wars—there appears to be no such attack against a US Ally protected by an *applicable* defense obligation of the United States.¹⁵

The two regions also present important similarities in terms of their threat environments. One common feature relates to the threat posed by theater-range missiles and the proliferation of anti-access/area-denial capabilities. This concern becomes particularly pressing following the demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty: progress in fielding theater-range missiles and anti-access/area-denial capabilities is enabling Russia and China to behave more aggressively. In this context, US Allies in Europe and East Asia face a similar conceptual problem—how to counter an impending missile challenge through enhanced missile defense capabilities, which includes

13. Linde Desmaele and Luis Simón, “East Asia First, Europe Second: Picking Regions in US Grand Strategy,” *War on the Rocks*, August 7, 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/08/east-asia-first-europe-second-picking-regions-in-u-s-grand-strategy/>.

14. Sven Biscop, “Letting Europe Go Its Own Way: The Case for Strategic Autonomy,” *Foreign Affairs*, July 6, 2018, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-07-06/letting-europe-go-its-own-way>; and Yogesh Joshi, *India-Japan-Australia Minilateral: The Promise and Perils of Balancing Locally*, Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Occasional Paper 114 (New Delhi, India: ORF, May 2017), 1–22.

15. Tongfi Kim, “U.S. Trans-Pacific and Trans-Atlantic Alliances: A Comparison,” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, January 6, 2019, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2019/01/06/trans-pacific-and-trans-atlantic-alliances>.

weighing the pros and cons of deploying theater-range missiles to deter Russian and Chinese aggression.¹⁶

And even if they may not go so far as launching a direct attack on US Allies, Russia's or China's missile and military buildup could give them the confidence to engage more aggressively in hybrid or gray-zone forms of warfare.¹⁷ Precisely because US extended deterrence has been so successful in preventing armed conflicts, China and Russia now engage in hybrid or gray-zone tactics, which are aggressive but aimed to avoid triggering military retaliation. Russia's "Little Green Men" have infiltrated Ukraine since 2014, while China's "Little Blue Men" have advanced Chinese interests in the South and East China Seas.¹⁸ As US Alliances were originally designed with large-scale armed aggression in mind, such hybrid or gray-zone tactics leave uncertainty about how these Alliances can cope with them.¹⁹ The link between traditional military threats and nontraditional ones is therefore concerning for US Allies in both regions.

The challenges China and Russia pose to US Allies in East Asia and Europe is further compounded by growing Sino-Russian cooperation. Such cooperation has grown steadily in the post-Cold War era, and the two former adversaries now appear to be aligned strategically.²⁰ In particular, periodic joint exercises, staff exchanges, and arms sales point to an increasingly institutionalized military cooperation. Russian arms sales and technology have played an important part in the development of Chinese anti-access/area-denial capabilities. More broadly, Russia and China appear to be learning from each other's best practices in hybrid forms of warfare.²¹

As a function of this strategic military cooperation, simultaneous probing by China and Russia of US Allies and interests in East Asia and Europe could help disperse US resources and thus maximize the chances of success for Beijing and Moscow. More broadly, Sino-Russian diplomatic and economic cooperation may also create an effective wedge against US Alliances. By working together, China and Russia could reduce the negative repercussions of their actions in the East and South China Seas or Ukraine, respectively, and also sabotage western efforts outside East Asia and Europe, as the situation in Syria shows. To

16. See Jacob Cohn et al., *Leveling the Playing Field: Reintroducing US Theater-Range Missiles in a Post-INF World* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2019), <https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/leveling-the-playing-field-reintroducing-us-theater-range-missiles-in-a-post-inf-world/publication/1>; and Luis Simón and Alexander Lanoszka, "The Post-INF European Missile Balance: Thinking about NATO's Deterrence Strategy," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 3 (Summer 2020): 12–30.

17. Alexander Lanoszka, "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe," *International Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January 2016): 175–95.

18. Christopher P. Cavalas, "China's 'Little Blue Men' Take Navy's Place in Disputes," *Defense News*, November 2, 2015, <https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2015/11/03/chinas-little-blue-men-take-navys-place-in-disputes/>.

19. Michael M. Bosack, "Ameliorating the Alliance Dilemma in an Age of Gray-Zone Conflict: Lessons Learned from the US-Japan Alliance," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 4 (2020): 45–66, <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=8145&context=nwc-review>.

20. Korolev, "Closely Aligned."

21. Grygiel and Mitchell, *Unquiet Frontier*.

the extent the credibility of US military protection is interconnected in different parts of the world, China and Russia could also work together to erode Allies' confidence in US extended deterrence.

Finally, a worsening regional threat environment brings back fears of abandonment among US Allies in both Europe and East Asia.²² Such fears are perhaps further compounded both by the aforementioned America First doctrine and by the fact that the need to deal with great-power challengers on multiple fronts may force the United States to prioritize the other region. Indeed, Trump openly questioned the value of US Alliances and demanded all Allies increase their financial payments to the United States.²³ In the late 2019 negotiations with South Korea on defense cost-sharing, for example, the United States reportedly demanded a fivefold increase, although this demand was subsequently dropped.²⁴

Trump also questioned the US commitment to NATO's collective defense and demanded NATO Allies increase defense spending.²⁵ US pressure on its Allies for economic concessions or increased defense spending was by no means a new phenomenon, but these recent demands were more serious because they were combined with a contempt for the value of US Alliances. Even as the Biden-Harris administration seeks to rebuild failing Alliances, Allies can no longer take such commitments for granted.

Differences

Beyond the well-known distinction between the multilateral NATO and bilateral Alliances in East Asia, there are important differences in how US Allies relate to regional threats. First, US European Allies are relatively economically self-reliant. Even though there is some degree of dependence on Russia, such dependence is confined to the hydrocarbon sector, which appears to be decreasing and is mutual—Russia is badly in need of European markets, investments, and technology.²⁶ Thus the degree of economic interaction and interdependence European Allies have with the United States far outweighs their dealings with Russia. In contrast, the economies of America's East Asian Allies are deeply intertwined with China, which has become the economic center of

22. Victor D. Cha, "Abandonment, Entrapment, and Neoclassical Realism in Asia: The United States, Japan, and Korea," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (June 2000): 261–91.

23. Zack Beauchamp, "How Trump Is Killing America's Alliances," Vox, June 12, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/6/12/17448866/trump-south-korea-alliance-trudeau-g7>.

24. Bloomberg, "US Drops Demand for Fivefold Hike in South Korea Troop-Funding Bill, Report Says," *Japan Times*, December 26, 2019, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/12/26/asia-pacific/us-drops-south-korea-fivefold-demand/#.XhG61FVKiUk>.

25. Jeremy Shapiro, "Trump's Meaningless NATO Spending Debate," *Order from Chaos* (blog), Brookings Institution, July 9, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/07/09/trumps-meaningless-nato-spending-debate/>.

26. European Commission, "Russia," European Commission, last updated May 20, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/russia/>.

gravity in the region.²⁷ The interests of the East Asian Allies to preserve good economic relations with China may at times undermine the cohesion of America's Alliances in East Asia.

Another interregional difference lies in the geographic characteristics of the two theaters. Whereas US Allies in East Asia face China's military challenges at sea over maritime territorial disputes, European Allies confront primarily land-based military threats from Russia.²⁸ In the military component of its rebalance to Asia, therefore, the Obama administration emphasized increased investment in the Navy.²⁹

Aside from different military requirements, the geographical differences are likely to produce different political challenges for the Alliances. Because maritime borders and territories tend to be far from metropolitan areas and have few residents, disputants may have a more difficult time justifying military conflict for their claims or, alternatively, believe escalation is easier to control than it is on land. For the United States, for example, it may seem absurd to fight a war against China over uninhabited islands, even though the US government has repeatedly confirmed the US-Japan security treaty applies to the Senkaku Islands.³⁰ For China, in turn, occupying the Senkaku Islands probably appears to be less provocative and dangerous than invading densely populated Taiwan.

Finally, unlike NATO's relatively clear-cut competitive relations with Russia, some US Alliances in East Asia are ostensibly targeted against North Korea, which is dangerous and nuclear armed but not nearly as powerful as China. In fact, the United States and its regional Allies have seen China as a potential partner to help address the challenge posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons development. If North Korea ceases to present a significant threat to Japan and to South Korea, US Alliances with these two countries will require significant political adjustments. Meanwhile, NATO is expected to play an important role in counterterrorism and geopolitics in the Middle East and North Africa. Although these new missions increase the importance of NATO, especially to the United States, they can also create friction among Allies, as was seen at the time of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq.

Perceived Links

Connections between US Alliances in Europe and East Asia may not be apparent at first glance, but they do exist and can have a

27. Evan A. Feigenbaum and Robert A. Manning, "A Tale of Two Asias: In the Battle for Asia's Soul, Which Side Will Win—Security or Economics?," *Foreign Policy*, October 31, 2012, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/10/31/a-tale-of-two-asias/>.

28. Mira Rapp Hooper, "Uncharted Waters: Extended Deterrence and Maritime Disputes," *Washington Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 127–46.

29. Robert G. Sutter et al., *Balancing Acts: The US Rebalance and Asia-Pacific Stability*, Elliott School of International Affairs and Sigur Center for Asian Studies (Washington, DC: George Washington University, 2013).

30. Tongfi Kim, *US Alliance Obligations in the Disputes in the East and South China Seas: Issues of Applicability and Interpretations*, PRIF Report, no. 141 (Frankfurt, Germany: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 2016): 1–34.

meaningful impact on the strategic calculations of US Allies in each region—and even on the United States itself. When new developments create uncertainty about US policy, with potential implications for the United States' reputation as an Ally or the allocation of US military resources, the Allies pay close attention to situations in distant regions.

Moreover, as the United States prepares for global competition with China, Washington has been paving the road for interregional cooperation between US Allies. For example, a recent expert group report to the NATO secretary general argues China is “best understood as a full-spectrum systemic rival, rather than a purely economic player or an only Asia-focused security actor,” and asserts “NATO must devote much more time, political resources and action to the security challenges posed by China.”³¹

Two somewhat contradictory interregional connections are particularly important for US Alliances. First, US Allies in both regions are affected by the reputation of the United States as a military protector.³² Insofar as reputation is a global commodity, all US Allies have reasons to support the reputation of the United States—the credibility of US extended deterrence helps guarantee their own security. Yet US military resources, including policymakers' attention, are limited, resulting in an inevitable trade-off between what the United States can commit to in East Asia and in Europe.

Thus, just as the Obama administration's rebalance to Asia or the Trump administration's emphasis on competition with China provoked uneasiness among European Allies about the sustainability of Washington's commitment to Europe, America's reengagement with Europe after Russia's annexation of Crimea led to questions in Asia about the future of the alleged rebalance. In this regard, the complementary and competitive relations between the two regions are an important background to any interregional collaboration among the Allies.

Beyond these important but abstract connections, what can the United States and its Allies gain from greater interregional cooperation? Arguably the most important contributions America's European and East Asian Allies can provide to each other's security are indirect. In a context defined by resource scarcity and a worsening threat environment in Europe and East Asia, the United States would prefer its Allies concentrate their defense resources and efforts in their respective regions. In this vein, US experts and policymakers often argue the most efficient way to use the resources and capabilities of America's European Allies is to deter Russia and provide security in their own continent—and

31. NATO Reflection Group, *NATO 2030: United for a New Era* (Brussels: NATO, November 25, 2020), 27–28, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_f2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf.

32. Hal Brands, Eric S. Edelman, and Thomas G. Mahnken, *Credibility Matters: Strengthening American Deterrence in an Age of Geopolitical Turmoil* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2018), <https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/credibility-matters-strengthening-american-deterrence-in-an-age-of-geopolit/publication/1>.

its immediate neighborhood—thus relieving Washington of its burden there as it prioritizes Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.³³ The same logic applies in relation to America’s East Asian Allies, whom the United States would rather have focus on deterring China in the Western Pacific.³⁴

America’s European Allies would also derive important indirect benefits if East Asian Allies were to step up their defense and security efforts, and vice versa. From a European perspective, perhaps the most useful contribution East Asian Allies can make is to increase their own military capabilities while also reducing tensions with China. Likewise, East Asian Allies would very much appreciate a greater European defense effort, which could free up US resources badly needed in East Asia.³⁵ East Asian Allies would also welcome a de-escalation between the West and Russia—perceived to be a relevant stakeholder in Asian security.³⁶ From their viewpoint, the more conflictual the relationship between the United States and Russia is, the more of a spoiler attitude Moscow may adopt in East Asia, for example, by closing ranks with China on North Korea and other issues.

Even though America’s European and East Asian Allies focus their efforts on their respective regions, the fact they face similar military-strategic problems offers opportunities for a structured security dialogue. Missile defense is one such area. Both sets of allies face the problem of proliferation of theater-range missiles and the challenges of addressing this threat through a combination of US support, the development of indigenous missile defense capabilities, and the development and deployment of theater-range missiles.³⁷ Another opportunity relates to countering hybrid warfare and related problems such as cybersecurity or disinformation.³⁸

Through a more structured dialogue, America’s European and East Asian Allies could learn best practices from each other in missile defense or hybrid threat countermeasures—including questions relating to divisions of labor with the United States—and even cooperate in research and technology. In this vein, the *NATO 2030: United for a New Era* report argues the Alliance should “deepen cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners, including by strengthening information-sharing and creating regularised dialogues on technological cooperation and pooling of R&D in select fields.”³⁹

To be sure, America’s European and East Asian Allies can *directly* contribute to each other’s security in a number of ways. Through the

33. Interviews with multiple US defense officials in Washington, DC, and Brussels, Belgium, September 2018–April 2019; and Barry Pavel and Jeffrey Lightfoot, “The Transatlantic Bargain after ‘the Pivot,’” Issue Brief, Atlantic Council, March 22, 2012, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/the-transatlantic-bargain-after-the-pivot/>.

34. Interview with US defense official, February 23, 2018.

35. Interviews with multiple Japanese and Australian officials, November 2019–March 2020.

36. Interview with Japanese defense official in Tokyo, January 15, 2020.

37. Jacob Cohn et al., *Leveling the Playing Field*.

38. Interviews with multiple Japanese, Australian, South Korean, and NATO officials, September 2018–March 2020.

39. *NATO 2030*, 15.

European Union's arms embargo against China, the steady flow of high-quality European weapons systems to East Asia, and engagement in defense cooperation with key US Allies and partners in the region such as Japan, Australia, and Vietnam, European Allies are contributing to the security of East Asian Allies, and the advancement of US strategic objectives in that region.⁴⁰

Another important direct contribution to security relates to diplomatic support in the face of political disputes. Having support from Allies beyond the scope of any given region adds legitimacy to US foreign policy, reinforcing its aspiration to frame the US position as grounded in global rules and norms. In this regard, the support from Japan and other East Asian Allies in denouncing Russia's annexation of Crimea or that of European Allies in denouncing Chinese actions in the South China Sea represents an important legitimacy boost.⁴¹ Arguably, the most practical assistance East Asian Allies can expect from European Allies is diplomatic and political support. For instance, European diplomatic support is important for Japan on issues such as North Korea's nuclear weapons development and territorial disputes with China.⁴² Diplomatic and political support from European Allies makes it easier for East Asian Allies to frame certain problems (for example, territorial disputes with China or North Korea's nuclear program) as threats to the rules-based international order, rather than merely a by-product of power politics.

Last but not least, since China is expanding its influence, mostly through geo-economic tools and the creation of an economic hierarchy in Asia, it is also important for East Asian Allies to receive European assistance in countering China's economic influence attempts. Until recently, China's power-projection capabilities were limited, and Beijing's leverage over other states derived mostly from its economic clout rather than its ability to either threaten or protect other states. As the debate over membership in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank or the debate over Huawei's role in 5G networks illustrates, China can resort to divide-and-rule tactics vis-à-vis US Allies in both regions.

Conclusion

America's European and East Asian Allies are far away from each other, but their links with the United States generate important geopolitical crossovers between regions. These nexuses become increasingly apparent as the threat by Russia and China to US regional Allies intensifies simultaneously. Against that backdrop, a number of relevant questions emerge. How can European and East Asian Allies strengthen deterrence in their respective regions? And what can they learn from each other's experiences in that regard? What are the

40. Luis Simón, "Europe, the Rise of Asia and the Future of the Transatlantic Relationship," *International Affairs* 91, no. 5 (September 2015): 969–89.

41. Interviews with multiple Japanese, Australian, South Korean, EU, and NATO officials, September 2018–March 2020.

42. Interviews with multiple Japanese officials, September 2018–March 2020.

similarities, differences, and possible connections between US Alliances in Europe and East Asia? What are the perceptions of credibility of US extended deterrence that abound in Europe and northeast Asia?

This article has addressed these questions by identifying some of the similarities, differences, and possible synergies between US Alliances in Europe and East Asia. While interregional dialogues thus far have focused on transnational challenges, a focus on deterrence against great-power challengers is warranted. Certainly as their respective regional security environments worsen, European and East Asian Allies are becoming increasingly focused on their immediate vicinities. This perspective limits the scope for direct engagement beyond each country's region. Yet all countries face similar challenges, ranging from missile proliferation and hybrid forms of warfare from Russia, China, or (to a lesser extent) North Korea to mounting concerns about America's commitment to their security.

Greater coordination can help US Allies learn from each other's experiences and best practices in dealing with regional challengers and better managing their relations with the United States, particularly in the face of increasing strategic coordination between China and Russia. Additionally, diplomatic support and greater economic engagement can be mutually beneficial in terms of strengthening resilience against regional challengers, mitigating excessive dependence on the United States, and hedging against the possibility of US retrenchment in the future. In particular, since China's geo-economic challenge is global in scope US Allies worldwide can benefit from supporting each other against Chinese predatory behavior. Thus, security dialogues between European and East Asian Allies should involve top leaders who can link the global, interregional, economic, and security aspects of cooperation.

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The Coercive Logic of Militant Drone Use

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ABSTRACT: While unmanned aerial systems can serve as a force multiplier for militants, these systems do not embody a transformation in modern insurgent warfare or enable militants to engage regularly in strategic coercion. Instead, drone use is consistent with a militant group's relative capabilities and broader strategic objectives. Consequently, these groups are likely to employ drones primarily for theater and tactical military purposes.

Drones provide militants with affordable and novel means of bringing force to bear against opponents as the cost and complexity of this technology decreases and range, lethality, and swarming ability increases. A simple cost-benefit analysis suggests many militant groups should be attracted to making drones a central part of their armory. This framework, however, overlooks important strategic and political considerations, the sum of which strongly suggest most militant groups have determined drone-based airpower does not enable them to engage successfully in strategic coercion in civil war. Instead, drones serve as tactical adjuncts to the existing military strategies of militant groups and are used primarily to support ground operations and to interfere with the military operations of opponents.

Background

Over the past decade, state and nonstate actors alike have substantially increased their production and militarized use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS)—drones.¹ The refinement and proliferation of affordable UAS technology has prompted more militant groups to incorporate drones into their military and political operations. For instance, militants have introduced drones to armed conflicts in Ukraine, Nigeria, Indonesia, Syria, Iraq, and Libya. Expressing concern about this trend, a May 2019 United Nations report advised, “greater efforts are needed to address the potential risks posed by terrorist use of UAS.”² US defense and political leaders have echoed this call.³

Mitigating the risks posed by such drone use is complicated by the lack of agreement among experts and practitioners regarding the nature

1. Secretary General, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), *Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)*, Cir 328 AN/190 (Montreal: ICAO, 2011), x, https://www.icao.int/Meetings/UAS/Documents/Circular%20328_en.pdf.

2. United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), *Greater Efforts Needed to Address the Potential Risks Posed by Terrorist Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems*, CTED Trends Alert (New York: CTED, May 2019), 1, https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CTED-UAS-Trends-Alert-Final_17_May_2019.pdf.

3. Michelle Tan, “Army Chief: Soldiers Must Be Ready to Fight in ‘Megacities,’” *Defense News*, October 5, 2016, <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/ausa/2016/10/05/army-chief-soldiers-must-be-ready-to-fight-in-megacities/>.

of the threat posed by militant drone programs. Some assessments raise alarm. “Imagine swarms of undersea, surface, and aerial drones hunting submarines hidden in the vastness of the ocean. Or imagine hundreds of airborne drones darting through New York City, seeking out targets and dosing them with nerve agent.”⁴ In 2017, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph F. Dunford Jr. remarked to a Senate committee that drones were “at the top of [the US defense community’s] list for current emerging threats.”⁵ Others, however, have expressed less concern.⁶

How and to what extent do militants advance their strategic objectives with drones? Drawing on Robert Pape’s categories of coercive airpower, this article presents a framework for assessing militant drone operations and their effects in armed conflicts.⁷ The analysis focuses primarily on drone operations conducted by Islamic State, Hezbollah, and Houthi militants as these groups are especially prominent among the few nonstate organizations known to have used drones to kill opponents.⁸

Appeal of Drone Technologies

Two types of drones are available to militants. The first type resembles an airframe that can carry a human crew—a fixed-wing, longer-range aircraft that can remain aloft for hours. These drones are equipped with satellite uplinks for long-distance communication, sophisticated surveillance systems, and sizeable payloads for guided missiles. Only a few militant groups, most prominently Hezbollah and the Houthis, have employed drones with some or all of these characteristics. The second type resembles a hobbyist drone—small, portable, and limited in range and payload. This type of drone has been used more widely by militant groups such as Islamic State.

Yet technological and political developments are rapidly blurring this distinction and may allow many militant groups to obtain drones capable of strategic effects. Commercial outlets are producing larger

4. Zachary Kallenborn and Philipp C. Bleek, “Drones of Mass Destruction: Drone Swarms and the Future of Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Weapons,” *War on the Rocks*, February 14, 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/02/drones-of-mass-destruction-drone-swarms-and-the-future-of-nuclear-chemical-and-biological-weapons/>.

5. Ash Rossiter, “Drone Usage by Militant Groups: Exploring Variation in Adoption,” *Defense & Security Analysis* 34, no. 2 (2018): 113–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2018.1478183>.

6. Dhia Muhsin, “Houthi Use of Drones Delivers Potent Message in Yemen War,” *International Institute of Strategic Studies* (blog), August 27, 2019, <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2019/08/houthi-uav-strategy-in-yemen>.

7. Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 46.

8. Emil Archambault and Yannick Veilleux-Lepage, “Drone Imagery in Islamic State Propaganda: Flying Like a State,” *International Affairs* 96, no. 4 (July 2020): 955–73, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iaa014>; and Don Rassler, *Remotely Piloted Innovation: Terrorism, Drones and Supportive Technology* (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, October 2016), <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Drones-Report.pdf>.

drone systems with wider operative radii and heavier payloads.⁹ Swarm technology continues to improve and is becoming accessible to amateur operators and militant groups.¹⁰ This particular technology could enhance militant groups' use of drones for strategic ends, allowing them to coordinate strikes among many small, inexpensive, and expendable drones to create physical and psychological effects.¹¹

The number of states producing and exporting drones is growing rapidly. States as diverse as Belarus, Iran, and Indonesia produce indigenous drone systems, and many other states import these types of weapons.¹² This proliferation could facilitate militant groups' acquisition of drones through a number of channels.

