



## **Senior Officer Professional Digest**

**Selected Readings from the World's Military Journals**

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### **CONTENTS**

**Ten Propositions About the Nature of War**

**Supremacy by Stealth**

**Integrating SOF into Joint Warfighting**

**Modifying Tanks for the Urban Battle**

**What is Power?**

**Dragon in Paradise: China's Rising Star in Oceania**

**Occupational Hazards: Myths of 1945 and US Iraq Policy**

**Fighting Child Soldiers**

### **The CA's Introduction**

**Professional reading is a commitment to our Army's future. The Senior Officer Professional Digest (SOPD) has been designed to assist you to learn more about the issues that will shape the future of warfare. I commend the SOPD to you and ask that you make the time to read the articles and to reflect on their content.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. Lee", written in a cursive style.

### **Editor's Note**

Please note that the next issue of the SOPD will be published in **September 2003**. Previous editions of the SOPD, as well as the *Australian Army Journal*, are available online:

**<http://www.defence.gov.au/army/lwsc/>**

<b>Title</b>	‘War’
<b>Author</b>	Lawrence Freedman
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>Foreign Policy</i> , July–August 2003, Issue 137, pp. 16–24.

### Synopsis

Sir Lawrence Freedman, Professor of War Studies at King’s College poses the question: *‘Which is more representative of modern war: The United States unleashing high-tech arsenals to defeat dubious Third World regimes swiftly or machete-wielding insurgents fighting brutal civil wars in Africa?’* The author argues that neither of the above scenarios conforms to the classic model of warfare as a titanic struggle between great powers. As a result *‘it’s time to update the textbooks and reappraise the nature of war’* by examining the following ten propositions.

#### **1. War is the continuation of politics by other means.**

*Yes*, declares Freedman, the Clausewitzian dictum still applies in modern war, although what has changed is whose purposes are being served and their nature. Traditional interstate struggles still exist but most Western powers now exercise military power mainly in the name of universal values. Most Third World conflicts are ‘civil wars’ that have become internationalised by the global media.

#### **2. Wars are never formally declared anymore.**

*Right*. Historically, a declaration of war enabled the state to define combatants, regulate hostilities and protect combatants, and to differentiate between noncombatants. Since 1945, however, governments have avoided formal declarations. Today, an adequate legal basis for war can be obtained from the spirit of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter enabling individual or collective self-defence. Most contemporary wars are therefore ‘enforcement actions’.

#### **3. Democracies do not go to war with each other.**

*Irrelevant*. The historically bound distinction between peace-loving democracies and belligerent authoritarian regimes does no justice to the complexity of modern international affairs. Decolonisation and the end of the Cold War have created many states that are democratic in form if not reality. As seen in the Balkans, states that are notionally democratic

engaged in conflict. In addition, stable, liberal democracies *'have shown themselves to be quite warlike when convinced of a just cause.'*

#### **4. A just war is backed by the United Nations.**

*No.* The UN is designed to prevent wars, not authorise them. The UN has rarely sanctioned the use of force — Korea in 1950 and Iraq in 1990 were rare cases. Chinese and Russian vetoes kept the UN from aiding the Kosovar Albanians against the Serbs and hence the NATO Alliance became the instrument of intervention. In times of war, the US Congress or Western parliaments are more important than the UN Security Council.

#### **5. The War on Terrorism is not a war.**

*Generally true.* The campaign against al-Qa'ida is, however, a special case based on global reach. The military component of counter-terrorism is less important than that played by law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Police and intelligence operatives are the main foot soldiers in the *security* fight against terrorists, despite the characterisation of the struggle as a *war*. Freedman observes: *'terrorism is best defeated by isolating militants from their claimed constituency...and, if possible, addressing the grievances upon which they feed'*.