States that produce drones might provide them to militant organizations to further their foreign policy objectives: Iran, for example, has been accused of giving Hezbollah and the Houthis access to sophisticated, long-range drone systems. Drones are widely traded on international markets, allowing militant organizations to purchase them legally or illicitly. Moreover, the diffusion of knowledge about drone production allows militants to produce drones themselves or modify unarmed drones to carry weapons.¹³

The urban battlespace also lends itself to drone use. Many experts, including US defense leaders, expect the frequency of urban warfare to increase worldwide.¹⁴ The urban terrain limits or removes many obstacles that otherwise characterize drone operations. For example, militants operating in an urban setting are less concerned about drones' limited flight range.¹⁵ Drones are well-suited to the urban environment. They are more difficult to detect and are naturally designed to avoid physical obstacles that might inhibit a small tactical unit, vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, or armed convoy. Some observers warn personnel operating in urban conflicts that "the development of large

9. T. X. Hammes, "The Future of Warfare: Small, Many, Smart vs. Few & Exquisite?" *War on the Rocks*, July 16, 2014, <https://warontherocks.com/2014/07/the-future-of-warfare-small-many-smart-vs-few-exquisite/>.

10. Zachary Kallenborn, "The Era of the Drone Swarm Is Coming, and We Need to Be Ready for It," *Modern War Institute*, October 25, 2018, <https://mwi.usma.edu/era-drone-swarm-coming-need-ready/>.

11. Robert J. Bunker, *Terrorist and Insurgent Unmanned Aerial Vehicles: Use, Potentials, and Military Implications* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2015), 25.

12. Matthew Fuhrmann and Michael C. Horowitz, "Droning On: Explaining the Proliferation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles," *International Organization* 71, no. 2 (Spring 2017): 397–418; Michael C. Horowitz, Sarah E. Kreps, and Matthew Fuhrmann, "Separating Fact from Fiction in the Debate over Drone Proliferation," *International Security* 41, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 7–42; and Peter Bergen, Melissa Salyk-Virk, and David Sterman, "Who Has What: Countries Developing Armed Drones," in *World of Drones* database (Washington, DC: New America, July 2020), <https://www.newamerica.org/international-security/reports/world-drones/who-has-what-countries-developing-armed-drones/>.

13. Don Rassler, *The Islamic State and Drones: Supply, Scale, and Future Threats* (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, July 2018), 22, <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Islamic-State-and-Drones-Release-Version.pdf>.

14. Tan, "Ready to Fight?"

15. Scott Stewart, "Beyond the Buzz: Assessing the Terrorist Drone Threat," *Stratfor*, February 9, 2017, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/beyond-buzz-assessing-terrorist-drone-threat>.

and capable suicidal drones needs to be considered as the next probable successor to suicide bombing.”¹⁶

These developments mean more militant groups have the capacity to obtain more sophisticated drones. From an operational standpoint, these systems offer a number of advantages. First, drones are easier to operate than many advanced weapons systems such as cruise missiles or fixed-wing aircraft. The technology underlying units from commercial retailers—a basic airframe, computing power, and communication capabilities—is not complex and is widely available. The larger drones used in the September 2019 attacks on the Saudi Aramco facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq are estimated to have cost only \$15,000 or less to build.¹⁷ This expenditure is comparable to the expense of assembling a suicide car bomb—between \$13,000 and \$20,000.¹⁸ Further, these systems obligate opposing forces to expend resources on developing drone countermeasures, which have faced many challenges.¹⁹

Operating larger, fixed-wing drones often requires more extensive training from experts. For example, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Hezbollah embedded long-term advisers in Yemen to train Houthi members to operate such systems.²⁰ But for militant groups committed to projecting airpower, these drones offer an accessible alternative compared to piloting, maintaining, and basing conventional aircraft. The absence of an onboard crew means militants risk fewer human resources when deploying these systems. This aspect of drones is especially appealing to armed nonstate actors who compete against larger and more capable government forces and must carefully husband their current and future recruits.²¹

Second, drones offer militants an opportunity to engage targets that would be too risky to attack or surveil with ground forces.²² While militant forces may not have the capacity to launch a successful ground

16. Craig Whiteside and Vera Mironova, “Adaptation and Innovation with an Urban Twist: Changes to Suicide Tactics in the Battle for Mosul,” *Military Review* (November–December 2017): 84, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/November-December-2017/Adaptation-and-Innovation-with-an-Urban-Twist-Changes-to-Suicide-Tactics-in-the-Battle-for-Mosul/>.

17. Ben Hubbard, Palko Karasz, and Stanley Reed, “Two Major Saudi Oil Installations Hit by Drone Strike, and US Blames Iran,” *New York Times*, September 14, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/14/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-refineries-drone-attack.html>.

18. Dina Temple-Raston, “How Much Does a Terrorist Attack Cost? A Lot Less Than You’d Think,” NPR, June 25, 2014, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/06/25/325240653/how-much-does-a-terrorist-attack-cost-a-lot-less-than-you-think>.

19. Arthur Holland Michel, *Counter-Drone Systems*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of the Drone at Bard College, 2019), <https://dronecenter.bard.edu/files/2019/12/CSD-CUAS-2nd-Edition-Web.pdf>.

20. Eric Schmitt, “Iran Is Smuggling Increasingly Potent Weapons into Yemen, US Admiral Says,” *New York Times*, September 18, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/world/middleeast/iran-houthis-fifth-fleet-admiral.html>.

21. Desirée Nilsson, “Turning Weakness into Strength: Military Capabilities, Multiple Rebel Groups and Negotiated Settlements,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 27, no. 3 (July 2010): 253–71.

22. James Igoe Walsh and Marcus Schulzke, *Drones and Support for the Use of Force* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018).

assault into a neighboring country, drones make surveilling or attacking these territories feasible.²³

Coercive Logic of Militant Drone Use

How and to what extent do militants use drones to advance their strategic objectives? Speaking to interstate relations, the “advent of airpower quite literally added a whole new dimension to the possibilities for coercion.”²⁴ Does the emergence of drone technologies offer a similar watershed moment to militant actors? “Coercion” is the “art of manipulating the costs and benefits to affect the behavior of an actor.”²⁵ Using this definition, how might militant groups use drones to erode their opponent’s will to fight and convince their opponent to make concessions or suffer the costs of coercion?²⁶

Armed actors can use airpower to coerce their opponents in multiple ways. Pape’s discussion of airpower in interstate conflict identifies meaningful differences in militants’ applications of drone systems. While armed drones may be used to execute tactical, operational, or strategic missions, this article focuses on the intended strategic results of drone-based missions and assesses the capacity for strategic coercion presented by militants’ use of drones. By design, strategic effects impair the adversary’s ability to carry out war or hostilities and should neutralize the adversary’s centers of gravity.²⁷

Pape first distinguishes between strategic bombing and theater air attacks.²⁸ Actors in armed conflicts use strategic bombing to coerce opponents in two ways—denial and punishment. In a denial strategy, airpower targets the opponent’s capacity to develop and deploy military forces, weakening it sufficiently to allow ground forces to seize territory. Actors use denial strategies to “dissuade an adversary by convincing them that any military campaign they may launch will fail militarily because the coercer will deny the ability to complete the action successfully.”²⁹

Toward this end, the coercer could threaten to capture territory held by the opponent or threaten to destroy enough of the opponent’s military power to thwart its territorial ambitions.³⁰ Denial involves the direct and

23. Brian A. Jackson et al., *Evaluating Novel Threats to the Homeland: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Cruise Missiles* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 37–42.

24. Tami Davis Biddle, “Coercion Theory: A Basic Introduction for Practitioners,” *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 94–109, <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/81862/TNSRVol3Issue2.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>.

25. Alexander B. Downes, “Step Aside or Face the Consequences: Explaining the Success and Failure of Compellent Threats to Remove Foreign Leaders,” in *Coercion: The Power to Hurt in International Politics*, ed. Kelly M. Greenhill and Peter Krause (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 96.

26. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 46; and US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication 1 (Washington, DC: JCS, March 2013): I-4.

27. US Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Publication 1* (Montgomery, AL: Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, March 10, 2021), 6, https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61/documents/AFDP_1/AFDP-1.pdf.

28. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 46.

29. Biddle, “Coercion Theory,” 109.

30. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 14.

large-scale destruction of enemy war-fighting units and personnel with a goal to undermine fundamentally an adversary's capacity to fight and to force that adversary to make strategic concessions. In a punishment strategy, enemy civilians are deliberately targeted to lower morale, leading them to press their government to end the conflict.

Actors use theater air attacks to coerce the enemy in two ways as well: interdiction and close air support. An interdiction strategy seeks to destroy "logistic networks, reinforcements, and command headquarters behind front lines," and its goal is to "stop the movement and coordination of forces throughout the theater."³¹ A close air support strategy involves supporting the military actions of ground troops by providing cover against enemy airpower, engaging in tactical surveillance, and targeting enemy forces in support of ground forces. The following four categories provide a framework to investigate the coercive capacity of militant drone operations.

Denial

Militants can use armed drones to attack opposing military bases and over-the-horizon forces without exposing their personnel to harm. Houthi forces, for example, regularly used drones to surveil and attack Saudi- and UAE-led coalition forces outside of Yemen. Similarly in July 2006, Hezbollah used a military-grade drone to disable an Israeli warship. Following the attack, group leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah warned Israeli officials, "you wanted an open war and we are ready for an open war."³²

With or without drones, strategic denial is a tall order for militant organizations, which almost always have fewer materiel capabilities than their state-based opponents. Yet some militants do seem to use drones for this purpose. Announcements by the Houthis demonstrate they consider drone attacks to fit within the group's broader "Balance of Deterrence" initiative—an explicit reference to a core principle of coercion theory.³³ For instance, after claiming responsibility for the September 2019 attacks on the Saudi Aramco facility, the Houthis capitalized on the event to coerce Emirati forces. A Houthi military spokesperson stated: "to the Emirati regime we say only one operation [of ours] would cost you dearly. . . . Today and for the first time we announce that we have dozens of targets within our range in the UAE, some are in Abu Dhabi and can be attacked at any time."³⁴

These types of attacks, designed to deny the coalition forces, will likely continue. In a limited but growing number of cases, militants have used drones to deny the advancement of other militants. For example

31. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 77.

32. Hamza Hendawi, "Israel: Hezbollah Drone Attacks Warship," *Washington Post*, July 14, 2006.

33. Rawan Shaif, "Saudi Arabia's Self-Fulfilling Houthi Prophecy," *Foreign Policy*, October 2, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/10/02/saudi-arabias-self-fulfilling-houthi-prophecy/>.

34. Aziz El Yaakoubi, Maher Chmaytelli, and Tuqa Khalid, "Yemen's Houthis Threaten to Attack United Arab Emirates Targets," Reuters, September 18, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-aramco-houthis-emirates-idUSKBN1W3282>.

in August 2017, Hezbollah used armed drones to strike Islamic State forces in Syria close to the border with Lebanon, demonstrating the broader application of this technology by militant groups.³⁵ Hezbollah, which boasts the longest-standing drone program among militant groups, seems to focus its lethal drone operations on members of other nonstate actor groups, namely Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamic State. Its drone operations against Israeli government forces, by contrast, have been largely nonkinetic.³⁶

This distinction between drone strikes against state opponents and against rivals suggests few militants might use armed drones in true denial strategies against the former, such as striking strategic targets at the opponent's center of gravity. Compared with government forces, most militants operate on the short end of the capability ratio; drones do not give militants an upper hand in this regard. On the whole, militant organizations, such as the Houthis, that possess sophisticated drone systems have a greater baseline opportunity to achieve strategic denial, however, they have not used their drone fleets to shift conflicts fundamentally in their favor.

This pattern of use is unlikely to change, even with advancements in drone-based technologies. Militants' ability to use drones for strategic effect, especially for purposes of denial, against state opponents is limited by logistical and materiel factors. Strategic coercion involves widespread and sustained attacks on an opponent's centers of gravity. Militant groups would need to control enough territory to house fleets of drones and their support operations, such as intelligence collection and analysis, repair facilities, and bases for drone operators.

Moreover, this infrastructure would need to be safe from attack—and resources would have to be diverted to protect this infrastructure. Only militant groups in a position to challenge the state more effectively with other military means could consider using drones for denial. Even capable militant groups such as Hezbollah lack elements needed to use drones for strategic denial; in this sense, they are fundamentally different from most states with modern military capabilities and command and control systems.

Relative weakness leads militant groups to husband their resources and deploy them to maximize their survival, wearing down opponents instead of trying to win through decisive battlefield victories. This is the fundamental political strategy of most militant groups, large or small. This strategy would also apply to a decision about whether to invest in large-drone capabilities—capabilities that create vulnerabilities as previously discussed. As such, militants will unlikely try to develop drone capabilities for the purpose of strategic denial.

35. Angus McDowall, "Hezbollah Uses Drones against Islamic State in Syria: Hezbollah-Run Media," Reuters, August 21, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-lebanon-syria/hezbollah-uses-drones-against-islamic-state-in-syria-hezbollah-run-media-idUSKCN1B11H4>.

36. Archambault and Veilleux-Lepage, "Drone Imagery," 13.

Punishment

Militants may attack soft targets as part of a punishment strategy. Coercion by punishment intentionally raises costs or risks to civilian populations, which subsequently pressures officials to back down or make concessions. And militant drone operations have indeed caused civilian casualties. Yet the Houthis' drone attacks on soft targets in Saudi Arabia and Yemen—intended to advance the group's political objectives by exposing the Yemeni government's inability to defend its territory and by exerting political pressure on the Saudi government to limit its activities—have focused more on targeting critical infrastructure.³⁷ Notably on June 14, 2019, the Houthis released a poster directed at Saudi and Emirati civilians that cautioned, “for your safety, avoid airports and military locations.”³⁸ They began a sustained strike campaign against Saudi regional airports that same week.

This example illustrates a broader point: militant organizations thus far have shown a lack of will rather than a lack of capacity to use drones systematically in punishment strategies. This fact is welcome but perplexing: even smaller drones offer a seemingly surefire way to incite fear among noncombatant populations. Indeed, many who express concerns about the use of drones in this context draw attention to the potential of these weapons to disrupt airport operations, attack large groups of civilians, or assassinate political leaders.

While small armed drones cannot kill many people, they could create widespread fear and lead to abrupt changes in public behavior. Yet this sort of attack seems to be quite rare, even for groups that otherwise target civilians, such as Boko Haram and Islamic State, and is consistent with Pape's findings about the ineffectiveness of using airpower to target civilians in interstate conflicts.³⁹

Why is this the case? Militant groups may have concluded other armaments are better suited for the task. Suicide bombing, for example, signals resolve and capacity.⁴⁰ Relatedly, a number of militant groups understand counterinsurgent air strikes kill civilians and have leveraged this data for propaganda purposes. They may refrain from using drones to target civilians in order to enhance this narrative. Indeed, one can imagine such attacks might backfire: this type of drone strike might lead the group's enemy, a regime for example, to devote more resources to the fight; it might also cause the civilian population in question to rally around

37. “Several Killed in Houthi Missile, Drone Attack: Yemeni Officials,” *Al Jazeera*, November 7, 2019.

38. Caleb Weiss, “Analysis: Houthi Drone Strikes in Saudi Arabia and Yemen,” *Long War Journal*, August 7, 2019, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/08/analysis-houthi-drone-strikes-in-saudi-arabia-and-yemen.php>.

39. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 10.

40. Bruce Hoffmann and Gordon H. McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (2004): 243–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100490466498>.

the regime. For these reasons, militant groups that engage in terrorism using drones are less likely to achieve their larger political objectives.⁴¹

Interdiction

Coercive militant force also may be used for interdiction purposes, weakening enemy battlefield forces by starving them of needed logistical support. Strikes against civilian airports, factories, and similar targets serve the strategic purpose of threatening command centers, arms depots, or logistical staging hubs. In some cases, these strikes undermine critical sources of economic revenue.⁴² The only militant group to have carried out such drone operations systematically is the Houthis. Since April 2018, the group has conducted a steady stream of drone strikes against airports, munitions warehouses, oil production facilities, and arms depots in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.⁴³

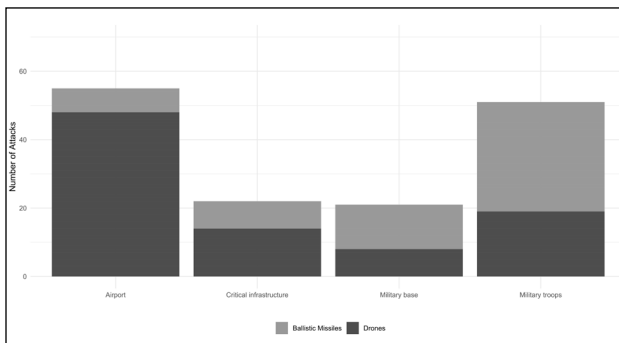


Figure 1. Houthi rebel drone and missile attacks, 2018–19

Starting in April 2018, the Houthis executed 115 drone attacks through October 2019 (figure 1).⁴⁴ Of these attacks, 62 were conducted against civilian airports or critical infrastructure, and 27 were conducted against military bases or troops.⁴⁵ The remaining 26 attacks were reported as intercepted or as striking unknown targets. By comparison, Houthi forces conducted 45 attacks with ballistic missiles against military bases and/or military troops and only 20 attacks against civilian airports or critical infrastructure.

This analysis indicates the Houthi militants use their drone arsenal for specific coercive purposes. Houthi drone operations strike softer

41. Max Abrahms, “Why Terrorism Does Not Work,” *International Security* 31, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 42–78, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4137516?seq=1>; and Virginia Page Fortna, “Do Terrorists Win? Rebels’ Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes,” *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2015): 519–66, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/abs/do-terrorists-win-rebels-use-of-terrorism-and-civil-war-outcomes/4729B2B926904616190DC38DB3240C8F>.

42. “Houthi Drone Attack ‘Hits Arms Depot’ at Saudi Airport in Najran,” *Al Jazeera*, May 21, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/houthi-drone-attack-hits-arms-depot-saudi-airport-najran-190521080525385.html>.

43. Weiss, “Houthi Drone Strikes.”

44. Data from Weiss, “Houthi Drone Strikes.”

45. Weiss, “Houthi Drone Strikes.”

targets rather than as part of a true denial strategy, while the group uses its ballistic missiles to attack harder targets protected with air defense systems that can more effectively intercept drones.

Overall, Houthi drone operations against soft targets disrupt sources of logistical support for coalition military activity in Yemen. These drone operations also demonstrate the group's strength and resolve while avoiding a potential rallying of the public around coalition leadership triggered by mass civilian casualties from drone strikes.

The Houthis' drone operations show mixed results in coercing opponents. Drone operations against the Saudis—the group's primary opponent—have had limited success at the strategic level. A 2019 report concludes, “ultimately, UAV use by [the Houthis] has not shifted the strategic calculus of the Saudi-led coalition.”⁴⁶ Indeed, while the Houthis have recently gained ground, the Saudis have also not retreated. In terms of successful coercion, the UAE completed the withdrawal of its forces in Yemen in February 2020. While outright military victory against the Houthis became less and less likely, this decision was also likely shaped by the Houthis' growing capacity and stated willingness to strike airports and critical infrastructure within the Emirates.⁴⁷

Close Air Support

Drones can also be used in theater air attacks to support ground-force operations, giving militants a combined arms capability. As Pape describes it, “the purpose of close air support, which attacks frontline fielded forces, is to thin the front, creating weak spots that the attacker's ground forces can exploit.”⁴⁸ The best-known example of these types of operations is Islamic State modifying unarmed drones—or engineering their own—to carry small munitions in Iraq and Syria. Islamic State effectively used its arsenal to disrupt coalition front lines in a number of campaigns, including the Battle of Mosul.

Bellingcat analyst Nick Waters records 208 drone attacks conducted by Islamic State in 2017 in Iraq and Syria (figure 2).⁴⁹ In contrast to the types of operations typical of the Houthis or Hezbollah, most Islamic State drone strikes were tactical enhancements used in defense of strategically valuable positions, focused on military vehicles and troops in transit or active combat. Less than 5 percent of the group's 2017 drone operations targeted critical infrastructure like information centers or communication towers. All of the 2017 attacks occurred in territories Islamic State controlled or defended in 2017, and more than half occurred in the major battles in urban areas. While Islamic State drone operations had relatively little strategic coercive effect, they have often been quite operationally and tactically disruptive.

46. Muhsin, “Houthi Use of Drones.”

47. Ibrahim Jalal, “The UAE May Have Withdrawn from Yemen but Its Influence Remains Strong,” *Middle East Institute*, February 25, 2020, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/uae-may-have-withdrawn-yemen-its-influence-remains-strong>

48. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 78.

49. Nick Waters, *Drone Proliferation Database* (Dropbox, 2018).

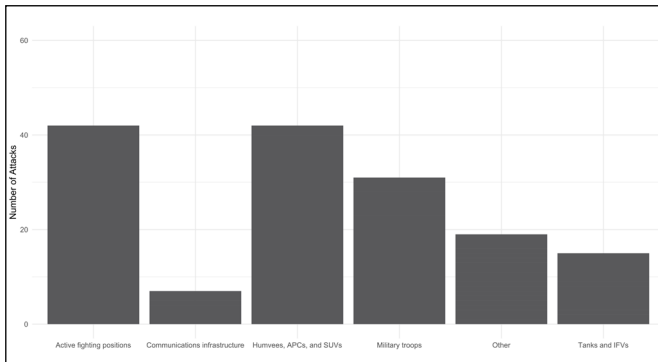


Figure 2. ISIS drone strikes by target type, 2017

Close ground support operations can include nonkinetic approaches as well. Interestingly, many militant groups with access to drones choose not to arm them at all. Indeed, a larger number of armed groups employ drones strictly for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance purposes. For example in 2018, an official associated with the Air Force Research Laboratory reported the Taliban had been using drones extensively to monitor the location and movements of US troops.⁵⁰ Islamic State’s West Africa Province in Nigeria has used drones to collect tactical intelligence, plan more effective hit-and-run attacks, and avoid surprise counterattacks. These drones are helpful for intelligence collection against stationary targets but are less useful for supporting attacks on small and mobile targets.⁵¹

Close air support presents one of the most fruitful areas for expansion in militant drone programs. Homemade, commercial, and military-grade units are all well suited for this purpose, meaning groups without access to military-grade drones can still conduct ground support operations effectively and on a systematic scale. In 2017, then commander of US Special Operations Command General Raymond A. Thomas noted, “[the] most daunting problem [of 2016] was an adaptive enemy who, for a time, enjoyed tactical superiority in the airspace under our conventional air superiority in the form of commercially available drones and fuel-expedient weapons systems, and our only available response was small arms fire.”⁵²

Indeed, Islamic State’s recorded use of drones mirrors Pape’s assessment of how such operations can be carried out to optimal effect. “The most important group support targets are point targets

50. Jared Keller, “The Taliban Are Watching US Troops with Drones ‘24/7’ in Afghanistan,” Task & Purpose, December 14, 2018, <https://taskandpurpose.com/bulletpoints/taliban-drone-surveillance-afghanistan>.

51. Jacob Zenn, “The Humanitarian Dilemma around the Military’s ‘Super Camp’ Strategy in Nigeria,” Council on Foreign Relations, *Africa in Transition* (blog) September 5, 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/humanitarian-dilemma-around-militarys-super-camp-strategy-nigeria>.

52. David B. Larter, “SOCOM Commander: Armed ISIS Drones Were 2016’s ‘Most Daunting Problem,’” Defense News, May 16, 2017, <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/sofic/2017/05/16/socom-commander-armed-isis-drones-were-2016s-most-daunting-problem/>.

requiring direct hits: tanks, armored personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery, bunkers used for communications, logistic storage, or other purposes, and bridges.”⁵³ While Islamic State’s drone operations did not, ultimately, have a strategic coercive effect, the group demonstrated in 2016 and 2017 how drones could be used on the front lines to challenge and deny—even temporarily—the advancement of better-equipped opposing forces.

Conclusion

Some experts argue drones provide militants with a “poor man’s air force,” enabling them to employ airpower as a central part of their political-military strategies.⁵⁴ Yet militant groups do not have powerful reasons to use drones systematically for strategic bombing, such as in denial or punishment strategies. Rather, they use these systems to optimal effect in theater air attacks—especially in interdiction or close-group support operations. A militant group’s drone program coincides with its limited relative capabilities and broader strategic objectives. Due to the rapid advancement and proliferation of drone systems, many militant groups will soon have the capacity to acquire drones that would allow strategic bombing. Most groups, however, will have little incentive to do so.

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53. Nick Waters, “The Poor Man’s Air Force? Rebel Drones Attack Russia’s Airbase in Syria,” *Bellingcat*, January 12, 2018, https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2018/01/12/the_poor_mans_airforce/; and Michael R. Gordon, “A Poor Man’s Air Force,” *New York Times*, June 19, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/19/international/middleeast/a-poor-mans-air-force.html>.

54. Waters, “Poor Man’s Air Force?”

JDN 2-19: Hitting the Target but Missing the Mark

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ABSTRACT: Predoctrinal deliberations about the employment of the US armed forces, captured in Joint Doctrine Notes, remain critically understudied. Using comparative text analysis, this article identifies changes in recent Joint Doctrine Note depictions of military strategy. These changes risk distorting the logic of military strategy, sacrificing means-ends integration to organizational impulse, and raising the prospect of future shortfalls in US strategic effectiveness.

In December 2019, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff released a new Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) on military strategy, JDN 2-19. The note differs from its predecessor, JDN 1-18, in significant ways. Perhaps most notably, 2-19 expands on conventional characterizations of military strategy. Per JDN 2-19, strategy encompasses more than the designated employment of the military instrument “to secure the objectives of national policy.”¹ The document specifically requires the creation of “friendly advantages . . . at the expense of the competitor or adversary.”² This modification, we contend, risks removing military strategy from its foundational logic, substituting organizational impulse for means-end integration and jeopardizing future strategic effectiveness.

The following sections provide theoretical grounding, evidentiary support, and practical context for our argument. First, the article examines classical accounts of the logic of military strategy, asking whether shifting doctrinal depictions of strategy run counter to that logic. The article then provides a comparative textual analysis of select sections from JDN 1-18 and JDN 2-19, lending substantiation to the claim that the two differ from each other in meaningful ways. The article identifies evidence of divergent portrayals of military strategy, highlighting JDN 1-18’s emphasis on means-ends integration and JDN 2-19’s embrace of military organizational impulse. Finally, the article addresses the implications of this variance for the future of US strategic effectiveness, particularly in the context of re-emergent great-power competition. The article warns JDN 2-19 may be a harbinger of regression in US military strategic thought and urges decisionmakers to *engage* rather than *evade* the complexities of means-ends integration.

1. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Strategy*, Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 1-18 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2018), I-7, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_18.pdf?ver=2018-04-25-150439-540.

2. JCS, *Strategy*, JDN 2-19 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2019), II-3, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn2_19.pdf?ver=2019-12-20-093655-890.

Means-Ends Integration: Logic and Obstacles

Clausewitz defines strategy as “the use of engagements for the object of the war.”³ This definition, along with the well-known “war is an instrument of policy” dictum, informs most contemporary understandings of military strategy.⁴ They also distinguish its chief function: bridging military means to political ends.⁵ Absent this function, “there is no rationale for how force will achieve purposes worth the price in blood and treasure.”⁶ Underscoring strategy’s rational-utilitarian logic, Richard Betts notes that

one must be able to devise a rational scheme to achieve an objective through combat or the threat of it; implement the scheme with forces; keep the plan working in the face of enemy reactions (which should be anticipated in the plan); and achieve something close to the objective. Rational strategic behavior should be value maximizing, choosing appropriate means according to economic calculations of cost and benefit.⁷

In other words, strategic effectiveness (success in bringing about the attainment of political ends) requires consideration of the costs of military options relative to one another, the costs of these options relative to the benefits of specified policy aims, and such costs relative to risks inherent to the strategic situation. Further utility-relevant deliberations might center on the prioritization of military resources, the sequencing of military activity, or the theory of how success will be achieved.⁸

Though superficially straightforward, the rational-utilitarian reconciliation of means to ends is susceptible to “thousands of diversions.”⁹ Though it may not guarantee battlefield success—the enemy, after all, gets a vote—political-military integration is almost certainly necessary for strategic success.¹⁰ Fog (uncertainty) and friction (danger, physical exertion, and intelligence gaps that impede action) are ever-present factors in war and strategy.¹¹ Political leaders are inclined to seek ambitious and ambiguous political ends absent an understanding of the limits of military force; military leaders are liable to curb political inputs that run afoul of military expertise. Strategic cultural biases,

3. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, indexed ed., trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 128.

4. Clausewitz, *On War*, 605–10.

5. Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 17; and Richard K. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?,” *International Security* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 5–6.

6. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?,” 5.

7. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?,” 6.

8. Eliot A. Cohen, “What’s Obama’s Counterinsurgency Strategy for Afghanistan?,” *Washington Post*, December 6, 2009, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/04/AR2009120402602.html>; and Jeffrey W. Meiser, “Ends+Ways+Means=(Bad) Strategy,” *Parameters* 46, no. 4 (2016): 81–91.

9. Clausewitz, *On War*, 178.

10. James Mattis, “Meet the Press,” NBC, video (no longer available), October 13, 2019; and Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 25–29.

11. Clausewitz, *On War*, 122.

tense or imbalanced civil-military relations, and leaders' cognitive psychological pathologies interfere with strategic decision making.¹²

Attempts at evading or bypassing the myriad predicaments of strategy are apt to prove untenable. The purposeful engagement with means-ends dilemmas is both necessary and advantageous.¹³ This engagement affords alternatives to brute-force attrition, enhances the value of existing resources, acts as a force multiplier, provides options for besting equally capable adversaries, and mitigates the costs of defeating weaker ones.¹⁴

While most obstacles to means-ends integration fall outside the control of the Joint Force, one exists well within its purview: the military's organizational penchant for pursuing certainty. This quest for certainty may influence the adoption of standardized procedures, the reliance on technocratic expertise, or the related preference for offense (and annihilation). In theory, offense enables management of an uncertain and threat-riddled security environment; defense requires responsiveness to that environment. Offensive plans, capabilities, posturing, and operations—the argument goes—alleviate fog and friction.¹⁵ This perspective colors military technocratic protocols that help depoliticize use-of-force policy debates, augment military budgets, and enhance organizational autonomy.¹⁶

Despite their ostensible appeal, offensive plans, capabilities, posturing, and operations do not yield cure-all effects. Friction, for example, is largely impervious to defensive *and* offensive plans, as adversary behavior ensures war rarely proceeds “according to expectations.”¹⁷ Further, blind adherence to offense may yield an outbreak of war consistent with the spiral model or may result in strategic failures: the adoption of (perceived) offensive capabilities or posturing may spark rival fears and in-kind responses, seeding unforeseen war, as illustrated by the onset of World War I.¹⁸ Notwithstanding the offensive arms race that triggered that war and indications that military technologies of the time favored defense, both the Entente Powers and the Central Powers went on to assume offense-centric strategies. France, which implemented a distinctly offensive “single combat doctrine” despite apparent barriers to its success, spent much of the war seeking to overcome the plan's costly shortfalls.¹⁹

Given the problems outlined above, what tools might serve as effective checks against undue organizational impulse or as effective

12. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?”

13. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, 25–29.

14. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?,” 6, 8, 50.

15. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, 48; and Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1973), xxii.

16. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, 49; and Jack Snyder, “Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and 1984,” *International Security* 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984): 109.

17. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?,” 37.

18. Snyder, “Civil-Military Relations,” 119.

19. Stephen Van Evera, “The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War,” *International Security* 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984): 60.

safeguards of means-ends integration? Scholars skeptical of military self-regulation in strategy call for active civilian intervention in strategy processes.²⁰ Others offer a somewhat less cynical alternative. Military mindfulness, encompassed in doctrine, enhances the likelihood of overcoming organizational blind spots and achieving strategic effects.²¹

The following comparative analysis of the texts of Joint Doctrine Notes 1-18 and 2-19 seeks evidence of competing predoctrinal characterizations of strategy. More specifically, the discussion examines 2-19 for recurrent text indicators linking the organizational preference for offense as the presumed mitigation of uncertainty. Does the language of JDN 2-19 evince bias for organizational predisposition, and if so, does that bias risk distorting strategy's means-ends logic?

Ends-Ways-Means versus Organizational Impulse

Doctrine outlines standards for the management of force employment or “fundamental principles” for the conduct of operations.²² Strategy-centric doctrine connects operational conduct to the logic of strategy. Such doctrine does not advance a particular strategy or set of strategies over another but provides guidance for identifying and overcoming barriers to strategic effectiveness.²³ Both JDN 1-18 and JDN 2-19 provide insights into ongoing deliberations about the substance of US military strategy and how this strategy should be depicted in Joint Doctrine. The comparison that follows reveals a doctrinal shift away from strategic process thinking as it relates to the formulation, implementation, assessment, and adaptation or innovation of military strategy. Should the contents of JDN 2-19 be reflected in doctrine, their inclusion could have significant ramifications for the Joint Force's approach to military strategy.

Strategy Formulation

Comparison. Both JDN 1-18 and JDN 2-19 introduce strategy formulation as a task founded on rationalist means-ends logic, noting this process requires consideration of the following questions:

1. Where do we want to go, or what are the desired ends?
2. How do we get there, or what are the ways?
3. What resources are available, or what are the means?
4. What are the risks and costs associated with the strategy?²⁴

Beyond this point, the documents' strategy-making guidance diverges. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 repeatedly calls for the development of “ends-ways-means-risks/costs” connections that aid the strategic

20. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, 49, 53–54, 58–59.

21. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?” 39; and Gray, *Modern Strategy*.

22. Aaron P. Jackson, *The Roots of Military Doctrine: Change and Continuity in Understanding the Practice of Warfare* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), 6; and Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*.

23. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*; and Jackson, *Roots of Military Doctrine*.

24. JCS, JDN 1-18, I-1, I-2–I-3; and JCS, JDN 2-19, I-1.

situation and ultimately serve political ends.²⁵ Strategy formulation requires the regular engagement of assorted participants: elected officials, political appointees, career bureaucrats, and military leaders. Curtailing their inputs jeopardizes means-ends alignment and unity of effort.²⁶ Further, mechanistic routine should be avoided, as such routine risks producing “unimaginative, pedestrian and predictable” strategies the adversary can “easily anticipate and counter.”²⁷

Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 asserts the configuration of strategy cannot rest on “inadequate” ends-ways-means-risks/costs calculations. The strategy formulation process demands military leaders articulate ways to “impose order on the environment” and “generate friendly advantages over the adversary.”²⁸ Politicians are relevant to the strategy-making process insofar as they must designate “the limits of actions and resources available.”²⁹ Beyond that point, military leaders must translate strategy’s conceptual narrative for “supporting military campaigns” into operational plans. Strategy development is a “function of [operational] creative art.”³⁰

Analysis. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 recognizes strategic effectiveness benefits from the incorporation of various civilian and military perspectives in the strategy-making process. The document suggests rationality and ingenuity are also critical to the attainment of political ends. The language of JDN 2-19, however, implies strategy operates in service of operational art and design (respectively, the cognitive and methodological frameworks for producing an operational approach) rather than the inverse.³¹ Strategy formulation, 2-19 implies, leaves little room for consideration of the ambition or ambiguities of political ends—such considerations exist within the realm of campaign management. This approach may result in stovepiped, if not limited, civilian participation in strategy making. Likening strategy development to operational design, which entails standardized planning, JDN 2-19 encapsulates technocratic biases for securing “order” and “advantage” over ends.³²

Strategy Implementation

Comparison. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 and JDN 2-19 also differ from each other on strategy implementation. While 1-18 accepts that environmental conditions should inform strategy, it ranks political ends as the most critical determinant of strategic behavior.³³ The note concedes strategic approaches, or ways—observation, accommodation,

25. JCS, JDN 1-18, vii.

26. JCS, JDN 1-18, II-8.

27. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-4.

28. JCS, JDN 2-19, II-2.

29. JCS, JDN 2-19, II-2.

30. JCS, JDN 2-19, I-1, II-3, vi.

31. JCS, JDN 2-19, IV-1; and JCS, *Joint Planning*, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2017), xxi, IV-1, IV-4–IV-6.

32. Regarding standardization, see JCS, JDN 2-19, IV-1.

33. JCS, JDN 1-18, III-2–III-3.

compromise, shaping, persuasion, enabling, inducing, assurance, deterrence, compellence, subduing, and eradication—differ in accordance with political objectives and strategic circumstances. Varying conditions along the strategic competition continuum may only call for nonkinetic shaping operations; indeed, they may require the military *do nothing* but hold, wait, and observe.³⁴

Like its predecessor document, JDN 2-19 acknowledges strategic activity serves political ends. Yet 2-19 more specifically pegs strategy implementation to other priority factors. A strategic approach should expressly accommodate “variables in the environment,” “the organization [the strategy] serves,” and the tools of operational art.³⁵ The document limits its coverage of strategic ways to assurance, coercion (deterrence and compellence), and forcible action. While 2-19 does not ascribe a particular strategy type to “forcible action,” it notes such action entails pitting “strength against strength” to “remove . . . the enemy’s ability to hold the initiative” and “subdue the enemy.”³⁶ Thus, forcible action seems synonymous with the offensive.

Analysis. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 suggests a broad and flexible range of strategic approaches, including nonkinetic and shaping strategies, hold utility for addressing political ends in the face of change and uncertainty.³⁷ In contrast, JDN 2-19 treads familiar territory, fixing strategic behavior to organizational interests in and operational art’s tools for assuring order over environmental variables.³⁸ By this logic, strategic action is largely synonymous with, and perhaps even subservient to, operational art. Further, 2-19 implies that securing order over the environment (particularly through kinetic operations) is apt to call for offensive and forcible action, which the text depicts in terms that roughly characterize strategies of annihilation and attrition.³⁹

Whereas 1-18 treats strategy implementation as the realization of political-military integration designs, 2-19 links strategy implementation to organizational interests in creating and sustaining competitive advantage. But strategic activity cannot be confined to operations alone. Exclusive focus on operational art risks forsaking strategic effectiveness for a business-as-usual implementation process.

Strategy Assessment

Comparison. Assessment weighs the suitability of military activity to “the strategic situation,” the designated end, and “its subordinate objectives” and requires estimates of one’s—and the adversary’s—aims,

34. JCS, JDN 1-18, III-2.

35. JCS, JDN 2-19, II-3, II-1, III-1, II-5.

36. JCS, JDN 2-19, IV-1, II-3–II-5.

37. JCS, JDN 1-18, III-2–III-3, viii–ix.

38. JCS, JDN 2-19, II-3.

39. Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Military Strategy: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 13–25.

capabilities, and strategic circumstances.⁴⁰ Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 advances conceptual guidance for “permeat[ing]” ends-ways-means-risks/costs estimates across dynamic political ends and environmental conditions.⁴¹ Assessments are not only critical gauges of a strategy’s likely effects but serve as validity tests of underlying strategic assumptions and the broader strategic situation.⁴² Absent recognition of this function, assessments serve “tactical and operational gains, but not . . . desired political objectives.”⁴³

Accordingly, JDN 1-18 warns against reliance on “magic formula[s] for calculating risk” or standardized protocols for guaranteeing estimate accuracy. Allowing that even effective strategies require updating for continued success, the document prioritizes prudence, urging strategists to refine skills for “recognizing and avoiding” assessment traps.⁴⁴

In contrast, JDN 2-19 adopts a notably different approach to assessment, calling for “a formal methodology to assess . . . risk”—specifically covered in the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual, *Joint Risk Assessment*. The manual upholds risk as “the probability and consequence of an event causing harm to something valued” and centers predominantly on estimates of environmental risk.⁴⁵ The “Joint Risk Assessment Model,” which purports to ensure risk can be capably managed utilizing “objective” measurements, is central to the manual.⁴⁶ The model incorporates and depends upon the specification of risk calculation and risk classification formulas.⁴⁷ Though *Joint Risk Assessment* situates this model within a broader “strategic planning construct,” the manual says relatively little about the relationship between risk and strategy, or how risk estimates might assist to gauge a strategy’s likely or actual effects (particularly with respect to ends).⁴⁸

Analysis. Though they employ intermittently overlapping terminology, JDN 1-18 and JDN 2-19 depict assessment in discernably different terms.⁴⁹ JDN 1-18 regards assessment as a complex and imperfect process and urges strategists to seek broadly analytical and holistic impressions of ends-ways-means-risks/costs estimates. The document implies individual discretion and expertise, not necessarily technocratic procedures and objective measures, hold considerable utility for establishing present strategic impact or future strategic direction. JDN 2-19 ostensibly gives precedence, instead, to the assessment of risk

40. JCS, JDN 1-18, III-4; Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 63–71; Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, third revised and expanded edition (New York: Routledge, 2001), 236–48; and Clausewitz, *On War*, 585–86.

41. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-1, ix.

42. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-1–IV-6, II-2 (Figure II-1).

43. JCS, JDN 1-18, II-5.

44. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-1, IV-2, IV-4.

45. JCS, JDN 2-19, VI-1; and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), *Joint Risk Analysis*, CJCS Manual (CJCSM) 3105.01 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2019).

46. JCS, CJCSM 3105.01, B-1, 4–5, 7.

47. JCS, CJCSM 3105.01, 4–5, 7.

48. JCS, CJCSM 3105.01, A-2.

49. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-1; and JCS, JDN 2-19, VI-I.

absent its relation to strategy, conveying seeming indifference to the broader requirements of assessment or the matter of how they might impact strategic effectiveness.

While the assessment content in JDN 2-19 does not specifically hint at the prioritization of offense, discussions of assessment do center on organizational concerns that drive the propensity for offense: risk (more broadly, uncertainty) inherent to the security environment. In short, JDN 2-19's emphasis on (environmental) risk assessment reflects operational predilections for mitigating uncertainty.

Strategy Innovation and Adaptation

Comparison. Changing circumstances are apt to require strategic updating. Updating may take the form of innovation over the long-term or grand-scale change “institutionalized across an entire organization”—a new doctrine, organizational framework, or technology.⁵⁰ Alternatively, updating may take the form of incremental adaptation based on knowledge gleaned in combat and carried out during the immediacy of war. As JDN 1-18 observes, “No strategy is infallible . . . significant changes in the strategic situation should force the strategist to adjust the strategy’s ends, means, and/or ways.”⁵¹ Strategic updating may be responsive to changes in the security environment, but these updates ultimately serve “[n]ational interests and policies.”⁵² Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 cautions against innovating or adapting by rote. The note further warns that organizational blinders and standard operating procedures undercut the “objectivity, open-mindedness, insight, and/or creativity” required for augmenting strategy in accordance with a variable strategic situation or evolving political ends.⁵³

Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 acknowledges the national military strategy links force innovation and adaptation to the “requirements of law, policy, and defense strategy.”⁵⁴ But the note predominantly centers on the organizational determinants of innovation (force design) and adaptation (force development). Force design involves testing new concepts against mid- to long-term “challenges in the strategic environment,” while force development entails identifying “capability requirements” for countering near- to mid-term challenges.⁵⁵ Force design and force development reinforce the organization’s purpose and reflect the senior leader’s vision for its future direction. Organizational-level innovation and adaptation encompass, naturally, organizational interests in shaping future investments.⁵⁶ Notably, however, JDN 2-19 does not include substantive coverage of either strategic innovation or strategic adaptation.

50. Williamson Murray, *Military Adaptation in War: With Fear of Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Theo Farrell, “Improving in War: Military Adaptation and the British in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 2006–2009,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 4 (2010): 567–94.

51. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-3.

52. JCS, JDN 1-18, II-1.

53. JCS, JDN 1-18, IV-6.

54. JCS, JDN 2-19, III-1.

55. JCS, JDN 2-19, V-1–V-2, III-1.

56. JCS, JDN 2-19, III-2, V-1.

Analysis. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 accounts for the innovation and adaptation of *strategy* in light of changing political ends and emerging environmental challenges, and for the possibility that updating mechanistically can undermine the likelihood of strategic effectiveness, potentially undercutting the “better or more permanent . . . condition.”⁵⁷ In contrast, JDN 2-19 seemingly shows greater concern for the innovation and adaptation of *capabilities* in alignment with organizational purpose and the vision of senior military leaders.⁵⁸ Though it briefly acknowledges force innovation and adaptation share links to policy, 2-19 heavily implies military means are more apt to guide political ends than the inverse. Because the note prioritizes updating capabilities to the neglect of updating strategy, it intimates political ends are essentially static and largely dependent on means alone.

Conclusion

Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 aligns with JDN 1-18 in several respects. Both define strategy in means-ends terms. Both account for the dynamism and ambiguity of political ends and the strategic environment. And both recognize military strategy operates at several levels, involves diverse actors, and crosses multiple time horizons. The two documents also differ from each other in meaningful ways. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 reveals consistent adherence to the classical strategy archetype, admits that means-ends integration is rife with, but responsive to, obstacles, and warns against the adoption of technocratic solutions to strategic dilemmas. Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 exhibits clear departures from the classical strategy model, conveys an apparent preoccupation with environment over ends, and suggests a predisposition for technocracy.

Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 gives considerable lip service to strategy’s means-ends integration logic. Initially, the note accedes that policy guides strategic choice and action, and the text further distinguishes military strategy from institutional strategy, planning, campaign plans, and the organizational determinants of force development and design.⁵⁹ Yet in subsequent chapters, JDN 2-19 focuses on those exact subjects— institutional strategy, planning, campaign plans, and organizational mechanisms for shaping future capabilities. These chapters broadly overlook the political-military dimensions and discourse inherent to strategy.

Likewise, 2-19 explicitly states the purpose of an institutional strategy is to “[translate] higher-level policy,” yet the text simultaneously suggests the starting point for institutional strategy is securing or maintaining operational advantages for the institution.⁶⁰ These two logics cannot coexist without one eclipsing the other, and in effect, JDN 2-19’s preference for organizational and operational prescriptions belie its stated concern for means-ends integration. This approach further

57. JCS, JDN 1-18, III-1, IV-1, III-3–III-4.

58. JCS, JDN 2-19, III-1–III-2.

59. JCS, JDN 2-19, II-3, III-2.

60. JCS, JDN 2-19, III-2.

informs and reinforces the notion that strategy rests on generating friendly advantages. Joint Doctrine Note 2-19's particular concern for the attainment of edge over ends aligns with theoretical and historical accounts of the military organizational pathology for offense.

Comprehensively, JDN 2-19 risks distorting the foundational logic of military strategy and legitimizing the substitution of organizational impulse for means-ends integration. Its reflection of organizational and technocratic biases, particularly those which undergird the preference for offense, warrant concern. Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 falls shy of accounting for the possibility that organizational aims do not necessarily serve national security ends. Further, this perspective hazards a willingness to accept "edge" as an end unto itself, rather than a means to national security ends and raises important questions for consideration. Does JDN 2-19 imply environmental variables merit regulation but political dynamics warrant avoidance? Does the document discount the need for active political and military participation across the strategy cycle? As articulated, does JDN 2-19 hazard a propensity to evade rather than engage with the civil-military complexities of strategy?

The assumption that military strategy distinctively hinges on the establishment and preservation of friendly advantages does not adequately account for contemporary security realities. The notion is both reductive and dangerous, given the possibility competitors may perceive overt bids for edge—particularly under shifting geopolitical realities—as offensive threats. The United States can ill afford to accept the risks of adventurism, or assume further costs to finite national resources, under conditions of mounting great-power rivalry.