#### **6. Information technology has cleared the fog of war.**

*Wrong.* The shift from information scarcity to information surplus creates entirely new sets of challenges and problems for the professional warfighter. Political and military leaders must still prioritise, interpret and contextualise rapid information flows. Moreover, *'information is not the same as intelligence, which in turn is not the same as wisdom'*.

#### **7. All future warfare will be asymmetric.**

*True.* In a sense, all wars are asymmetric in that adversaries never possess the same force structures or capabilities. In the 21st century, adversaries who seek to fight the US military and advanced Western forces will do so most likely through acts of terrorism, through guerrilla operations and by the use of weapons of mass destruction.

#### **8. Airpower is decisive in modern war.**

*Only up to a point.* The theory that strategic airpower alone can win a war has been disproved throughout the 20th century ever since Douhet first proclaimed it in the 1920s. Short of complete 'decapitation', strategic airpower is unlikely to be decisive by itself. Modern airpower is really a tactical weapon. Aerospace power's real utility lies in its tactical employment in missions such as close air support, interdiction and in the

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

achievement of air superiority. UAVs such as Predator promise increased tactical flexibility as opposed to strategic certainty.

### **9. Modern war means fewer casualties.**

*No.* Western nations may seek casualty limitation via RMA technology but modern war as a whole continues to be bloody. The United States withdrew from Somalia in 1993 after losing eighteen soldiers. Yet millions have died in African wars including 800 000 people in the Rwandan conflict of the 1990s. Western countries, however, certainly attempt to employ knowledge or capital-intensive methods of warfighting in order to minimise casualties.

### **10. The United States can Win a War at Any Time in Any Place.**

*No.* While the United States can certainly prevail in most conflicts, whether it has the determination is questionable. There are limitations to American military power. Given current US deployments, military overstretch could dissipate American force capabilities. The cost of postwar reconstruction, both in security forces and dollar terms, in places such as Iraq, may also serve as a limitation on the projection of military force. The lesson from history is that it is easier to acquire empires (even benevolent ones) than to sustain them.

<b>Title</b>	‘Supremacy by Stealth’
<b>Author</b>	Robert D. Kaplan
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>The Atlantic Monthly</i> , Vol. 292, No. 1, July/August 2003, pp. 65–83.

### **Synopsis**

Robert D. Kaplan came to prominence in the 1990s with his prescient essay and book on the ‘coming anarchy’ of the post–Cold War world. In this article, he assesses future American military requirements for managing an unruly 21st century world. Kaplan argues that, despite the war in Iraq and the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, the future of conflict will require that the United States military operate according to ten new rules:

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

1. **Produce more Joppolos:** This is a reference to the civil-affairs officer who is the hero of John Hersey's famous World War II novel, *A Bell for Adano*. In the future, the United States will require soldiers of exceptional versatility, cultural knowledge and language skills.
2. **Stay on the move:** The United States should avoid quagmires by employing specialist military missions and using expert soldiers.
3. **Emulate 2nd-century Rome:** Kaplan compares 21st-century America to 2nd-century Rome under Trajan. Like Rome before it, the United States represents an international society and must employ more Arab-Americans and Asian-Americans as area specialists to secure its interests, thus creating more 'potential Joppolos'.
4. **Use the military to promote democracy** by utilising US security-assistance programs to professionalise foreign militaries and using human rights as a tool of counter-insurgency. Kaplan argues that the distinction between civilian and military operations overseas is eroding. He notes, *'the US military will increasingly churn out . . . chameleons: operatives who combine the traits of soldier, intelligence agent, diplomat, civilian aid worker, and academic'*.
5. **Be light and lethal:** The United States must learn the military value of economy of force rather than rely on mass warfare. For Kaplan, less than a hundred Special Forces trainers in El Salvador in the 1980s were more effective than thousands of US troops in Vietnam in the 1970s.
6. **Bring back the old rules**, that is, the pre-Vietnam War methodologies of covert warfare. As war grows more asymmetrical, international law will be less effective, while the UN Security Council is antiquated.
7. **Remember the Philippines:** The Philippines counterinsurgency between 1899 and 1902 was one of the most successful US anti-guerrilla campaigns ever waged. The Philippines campaign of 1899–1902 may be more relevant to future US wars than the 2003 Iraq campaign.
8. **The mission is everything:** Military missions should not be compromised as so often occurs with UN deployments. American troops should have flexibility and not be concentrated where they cannot patrol and dominate.