The collapse of the American "unipolar moment" calls for restraint in the realms of both grand strategy and military strategy.⁶¹ The reemergence of interstate strategic competition suggests the United States cannot afford to "cow all potential challengers" and "comfort all coalition partners."⁶² Further, America should not risk enticing adversaries to conflict. Yet strategy that hinges on the quest for persistent military edge quite plausibly involves significant costs and risks, including arms races, war spirals, and strategic failures.

The disjuncture between the language of JDN 2-19 and the need for strategic prudence is a relic of the unipolar moment and is indicative of the "strategic atrophy" that the *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy* warns against.⁶³ Decades of US strategic drift—exemplified by the interventionism of the 1990s, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the 2011 participation in the NATO strikes on Libya, and the January 2020 drone strike on Qassem Soleimani—call for greater engagement with

61. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990): 23–33.

62. Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996–97): 32.

63. James N. Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2018), 1.

the political dimensions of strategy.⁶⁴ The drone strike, carried out just weeks after the publication of JDN 2-19, continues to draw scrutiny. Questions of legality aside, the strike's underlying objectives, and thus the matter of its strategic effectiveness, remain largely unclear.⁶⁵ The fact that JDN 2-19's thematic content is broadly consonant with the character of the strike—assertion of force absent delineation of purpose—suggests the need for a more rigorous approach to military strategy.

Future strategists will be called on to devise increasingly flexible, adaptive, and resource-efficient options for countering great-power competitors, confronting the persistent condition of terrorism and addressing human security challenges such as pandemics. Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 provides an imperfect but utilitarian roadmap for matching military means to political ends. The document's coverage of tools for recognizing and surmounting strategic dilemmas, and its inclusion of historical cases in which political-military discourse is central to the resolution of those dilemmas, could prove critical to future strategists.

It may be the case that JDN 1-18 encapsulates the exception to—and not the rule of—US strategic pursuits, and that JDN 2-19, in turn, represents a conventional preference for the American way of battle. As military leaders determine whether to forge ahead with offensive conceptions of strategy or relink strategy to its political underpinnings, they should recall Joint Doctrine Notes are not definitive but instead represent an ever-evolving discussion about the foundational tenets of military strategy. Strategy may yet be salvaged from its detractors and employed to purposeful effect.

Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 encompasses constructive updates to US strategic thought. Facets of JDN 2-19—its consideration of innovation, for example—appropriately account for substantive gaps in JDN 1-18. Further, this evaluation of 2-19 is far from exhaustive, warranting circumspect rather than definitive projections about the note's implications for future strategic effectiveness. It is entirely plausible JDN 2-19 mirrors military leaders' frustration with the struggle of political officials to identify or resource adequately the aims of the US unipolar moment, the counterterrorism decade, or the initial return to interstate strategic competition. Faced with such conditions, it seems reasonable doctrine might prioritize environment and edge over the political ends.

Yet as Betts reminds us, strategists are often plagued by ambitious or ambiguous political objectives; they are the hallmarks of strategy's

64. Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

65. Natasha Turak, " 'Dangerous Escalation' and 'Severe Revenge': The World Responds to the US Killing of Iran's Top General," CNBC, updated January 5, 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/03/qasem-soleimani-death-world-responds-to-us-assassination-of-irans-top-general.html>; and Tamara Wittes, "Around the Halls: Experts React to the Killing of Iranian Commander Qassem Soleimani," *Order from Chaos* (blog), Brookings Institution, January 3, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/01/03/around-the-halls-experts-react-to-the-killing-of-iranian-commander-qassem-soleimani/>.

illusory nature.⁶⁶ These hallmarks call for the persistent and rigorous pursuit of political-military integration. They do not provide justifiable cause for removing strategy from its purpose.

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66. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?"

Integrated Planning and Campaigning for Complex Problems

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ABSTRACT: Shortfalls and inefficiencies in traditional planning and campaigning have become increasingly clear in the current hyperconnected security environment. US military planners can mitigate these deficiencies by embracing integrated planning and campaigning approaches including the development of new organizational structures and processes. These improvements will give senior leaders increased options as the US military and US Allies and partners address complex problems with better effect and to greater advantage.

Over the last two decades, rapid advances in information technologies, the hyperconnected world these technologies have created, and the reach and power of the narratives they convey have driven significant changes in the global security arena. Adversaries excel at leveraging these technologies and tools with few legal and ethical constraints and restraints. Further, these adversaries are willing to play the long game, betting they can outlast what they see as a tired and strategically impatient and incoherent America. Legacy planning and campaigning tools are largely ineffective in a competition space defined by hyperconnectedness, the ubiquity of information, narrative warfare including disinformation and misinformation, and the democratization of access to the means and ways of information power.¹ Moreover, the often uncoordinated efforts of different government departments and agencies—and among Allies and partners—only magnify the problem.

To begin addressing these challenges, the US Joint Staff in 2018 published the *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning*. This publication offers useful approaches and ideas for combating information-savvy opponents through the development of new planning and campaigning capabilities. It defines integrated campaigning as “Joint Force and interorganizational partner efforts to enable the achievement and maintenance of policy aims by integrating military activities and aligning non-military activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains.”²

1. Robert S. Ehlers Jr. and Patrick Blannin, “Making Sense of the Information Environment,” *Small Wars Journal*, March 3, 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/making-sense-information-environment>.

2. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning* (JCIC), (Washington, DC: JCS, March 16, 2018), v, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/concepts/joint_concept_integrated_campaign.pdf?ver=2018-03-28-102833-257.

Integrated campaigning is indispensable for dealing effectively with the new realities of conflict evident in the hyperconnected global security environment and for gaining the initiative in prolonged security problems.³ This article addresses the basic elements of integrated campaigning and its utility for addressing long-duration security challenges and information-savvy opponents. The article then considers the value of integrated campaigning as a means for addressing complex problems within the hyperconnected global security environment and the utility of this type of campaigning to planners. The article concludes with recommendations for structural and organizational improvements to promote this more-effective approach to planning and campaigning.

Planning Evolution

The attributes currently associated with military planning matured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Prussian Great General Staff was arguably the first highly sophisticated planning organization focused on mobilization timetables, logistics, replacements, and the most effective use of everything from the railroad and the telegraph to breech-loading artillery and the machine gun.⁴ These new approaches to planning grew out of changes in the character of war driven by political, economic, and social realities.⁵

The Prussian planning model, adopted by other great powers including the United States, worked well so long as the military technological paradigm of the era—industrial warfare based on mass conscription—remained the norm.⁶ The disasters of the world wars and the development of atomic and nuclear weapons produced a paradigm shift, but not a definitive one. NATO and the Warsaw Pact continued to plan for major conventional war in Europe using tried and tested planning processes, and their military forces appeared much like those produced by earlier manifestations of the industrial warfare paradigm.⁷

The end of the Cold War and the Coalition victory in Operation Desert Storm portended major changes in armed conflict. While some called Desert Storm the last industrial war, others called it the first information war. The war's new computing and communications technologies represented a clear evolution, altering the character of that conflict in every way from the speed and precision of Coalition

3. Ehlers and Blannin, "Information Environment."

4. Arden Bucholz, *Moltke, Schlieffen, and Prussian War Planning* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1991), 1–17; and Gunther E. Rothenberg, "Moltke, Schlieffen, and the Doctrine of Strategic Envelopment," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 299–302.

5. Bucholz, *Moltke*, 1–17.

6. Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 258–70.

7. Jan Hoffenaar and Christopher Findlay, eds., *Military Planning for European Theatre Conflict during the Cold War: An Oral History Roundtable, Stockholm, 24–25 April 2006*, Zürcher Beiträge: Zur Sicherheitspolitik, NR. 79 (Zurich: Center for Security Studies, ETH), 46–56.

maneuver to the lethality of its actions.⁸ But planning for Desert Storm still involved a traditional, industrial-war approach: AirLand Battle doctrine and planning processes, developed for war in Europe, drove operations.⁹

With the development of the World Wide Web and rapid increases in the speed of communications, events began outpacing the predominant planning model. Counterinsurgencies and wars of national liberation fought in the second half of the twentieth century had also exposed shortcomings inherent in the model. When opponents refused to play by prevailing rules and norms, the military advantages of the great powers shrank or disappeared. In French Indochina, Algeria, and elsewhere, David was often beating Goliath. These victories had more to do with will and strategic patience than with military strength.¹⁰

Similarly, as people gained access to the Internet and began publishing and disseminating narratives, hyperconnected, agile, message-savvy “Davids” began emerging, drawing crowds and amassing influence and power. The arrival of 3G and 4G transmission speeds and associated Web-publishing tools made the late 1990s and early 2000s a watershed period for this new kind of power. These trends are intensifying, giving nonstate actors and states willing to break with conventional norms major advantages in pursuing their strategic priorities. The dissemination of 5G further intensifies this process.¹¹

Countering these new forms of conflict reveals insufficiencies in traditional planning processes. While constraints and restraints hamstring American and Allied responses to technologically savvy adversaries, the planning process itself is often the biggest culprit. Planning tends to be episodic rather than continuous. Planning teams are often ad hoc and temporary. Even when a good team comes together, the assignments process almost immediately begins disassembling it. Unfilled billets prevent formal changeover between outgoing and incoming personnel, and in the name of security and efficiency, communications specialists wipe the computer drives of departed staff. These actions and the resulting loss of knowledge continuity produce institutionalized inefficiency and ineffectiveness in planning and lessons-learned processes.¹²

8. Alan D. Campen, ed., *The First Information War: The Story of Communications, Computers, and Intelligence Systems in the Persian Gulf War* (Fairfax, VA: Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) International Press, 1992), 1–22.

9. Rick Atkinson, *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War* (Boston: Mariner Books, 1994).

10. Gérard Chaliand, ed., *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

11. David Patrikarakos, *War in 140 Characters: How Social Media Is Reshaping Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 3–13, 255–64.

12. Michael J. Mazaar et al., *The U.S. Department of Defense's Planning Process: Components and Challenges* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), xii–xiii, 2–3, 32–40; and T. C. Greenwood and T. X. Hammes, “War Planning for Wicked Problems,” *Armed Forces Journal* (2009), <http://armedforcesjournal.com/war-planning-for-wicked-problems/>.

The Centrality of Information

Contemporary conflict is particularly information dense and transcends geographic boundaries in ways not previously possible. As a result, multifunctional, multidomain campaigns are increasingly complex. The central objective of what is now called information warfare or operations in the information environment is to achieve information advantage and decision superiority through nonlethal and lethal operations, leading to an end state that supports strategic priorities. But information advantage and decision superiority are temporary conditions within a limited space. This boundedness makes coordinated and synchronized actions, and the planning process required to develop them, central to successful operations.¹³

Gaining advantage—producing the full range of effects and objectives required to achieve end states—in today’s security challenges requires a process integrated across all instruments of power, alliances, and other collectivities. Often these challenges are persistent, highly complex, and feature opponents well versed in the use of gray-zone tactics—“intense political, economic, informational, and military competition more fervent in nature than normal steady-state diplomacy, yet short of conventional war”—and other information-heavy approaches. Accordingly, only a highly adaptive, flexible, and iterative process of integrated campaigning offers any hope of long-term success.¹⁴

The linear, sequential, and highly centralized planning and campaign development processes of the previous century cannot deliver the level of agility and adaptability required to maintain an advantage in current operating environments. Applying instruments of power deftly and in coordination with whole-of-government and alliance actors requires a planning approach that identifies common characteristics of diverse and seemingly unrelated problem sets and aligns policy-driven end states with shorter-term objectives and activities. This is where integrated campaigning can be of the greatest value.

Integrated campaigning forgoes the “false dichotomy of peace and war” or the existence of “artificially static environments that can be broken into discrete *campaigns* with fixed end-states” by recognizing “the need for proactive, ongoing *campaigning* that adjusts to fluid policy environments and changing conditions to create favorable and sustainable outcomes.”¹⁵ This adaptability allows policymakers and commanders to understand, shape, and influence adversaries, partners, and neutrals throughout enduring or discrete operations.

13. Ehlers and Blannin, “Information Environment”; and Eric X. Schaner, “What Are OIE?: Definition and Functions,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 104, no. 4 (April 2020): 20–22, <https://mca-marines.org/wp-content/uploads/MCG-April-2020.pdf>.

14. Joseph L. Votel et al., “Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (1st Quarter 2016): 102, https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-80/jfq-80_101-109_Votel-et-al.pdf.

15. JCS, JCIC, iii.

Crucially, integrated campaigning is ongoing. Supporting organizational structures and processes must be established, including cross-functional planning teams, formal and informal information-sharing networks, and information pass-along as members of planning teams move to other assignments. Integrated campaigning must not be episodic but instead constant and consistent in line with the evolving problems it addresses.

Viewed through the lens of current planning processes, however, campaign planning approaches across the competition continuum have inherent contradictions. Joint Doctrine Note 1-19, *Competition Continuum*, states, “campaigning through cooperation is usually an enduring activity with no discreet start or end point.”¹⁶ How does this direction align with traditional ends-, ways-, and means-based planning? The efficacy of cooperation-oriented activities can only be accurately assessed once they are tested in a competitive environment. Consequently, planning must remain proactive, not reactive. Also, while adaptability is key to success in competitive environments, achieving long-term strategic aims is the primary motivation and must inform planning, execution, and assessment.

Additionally, constraints and restraints emerge from the same precept upon which integrated campaigning is based. Domestic and international law apply the distinction between peace and war to legitimize, rationalize, and regulate the use of force. The transition to a state of war—declared or undeclared—also justifies the allocation of resources coinciding with an increase in acceptable risk. For an institution as large as the US Department of Defense, it is easier to treat these matters in distinct categories rather than on a complex sliding scale. Are the existing legal and institutional advantages of the artificial and simplistic peace/war binary compatible with the multidimensional complex sliding scale now characterizing competition and conflict?¹⁷ Moreover, what is the role of the military in an environment characterized by multidimensional complexity?

Despite these potential limitations, integrated campaign planning and its ultimate result, integrated campaigning, enable commanders to excel in armed conflict, and ideally short of it, through the skillful application of whole-of-government cooperation and competition strategies. Commanders must be alert to the tension between military and other instruments of power and strive continuously for proper balance.

Perhaps most important, integrated campaigning reduces the difficulty of operating in the hyperconnected global security environment by enabling information maneuver in coordination with more traditional physical forms of maneuver. State and nonstate actors are becoming adept at articulating the concept of information maneuver. They

16. JCS, *Competition Continuum*, Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 1-19 (Washington, DC: JCS, June 3, 2019), vi, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_19.pdf; and JCS, JCIC, 7.

17. JCS, JCIC, 31–32.

recognize how continuous, integrated, well-timed, and well-targeted shaping and influence actions enable combined effects at the whole-of-government and whole-of-nation levels and enable combined-arms effects at the military level. Employing properly targeted information in the right places and times, against the right audiences, either in conjunction with physical force or independent of it, is crucial in the hyperconnected hyperconnected global security environment. Our adversaries understand this concept.

Consequently, in the face of a militarily superior United States, other players work to achieve strategic aims through gray-zone activities. Russia, for example, has developed a range of nonmilitary and quasi-military capabilities and tasks not normally assigned to Western militaries. The Russian Federation's use of reflexive control and its associated activities is a case in point.¹⁸ Russian operations in Georgia, Crimea, and Ukraine have made full use of these capabilities to throw opponents off balance and keep them on the defensive in the battle for narrative and physical dominance.¹⁹

During a crisis, doing something is often seen as imperative. This bias for action frequently results in the military becoming the default responder.²⁰ If timely action is a priority, the military can effectively be brought to bear, as other instruments of power are rarely as responsive. But the nonintegrated deployment of military assets rarely delivers sound, long-term solutions to crises, making imperative a synchronized whole-of-government approach.²¹ In this way, other instruments of power can set the conditions to make military efforts either unnecessary or more effective. Russia has moved in this direction, as has China with its "Informationized Warfare" and "Three Warfares" approaches.²²

China continues to enhance its information warfare capabilities and build its information advantage, emphasizing operations designed to weaken an enemy force's command and control systems.²³ The People's Liberation Army has boosted its multi-domain, anti-access/area-denial

18. Michael Holloway, "How Russia Weaponized Social Media in Crimea," Real Clear Defense, May 10, 2017, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/05/10/how_russia_weaponized_social_media_in_crimea_111352.html; and Keir Giles, James Sherr, and Anthony Seaboyer, Russian Reflexive Control (Kingston, Ontario: Royal Military College of Canada, October 2018), 13–23, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328562833_Russian_Reflexive_Control.

19. Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying Out Combat Operations," reprinted in *Military Review* (January–February 2016): 23–29, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160228_art008.pdf.

20. Robert Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense [DoD], February 6, 2006), 86, <https://archive.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf>.

21. John J. Frewen, "A Bias for Action? The Military as an Element of National Power," in *New Directions in Strategic Thinking 2.0: ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre's Golden Anniversary Conference Proceedings*, ed. Russell W. Glenn (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2018), 44.

22. Dean Cheng, *Cyber Dragon: Inside China's Information Warfare and Cyber Operations*, The Changing Face of War, edited by James Jay Carafano (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2017), 37–53.

23. Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), *FY04 Report to Congress on PRC Military Power, Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act: Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington, DC: OSD, 2004), <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2004/d20040528prc.pdf>.

capabilities.²⁴ China is also improving its cyber capabilities, including computer network attacks, electronic warfare, and information blockades of its computer networks. Chinese leaders realize how important emerging technologies are to national success. Artificial intelligence, for example, has assumed a major role in Beijing's ambitious *Made in China 2025* plan. This technology-based blueprint details a three-phase strategy to maintain market share in 2020, develop significant breakthroughs by 2025, and dominate the sector (along with nine other high-tech sectors) by 2030.²⁵

Although their playbooks differ, Russian and Chinese means for obtaining and leveraging the initiative in conflict and gray-zone competition derive from their understanding that using and manipulating information more rapidly and effectively than their opponents offers major advantages. These approaches spring from a deep contextual understanding of the problem, its key players, and how changes in the speed and ubiquity of information flows have altered planning and operational requirements. Moreover, Russia and China can move unpredictably, execute operations rapidly, and fail fast without severe internal political ramifications, which makes them more risk tolerant.

Although Russian and Chinese activities have elicited a range of punitive responses, their governments arguably have mitigated the impacts by co-opting whole-of-nation capabilities as force multipliers in an enduring and scalable manner. Acknowledging this reality is important because the West has difficulty replicating such whole-of-nation capabilities for structural, legal, and moral reasons. Adopting an integrated campaigning mindset, however, may facilitate development of the whole-of-nation effects leveraged by Russia and China. Integrated campaigning will also facilitate more effective whole-of-alliance (or coalition) actions using all instruments of power in a coordinated, synchronized, and interactive manner.

Understanding both the major impacts of information on the contemporary global security environment and how our principal opponents use that information to gain advantage in specific situations makes it possible to understand not only why integrated campaign planning and integrated campaigning are vital, but also how these concepts might best be operationalized.

Operationalizing Integrated Planning and Campaigning

The *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning* begins with a warning:

The United States is in a worldwide competition with emerging and resurgent global powers, aspiring regional hegemons, and non-state actors

24. S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, *Countering Anti-Access/Area Denial Challenges: Strategies and Capabilities*, Event Report (Singapore: RSIS, December 1, 2017), https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ER180424_Countering-Anti-Access.pdf.

25. People's Republic of China (PRC) State Council, *Made in China 2025* (Beijing: PRC State Council, July 7, 2015), <http://www.cittadellascienza.it/cina/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/IoT-ONE-Made-in-China-2025.pdf>.

seeking to challenge aspects of the post-World War II international order. For the foreseeable future, adversaries will continue to creatively combine conventional and non-conventional methods to achieve their objectives. Many will operate below a threshold that invokes a direct military response from the United States while retaining the capability to escalate to more conventional armed conflict if desired.²⁶

To meet these challenges, the United States and its Allies and partners must engage in Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational integrated campaigning across all instruments of power. The *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning* defines integrated campaigning as, “Joint Force and interorganizational partner efforts to enable the achievement and maintenance of policy aims by integrating military activities and aligning nonmilitary activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains.”²⁷ Its “foundational idea” is “to enable *an expanded view of the operational environment* by proposing the notion of a *competition continuum*. This competition continuum offers an alternative to the old peace/war binary with a new model of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict. These are not mutually exclusive but rather states of relationships with other actors that can exist concurrently.”²⁸

To develop and practice integrated planning and campaigning, four actions are required: understanding the problem and its associated operating environment through the lens of the competition continuum; constructing iterative campaigns using a design process that coordinates and deconflicts military and nonmilitary activities; employing force and securing gains in campaigns tailored to the operational environment; and assessing and adapting campaigns based on objectives aligned with strategic priorities.²⁹

These approaches signal a fundamental shift in what planning entails. Specifically, planning must become an integrated, long-term, continuous process operating in parallel with the integrated campaigning it sets in motion. This effort requires planners to monitor continually the progress made in achieving objectives and end states.

Achieving this combination is challenging. The process revolves around the core of a clearly articulated mission and a well-defined (and achievable) end state. The Australian Defence Force’s *Information War: ADF Manoeuvre in the Information Environment*, JDN 1-20 emphasizes, “defence against threats generated in the IE [information environment] requires a national strategic narrative.”³⁰ Unlike the United States, however, the Australian government does not produce a national security strategy to articulate a national security-oriented strategic narrative nested within a grand strategy. There is no “over-arching

26. JCS, JCIC, 5.

27. JCS, JCIC, 5.

28. JCS, JCIC, 6.

29. JCS, JCIC, 5–6.

30. Australian Department of Defence (ADoD), *Information War: ADF Manoeuvre in the Information Environment*, JDN 1-20 (Canberra: Joint Doctrine Directorate, 2020), 5.15.

controlling national policy or architecture . . . to [facilitate] contest in the IE.”³¹ Similarly problematic is the American tendency not to act in accordance with its national security strategy.

Viewed through the lens of the hyperconnected global security environment and its dynamics, the imperatives for effective and achievable strategic aims, coordinated policy formulation, effective policy execution, and strategic patience all drive requirements for major changes in planning and operations. This new mindset will support the rapid, effective, and persistent integration of operations across the cognitive, physical, and informational domains to achieve integrated campaigning objectives.

The combination of inertia brought on by decades of traditional planning processes, legal and ethical constraints, and the relative freedom of action of adversaries and competitors all present challenges. Together, they make translating planning and operational improvements into effective integrated campaigning difficult. In fact, developing mature and capable integrated campaign planning and campaigning processes requires a paradigm shift in the structures and processes of planning organizations themselves.³²

From Concept to Practice

Campaign plans seek to shape the operational environment and achieve national objectives.³³ These plans establish operations, activities, and investments to achieve objectives in support of strategic priorities. Objectives must be continuously assessed. As they are achieved (or determined to be infeasible), decisionmakers update the plans with new objectives and assessment measures. Integrated campaigning includes operations across the spectrum of conflict, creating opportunities to affect the operational environment favorably.

Campaign planning identifies means to achieve specific effects and objectives. By extension, integrated campaign plans seek to capitalize on the cumulative effect of multiple coordinated and synchronized operations, effects, activities, and investments that cannot be accomplished by a single operation. This approach facilitates integrated campaigning with a continuous, coordinated planning process executed in parallel with the operations it sets in motion.³⁴

The implications of this approach, specifically for long-term problems, are important. Setting conditions is vital to campaign planning because it involves a range of whole-of-government and international factors shaping the problem. Shaping and influencing target audiences, steadily and well ahead of the problem becoming a crisis, is

31. ADOD, JDN 1-20, 5–21.

32. Marcus Thompson, “Information Warfare – A New Age?,” (speech, iWar Five Eyes Principals’ Forum, Australian Defence Force Headquarters, Canberra, October 31–November 1, 2018).