Senior Officer Professional Digest

- 9. Fight on every front:** Taking his cue from the Chinese military theory of unrestricted warfare, Kaplan argues in favour of ‘combination war’—total war on all fronts, military, diplomatic, cultural, social.
- 10. Speak Victorian, think pagan:** The challenge of order and security presents the United States with conflict that has no end point. America must use its raw military power to rewrite the rules for the maintenance of a peaceful international society.

<b>Title</b>	‘Integrating SOF into Joint Warfighting’
<b>Author</b>	Lieutenant Colonel Mark Jones, US Army, and Lieutenant Colonel Wes Rehorn, US Army
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>Military Review</i> , Vol. LXXXIII, No. 3, May–June 2003, pp. 3–7.

### Synopsis

This article reflects on recent experiences in Afghanistan of integrating Special Forces (SF) into theatre command and argues that Special Forces need to be fully integrated into joint-force operations. The authors, both Special Forces officers themselves, point out that the old days of regarding SF as a discrete capability are over. They argue that, in a joint environment, SF need to be treated like any other component. This means that SF activities need to be known to the theatre command. They suggest that, in the modern, fast-moving battlespace, the potential compromise of SF locations is less likely than the threat of fratricide.

Furthermore, the joint force commander has to be responsible for developing communications and security policies in order to enable SF to interoperate with coalition partners. By their nature, SF can be highly interoperable, but their presence in theatre can lead to problems if their activities are not coordinated with those of coalition partners.

Finally, the presence of SF as a theatre asset is a relatively low-risk way of conducting simultaneous operations. Sequential operations may

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

involve lower risk, but the ability of SF units to mount operations rapidly and maintain a high tempo allows a deployed force to disrupt an opponent's decision–action cycle. However, attention needs to be paid to clearly delineating mission-approval authority to designated officers to operate within the commander's intent.

<b>Title</b>	'Tough Bows and Iron Blades: Modifying the M1 for Urban Battle'
<b>Author</b>	Captain Frank Bridges and Captain (P) Michael R. Evans
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>Armor</i> , vol CXII, no. 4, July-August 2003, pp. 11-17

**Synopsis**

This article by two US armour officers analyses the problems involved in optimising the US Army's M1 series tank for unfamiliar operations in urban terrain. Dismissing the old adage that '*tanks don't go into cities*', the authors point out that of 40 major urban battles between 1920 and 1994, thirty-two were fought with combined arms forces that included armour. Embedding tanks in the combined arms team in urban combat remains vital for the very good reason that '*lone tanks in urban areas are dead tanks*'.

In the future, tanks would be employed in modern urban operations in two principal roles: support by fire and attack by fire. They will have to move on a non-linear battlespace and like tank crews in World War II, Korea and Vietnam would face the need to modify tactics and equipment. In urban warfare, tanks face problems of turret/gun traverse length and poor close-range visibility. In order to prepare the M1 tank for the urban battle of the future, the authors recommend the following modifications:

- Using easy-to-install kits allowing upgrading based on threat
- Maximum use of off-the-shelf technology

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

- Addressing the problem of gun elevation and depression in the M1 that creates a 10.8m 'deadzone' around the tank which, in a 16m street flanked by buildings could prove costly
- Addressing the problem of back deck depression for dealing with rear targets without pivoting the entire tank
- Replacing the usual 120mm armour piercing APFDS and high explosive HEAT ammunition with multipurpose rounds such as the MPAT and MPAT-OR (obstacle reducing round) for urban combat
- Giving the M1 a counter-sniper capability by mounting an additional .50 calibre M2HB machine gun for precision point engagements
- Adding the common remotely operated weapon station (CROWS) currently being developed for the lighter Stryker family of vehicles
- Improving the M1's close-range defence and counter-ambush capacities by adding more specialised munitions such as the Galix system of 80mm stun, smoke, flare and tear gas grenades and the M5 crowd control munition that can be interchanged with M18 Claymores.
- Introducing counters to laser-guided munitions and ATGMs through fitting laser warning systems
- Improving situational awareness for tank crews on the urban battlespace by better sensors, laser designators and forward infrared image intensification
- Eliminating deadspace by image intensification and side cameras and other distributed sensors
- Ensuring that the M1 operates as part of a combined arms team in which the engineer component is emphasised. Dozer blades should be introduced to clear rubble and facilitate urban manoeuvre
- Introducing additional armour panels that explode outward on turrets, engine decks and rear hulls to enhance the M1's protection.

The authors argue that infantry-tank cooperation and the principles of combined arms warfare remain vital in urban combat. They note:

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

*'[tank protection from infantry] is not a support role, but should be regarded as a combined arms team with the tank and infantry components playing the roles of separate mutually supporting maneuver elements within the larger team. As the infantry protects the tank from close-range attack, so does the tank enable dismounted maneuver by employing its protected firepower to destroy or suppress enemy positions prior to or during infantry assault'.*

<b>Title</b>	'What is Power'
<b>Author</b>	Niall Ferguson
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>The Hoover Digest</i> , No.2, Spring issue, 2003, www- hoover.stanford.edu/publications/digest/032/ferguson.html

**Synopsis**

In this article, the prolific and opinionated Niall Ferguson reflects on the implications of America's current position as the global hyperpower. Niall Ferguson has sprung to prominence as a 'big picture' historian and is a leading example of the new breed of 'transatlantic professors' holding a university chair as the Herzog Professor of Financial History at New York University as well as retaining his senior research fellowship at Oxford University.

Ferguson argues that there are two challenges to America's position. The first is that the power that America derives from its technological superiority may be rapidly curtailed as other countries close the technology gap. Second, American expenditure on defence has only been maintained because of the extraordinary economic growth of the 1990s—a trend that may not be sustainable.

He points out that America's military might is based on its qualitative superiority. Europe's NATO members have between them more personnel, but most of them remain ill-equipped and poorly trained conscripts. Ferguson goes on to consider the nature of 'soft' or economic

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

power and concludes that the combination of soft and ‘hard’ power wielded by states such as America surpasses anything that a multinational corporation or non-government organisation can currently invoke.

A real threat to international security is the ‘historic cheapness, smallness and destructiveness of modern weaponry’. This type of capability can bestow enormous power on maniacs. The lesson of 11 September, he argues, is that ‘the suicide bomber will always get through’.

Ferguson concludes by stating that the final dimension of power is psychological.

*Two things can greatly magnify or diminish the ability of any entity, governmental or nongovernmental, to project power: first, its own legitimacy in the eyes of its individual members; second, its credibility in the eyes of other powers.*

We should not exaggerate the likely duration of US predominance, he argues. However, power is about material success combined with morale. If the United States is to hold onto its great power, it will do well to emphasise its credibility and legitimacy.

**Title** ‘Dragon in Paradise: China’s Rising Star in Oceania’

**Author** John Henderson and Benjamin Reilly

**Publication Details** *The National Interest*, Summer 2003, No. 72, pp. 94–104.

### Synopsis

This article examines the rise of China’s influence in Oceania. The authors argue that this development may have important long-term consequences for the balance of international security. Because the United States is preoccupied with the war on terror, there is a risk that Washington will overlook important developments in peripheral regions such as Oceania where China may be seeking to become a broader Asia-

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

Pacific power. The authors suggest that the region *'may well become an important arena for China to establish footholds of influence, recruit new allies and test its growing strength and ability to command allegiance hitherto dominated by the Western powers'*. Many island states may seize the opportunity to play the 'China card' in an attempt to attract Western interest and aid payments.