33. DoD, *Joint Planning*, Joint Publication 5-0 (2017), I-1.

34. DoD, JCIC, 1–8.

imperative. Accordingly, integrated campaign planning relies heavily on continuous war gaming, red teaming, and assessment, all of which help decisionmakers stay ahead of problems, anticipate major developments, and gain initiative over time as integrated campaigning continues. The line between planning and operations is increasingly blurry precisely because planning and operations occur simultaneously over long periods. Trying to gain the initiative and achieve continuing advantage involves parallel efforts along with careful phasing and sequencing.

Unlike deliberate planning, which produces operational plans that may or may not be executed in the future, integrated campaign planning addresses ongoing, complex problems that require constant engagement. A similar dynamic pertains when comparing integrated campaign planning with crisis action planning. While the latter addresses an immediate problem and will often be executed, such planning begins and ends at specific points in time, while integrated campaign planning and the integrated campaigning it supports continue for the duration of the problem.

Iterative planning and assessment, along with frequent and realistic war gaming and red teaming, facilitate plan development, operations, and the continuous updates required to stay ahead of opponents. The feedback loops and other observe-orient-decide-act aspects of this dynamic are often intensely negative for the party falling behind. Important changes in structures and processes associated with this aspect of integrated campaign planning include establishing standing and multidisciplinary planning groups with a long-term focus on security problems and high levels of understanding regarding those problems. These planning groups require human-machine interfaces that provide advanced data analytics to help planners understand how the problem is evolving, identify possible solutions, and select a viable course of action.

Condition setting, continuous assessment during parallel planning and execution, and updating campaign plans faster and more effectively than opponents all maximize the probability of addressing problems successfully and short of armed conflict. Long-term shaping and influencing to place an opponent in a position of relative disadvantage is vital, as is the battle for the loyalty of partners, neutrals, and others in the court of global public opinion. Alienating these groups with an approach too reliant on the threat of physical force and too light on information mass and maneuver will erode support and endanger relationships with potential partners. Nonlethal approaches and actions are well worth the effort, and continuously and methodically planning for them is at least as important as planning for lethal actions.

Key Aspects and Recommendations

The foregoing discussion of planning for long-term complex problems provided the general approaches, structures, and processes necessary for effective planning and operations in the hyperconnected

global security environment. The most important of these best practices can be summarized as follows.

Persistence. Integrated campaign planning must be continuous. Unlike conventional plans, integrated campaign planning changes constantly because it occurs in parallel with the integrated campaigning it supports. The requirements for persistence in information-centric planning parallel the rapid flow of information itself as well as the fast-paced shifts in behavior and initiative such information flow drives. Speed requires a speedy antidote, or at least a persistent and timely one, and this begins with the planning process.

Standing planning groups. Multidisciplinary standing planning groups, comprised of the best available people by skill set and experience, are indispensable for integrated campaign planning and integrated campaigning. The Israeli Defense Force Spokesperson's Unit and its real-time media center compose one case in point. While this organization is an operations center designed to counter and provide dueling narratives and messages, the deeper function that allows this activity is persistent and time-sensitive planning by the right groups of people.³⁵ The need for standing planning groups applies to problems as urgent as Israel's conflicts with Hamas and as long term and gradual as those involving China and Russia.

Organizational structure and processes. An organization's structure and processes must facilitate persistent, well-informed, and well-staffed planning. While the Joint (J-code) structure accomplishes this integration in limited ways, it is far from ideal for addressing long-term, complex problems, especially those with high operational tempos. The key shortcoming within the J-code structure is not the number of J-code directorates but the paucity of truly integrated teams dedicated to working specific problems over long time periods. This close and persistent integration of personnel in permanent spaces—rather than coming together occasionally on neutral ground—is key to integrated campaigning.

Time and depth. Certain numbers of US military officers need to be generalists—as in “general officers.” The rest of the officer corps needs greater time and depth in specific, long-term problem sets much like their enlisted and civilian counterparts who are generally hired to provide deep expertise and continuity. Practical solutions to this challenge of time and depth can be found by updating the military personnel assignments process. While less than 1 percent of officers will reach flag rank, the majority are developed professionally as though they might. While this professional development opens a wider window for the selection of flag officers, it drastically reduces the aggregate time and depth officers have in any given problem set or area of specialty. The “up or out” system is not very effective in the current security environment.

35. Neal Ungerleider, “Inside the Israeli Military's Social Media Squad,” Fast Company, November 20, 2012, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3003305/inside-israeli-militarys-social-media-squad>; and Patrikarakos, *War in 140 Characters*, 63–90.

Whole-of-government approach. No aspect of integrated campaigning is less well developed. Because most problems in the global security arena are long term, highly complex, and reliant on an all-instruments-of-power approach, no single instrument of national power will suffice to deal with them. Unfortunately, whole-of-government approaches are limited in scope and are the exception rather than the norm. Cultural and contextual differences account for much of this nonintegration, and the current hyperpartisanship only exacerbates the problem. Standing, cross-functional planning teams must include long-term participants from all interested agencies and departments sitting in common spaces and working at an all-instruments-of-power level. This comprehensive approach is the basis of effective interagency coordination, civil-military cooperation, Joint and multinational operations, and the effective use of structures such as Joint interagency coordination groups and Joint interagency task forces.

Engagements with nongovernmental experts. Because limited numbers of real experts in a given problem set reside within the government, planners must seek insight from business, academic, professional, humanitarian, and other entities with relevant interests. These relationships must be cultivated over time and at the organizational level to build mutual understanding and cooperation.

Advanced and basic planning tools. The rapid development of advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence technologies is changing how humans understand and engage with complex problems. While technology is not a substitute for human interaction and interconnections, it is moving in that direction. Planning teams need a combination of the latest interactive technologies along with the venerable and still indispensable whiteboards and butcher-block paper. These legacy methods facilitate a more creative and interactive planning process even as cutting-edge tools enhance analytical insights.

Conclusion

Today the national interests, citizens, and territories of the United States and its Allies and partners are threatened in every operating domain by regional instability, failed states, increased weapons proliferation, global terrorism, unconventional threats, and challenges from adversaries. Working within this highly complex environment, planners must learn to engage in integrated campaign planning, and their operational counterparts in integrated campaigning. To succeed, planners and operators must embrace the realities of this security environment, including its complex informational aspects, and operate with clarity from within. The hyperconnected global security environment of today mandates a flexible, adaptive approach to military planning and ever-greater cooperation between all the elements of national power, coordinated with that of our Allies, partners, and various intergovernmental, nongovernmental, and regional security organizations.

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On “The Politics of Oath-Taking”

David J. Wasserstein

This commentary responds to Marybeth Ulrich’s article “The Politics of Oath-Taking” published in the Summer 2020 issue of Parameters (vol. 50, no. 2).

Marybeth Ulrich’s article, “The Politics of Oath-Taking” raises questions important to any democracy, especially to the United States, and even more so, as she points out, as we navigate a period of what Steven Metz in the same issue labels “the decline of authority structures, political hyperpartisanship, and the coalescence of new ethical structures” (“The Future of Strategic Leadership,” *Parameters*, Summer 2020, 61). These questions touch on the obligations of the citizen, the soldier, and the civil servant in relation to the state, its governing institutions, and its orders. While she highlights problems, her responses, however, do not resolve them but imply an ease about solutions belied by thought and historical experience.

Two central issues stand out. In the first, Ulrich distinguishes between what she labels professional and political oath-taking/takers. And the second concerns the primacy of legal over other obligations.

As to Ulrich’s assertion of a difference between professional and political oath-takers, the distinction is artificial at best, dangerous at worst. The former are obliged to give impartial, nonpartisan service to their country, while the latter give explicitly partisan support to the political agenda for which they or those who appoint them are elected. Ulrich mentions Ambassador William B. Taylor Jr. who took an oath twice, once as a professional and later as a political appointee. Her argument does not, however, draw any conclusions from his case, which glides tellingly between her two positions. (It is also noteworthy Taylor was, at over 70 years old, far from risking his career in defying a presidential prohibition on testifying before Congress).

There is certainly a difference in the persons and the tasks involved. Professional appointees are skilled experts possessed of relevant qualifications for their jobs. Political appointees, by contrast, need not have any special qualifications for their posts, beyond enjoying the confidence of the president and, when relevant, winning Senate approval. But no difference exists in the legal (and the moral/ethical) obligations to the state and the people of this country that come with these jobs and the oath, regardless of whether the oath-taker is a professional or a political appointee. The real world does not alter these obligations.

The second issue is far larger than the first. The question is not whether those who take oaths are obliged to follow through and obey them. Obviously they are—except when they are not. The real question, therefore, is when may they, when must they, not. The problem is very often the answer to that question boils down to a matter of perception: when do we, when must we, place our moral/ethical obligations above our legal ones? When do we place our legal obligations as we understand

Dr. David Wasserstein, professor of history and the Eugene Greener Jr. professor of Jewish studies at Vanderbilt University, is the author most recently of *Black Banners of ISIS: The Roots of the New Caliphate*.

them above our legal obligations as they are understood by others? And when may government or the president compel such obedience?

These questions have worried and harried human beings for millennia. Twenty-four centuries ago, Sophocles showed us Antigone, in his play of that name, faced this central issue—in the terms of that time, the law of the state versus the law of God—and offered one answer. We admire her decision and her action, not least because it threatens to cost her her life. But hers is not, or not always and not necessarily, the only possible or right answer. This dilemma, rather than the answers themselves, is why the decisions of now retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman and Taylor are important. It is also why those who think those decisions wrong are not so handily to be dismissed.

The questions matter not just in the personal realm, but also, as Ulrich points out, in what she labels the “civil/military relations norms” field. Like other Western nations, the United States is a democracy in which the military is firmly subordinated to civilian control. We can even say that to be a so-called Western nation, a state must subordinate the military to civilian control. But as the current situation shows, there may come times when devotion to country and the Constitution demands an individual break an oath and disregard norms of civil-military relations. That devotion may demonstrate an oath—quite apart from its legal aspects—is really just confirmation of a universal obligation (The famous Great Loyalty Oath Campaign in Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22* is not irrelevant here).

It may occasionally, as the United States itself has asserted in many countries around the world, be necessary to destroy democracy temporarily in order to save it permanently (the example of the dictator in ancient Roman legal tradition is pertinent here). If democracy or the state is threatened from within by the actions of a commander in chief gone wild and the civilian arm has no means or desire to remove that individual, the military may have a responsibility—a loaded term—to step in. That is what German officers (without Allied support) tried and failed to do in 1944—far too late, for the wrong reasons, and with terrible results for themselves. It is also, less admirably, what Chilean General Augusto Pinochet—with American support—did in Chile in 1973. The moral/ethical dilemmas for soldiers, as for others, are complex.

Additionally, the obligations Ulrich describes in the oath-taking of soldiers and public servants are not as special as she thinks. Oaths simply add another layer of obligation to those that exist already under the law. Being a soldier or a professional or political civil servant does not exempt anyone—including the president—from the obligation to obey the law.

Ulrich’s essay is timely and useful. The United States faces major problems, especially internally, that confront citizens—soldiers, professional civil servants, political appointees, everyone—with the legal and moral challenges she addresses. How Americans face those challenges will determine more than the careers of a few soldiers or retired ambassadors. It will determine the future of the Constitution, America’s system of checks and balances, and the place of the United States in the world.

On “The Politics of Oath-Taking”

Jimmie R. Montgomery, retired US Air Force colonel

This commentary responds to Marybeth Ulrich’s article “The Politics of Oath-Taking” published in the Summer 2020 issue of Parameters (vol. 50, no. 2).

Marybeth Ulrich’s article, “The Politics of Oath-Taking” presents much to unpack and does more than promote the idea that oath-takers are obligated to abide by their oaths. Let me react. First, what American military officer would fail to support democratic institutions and our constitutional processes? How is it possible to allege such actions are a violation of our nonpartisan norms? I reject that notion! Supporting our institutions is inherent in our duty. Characterizing it as patriotic seems overkill. It is just expected.

I agree a military officer can testify before Congress if lawfully subpoenaed. I do not agree with the assertion Congress is a “second and coequal civilian master.” This assertion is a wholly different and distracting inclusion. The Department of Defense is in the executive branch. In her discussion regarding Constitutional foundations, Ulrich cites herself in restating the theory of two masters. (I disapprove of the term master in this context.) Then Ulrich asserts any action violating constitutional norms violates our oath. I agree, but the challenge for us all is the lack of clarity or consensus on such norms. Ulrich ignores this challenge, and the fact she does not address it undermines her argument.

I have no heartburn with her paragraphs on the stated purpose of the presidential impeachment inquiry or the distinction between the two oath-taker types postulated. (I do have less confidence in our nonmilitary oath-takers.) And the scholars cited, David Barno and Nora Bensahel, warn of consequences resulting from a loss of trust in our military institutions due to partisan activities by oath-takers. The referenced article importantly notes such activities are not new. (As an aside, does calling them scholars mean their views carry extraordinary weight?)

Several paragraphs are spent building up Ambassador William B. Taylor Jr. as a righteous example of a good, responsible oath-taker. I would not argue with that conclusion. But citing Timothy O’Brien, a well-known Democratic loyalist, undermines the buildup. Taylor, in his testimony, was explicitly upset for two reasons. First, an irregular channel of policy making was used by the administration. Frankly, get over it. Taylor executes policy, and while he may have an input to the policy process, he does not make it.

Second, Taylor asserted military aid he considered vital was being withheld for “domestic political reasons.” It is worth noting the aid was delayed about seven weeks. Taylor thought, as characterized by O’Brien, the president was undermining the national interest. For me, Taylor’s testimony before the impeachment inquiry was far from convincing. No mention was made by Ulrich of Ambassador Gordon Sondland’s

Retired colonel Jimmie Montgomery served in the US Air Force commanding various units responsible for criminal, fraud, and counterintelligence operations worldwide. Most recently, his unit administered security and operations security (OPSEC) for special acquisitions programs.

testimony/recollection, which was often at odds with Taylor's. Perhaps Sondland is not a good, responsible oath-taker.

Ulrich uses now retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman as the second example of a good oath-taker. Again, Vindman was responding to a lawful subpoena, and he should have testified. He was not insubordinate. He did his duty. He expressed his judgments. I listened to Vindman's testimony and viewed his demeanor; he does not lack self-confidence and was borderline arrogant in his responses. He believed what he said. Whether his judgment was correct on what he believes he heard in the phone conversation between the president of Ukraine and US President Donald Trump will be evaluated by history.

Finally, I wholeheartedly disagree with the concluding assertion that the current view of our military officers is that loyalty to the president outweighs the duty to testify before Congress when lawfully subpoenaed. (I had to smile at the use of "trumps" in the paragraph.) I agree a robust education is needed on oath-taking, but the concluding paragraph in the article should have been omitted. The tone is melodramatic.

The Author Replies

Marybeth P. Ulrich

In my essay, "The Politics of Oath-Taking," I introduced the concept of political oath-takers (political appointees) and professional oath-takers (civil servants including the uniformed military) and argued understanding their constitutional obligation is uneven. I also raised the basic question of whether participating in the constitutional process in support of democratic institutions violated the professional military norm of nonpartisanship. I concluded fulfilling one's oath to the Constitution, even if such an act was contrary to the commander-in-chief's wishes, did not violate professional military norms. On the contrary, acts such as now-retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman's testimony before the House of Representative's impeachment inquiry support Congress's impeachment power to protect the presidency from an occupant who may abuse presidential power. Several readers took issue with some of the arguments raised. This brief essay seeks to address their concerns.

Political versus Professional Oath-Takers

David Wasserstein writes the distinction I proposed between professional and political oath-takers was "artificial at best, dangerous at worst." He went on to offer a distinction, "The former are obliged to give impartial, nonpartisan service to their country, while the latter give explicitly partisan support to the political agenda for which they or those who appoint them are elected." This definition is in fact consistent with my own, but I also emphasize whether or not the role is a partisan one, the obligation to uphold the oath is the same. As such, political

oath-takers cannot be excused from not following their oaths simply because they are political appointees.

Members of Congress are political oath-takers who have a particular obligation beyond political appointees. As elected officials, they are accountable to their constituents and are ascribed specific constitutional powers in order to check executive power. Members of Congress who choose to attack the character of witnesses and engage in hyperpartisan rhetoric, instead of questioning professional oath-takers on the issue at the heart of the inquiry, abdicate their constitutional responsibility. Professional oath-takers offer the nonpartisan objectivity critical to establishing the truth. Members of Congress true to their oaths balance their partisan loyalties with their constitutional obligation to check a president who abuses the power of his or her office. Unfortunately, the impeachment inquiry featured a number of politicians unable to exercise the restraint necessary to conduct an objective proceeding capable of producing the constitutional remedy the founders intended.

The readers criticize Ambassador William B. Taylor Jr. and Vindman for interjecting their policy expertise into the proceedings. It is important to clarify the responsibility that career national security professionals, both uniformed and civilian, have in the process. Vindman and Taylor both possessed expert professional knowledge relevant to the inquiry uniquely acquired through their national service. Professional norms and the oaths of each man to the Constitution required such expertise be shared in the form of professional advice with the executive and Congress. Indeed, as part of the confirmation process senior military officers promise to be forthright when questioned before Congress.

Jimmie R. Montgomery rejects the “two masters” argument that the military is subject to the control of both the president and the Congress, citing the fact the Department of Defense is part of the executive branch. This position highlighted the president’s commander-in-chief role atop the military chain of command but did not pay sufficient attention to the founders’ intent to place significant authority to fund, regulate, and even create military forces, such as the nascent Space Force, uniquely in Congress’s hands.

Montgomery also took issue with Vindman’s demeanor while testifying, chiding him for arrogance. I witnessed some of my War College students raising such objections, including the critique he wore his uniform to testify. Vindman responded he was testifying in his professional capacity. His choice was in line with Army regulations and the norm that active duty officers testify in uniform. Critics may dispute his preference, but focusing on his attire and demeanor detracts from full consideration of the issues at the center of the inquiry.

Implications

Vindman retired from the Army in the aftermath of President Donald Trump’s attempt to deny him promotion to full colonel and Army officials’ communication to him his future assignments would be restricted. Vindman determined his Army career was no longer viable, ultimately sacrificing his career for remaining loyal to his oath. Vindman told the *Atlantic*, “I had to choose between the president and the Constitution. I was aware of the fact that I could be compelled to

testify. But I chose the Constitution. No Army officer wants to be put in that position, but there I was” (Jeffrey Goldberg, “Alexander Vindman: Trump is Putin’s ‘Useful Idiot.’” *Atlantic*, September 14, 2020). Given the inability of the secretary of defense to protect Vindman sufficiently from retaliation for his participation in the impeachment query, future professional oath-takers may not choose a path of government service if such a choice is perceived to be career ending.

The founders understood merely stating the rules of the game in the Constitution would not be enough. They also thought it was important to socially construct an emotional commitment to the document—the oath—in order to buttress the rules with supporting norms. But the current American political scene lacks oath-takers in sufficient numbers who understand the obligations of their oath and its associated norms for civil-military relations in a democracy. Without such understanding those “who choose loyalty to American values and allegiance to the Constitution” may be punished, contributing to the further erosion of democratic institutions (Alexander Vindman, “Alexander Vindman: Coming Forward Ended My Career. I Still Believe Doing What’s Right Matters,” *Washington Post*, August 1, 2020).

Book Reviews

ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY

The Sexual Economy of War: Discipline and Desire in the U.S. Army

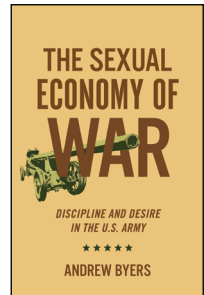
By Andrew Byers

Reviewed by Dr. Jennifer Mittelstadt, professor of history, Rutgers University

Three years ago, I taught a course at the US Army War College that explored the history of the US military's relationship to economics markets. Of all our topics, the lesson that generated the liveliest discussion was the one on sex—how the US military had historically, both formally and informally, regulated the market for prostitution. Our historical readings generated tough questions about the military and its perceived need to regulate sex work to preserve morale, protect individual and unit readiness, and ensure global military effectiveness. I wish we had been able to read Andrew Byers' powerful book to help us answer our questions. *The Sexual Economy of War* offers a broad history of the US Army's attempt to define and regulate sexual activity—from the beginning of the twentieth century to the cusp of World War II. Its case studies and conclusions provide a fruitful perspective on the military's complicated relationship to human sexuality.

Byers's book joins an increasingly robust subfield of histories on gender and sexuality in the US military. Most studies of sexuality and the military explore only one topic: prostitution, the regulation of military family life, the regulation of homosexuality, the treatment of women military personnel by male military personnel, marriage of local women abroad to US military personnel, or sexual relations within the military among personnel. Like no historian before, Byers combines these different aspects of sexuality under one umbrella and examines the US Army's treatment of them as an interconnected whole. His broad vision reveals sexuality as an unavoidable field in which the Army must operate.

Through his wide scope and careful research, Byers presents an argument that will capture the attention of military historians and historians of US foreign relations: the US military in the decades before World War II could not modernize or achieve political acceptability, operational effectiveness, or national and global strategy goals without regulating sex. In order to professionalize, improve effectiveness, and expand overseas, the military controlled same-sex desire among soldiers, supervised officers' wives and daughters, managed sex work, monitored sexual health, and censored servicemen's relationships with local women in the United States and abroad. Byers reminds readers that just as the military operates within a political economy of war—a regulation of who produces what materiel and weapons, who performs



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which services, what these goods and services cost—the military also operates within a sexual economy of war.

From a deep dive into the records of courts-martial, the US Army JAG, Inspector General, World War I training camps, and more, Byers reveals rich and surprising stories of the sexual concerns the military dealt with from the Spanish-American War until the onset of World War II. At Fort Riley, Kansas in the 1920s, the Army court-martialed soldiers who wed surreptitiously to enforce the ban on marriage for enlisted men. In the Philippines, the military subjected brothels to daily health checks and price controls to ensure servicemen's access to sex without compromising their health and readiness.

During World War I, the Defense Department Committee on Training Camp Activities imprisoned 30,000 American women whose potential sexual relationships with doughboys were felt to imperil relations with the local community and the sexual health of soldiers. In Europe, the AEF banned sexual relationships with nonprostitutes, monitored soldiers' sexualized street behavior, and discouraged troop marriages to foreign national women to avoid antagonizing local communities and national alliances. In Hawaii, the military cracked down on hundreds of men for same-sex relations as the military increasingly defined homosexual sex as a threat to morale and discipline.

Byers's survey of five locations and 50 years of military regulations and courts-martial reveals how the military regimes of sex regulation were sharply differentiated based on nationality and locale, class and rank, homosexuality versus heterosexuality, and racial identity. He explores how the military tried to stamp out legal and regulated prostitution in its post communities in the United States but created elaborate legal and regulated structures in the Philippines and worked within existing legal regimes in Europe.

The military treated its African American soldiers more harshly than its White soldiers everywhere, treating Black sexuality as more dangerous to local relations and unit readiness and morale than White sexuality. The military prosecuted all forms of nonheterosexuality brought to its attention, whereas it let some of the same acts pass for heterosexual soldiers. In France and Germany during and after World War I, the military prosecuted officers for nonmarital sex and sexually related conduct unbecoming, but not enlisted personnel. Still, at its permanent posts in Hawaii, the military prosecuted no officers for nearly 40 years—only enlisted personnel. And the military veered wildly between pursuing sexual regulation to preserve health and readiness versus pursuing morality and its perceived impact on military morale. Byers shows readers both resilient patterns and stark anomalies.

These patterns and anomalies might be easier to comprehend if Byers had organized the book thematically rather than geographically. Instead of centering each chapter on a different type of sexual behavior in the Army from 1900–41, Byers presents case studies of individual

posts in Kansas, the Philippines, Louisiana, France, Germany, and Hawaii. As a result, the book feels choppy and repetitive, as some chapters march readers through very short sections on the treatment of each type of sexual regime in each locale.

To account for every issue comprehensively, Byers sometimes misses opportunities for comparison and deeper causal argument. In the end, these weaknesses are overcome by the overall impact of Byers's careful chronicling of the many sexual regulation efforts over time and across the globe. Readers cannot put down the book without acknowledging the sexual economy of war was central to the US military's early-twentieth-century development, expansion, and performance.

Current military leaders should read Byers's history of the US Army's pre-World War II struggles to regulate sex to rethink the challenges facing the US military in recent decades. Today's efforts—and failures—to regulate and shape sexuality, sexual activity, sexual violence, and more have often been treated as novel problems resulting from the incorporation of women and gay, lesbian, and trans servicemembers into the military.

IRREGULAR WARFARE

**The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts
of the Islamic State Movement**

By Haroro J. Ingram, Craig Whiteside, and Charlie Winter

Reviewed by Robert J. Bunker, instructor at the Safe Communities Institute
at the University of Southern California

The purpose of *The ISIS Reader* is simple yet effective: “to present the Islamic State movement in its own words, through the texts and speeches that shaped its evolution from the late 1990s through the second decade of the twenty-first century,” to provide clarity and nuance on ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham) thought and emotive processes, and to stress the critical importance of analyzing the primary sources produced by violent nonstate political actors (1–2). *The ISIS Reader* represents an ethnographic study—a strategic red teaming deep dive—into the hearts and minds of the ISIS intelligentsia who adhere to Salafi-jihadi norms and values bereft of a separation of church—here mosque—and state. As a result, all political matters are religious in nature, all religious matters are political in nature, and ISIS leaders and common fighters are viewed as holy warriors of God carrying out his will on Earth never as agents of the state as in the West.

Authors Haroro J. Ingram, a senior research fellow at George Washington University’s Program on Extremism, Craig Whiteside, an associate professor at the US Naval War College resident program at the Naval Postgraduate School and a retired Army lieutenant colonel, and Charlie Winter, a senior research fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization at King’s College London, have extensive military and national security careers. Collectively, they have produced numerous professional and academic publications on the Islamic State and possess the requisite research expertise to produce this work. Anas Elallame of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, the translator of a number of the ISIS works in the book originally published in Arabic, should also be singled out for his vital contribution.

The work is divided into acknowledgements, an introduction, four parts (representing the bulk of the book), a conclusion, a glossary of Arabic terms-ISIS usage, and an index. The four parts are subdivided into two chapters on multiple ISIS works from 1994 and 2004; three chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2006, 2007, and 2009; five chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2013 through 2016; and five chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2016, 2018, and 2019. Each of the 19 readings is sourced to a speech, document, video communiqué, or other media with background on whether the reading represents an ISIS translation into English (which is given precedence), a US governmental translation,

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or a translation specifically undertaken for readers and includes detailed analysis to place it into context and discuss its significance.

The content of the readings ranges from being laden with mystical metaphors and tribal rituals to presenting a practical strategic assessment and action plan to offering Caliphate gender guidance to utilizing strategic messaging to bolster the righteous cause of global jihad. From a strategic military perspective, the most important readings are “Zarqawi’s Strategy” (chapter 2), “Advice to Leaders of the Islamic State” (chapter 4), and “Media Jihad” (chapter 10). Readers will likely skim the more esoteric and religiously skewed material and rely on the analysis section to interpret their meaning.

The concluding chapter highlights “Several recurring trends . . . that are pertinent for scholars wishing to understand the movement and strategic-policy architects seeking to devise strategies to confront it” (303). These trends are strategic opportunism, a deft use of propaganda, and a willingness to openly disclose its future intentions as follows: “. . . the group’s strategic culture of critical reflection and innovation, evidence of which continually emerges and re-emerges throughout its history,” “. . . the central role afforded to propaganda a mechanism by which the Islamic State movement competes against foes who are conventionally superior to it by almost any measure,” and “. . . that [the] Islamic State has a history of telling its supporters exactly what it intends to do” (303, 304, 306).

The telegraphing of the strategic intentions of ISIS—like a boxer providing cues for the next punch he is going to land—is an important trend to isolate related to this entity. As we know, the global insurgent Salafi-jihadi struggle with ISIS, or al-Qaeda for that matter, is far from over.

Faults with the book are minimal. The glossary is missing some Arabic terms from the text but this omission represents a small oversight. The footnotes for the analytics section supporting each reading are solid, however, a “references cited” master listing at the end of the book would have proven beneficial. Further, no tables or diagrams were evident and could have been used to better organize conceptually the numerous readings appearing in the text, their relationship to ISIS evolutionary phases, and their sourcing and strategic significance in the introductory and concluding sections of the book.

The Isis Reader is a unique and well-executed resource on translated Islamic State primary milestone texts and their analysis. It will serve as an extremely useful primary reference for War College and related graduate-level program courses focused on a strategic analysis of the Islamic State as well as a secondary text in courses focused on Salafi-jihadi radicalization or al-Qaeda and Islamic State strategic competition.

Small Arms: Children and Terrorism

By Mia Bloom with John Horgan

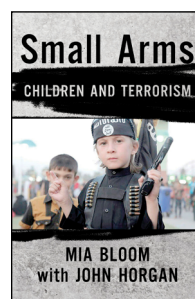
Reviewed by José de Arimatéia da Cruz, professor of international relations and international studies, Department of Political Science and International Studies, Georgia Southern University

Small Arms: Children and Terrorism addresses an important issue in terrorism literature—the use of children to carry out acts of terrorism worldwide. Traditionally, terrorism is a weapon of the weak and a tool used by groups to coerce a population or overthrow a regime either through military means or in a more clandestine fashion. Focusing on children who are recruited, kidnapped, or sold into slavery and turned into terrorists by organizations such as Boko Haram, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the Islamic State, and al-Qaeda authors Mia Bloom and John Horgan, both professors at Georgia State University, note that “children in violent extremist movements, [often] referred to as ‘child terrorists,’ are not born. Rather, they are made, and they learn to *want* to be a part of a violent group, either with or without the knowledge and support of their families” (1). The book further “explores the extent of children’s involvement in terrorist groups and examines their transition from victims to perpetrators, while demonstrating the interchangeability of these roles” (3).

Using an economic approach, Bloom and Horgan agree that “children are not used as substitute goods . . . but as a complementary goods able to accomplish something adults could not” (15). In many attacks against infidel forces, children are used for several reasons, including the fact that children are less likely to arouse suspicion and can act innocently. “The Taliban prized child operatives; one Pakistani fighter explained, ‘children are innocent, so they are the best tools against dark forces’” (15).

The book also examines the social ecologies of children and their socialization processes. It focuses on their “parents, families, peer groups, religious leaders, and other community based institutions, and how structural conditions pressure children to participate in hostilities” (5). Children who are recruited or forced into terrorism, especially the “Ashbal al-Khilafa” (or Cubs of the Caliphate), are groomed and exploited to victimize others (1). Several channels allow children to be recruited into terrorist organizations, either against their will or with the consent and encouragement of their parents or caretakers. It is important to note that “terrorist leaders across a variety of regions and cultures tend to shield their own children from involvement, instead focusing recruitment on young people to whom they are not related” (14).

Another important factor facilitating the recruitment of innocent children to do the dirty job of adults in terrorist organizations is the push and pull factors in many areas where the recruitment takes place. Push factors are “the structural conditions that facilitate involvement



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in terrorism” while pull factors are the “things that make involvement appear personally attractive to the individual” (16). Finally, recruitment does not take place *ex nihilo*. Instead, recruitment is a long process that “requires years of indoctrination by the media, sources of religious authority, schoolteachers, and the larger community” (21).

The connectivity explosion, which is shrinking the world and making sovereignty more porous, has been a force multiplier for terrorist organizations. As Bloom and Horgan note “the deliberate targeting of youth online, especially through social media, has exploded in recent years to near critical proportions, as terrorist groups have become increasingly savvy at using the internet to disseminate propaganda and attract new recruits” (25).

Another important contribution by Bloom and Horgan is the six stages of socialization into a terrorist organization and how the social ecology of terrorism enhances the appeal of child recruitment: “seduction, schooling, selection, subjugation, specialization, and stationing” (140). In the seduction stage, children are enticed to join a terrorist organization. The process, mainly through propaganda and outreach activities, shows potential recruits how their lives will be different once they join the organization.

A similar process takes place in Brazil’s notorious *favelas*, or shantytowns, where poor *favela* youth often join criminal organizations as a way out of poverty and a means for acquiring quick cash. Many terrorist organizations shower children with “toy/candy giveaways” and give speeches and “shows of strength” in addition to shows of executions and “indirect exposure to IS personnel” (140).

It is also important to remember many terrorist organizations, like gangs in the United States and worldwide, provide recruits with a sense of belonging and a purpose in life. Obviously, the outcome of joining is not optimal since most terrorists are usually captured or killed and leaving the organization can be complicated if not impossible. Bloom and Horgan, in their attempt to provide a solution to the very complex issue of children involved in terrorism, propose eight practical steps or best practices that could win hearts and minds in order to reintegrate children who served in terrorist organizations (179).

With the implosion of the Soviet Union and its replacement with Russia and the “end of history,” the United States, the newly lone superpower, must confront a new reality—not only terrorism, but also child terrorism. As Bloom and Horgan state “the ability to win hearts and minds is what has allowed many of the extremists to operate, by providing social services and offering benefits where states have failed to, but also by outlining what they are for and whom they are against” (181).

In conclusion, *Small Arms: Children and Terrorism* should be read by students at the US Army War College. It highlights a topic rapidly growing in prevalence around the world, and future military leaders must learn how to deal with this new pandemic problem.

Niche Wars: Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001–2014

Edited by John Blaxland, Marcus Fielding, and Thea Gellerfy

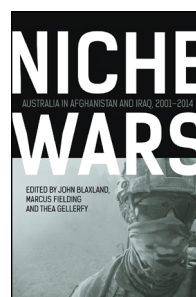
Reviewed by Dr. Russell W. Glenn, director, plans and policy, deputy chief of staff G-2, US Army Training and Doctrine Command

In addition to its availability as a free download, *Niche Wars* is unique for the breadth of its authors' expertise—a blending of strategic, operational, and tactical insights and a frankness rarely seen in such collective efforts. It provides a valuable opportunity to learn from one of the United States' closest and ablest military partners as they confronted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Niche Wars is organized into four sections and three appendices (two of which provide helpful chronologies of Australia's commitments in the two conflicts). The first section, "Policy and Strategy," presents a strategic overview of the country's national leadership decisions to commit forces from the perspectives of a minister of defence, a secretary of the department of defence (generally a long-serving senior bureaucrat), and a former chief of the defence force. This trio of chapters sets the strategic context for what follows, making it clear Australia's participation was a response to what its government perceived was, in the words of Minister of Defence Robert Hill, "not only an attack on our ally the United States but also, and fundamentally, an attack on our shared values" (23). Significantly, Hill addresses the failure of the leaders in Washington to include key partners in critical decisions, observing "I do not think we were even consulted on what turned out to be two of the most unwise decisions following the conflict: to disband the Iraq army and the Ba'ath Party," while admitting "I think we preferred to pass these responsibilities to others" (28).

There is much wisdom to be mined between these lines. US officials—civilian and military alike—too often default to a "not invented here" approach during both preparation and execution; a default that deprives them of what can be invaluable insights from knowledgeable parties who might assist in avoiding unfortunate missteps. Yet, ultimately, the responsibility for outcomes rests with the coalition lead nation. While partners might be hesitant to assert their views, lead partner solicitation of input constitutes a win-win. Resulting views often provide options those immersed in day-to-day planning or management of operations overlook. Solicitation also overtly recognizes the truth that the lead nation and partners alike are in this together and all legitimately have a right to be heard.

Authors of the second section have muddier boots than the authors of the opening chapters. Here special operations forces—air and maritime activities—and conventional ground force challenges in Iraq receive attention along with a rarely heard vantage point of an international officer embedded in a US headquarters. The tensions a tactical commander experiences in a coalition



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environment are clear in Anthony Rawlins's chapter recalling his tour of duty as commanding officer of the Overwatch Battle Group West (Two) in southern Iraq. His force served alongside British and other partners to whom he felt a justified obligation to support in extreme cases. Those tensions came to the fore when guidance from the senior Australian officer restricted his force if commitments were thought to threaten casualties amongst Rawlins's soldiers. It was a situation exacerbated by the battle group's discomfort in not having full access to strategic intentions from Canberra—to include those regarding casualty concerns. A situation presenting a conundrum never fully resolved during the unit's time in-country.

Section three delves into specific functional areas spanning operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Military functions such as intelligence, command and control, and civil affairs find complements rarely provided in conflict compilations; the chapter on the military and media perhaps being an exception in that regard. Two authors address undertakings by the Australian Federal Police in Afghanistan during the period 2007–14, making clear the value of civilian law enforcement experts who are able to complement military training for a host nation's other-than-military security forces. It is a task more difficult than it might appear. This reviewer's interviews regarding the British Army's experience in the early years of its coalition commitment to Iraq reflected that while military police can undertake such training, the differences between military and civilian law enforcement are such that this approach is not the preferred solution.

The third section concludes with chapters analyzing Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) operations and gender considerations, the latter being particularly significant when dealing with populations in which female-to-female interactions are essential to successful intelligence collection, gauging local attitudes, and not violating social norms. Here as elsewhere throughout the book, readers will find observations that might stir unpleasant memories while also constituting worthy reminders of lessons too valuable to lose.

Dave Savage's "AusAID Stabilization," for example, rightly observes, "often enough, the provision of aid is the easiest part. The real challenge is ensuring the aid is what is really required, is compatible with the mission, is not supporting the insurgency, and is both viable and sustainable over time. Indeed, aid that is poorly delivered can often be worse than no aid at all" (232). This observation is again in keeping with several interviews this reviewer conducted during visits to Iraq and Afghanistan over the past now nearly 20 years, an observation that calls for providing effective training to personnel who might be tasked with the authority to disperse Commander's Emergency Response Program funds or some equivalent thereof during future contingencies.

The fourth section includes several essays that do not fall into the above three categories with two essays focused exclusively on lessons thought to be of value during contingencies yet to come. The five chapters in the closing section are an apt topper to a worthy collection of essays that will be of interest to readers seeking a better understanding of these ongoing conflicts and to other readers with specific functional area interests. Their value, and that of the book as a whole, extends to conflicts beyond those involving counterinsurgency to touch on coalition leadership, occupation responsibilities, and interactions with local populations and governments—in short, virtually any contingency the future might hold.

Cities at War: Global Insecurity and Urban Resistance

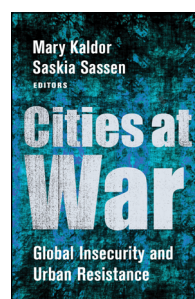
Edited by Mary Kaldor and Saskia Sassen

Reviewed by Dr. John P. Sullivan, senior fellow, Small Wars Journal El Centro

Urban warfare is a constant feature in current and future conflict. Ranging from civil strife and chronic insecurity to terrorist attacks, sectarian violence, and components of broader campaigns, urban war spans both international and noninternational armed conflicts and criminal armed violence. Most texts look at urban warfare challenges from the view of the combatant warfighter; others look at the tactical challenges, including those involved with protecting the populace. This edited collection, however, looks at urban insecurity from the perspective of the civilians inhabiting the cities at war.

Editors Mary Kaldor and Saskia Sassen are influential contemporary urban scholars. Kaldor is known for her theoretical work on networked conflict and new wars, while Sassen is noted for her work on global cities. Both scholars are concerned with global security, violence, and assemblages of power. Here they articulate the concept of urban capabilities through the metaphor of the “yogurt run” as seen in the ability of a farmer in Ghouta, Syria, to negotiate the distribution of dairy products to residents in embattled Damascus (1). Such urban capabilities epitomize community resilience and are key to understanding the dynamics of urban insecurity and conflict.

Kaldor and Sassen use the term new wars to describe a social condition involving conventional and irregular forces ranging from militias, private military companies, terrorists, warlords, and criminal gangs. These new wars are increasingly networked and urban. The global networks of transnational organized crime and the global economy connect seemingly disparate conflicts through a range of spaces and flows. Identity politics and fragmented spaces—including enclaves—are a means of negotiating the resulting global political economy. Informal and criminalized markets are integrated into global circuits and networked assemblages of power. Communities and combatants



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264 pages
\$30.00

adapt to these realities creating new threats and importantly new opportunities to forge security and political access.

These new opportunities are a means of coping with, and managing, perpetual war. Two major models for doing so are the “war on terror”—militaries directly engaging nonstate forces—and “liberal peace”—formal stabilization and peacekeeping (11–13). The interaction between these two models is explored in selected case studies on a range of conflict scenarios over time.

Chapter 1 by Ruben Andersson looks at Bamako, Mali, a West African city of almost two million citizens that became a safe haven for peacekeepers and humanitarian aid organizations. Andersson reviews the security mechanisms employed by international actors in context of the geography of intervention and assesses the fragility of the safe zone established for intervention and the social dynamics that can mitigate the perception of barricaded enclaves of remote intervention.

Chapter 2 on Kabul, Afghanistan, by Florian Weigand compares perceptions of security between urban and exurban residents of Kabul Province’s “zones of (in)security” (54). He argues that inclusive security practices can “enhance the level of perceived security and [state] legitimacy” (54). In Kabul both insurgent and criminal violence contributed to perceptions of security. Police are not always successful in meeting community perceptions. At times, state intervention—or misintervention when police are viewed as corrupt or predatory—raises levels of perceived insecurity. The Taliban is seen as a source of insecurity and security. Cooperation and community engagement are key.

In Chapter 3 Ali Ali assesses insecurity in Baghdad, Iraq, in the wake of US intervention and the establishment of green and red security zones. The “green zone” is a walled secure enclave that shelters its inhabitants from lawlessness. Citizens living outside the walls in the “red zone” are subject to violent assaults, terrorists, insurgents, and gangsters (85–87). State capacity is limited and the need for integrated and inclusive security measures based upon active engagement has been established.

Chapter 4, “A Tale of Two Cities” by Mary Martin, examines insecurity in the twin border cities of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. “Narco-insecurity” is explored in light of border securitization, the war on terror, and “neoliberal security”—including privatization and the interaction between globalization and development—as a prelude to reviewing community responses to counter the insecurity (123–28). Additional discussion on the role of criminal cartels, cross-border gangs, and *narcocultura*, as well as allegations of police collusion with cartels, torture, and corruption would have enhanced this chapter.

Sobia Ahmad Kaker surveys enclave making in Karachi, Pakistan, in Chapter 5. Social fragmentation leads to disparate (in) security perceptions and enclaves heighten insecurity and marginalize the urban poor. Chapter 6 by Karen Büscher assesses insecurity in

Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Goma became a safe haven for peacekeepers and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations and a refuge for internally displaced persons fleeing active conflict thus driving increased urbanization. Rebels exploited this stability to exert political and economic influence and as a foundation for financial support, recruitment (especially of child soldiers known as *kadogo*), and political action.

Chapter 7 by Johannes Rieken, Efraín García-Sánchez, and Daniel Bear looks at restoring perceptions of security in the aftermath of insurgent and criminalized conflict in Bogotá, Colombia. Community-based approaches show promise. Chapter 8 by Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic explores how (in)security in Novi Pazar, Serbia, is exacerbated by economic decline, the influx of refugees, identity politics, and clientilistic governance.

In their conclusion, Sassen and Kaldor emphasize the need for “tactical urbanism” in response to urban insecurity and future urban wars and adaptive community responses to conflict (227–29). It also requires military, diplomatic, and humanitarian actors responding to urban conflicts recognize the global assemblages of power needed to integrate local features and actors. Engagement must be direct and sustained to build trust. In all cases, as in evolving conflicts worldwide, criminals exploit and participate in conflict. Military leaders at the strategic level, intelligence and civil affairs personnel, military and civilian police, and humanitarian actors will benefit from reviewing this important text to recognize opportunities to enable future “yogurt runs” (231).

MILITARY HISTORY

Brotherhood in Combat: How African Americans Found Equality in Korea and Vietnam

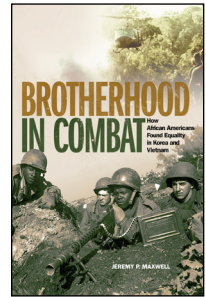
By Jeremy P. Maxwell

Reviewed by Douglas Bristol Jr., associate professor of history, and codirector, Center for the Study of the Gulf South, University of Southern Mississippi

Brotherhood in Combat is the first comparative history of racial integration during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. It views Black military service through the aspirations of Black soldiers, who hoped to prove their right to full citizenship. Jeremy Maxwell argues Black and White GIs in both wars forged bonds of care and trust in combat that created racial equality in frontline units, concluding they “found equality of experience in combat” (18). Maxwell, however, does not claim the experience of fighting beside men of a different skin color ended racial tensions in the military. He also distinguishes carefully between the environment in frontline units and in rear units—where racial tensions proliferated, especially toward the end of the Vietnam War. This distinction is important as the evolving civil rights movement increasingly politicized Black soldiers in Vietnam.

Chapters 5 and 7 substantiate the book’s thesis by analyzing the experience of combat in Korea and Vietnam through the soldiers’ personal accounts. Maxwell is the first scholar to use the oral histories of Black veterans from the Veteran’s History Project of the Library of Congress. Their stories are gripping: “Harold Bryant, a [B]lack combat engineer operating with the 1st Cavalry Division” during Vietnam, remembered “one of his platoon members,” who “was a card-carrying Ku Klux Klan member” (130). The platoon ended up in a firefight, and the Klansman was cornered. Although Bryant and others “laid down a base of fire to cover him,” he froze (130). A Black member of the platoon came to his rescue. The White soldier later said that action changed the way he viewed Black people. Maxwell uses stories like this one to demonstrate how the constant threat of danger on the front lines fostered cohesiveness beyond racial ties.

In contrast, the situation Maxwell describes in the rear units was racially divisive. To explore these racial tensions, he draws on research in military records at the National Archives, contemporary news articles, and oral histories. Enlisted men tended to self-segregate, which when combined with boredom, resentment against discrimination in the military, and widespread alcohol and drug use, lessened constraints on expressing racial animosity. In fact, most racial incidents in Vietnam happened between off-duty soldiers drinking at service clubs, although it should be noted Maxwell also discusses riots in stockades and aboard ships such as the USS *Kitty Hawk*.



Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2018

224 pages

\$29.95

Despite its broad scope, the book is narrowly focused in some ways. Maxwell concentrates on the experience of African Americans in the Army and the Marines, with occasional comparisons to the Navy and the National Guard. He does not cover the Air Force or the Coast Guard, nor does he examine women in the military. He explains their exclusion from combat in the period he studies means their experiences are not directly relevant to an analysis of *Brotherhood in Combat*.