The article points out that Oceania is a vast region with a small population. Many of the Pacific states are weak, internally divided and are becoming increasingly impoverished. Conflict, corruption, political violence, social instability and a record of poor governance are rife in most of the island-nations that comprise Oceania. Despite peace and aid efforts by the UN and other organisations, most of Melanesia is unstable and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

The authors go on to point out that *'the establishment of international shelf banks heavily engaged in money laundering, shipping flags of convenience and passports sales has brought these islands into contact with a range of shady organizations, including terrorist groups'*. Two examples are cited:

- In early 2003, three vessels flying the Tongan flag in the Mediterranean were intercepted ferrying weapons, explosives and recruits for the al-Qa'ida terrorist movement.
- In April, six alleged terrorists, including two al-Qa'ida operatives, were arrested by US authorities, and found to be in possession of Nauruan passports.

The authors argue that the political and economic weaknesses of the Pacific island states make it easier for Beijing to buy support in the region. While China's military assistance to Pacific island states has traditionally been modest (consisting of mainly training and logistical support rather than weaponry), such assistance has increased sharply in recent years. China's strategic interests in Oceania appear to be long term and are probably connected to ambitions to develop a blue-water navy. It is possible that, in the future, China may also consider that some of the islands might serve as bases for the deployment of land-based anti-ship missiles in order to compensate for Chinese naval weakness. It is significant that, in 1997, China established a 'satellite space-tracking station' in the Republic of Kiribati.

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

The authors conclude that China increasingly views itself as an emerging Oceanic power and is likely to overtake Japan as the leading Asian state in the Pacific region. Such a development may create more tensions in Sino-US relations and spur the United States to recognise the strategic significance of the Pacific islands. An active United States engagement strategy in Oceania is required, but such a strategy poses the important question as to *‘whether the US government can effectively manage peripheral issues in any mode but an exclusively reactive one?’*

<b>Title</b>	‘Occupational Hazards: Myths of 1945 and US Iraq Policy’
<b>Author</b>	Douglas Porch
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>The National Interest</i> , Summer 2003, No. 72, pp. 35–47.

**Synopsis**

Douglas Porch’s article presents a critique of US postwar reconstruction policy and rhetoric in Iraq. Porch, Professor of National Security Affairs at the US Naval Postgraduate School, refutes the belief that the post–World War II reconstruction of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan serve as models for the rehabilitation of post-Saddam Iraq.

In Porch’s view, retired US General Jay Garner, ‘Washington’s Douglas MacArthur designate’, was a poor choice to run postwar Iraq. Moreover, Garner’s successor, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III had to begin his tenure by abandoning the option of creating a provisional Iraqi government. Some 30 000 Ba’ath Party members employed in the public sector have had to be removed and the Iraqi armed forces have been disbanded. Porch argues that this approach signals ‘America’s determination, as in the past, to append democratic reconstruction to military victory’.

The author describes President George W. Bush as a ‘born-again reconstructionist’ whose models for rebuilding Iraq are Germany and Japan after 1945. Porch argues that the comparison between Iraq on the

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

one hand, and Germany and Japan on the other, is misleading. He observes:

*The more one mines [the German and Japanese] experiences, the less appropriate to the moment and downright non-transferable they look. Indeed, it may be that the best purpose of studying these experiences is to learn what not to do, for the course of true democracy in Germany and Japan after 1945 did not run smoothly.*

The post-1945 reconstruction of Germany and Japan owed less to the success of ‘Allied occupation policies than [to] an array of other factors in combination.’ These factors included:

- Enlightened American, German and Japanese political leadership and economic success largely as a result of the Marshall Plan and the Korean War.
- Despite German and Japanese militarism, both countries also had experience of democratic government. Unlike the situation in Iraq, in the case of both Germany and Japan, democratic reform amounted to the re-introduction of a former system of government. In contrast, Iraq lacks any meaningful democratic tradition.
- The outbreak of the Cold War was also a factor in German and Japanese rehabilitation since it helped to unite both nations. Both Bonn and Tokyo looked to American protection against communism, thus reinforcing the process of political unity, democratisation and liberal government.