Less justifiably, Maxwell does not examine gender, or to be more specific, masculinity. The recent trend in scholarship on Black soldiers in Korea and Vietnam has been to explore the impact of the desire of Black soldiers to have their masculinity recognized on their perceptions of military service. A study of men bonding in combat would benefit from investigating whether shared identities as men performing the ultimate masculine activity—fighting in war—helped lessen racial differences.

Senior members of the defense community will be interested in this book for three reasons. First, it illustrates through numerous examples the importance of placing constraints on expressions of racial animosity and the consequences of failing to do so. Second, it discusses the experience of Black and White soldiers in terms familiar to the defense community, taking into account the practical realities of the battlefield and rear units. Lastly, it briefly reviews the history of racial integration through the end of the Vietnam War for readers unfamiliar with the subject. The first chapter provides background on the issues facing Black soldiers from the Civil War to World War II. The next three chapters outline the forces driving integration in Korea, and another chapter highlights racial issues in Vietnam. Maxwell's graceful prose, moreover, is clear and free of social science jargon.

In conclusion, *Brotherhood in Combat* sheds new light on race relations in the military during the Korean and Vietnam Wars by exploring the impact of combat on troops. Maxwell concludes the military—despite ongoing discrimination—made greater progress toward racial equality than civilian society through the early 1970s. The book will be enlightening for anyone working for greater diversity in the military and trying to understand the persistence of racism.

Women of Empire: Nineteenth-Century Army Officers' Wives in India and the U.S. West

By Verity McInnis

Reviewed by Jody M. Prescott, colonel, US Army (retired)

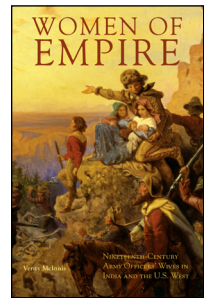
Verity McInnis's monograph on the role of army officers' wives in the 1800s in British India and the American West is a must-read for anyone who wants to better understand the evolution of gender roles among soldiers and spouses in the contemporary US Army. McInnis pulls no punches in addressing gender, ethnicity, race, class, and sexuality in these two different historic military contexts—topics still relevant today as the US military works to maintain a force driven by equal opportunity based on merit. Gender, for example, is increasingly important operationally because of the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017* and the Department of Defense strategy that implements it.

With thorough and careful research, McInnis illustrates her points through observations from the writings and journals of these women—and some of their husbands. She preserves their language and nuance, brings their voices to life in breadth and detail, and humanizes certain points of view modern readers will find unenlightened—and likely offensive—that must be considered for there to be a rich and meaningful discussion. Most importantly, the accounts make the book interesting to read.

McInnis identifies two important similarities between these two groups of women, bringing them together in her assessment of their impacts on the administration of both armies and the very different areas those armies helped administer. First, both groups of women largely bought into national ideologies based on notions of white racial and cultural superiority that legitimized the armies' roles in *civilizing* these conquered non-European territories. Significantly, as McInnis points out, these roles were fostered and implemented in large part by the officer products of the military academies of each country.

Second, these women, operating within a masculine military value system that emphasized selfless service and military professionalism on the part of gentlemen officers, did not merely reflect the prejudices of their times. Instead, in their complementary role, the women were active agents who reinforced these prejudices as a means of maintaining social control over indigenous people and even their own civilian nationals. This second point is significant when objectively assessing the women's impact on their military communities and in the societies these armies helped govern.

McInnis shows the officers' wives in these two nineteenth-century armies enjoyed a degree of responsibility and respect their civilian counterparts did not. It was common for officers' wives to derive authority and status from their husbands' ranks and create a mirrored



Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017

304 pages

\$34.95

rank hierarchy within their gender. Within the armies, and particularly in garrison settings, these women formed effective influence and communication networks that flowed around the military rank structure. For example, they often played an essential role in determining whether other women would make suitable brides for young officers (61–62).

External to the armies, McInnis shows how officers' wives often found themselves serving as ambassadors of their particular national values—from how they comported themselves in ceremonies and social settings to how they dressed and decorated their homes to how they interacted on a daily basis with their working-class servants. These roles all offered opportunities for agency when played well, but they were not without cost. McInnis notes that “Working within the military system, however, required the women to live highly regulated lives and to observe codes of conduct appropriate to their partners' position in the imperial hierarchy” (9). In addition, these women often keenly noted a decrease in their social stature and scope of responsibilities when their husbands took positions outside military garrisons or retired from active duty and returned to civilian life.

McInnis does not oversell her argument on the exercise of female authority in these two armies. She recognizes the women's accounts reflect their biases regarding their husbands' roles as officers and gentlemen. She also acknowledges these accounts are highly individualized and cannot fully cover the depth of experience of all the women who were married to officers serving in India or the American West. McInnis also appreciates that the voices of those whom these women considered their social or racial inferiors are generally not represented in their own words, such as the perspectives of enlisted men's wives or those of their African American, Native American, Mexican, or Asian servants.

The role of Army officers' spouses today is quite different than it was in the 1800s, or even in the 1980s, when officers' evaluation reports might include information about their spouses' work with unit functions or charitable causes. Other things have not changed, such as the challenges of moving families every couple of years to new duty stations. Today this challenge also presents professional disadvantages for spouses as they try to find new jobs, or in the case of dual-career military couples, equally career-enhancing positions. The military lifestyle is not easy. To make it work for their families, officers' spouses still need a system of shared positive military values to which they can subscribe.

Women of Empire is a valuable contribution to understanding the history of others who lived and managed the military life in their times. It provides a well-researched and well-documented launching pad for honest discussions today about the role of military spouses, both officer and enlisted, as the US Army evolves to reflect the diversity of the American people.

1774: The Long Year of Revolution

by Mary Beth Norton

Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

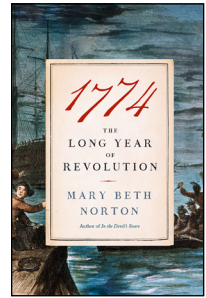
Mary Beth Norton, a historian who specializes in the history of the early American republic, is a history professor at Cornell University and the former president of the American Historical Association. Her latest book, *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*, examines the 16 crucial months between the Boston Tea Party (December 16, 1773) and the Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 19, 1775) and captures the voices of the colonists who debated and fumbled along the path to independence before fighting the formidable British Empire—the most powerful country at the time.

Norton shows the varied opinions among the colonists, from their concerns over the authority of England to the justness of British policy to the condemnation of London's attempts to levy taxes upon the colonies. Citing pamphlets, newspapers, and personal correspondence from the period, she skillfully weaves this material into her narratives, using the header "Advices from London" to highlight source materials. She also claims most historians gloss over the details of this pivotal window in American history and miss the variance of opinions and facts surrounding the events.

The book is divided into nine chapters, beginning with "The Cursed Tea" and the early colonial obsession for the dark beverage. Norton shows the divided public opinion on how to best deal with the tax on tea and how tea was issued as payment, purchased, and consumed—though many colonists abstained from using the tea. In each chapter of the book, Norton highlights the divided public perceptions in the colonies, leading up to the final chapter, "All Our Liberties at Stake," prompting the inception of the conflict that became the American Revolution.

Norton details how London taxed colonists in North America with the Molasses Act of 1733, along with a series of subsequent taxes, including the Cider Tax of 1763 and the Sugar Act of 1764. These taxes, however, were loosely enforced and circumvented by smugglers. She believes the issue of taxes in the colonies was most closely associated with tea.

As late as the early 1770s, the colonists viewed themselves as loyal British subjects of King George III. Even years later, many Americans maintained that view—although the colonists were adamant, the British Parliament did not have the authority to tax them. Surprisingly, some raucous New Englanders were eager to purchase and consume the tea, much to the chagrin of the activist group Sons of Liberty. This issue served as a foundation for the larger problem and debate about



New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020

528 pages

\$32.50

the authority of the British Parliament to tax the colonies, along with the mixed public reaction around the colonies.

The North American colonies officially drank over 265,000 pounds of tea in 1771; they also consumed another 575,000 pounds of smuggled tea. Most narratives only cover the seven ships loaded with East India Company tea bound for the colonies. The Boston Tea Party dictates that many authors primarily focus on the three ships (the *Dartmouth*, the *Elanor*, and the *Beaver*) that arrived in Boston laden with over 100 chests of British East India Company tea that would end up in Boston Harbor. Norton reveals there is much more to the story.

Through a rigorous review of source documents, Norton splendidly traces the cargo of the four other ships, including the *William*, the seventh ship that sank off the coast of Cape Cod in the middle of December. She pieces together the details of the shipwreck and the disposal of the tea down to the individual chest. She also provides vignettes of lesser-known figures, like Jonathan Clarke and John Greenough from Provincetown, Massachusetts, who oversaw the distribution of the salvaged tea—much to the frustration of Samuel Adams who wanted all the tea destroyed. Ultimately, the men used the *Eunice*, a Salem fishing schooner, to move the 54 chests and one barrel of tea to Castle William, located on an island in Boston Harbor.

Norton's conclusion points out that although Americans did not draft a Declaration of Independence when the first shots rang out at Lexington and Concord, colonial leaders had thought and functioned independently since the founding of the colonies. She closes with the poem "The Glorious 74," which extols 1774 as the crucial period leading up to American independence.

Students of military history and the American Revolution will appreciate *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*. Norton's in-depth research and varied source documents serve as a lens into the complex nature and multiple emotions of independent-thinking colonists who did not fully comprehend the implications and consequences of their actions.

REGIONAL STUDIES

The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood

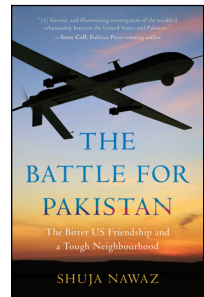
By Shuja Nawaz

Reviewed by James P. Farwell, associate fellow, Centre for Strategic Communication, Department of War Studies, Kings College, University of London, and non-resident senior fellow, Middle East Institute, Washington, DC

A distinguished fellow at the South Asia Center at the Atlantic Council, Shuja Nawaz earned high praise for *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within* (Oxford University Press, 2009), in which he provided unique insights into the complex dynamics of Pakistan's army. His new book, *The Battle for Pakistan*, validates those accolades and reviews many topics familiar to readers interested in Pakistan: the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in 2007 and its repercussions; the challenges Pakistan faced, from floods to internal security confronting her husband Asif Zardari, who took control of the People's Party upon her death and who refrained from investigating the assassination; the political maneuvers by former presidents Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif as they jockeyed for power; the byzantine relations between successive chiefs of army staff and their civilian counterparts; the fraught tensions with India; and throughout, the often contradictory and complicated relationship that exists between the United States and Pakistan.

While distinguished authors in multiple books have covered these topics well, *The Battle for Pakistan* stands apart. First, Nawaz knows Pakistan inside and out. He understands its byzantine politics—long dominated by the Bhutto and Nawaz families—in which confecting and unraveling conspiracy theories is as popular a preoccupation in Pakistan as NFL football is in the United States. Second, his work stems from a detailed exploration of these events through a wealth of first-hand accounts in the United States and Pakistan. Third, he possesses an unparalleled knowledge of Pakistan's military. And finally, he applies wisdom and insights to these events as only an expert with his knowledge and expertise can do.

Nawaz's dissection of how Pakistan perceives its relationship with the United States and the war in Afghanistan packs a punch. Too many American leaders, he argues, view Pakistan as a nation whose alliance can be purchased through aid leveraged to influence Pakistani security policy. American naivete, he notes, is well illustrated by the use of "Af-Pak" to identify the conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan (57). Richard Holbrooke, who considered himself the house expert on the region—and on probably most topics that drew his interest—was taken aback when the astute Bruce Riedel explained the tendency of some Americans to call Pakistanis "Pakis" was like using the N-word



London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020

428 pages

\$89.00

in America (67). It is a small item, but readers can draw broader conclusions from these insights about misfires in forging partnerships and alliances.

Nawaz is critical of the United States' failure to forge a coherent strategy for winning in Afghanistan, a reality Pakistan recognized and factored strongly into its posture in dealing with Americans. The United States prosecuted the war on a short-term basis, driven by domestic politics and the inability to persuade Pakistan to seal the border or adequately equip the Pakistan army to fight against the Taliban.

Nor, as Pakistani military commanders—especially Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani—repeatedly complained, did the United States credit Pakistan with sustaining the huge losses its military suffered in fighting Islamic extremists. The failure created bitterness and mistrust, even with the intellectual Kayani, whom Nawaz views as pro-Western in his outlook. Nawaz argues the United States was blind in expecting Kayani, for any reason, would put US interests ahead of Pakistan's welfare. Kayani understood the conflict would be drawn out. Like many countries in the region and members of Pakistan's political and military establishment, he doubted the United States would stick it out for the long-term.

Kayani was right, although his insight overlooks the broader strategic question of how deeply and for how long a strong US presence in Afghanistan made sense. In the meantime, nerves were rubbed raw by the takedown of Osama bin Laden, the Raymond Allen Davis affair in which an American—whom the Pakistanis branded a CIA agent—killed two Pakistanis, and miscommunications that led in November 2011 to the deaths of two dozen Pakistani soldiers at the hands of American forces.

Nawaz clarifies the strategic importance of this nuclear-armed nation of over 220 million citizens to stability in Southwest Asia and the tremendous work required to strengthen and stabilize relations between the United States and Pakistan. Improved relations are important even as Pakistan looks to strengthen its ties with China, which has dealt with Pakistan by providing aid more adroitly.

In a book laden with rich analysis of pivotal events, the final chapter with recommendations for the future bears close reading. There is not space here to recount all of Nawaz's suggestions, but the bottom line is that Pakistan must streamline its government, strengthen transparency and integrity, and bring civilian and military power into equal balance. While Pakistan's army has made strides in modernization to address the current threat environment, the Pakistan government needs to do more diplomatically, especially in persuading India to reduce the number of its forces facing Pakistan to stabilize relations more permanently and avoid a catastrophic nuclear war. Ultimately, Nawaz writes, "Pakistan's future lies in emphasizing and building a strong economy and creating opportunity."

Battle for Pakistan is required reading for students of Pakistan and professionals who deal with this byzantine nation of immensely talented but—to this observer—strangely insecure inhabitants. The nation’s stability is essential not only for Pakistan but for the region and the rest of the world.

China’s Western Horizon: Beijing and the New Geopolitics of Eurasia

By Daniel S. Markey

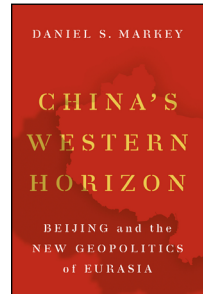
Reviewed by Dr. Andrew Scobell, RAND Corporation

During the past two decades, great-power rivalry for the United States meant intensifying competition with China. This rivalry for many American military professionals focused on the military realm, especially in the Western Pacific maritime domain. Yet, in recent years there has been greater awareness that the US-China rivalry entails competition in multiple realms. As the *2017 National Security Strategy* observed, bilateral rivalry with China also includes economic and political competition. This reality underscores China’s much-hyped “Belt and Road Initiative”—an ambitious and extensive effort to expand its economic presence and enhance its political influence worldwide.

China’s Western Horizon: Beijing and the New Geopolitics of Eurasia makes important contributions to our understanding of the processes and outcomes of China’s unprecedented and growing involvement in countries far beyond its western borders. This timely volume examines Chinese activities in three regions, focusing on a single country of particular importance to each region (Kazakhstan in Central Asia, Pakistan in South Asia, and Iran in the Middle East), and explores in detail the interactions between these countries and China.

The dominant Belt and Road Initiative narrative in the United States portrays China as the malevolent economic colossus consumed with waging “debt-trap diplomacy,” duping defenseless and gullible governments worldwide into signing predatory loan agreements to finance desperately needed infrastructure projects in these developing states. In a variant of this narrative, Beijing bribes local elites to mortgage their country’s future. The logic undergirding this narrative is that China fully intends for these governments to default on the massive debts, ensuring Beijing will own, or at least control, these countries.

China’s Western Horizon is a valuable corrective to this one-sided narrative. Countries such as Iran, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan are far from helpless or gullible and often hold significant sway over Chinese decisions and actions. Markey recounts the origins of the Gwadar port project in Pakistan. Contrary to conventional wisdom in the United States, China neither initiated the project nor propelled it forward. Almost 20 years ago, then Pakistani President Musharraf aggressively lobbied



New York: Oxford University Press, 2020

336 pages

\$29.95

Beijing to invest in Gwadar, and China reluctantly acceded. According to Markey, “Gwadar may eventually serve a variety of Chinese goals, but the port was initially the product of a Pakistani effort launched for Pakistani reasons” (ix).

Markey effectively captures the domestic dynamics in Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Iran. He is especially adept at analyzing Pakistan’s internal workings and illuminating how the array of governmental and societal actors shape the outcomes of negotiations between Beijing and Islamabad. He also deftly maps the geopolitical landscape in the three regions showing local competitors within each region as well as external great-power rivals. With his extensive knowledge of South Asian dynamics, Markey also provides readers invaluable insights into three key dyads—China-Pakistan, China-India, and Pakistan-India. He concludes that Beijing’s growing influence and involvement in the subcontinent could likely produce the “worst of all possible worlds” by generating greater instability in an already tumultuous region (79).

Moreover, Markey’s nuanced discussion of the soft competition between Beijing and Moscow is fascinating and on point. While China-Russia ties may be the best they have been in many years, underlying tensions persist, and Central Asia lurks as the issue most likely to bring these tensions to the surface.

The final chapter outlines implications for the United States and offers policy recommendations. Markey’s assessment is ominous. South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East are all “primed for greater Chinese involvement, less reform, and more geopolitical competition” (156). Moreover, “Beijing shows little appetite for assuming responsibility for the many existing conflicts within and among Eurasian states” (164). This assessment means Chinese actions are unlikely to contribute to stability in many countries and may prove destabilizing for others.

Whether other great powers will be willing to assume responsibility for these regions is not clear. In the coming years, American military professionals should anticipate heated debates inside and outside the Beltway regarding the appropriate role and military posture for the United States on the Eurasian landmass. Markey’s primary advice for US policymakers is worth restating: acquiring “a clear grasp of local histories, interests and relationships will be essential to advance America’s specific . . . interests in Eurasia” (189).

China’s Western Horizon is a tour d’horizon and should be required reading for anyone grappling with the enormity of America’s China challenge—whether they sit in Carlisle Barracks, Camp Smith, MacDill Air Force Base, the Pentagon, or elsewhere.

Moscow Rules: What Drives Russia to Confront the West

By Keir Giles

Reviewed by Captain Jake Shelton, US Army Special Forces

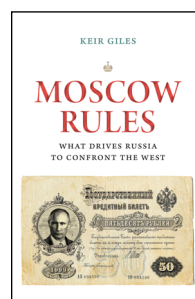
The US relationship with major nuclear power Russia is at its worst point since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In *Moscow Rules*, Keir Giles offers a unique perspective through his assessment of the sources of confrontation and shows how Westerners could better understand Russia and prevent conflict. Widely lauded in academic and diplomatic circles, the book also has applications for military leaders focused on countering Russian aggression and should be added to their reading lists.

Moscow Rules diverges from the popular claim that tension with Russia is based on Putin's incursions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria or election meddling as seen recently in *The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin* (Vintage Books, 2016) by Steven Lee Meyers and *Putin's World: Russia against the West and with the Rest* (Hachette Book Group, 2019) by Angela Stent. Instead, Giles suggests "The West" mistakenly views Russia as "Western" and incorrectly applies its standards as it would for other European nations. Through citations and extracts from Russian leaders and experts, he describes how Russia is not Western and operates by a different set of rules. While the book's sections cover topics from Mongol occupation to recent protests, two rules summarize the content military leaders can use to help craft their campaign plans. First, Russia views security as a finite resource, and second, Russia is culturally nondemocratic.

For the first rule, to Russia security is finite and "History Matters" (21, 117). This history long precedes the classically cited German invasions of the twentieth century. For thousands of years, Russia fell victim to its vast undefendable geography through invasions from every direction. *Giles* claims this historical context manifests itself today through Russia's continued effort to weaken and destabilize geographic neighbors and create a security buffer zone (13).

Military leaders who understand this rule can improve upon recent strategic failures. Russia views a destabilized Ukraine and Georgia unable to join NATO as directly beneficial to their security. While countering actions on the border of any country are difficult, the first rule could have anticipated Russian involvement in Syria and Crimea to maintain the strategically vital deepwater ports at Latakia on the Mediterranean Sea and Sevastopol on the Black Sea.

For the second rule, Giles argues the historical oppression of the Russian people has ingrained state servitude to the near "genetic level" and highlights public indifference to rigged elections, whitewashed history, state-sponsored assassinations, and Moscow-backed party line propaganda to support this assertion (64). An appreciation of this



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256 pages

\$34.45

cultural difference can aid military leaders in predicting Russia's actions. In retrospect, Moscow seems far less rogue for annexing Crimea in 2014 when viewed from their perspective. The Kremlin simply combined ambition with its indifference to public accountability and annexed what they had long claimed was already Russia.

Additionally, this nondemocratic culture allows Russians to accept the "ends justify the means," such as barrel bombing Syrian cities, so leaders should not assume Moscow would adhere to the Law of Armed Conflict (91). Finally, the state oppression of the population has resulted in an inherent distrust of "outsiders," which could diminish the effectiveness of unconventional warfare, psychological operations, and civil affairs in campaign plans (111).

The book's only flaw is the author's bias against President Trump. While Giles cites facts, quotes, and excerpts throughout Russian history, he only criticizes the Trump administration. A more robust argument would include the influence of previous administrations on Russian relations. This criticism does not significantly detract from the validity of the book's arguments, however, as Giles identifies his bias and acknowledges Russia is only one country in the larger geopolitical world.

Moscow Rules can help Western leaders gain initiative over Russia in two ways. First, the sequential nature of Russia's foreign incursions indicates direct involvement by leadership at the highest levels. By creating "competent societies and militaries" across Russia's border, the West can overwhelm Moscow's ability to micromanage (169).

Second, Putin understands excessive defense spending caused the downfall of the czars and the USSR (156). Moscow, therefore, will increasingly pursue its interests through proxies and electronic means further from its periphery. By imposing costs on Russia's indirect approach, the West can counter future incursions. Combining these two approaches will force Russia into a dialogue, as Giles hopes, while avoiding direct conflict by simply understanding "Moscow's rules."

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy versus Autocracy from the Ancient World to the U.S. and China

By Matthew Kroenig

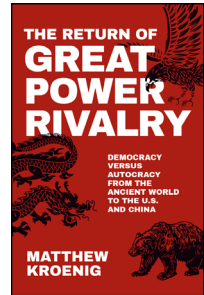
Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

Matthew Kroenig argues the United States will prevail in the great-power rivalry with China because democratic governments are superior to all other political systems. In his newest book, *The Return of Great Power Rivalry*, Kroenig surveys seven historical examples that highlight democratic superiority over autocratic governments. The book is well researched, though written primarily for laymen as it avoids jargon and terms familiar to international relations theorists. Kroenig, however, does highlight key works by Joseph Nye, Paul Kennedy, and James Robinson, to name a few.

Kroenig's thesis is that "democratic countries are better able to amass power, wealth, and influence on the world stage than their autocratic competitors," though many scholars might suggest China has the potential to provide a unique system that surpasses democracies (4). Many scholars point out the conclusion is not preordained, and the outcome is uncertain, contrary to Kroenig's claim. This topic is generating volumes of books, with some critics suggesting China's one-party system will more closely resemble Singapore's hybrid system that blends democratic characteristics with rule by an elite group. This timely book provides more data to fuel continued conversations on the topic.