Porch doubts whether this combination of factors can be duplicated in Iraq in the 21st-century. In contrast to Germany and Japan in the middle of the 20th-century, there is a dearth of ‘enlightened leadership’ among the ranks of the postwar Iraqi political contenders. An economic miracle is also unlikely in a country impoverished by decades of war, authoritarian rule and corruption at the highest levels of government. The democratic model has never existed in Iraq and consequently its appearance looks like an American imposition. Finally, there is no external threat to compel Iraqi national unity. The threat of Iran on the collective Iraqi consciousness lacks the galvanising effect that Soviet communism had on German and Japanese political unity. The following issues have to be resolved in Iraq:

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

- making a transition from a Coalition occupation force to a new Iraqi army and police force
- managing the relationship between collaborators and would-be friends of the occupiers
- managing ‘the tension between the asymmetrical psychologies of defeat and liberation’ among Iraqis
- balancing the need for both ‘stability and change’

Porch argues that the goal of the US-led administration in Baghdad should be to ‘normalise Iraq fairly quickly by putting a responsible leadership cadre in place while retaining a supervisory role’. The presence of a military force of sufficient might is also necessary in order to prevent a return to the anarchy of the immediate postwar situation. The author concludes:

*Then, with any luck, as in Germany, the next Iraqi generation will wonder why their parents ever allowed a tyrant like Saddam Hussein to come to power, and vow that it will not happen again in their country.*

<b>Title</b>	‘Fighting Child Soldiers’
<b>Author</b>	Peter W. Singer
<b>Publication Details</b>	<i>Military Review</i> , Vol. LXXXIII, No. 3, May–June 2003, pp. 26–31.

**Synopsis**

Peter Singer, Olin Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, explores the use of children as warriors—an approach that is alien to the traditions of warfare in Western liberal democracies. The author notes:

*There is no moral excuse for sending children into battle, but the dark reality is that this terrible practice is a regular feature of modern warfare. Some 300 000 children under the*

## Senior Officer Professional Digest

*age of 18 (both boys and girls) are now combatants, fighting in approximately 75 percent of the world's conflicts.*

Singer's article draws principally from the recent US experience in the Iraqi theatre where Coalition forces faced child soldiers in the fighting around Karbala and Nasariyah. Moreover, the Kurdish PKK has approximately 3 000 child soldiers.

When infused with religious or political fervour or stoked by drugs, children are capable of demonstrating tremendous ferocity and audacity in battle. Child soldiers also present 'the essential quandary' for professional forces. In the Western military code, children are traditionally outside the scope of war. Recent engagements in which child soldiers were killed have proven to be demoralising for Western troops. Singer observes: *'British forces operating in West Africa in 2001 faced deep problems of clinical depression and post-traumatic stress disorder among individual soldiers who had faced child soldiers.'*

Rules of engagement need to change in order to address the problem of dealing with child soldiers. Countermeasures should include:

- targeting any adult involvement in child soldier formations since *'their [adult] hold over the unit is often the center of gravity'*;
- keeping children well away from soldiers at roadblocks;
- firing for shock effect by military professionals using smoke or flash rounds;
- low-level helicopter passes to disrupt and disperse child soldier threats;
- swift provision of clothing, food and shelter for captured combatant children. Humane treatment may dispel myths about foreign forces and induce other child fighters to desert; and
- the rapid transfer of children into the hands of health-care or nongovernmental organizations to *'help break the system of control that brought them into warfare'*.