The book is organized into four parts. The first part highlights potential benefits of each system, and the three remaining parts concentrate on democratic advantages presented from historical, contemporary, and future perspectives. The term democracy is deceptive, and Kroenig reviews one key distinction cited by political scientists "in which political officeholders are selected through competitive, popular elections" (18). The distinction, however, is more nuanced, and he should have added the qualification that the popular vote for key leadership positions in the government, given the emergence of hybrid forms of government.

A point of clarification for the layman is the fact that if one were to ask average Chinese citizens on the street about democracy, they would say China is democratic, while it will likely grow more democratic in the future. The confusion is based on a unique understanding of democracy in China. Economic progress is the crux of the ideological divide between occidental and orientalist conceptions of statecraft, and one underscored by the influence of Confucian influence via the



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304 pages

\$29.95

notion of moral economy. In other words, most Chinese citizens view the social contract with the government and the people as one that is predicated on material support and opportunities provided by the state rather than individual freedom.

Kroenig's detailed study of key transformations in the European world will inform students of history while highlighting the benefits of democracies in European history. His survey of ancient Greek political theory is useful, though Sparta ultimately won the Peloponnesian War and the dual monarchy was not democratic and Athens (a democracy) was defeated. Sparta's oligarchy, however, did not last long and fell to Alexander the Great. Kroenig's claims stretch the truth at times, such as when he writes, "[D]emocratic states produce better soldiers," and "Democracies also enjoy a military advantage due to their innovation edge," though most of Europe between 1939 and 1942 might have disagreed when the Wehrmacht rolled through Europe with their innovated combined arms blitzkrieg and panzer divisions (30).

If China's economy is the largest in the world, other metrics are meaningful when contemplating international influence. Soft power is one area where America continues to rank number one for several reasons including premier secondary learning institutions that are among the best in the world and an entrepreneurial spirit that is closely affiliated with democratic forms of government.

The literature surrounding the rise of China and the decline of the United States continues to be popularized by academics like Andrew Bacevich and countless others. In 2008 Fareed Zakaria warned we were entering a post-American world where the United States must share the world stage with emerging actors like China, India, and Russia. Since then, geopolitical specialists have highlighted China's growing economy and cited statistics from the World Bank to support their argument that China's authoritarian one-party system is more efficient than American democracy.

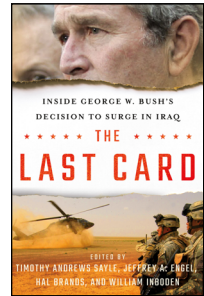
To cite an example, scholars point to World Bank reports that highlight the growth in China's share of the world's gross domestic product—in purchasing power parity terms—that skyrocketed from 4.5 percent in 1990 to 18.6 percent in 2018, while noting America's share dropped to 15 percent. Since 2011 Chinese patent applications have surpassed America's patent applications and have been climbing higher ever since (World Bank, <https://www.worldbank.org/>).

Senior-level leaders will find *The Return of Great Power Rivalry* helpful as a great summary of democratic governments from ancient Greece to the present, though its real value is in providing case studies for war theorists. Kroenig does not present a convincing argument that American democracy will prevail. He admits early in the book that "Perhaps China will be the sole exception, but every other state-planned economy in history has hit a wall at some point" (22). While this statement is true, the jury is still out.

The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush's Decision to Surge in Iraq

Edited by Timothy Andrews Sayle, Jeffrey A. Engel, Hal Brands, and William Inboden

Reviewed by Steven Metz, professor of national security and strategy, US Army War College, and nonresident fellow, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft



Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019

416 pages

\$34.95

The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the long stabilization operation that followed were seminal events in the evolution of American strategy. These events naturally spawned a growing genre of analytical literature—which, in broad terms, developed in three waves. Initial quick looks, most written by journalists, were published soon after the invasion and in the early stages of the insurgency. The second wave consisted of more detailed and rigorous academic assessments and participant memoirs on tactical and strategic operations. The third wave has only just begun and reflects newly available information and a greater degree of frankness made possible by the increasing distance from the conflict.

An initial contribution to the third wave was *The US Army in the Iraq War* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2019), a two-volume study based on thousands of declassified documents and dozens of new interviews with key participants and leaders. *The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush's Decision to Surge in Iraq* is another important part of the third wave, but it looks at a very different aspect of America's involvement in Iraq—President George W. Bush's decision in late 2006 to shift from a strategy based on training Iraqi security forces and disengaging as quickly as possible to the “surge.” This decision increased the number of US military forces in Iraq and committed them to working directly with Iraqi security forces. The surge was based on recognition that the conflict had changed from an insurgency primarily targeting US forces to a sectarian civil war; political progress—the ultimate determinant of success or failure in Iraq—was impossible without improved population security.

While President Bush gradually accepted the idea that the United States needed a new strategy over the course of 2006, he knew a major strategic shift would require adroit management and salesmanship. The Department of Defense and many senior military leaders still believed the old “train-and-leave” strategy was working, and the State Department remained skeptical of sustainable political reconciliation in Iraq. Additionally, the American public and Congress were increasingly frustrated by the cost of the operation. This book is a detailed study of how President Bush decided on the surge and how he brought the public and the rest of the government on board.

There have been other studies of the surge but none structured like *The Last Card*. The first half summarizes 28 interviews—completed in 2015 and 2016—with key participants in the surge decision. Nearly

every major player, except former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and US Army General George Casey, was interviewed, including President Bush. The second half of the book provides analytical essays by an all-star cast of security experts.

While the book's contributors vary on their acceptance of the idea that the surge snatched victory from the jaws of defeat for the United States, and was a textbook case of how to undertake a major strategic shift, most contributors agree the shift was an impressive performance by Bush. He united all the senior policymakers except Rumsfeld (who left government service shortly before the formal surge decision), all elements of the government, and much of the public and Congress behind this shift. Political scientist Robert Jervis outlines in his chapter that the process demonstrated Bush's "extraordinary skill . . . not in his making the decision, but in his ability to craft what he was doing so that it would minimize the opposition and allow him to proceed with a united government" (273).

While there are no stunning new revelations in the book, it does pull together much of what was already known about the surge decision and fills in additional details, however, it suffers from two problems. First, the editors rely on oral histories rather than a blend of oral histories and documents like the Army's Iraq study. Interviews are valuable but they are susceptible to selective memory by those being interviewed. Second, the editors have allowed extensive redundancy in the analytical chapters. All the chapters are valuable stand-alone studies of the surge, each with a different perspective or focus, but since the chapters rely on the same oral histories, identical narratives—and even quotations—show up many times.

Given the unusual structure of the book and the redundancy of information, few readers other than researchers performing in-depth analysis of the surge will find it useful to read cover to cover. That said, *The Last Card* is an excellent resource for scholars. It provides important and authoritative insights into one of the seminal events in American history.

STRATEGY

Adaptation under Fire: How Militaries Change in Wartime

By David Barno and Nora Bensahel

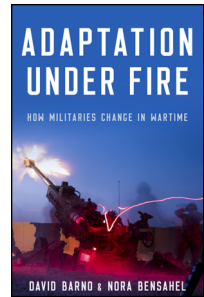
Reviewed by Major Zachary Griffiths, operations officer, 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)

In fall 2020 the US Army terminated the Asymmetric Warfare Group and the Rapid Equipping Force. Both organizations adapted the Army to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but no longer seemed necessary in the Army's turn toward "great power competition" (1). Was this a mistake? In *Adaptation under Fire*, authors David Barno and Nora Bensahel explore whether the US military is adaptable enough to prevail in the wars of the twenty-first century.

Barno and Bensahel present a credible case that American military reform should include building a more adaptable force in preparation for twenty-first-century conflicts—and they bring tremendous credibility to the project. Barno commanded US forces in Afghanistan, while Bensahel achieved tremendous acclaim for her defense policy expertise.

Employing a comparative case methodology to validate their recommendations for both practitioners and policymakers, Barno and Bensahel analyze operational level wartime adaptation. Borrowing from Amy Zegart's work on military and intelligence adaptation, they define adaptability as "a dynamic process that must keep up with the rate of change" during war with two parts (9). First, adaptations must have sufficient magnitude to change what an organization does or how it does it. Second, the change must improve the fit between an organization and the environment. Big changes that fail are not adaptation. Small changes that work locally but fail to scale are not adaptation. Wartime operational level adaptation drives the entire project.

The book is divided into three parts, with the first part being the strongest. In the first part, Barno and Bensahel define their terms and identify the three components for their analytic framework: doctrine, technology, and leadership. They demonstrate the validity of their framework by comparing cases of successful and unsuccessful twentieth-century wartime adaptation. In the second part, they evaluate American adaptability in Afghanistan and Iraq through their framework. Finally, in the third part, they explore emerging trends and argue that the "adaptation gap"—the difference between the anticipated war and the war that will actually be fought—will continue to grow. They conclude with recommendations for improving doctrinal, technological, and leadership adaptation in the US military.



New York: Oxford
University Press, 2020
440 pages
\$34.95

Structure is one strength of *Adaptation under Fire*. From the outset, the book proceeds logically, defining the argument, validating each component of the framework in existing literature, exploring each component in the modern context, and then concluding. The early chapters defining the doctrinal, technological, and leadership elements of adaptability do this especially well. They start with a bulleted list of factors associated with adaptability and a two-by-two matrix of the cases to be explored. For example, the chapter on doctrine lists flexibility, assessment, inclusive development, and rapid dissemination of changes as crucial to innovation before exploring the cases. The matrix then buckets the four cases by whether they are or are not examples of adaptable doctrine and accurate doctrine. Because of the time the authors invested in laying out the chapter's argument, readers can rapidly advance through the material.

Thorough research is another strength of the book. The authors draw upon a rich array of sources, including history, political science, peer-reviewed academic articles, military journals, military doctrine, and interviews. Nearly 115 of the book's 430 pages are reserved for notes and the bibliography. The authors, however, sometimes lean heavily on one source for a particular case. For example, Steven Zaloga's *Armored Thunderbolt* accounts for seven of 10 citations in that chapter's supplemental tank armor case. Notwithstanding the occasional overuse of a single source, the bibliography is a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners.

Despite the book's strong structure and detailed research, the case selection deserves further scrutiny. As Barno and Bensahel never explicitly define their case selection criteria, they open themselves to criticism of either drawing on familiar cases or not fully considering the full range of possible cases. Despite the lack of criteria, some comparisons make intuitive sense. For example, the chapter defining technological adaptation compares four cases of tank innovation: the World War II "Rhino tank" plow, World War II supplemental tank armor, World War I French tank development, and World War II American tank development. With all cases focused on the same type of technological adaptation in roughly the same time period and theater, readers can assume omitted variables matter less.

The chapter defining leadership adaptability, however, does this less well. Can we directly compare the leadership of a captain in Grenada to a battalion commander in Vietnam, and then to theater-level commanders in Vietnam in the 1960s and India during World War II? The varying levels of command, the types of units (elite volunteer troops versus draftees), the theater of conflict, political conditions, and the time period wildly differ. While leadership adaptation may have been the critical variable explaining success, the large number of other factors at play challenge the conclusion that adaptive leaders must build a "climate of openness, trust, and candor" (97). Justification of case selection would better persuade readers of the argument and help them understand competing factors.

In all, *Adaptation under Fire* effectively argues for adaptability's importance in future conflicts. Barno and Bensahel identify and test doctrine, technology, and leadership as key components of adaptation analysis before evaluating the American military's recent performance and offering recommendations. Readers interested in understanding how the American military adapted (or failed to adapt) during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq must read this book. Likewise, scholars of military adaptability may lean on the common sense doctrine, technology, leadership framework, detailed notes, and bibliography. Finally, both uniformed and civilian policymakers may find the recommendations of Barno and Bensahel helpful as the services reorient away from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq toward great-power competition.

Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World

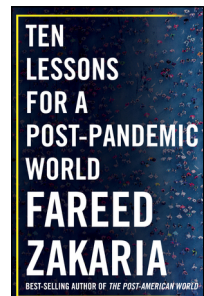
By Fareed Zakaria

Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

Fareed Zakaria is a prolific author, political analyst, host of CNN's *Fareed Zakaria GPS*, and a contributor for the *Washington Post*. His latest book, *Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World*, uses the COVID-19 pandemic as a springboard to reflect on broader globalization challenges and the evolving nature of human interaction in the world. The book's title is deceptive. Although the book is about COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, it focuses more on globalization and world politics than diseases.

The book's main thesis is that American exceptionalism has fostered complacency and inefficiencies that manifested during the COVID-19 outbreak. Zakaria argues eloquently that the US government is in vital need of an overhaul, though he does not outline specific policy recommendations or revisions that would be useful for senior leaders in the defense community. Overall, he provides a solid argument that would have benefited from more detailed analysis and potential solutions. Nevertheless, all senior leaders should read the book for a superb summary of the impact of globalization and the challenges framed by a more connected society. Readers will also gain a better understanding of epidemics that military practitioners will face in the future.

Zakaria organizes the book into 10 "lessons," reviewing the influence of effective governance, why we should listen to experts, the impact of the digital life, the social nature of people, rising inequality, and the transformation of international politics, to cite just a few. He begins with an overview of global epidemics—from the mysterious plague described by Thucydides to the infamous bubonic plague that wiped out half of Europe. Globalization transformed the world,



W. W. Norton & Company,
2020

307 pages

\$26.95

virtually eliminating national borders, integrating trade, connecting remote regions of the world to megacities, and underscoring the nature of modern intermeshed society.

One conclusion Zakaria draws (lesson 6) is the social nature of human beings, which became a source of frustration for many Americans locked in their homes in some parts of the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, who craved human contact and interaction. They learned Zoom calls are a pale substitute for social contact. Solving this crucial human need must be factored into future productivity and innovative technologies moving forward.

The economic lessons of globalization come with a dire warning. Zakaria writes, “We have created a world that is always in overdrive . . . All of these strains and imbalances produce dangers—some that can be foreseen, and others that cannot” (15–16). Technologist Jared Cohen’s lesson that only two of the three characteristics of open, fast, and stable systems are viable without a system spinning out of control provides insight into modern trade networks (14–15). It is illustrative to use Cohen’s model to capture the challenges of capitalism that are open and fast but unstable which is a concern, though serving as a launching point for the spread of epidemics that will continue to haunt future generations.

As the global population moves up the income ladder, they will relocate to dense urban areas with modern technologies. At the same time, much of the rest of the planet will remain poor and without access to refrigeration so “wet” markets where animals are kept, killed, and sold will not be eliminated. The proximity of humans to animals is an elusive vector to control. Most new diseases, 75 percent of them, such as AIDS, Ebola, SARS, MERS, the bird flu, and the swine flu, originated in animals. Future pandemics will become more common, though Zakaria does not propose specific policies that will help world leaders manage these events more effectively in the future.

A Facebook post by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology that was quickly deleted reveals the unspoken reality of European derision with American systems, specifically health care systems. At the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic, school administrators directed students abroad to return home if they were in a nation with a poorly developed health-care infrastructure, *like the United States*. The message highlighted the fact that America is no longer the shining city upon a hill.

A Stanford study concluded the likelihood of someone moving from the bottom fifth of income distribution to the top fifth is only 7.5 percent for those born in the United States while Canadians are almost twice as likely to make the transition (70). Zakaria’s argument would be more effective if he had examined the same trends in China where young entrepreneurs have growing opportunities, given the shifting world demographics. The reality is the future is full of promise and uncertainty while globalization reminds us that the new

reality has shifted to an information age where knowledge is the critical determiner for success.

Zakaria reminds readers of the powerful scene in *Lawrence of Arabia* when Peter O'Toole, playing an unforgettable T. E. Lawrence, turns back to rescue a lost man, reminding those present that we are in charge of our destiny when he tells them "Nothing is written..." (234–35). He closes *Ten Lessons of a Post-Pandemic World* by capturing the new reality of globalization, rising inequality, and changing world leadership that is a shell of the post-American world. This liminal period in world history will provide unique opportunities and challenges as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The future is filled with uncertainty and new opportunities. It is up to American leaders with public support to take advantage of them.

TECHNOLOGY AND WAR

Killer Apps: War, Media, Machine

By Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves

Reviewed by Dr. Zac Rogers, research lead, Jeff Bleich Centre for the US Alliance in Digital Technology, Security and Governance, Flinders University, South Australia

Biological evolution, and its branch of human epistemology, is not the work of any naturally occurring optimization function. It is purposeless drift—adapting and changing as contingencies arise—with no specified goal or end state. Artificial evolution and machine epistemology, on the other hand, is pure optimization function. This distinction is critical in understanding the profound implications of our techno-anthropological reality. The latter emerged by way of the former but is in no way determined, controlled, or contained by it. The two natural forces are inimical—not complimentary or coconstructive in the way many popular accounts of our technological civilization would conceive. Part polemic, part historical analysis, part exploration, *Killer Apps*, in delivering this news, adds timely perspective to the existing discourse while avoiding several pitfalls.

The machine episteme is binary and goal oriented—it contains within it an approximate rationality in which the annihilation of human life becomes axiomatic. Crucially, the decision of the authors to position the book’s conceptual center around media is their most important and original aspect. They show, using well-researched historical and contemporary examples, how the proliferation of machine media—any technology that selects, collects, stores, processes, and transmits information and incurs a manipulation of time and space—has accumulated via the escalating strategic games of military competition, to the point where human existence now takes place inside the confines of an alien and inimical machine episteme.

Chapter 8 clearly states this point: “War is the condition of media escalation. Media technology propels competition between military powers in order that it may evolve” (108). Our world and the machine’s world are codetermined, coproduced, and deeply entangled by our shared media—but in no way commensurate. In this hybrid world, we have cocreated, humans are the weak, the slow, the stupid, and the soft (4). Yet we continue to behave and think, in a tragedy exceeding farce, as if we are master and conductor.

Within the machine episteme, humans are the noise and the fog. Our elimination is therefore simply a byline of the machine logic our strategic escalations have engendered. When expressed in geopolitical terms, this episteme holds, in the first instance, that the optimal way to make the world safe for Americans is to depopulate it of non-Americans.



Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020

280 pages

\$26.95

Something akin to what Carl Schmitt described as a state of “absolute enmity” (“The Political Character of Absolute Enmity”). Packer and Reeves show how this binary process of elimination by filtration was prefigured in early postwar continental air defense, continues in the ongoing expansion of automated drone warfare and spills over in the vanguard shift to low-cost, low-energy, fully autonomous AI-driven swarms. The corollary of this process has been steady human subordination to the binary machine episteme.

Continuing with the machine logic, the only way to make the world safe for the machines is to depopulate it of humans—or at least minimize the “human factor” to the point of its effective irrelevance (17). Packer and Reeves argue that existing legal constraints, such as the Department of Defense “human-in-the-loop” policy, are little more than ornamental (3). The machine episteme and its internal logic of operational speed and error elimination have overwhelmed any regulatory expression of normative or ethical prudence. They address head-on the misguided humanism of the techno-optimists and the swollen cohort of AI ethicists, who cling to the belief that this regime—any regime—of scaled media technology can be subordinated to human intentions. Their demolition of the naive anthropocentrism in this popular line of thought in Chapter 4 is alone worth the cost of the book.

In expressing this existential fear, Packer and Reeves join a litany of historical voices, to realize again that knowledge, activated and materialized via media, is a Promethean gift. They echo C. S. Lewis who wrote: “Each new power won by man is a power over man as well. Each advance leaves him weaker as well as stronger. In each victory, besides being the general who triumphs, he is also the prisoner who follows the triumphal car” (*The Abolition of Man*, 1943). While modernity and its wake has proceeded under denial of this truth, Packer and Reeves have updated the insight with penetrating acuity.

For the national security, intelligence, and defense communities, *Killer Apps* presents both a valuable scholarly resource and a deeply ambiguous set of questions. As the authors presage in the preface, are they friend or foe of this community? Defined as it is by the imperative of knowing the difference, the national security, intelligence, and defense communities might take *Killer Apps* as an opportunity to reflect. The media we have inherited from our forebearers—both human and machine—incarcerates us in an episteme in which the prospects of a peaceful existence is itself increasingly subject to automated annihilation. At a minimum, we should reflect on the incongruity that thinking of strategic futures might preclude the very possibility of being human. If it does preclude the possibility, what does winning mean?

A definitive account of this subject matter will remain elusive—such an undertaking is yet to be attempted by any authors, past or present. Reading *Killer Apps* alongside other related perspectives, however, such as Philip Mirowski’s *Machine Dreams: Economics Becomes*

a Cyborg Science (Cambridge University Press, 2002), Bruno Latour's *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Harvard University Press, 1999), and John Gray's *Enlightenment's Wake: Politics and Culture at the Close of the Modern Age* (Routledge, 1995)—which converges in its final pages with *Killer Apps* in its appeal to Heideggerian *Gelassenheit*—will reward readers seeking to fill out and augment their understanding of the phenomena at hand. The task of grappling with the techno-anthropological reality is immense.

Stylistically, some readers will find the combined narrative, historical, and analytical approach deployed in *Killer Apps* unappealing. Without doubt, critics will complain of the dearth of solutions offered. Misanthropes will relish the dystopian tones. But these types of responses suffer precisely the anthropocentric orientation to which Packer and Reeves are taking an ax, and for that their contribution is invaluable. They force readers to transcend the humanist epistemological orientation in order to understand what the machine age has truly ushered in.

Contributor's Guidelines

Article Submissions

Content Requirements

Scope	Submissions to the US Army War College Press must address strategic issues regarding US defense policy or the theory and practice of land warfare while exhibiting the highest standards of research and scholarship. Actionable strategic, policy, or instructional recommendations must be included. For more information, visit https://press.armywarcollege.edu .
Audience	US Army War College graduates, other senior military officers, policymakers, and members of academia concerned with national security affairs.
Clearance	Members of the US military and employees of the US Department of Defense must provide a memo from the local Public Affairs Office stating a submission is appropriate for public release (see AR 360-1, ch. 6).
Concurrent Submissions	Submissions must not be available on the Internet or be under consideration with other publishers until the author receives notification the submission will not be published or until the work is published through the US Army War College Press.

Formatting Requirements

Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monographs (accepted from USAWC faculty and staff only): 20,000 words (15,000-word main text, 5,000 words in the foreword and executive summary).• Articles: 5,000 words or less.• Commentaries: 2,500–3,000 words.• Book reviews: 800–1,000 words.
File Type	Text must be provided in a single MS Word Document (.doc).
Visual Aids	Charts, graphs, and photographs may be provided to clarify or amplify the text. Tables must be presented in the body of the Word document. Microsoft-generated charts and graphs must be submitted in Excel. And photos must be provided as .jpg images of not more than 9MB (at 300 dpi). If any table, chart, graph, or photograph has been previously published, written permission from the copyright holder to republish the content must be included with the submission.
Citations	Use the <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i> format to document sources. Indicate all quoted material by quotation marks or indentation. Reduce the number of footnotes to the minimum consistent with honest acknowledgement of indebtedness, consolidating notes where possible. Lengthy explanatory footnotes are discouraged and will be edited.

Submission Requirements

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1. For each contributor, provide the following information: full name, mailing address, phone number, email address, areas of expertise, and a brief biography or curriculum vitae.
 2. Attach all files, including graphics.
 3. For book reviews, include the author, editor, or translator's name, the book's title, the publisher, and the publication date.
 4. Abstract requirements, approximately 200 words, including the following information:
 - a. What is the thesis/main argument of the piece in one sentence?
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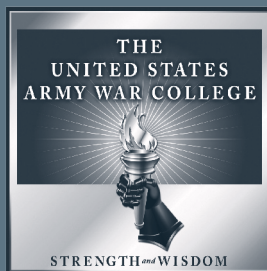
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