



## **Senior Officer Professional Digest**

**Selected readings from the world's military journals**

**Issue No: 6      Date: September 2002**

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### **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.**



### **Editor's Note**

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**Article Title** Is it Time to Abandon the Military Decision Making Process?

**Author** Major Joseph S. McLamb, US Army

**Publication Details** Military Review, Vol LXXXII, March-April 2002

### **Synopsis**

Many officers and NCOs express their unhappiness with the complexity and slowness of the military decision making process (MDMP). This article examines the MDMP and considers some options to increase the understanding and effectiveness of the MDMP.

Combat is a thinking man's game and the MDMP is just a method for applying available resources to the problems encountered. Solutions are only valid if they solve the problem; they gain no value by being doctrinally sound, detailed or daring. To be of value to the military, a decision making process needs to be sufficiently general to meet the range of scenarios from combat to humanitarian operations. The MDMP fits this bill.

The main problem with the MDMP, according to the author, is that staffs lack experience and training in its use. High personnel turnover - a consequence of the army's personnel management system - is the main reason for this situation. Commanders facing this problem have responded by ignoring it, ignoring the MDMP or by ignoring their staffs. The first solution results in poor unit performance. Commanders may also replace the MDMP by reliance on targeting as a magic bullet or they may ignore their staff and proceed with their own analysis for a COA, merely using the staff to produce the operational orders.

According to the author, the solution to the current poor levels of employment of the MDMP is for commanders to become more involved in the process. What at first seems like micro-management can result in a system of mentoring that improves the staff's familiarity with, and thus efficiency in the use of, the MDMP. The problem is not the process, just the way it has been poorly employed in units suffering from the problems of training in peacetime.



**Article Title** The Uniformed Intellectual and His Place in American Arms, Part I – Anti-intellectualism in the Army: Yesterday and Today

**Author** Colonel Lloyd Matthews, US Army, Retd., former editor of the US Army War College Journal *Parameters*

**Publication Details** Army Magazine, July 2002, Vol 52, No 7.

### Synopsis

This article begins with an amusing anecdote that establishes the long tradition of anti-intellectualism in the US Army. The author also notes that the theme of anti-intellectualism is a staple in most Western armies. He follows this observation with a brief survey of anti-intellectualism in the British and French armies. Turning to his own service, Matthews notes that, because soldiers have always seen themselves as men of action they have a tendency to look down on colleagues with a more contemplative turn of mind. This is not to say that such men have not existed within the US Army, however they have succeeded in spite of, and not because of, official encouragement.

After defining what an intellectual officer is, Matthews quotes Sir William Butler's warning that '*a nation which insists on drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking done by cowards.*' He then goes on to discuss a series of propositions:

- Not all writers and teachers are intellectuals and not all intellectuals are writers and teachers.
- Not all defence intellectuals are in the military. Matthews divides non-military intellectuals into categories: retired military officers, journalists, think tankers, academics and "New Mercenaries" (or contractors). About this last and growing group he makes the observation that in 'hiring outsiders to do its thinking, the services risk selling their intellectual souls to the devil of deprofessionalisation.' Even when these people are retired military personnel, he believes that 'there is never perfect congruence between the thinking, interests the outlook of the contractor.'
- To be intellectual is not the same as to be intelligent.
- Advance degrees do not necessarily an intellectual make.

His concluding thought is that for the military to systematically exclude from its senior ranks people capable of conceiving and sustaining the theoretical basis of the profession is to risk nothing short of intellectual suicide.

**Article Title** The Uniformed Intellectual and His Place in American Arms, Part II – The Effects of Anti-intellectualism on the Army Profession Today

**Author** Colonel Lloyd Matthews, US Army, Retd., former editor of the US Army War College Journal *Parameters*

**Publication Details** Army Magazine, August 2002, Vol 52, No 8.

### **Synopsis**

The second part of this article examines the harmful effects of anti-intellectualism in the US Army today. Matthews begins by observing that in the ‘information age’ one might expect that anti-intellectual attitudes in the Army would have disappeared. This, however, is not the case. Tension between the active and the contemplative officer, which is the basis of anti-intellectualism in the US Army, still persists. The second part of the article also begins with an anecdote which underlines this point.

The problem is one of culture. As Ward Just observed, *On War* could never have been written in the US military because it required time and serious thought, ‘*An Army officer has no time to think, and imaginative reflection is discouraged.*’ While President Bush has told uniformed audiences he has a vision of a military that rewards imaginative thinking and encourages innovation, the fate of Colonel Douglas Macgregor, author of *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, shows that this situation does not yet exist. Indeed, a panel on officer training and leadership development, convened by General Shinseki, found that officers suffer from stifling micro-management and a promotion system driven by bureaucratic needs. Matthews reviews the origins and development of the current promotion and personnel management systems and finds that they subtly, but just as virulently as in the past, reinforce the Army’s anti-intellectualism.



Matthews makes several observations in his discussion of the promotion and personnel management systems. The first one is that, if George C. Marshall had started his Army career in the 1980s, he probably would not have survived long enough to reach high rank. This is due to emphasis that the current promotion system places on officers serving in a set range of appointments in each rank in order to be deemed suitable for promotion to the next rank level. Another is that the current promotion and personnel management systems are designed to reward those officers who extrapolate lower-level command skills rather than those who develop and demonstrate skills suited to the duties and responsibilities of high rank. Because these lower-level skills are so highly valued there exists what one RAND study referred to as an 'action bias', in which soldiers who have proven their skills in the field are promoted to jobs that require more sophisticated intellectual, technical and staff skills. Very few senior officers are called upon to exercise their command skills in the field, the majority of senior officers work in areas that require the ability to deal with policy development, planning and political-military relations. The action bias results in two problems. Firstly, aspiring higher commanders must follow a very narrow career path that gives them 'muddy-boots' but very little experience in developing and exercising advanced cognitive skills. Secondly, officers of an intellectual turn of mind feel that in order to pursue high rank they must suppress or disguise their intellectual side. Many US Army officers now eschew teaching posts at West Point or educational opportunities because they do not provide the right career profile.

The result is a lopsided general officer corps, more comfortable with practice than it is with reflecting on practice. Moreover, the decline in the importance of intellectual aspects of the profession has produced a senior officer corps marked by conformity and rigidity. An April 2002 report on military professionalism found that, despite recent battlefield successes, the professionalism of the army was being rapidly degraded. As if to confirm this, the next SACEUR will be a Marine Corps and not a US Army general. To address these problems the army needs to stop the separation of theorists and operators. While many operators are obviously intelligent, the current promotion and personnel systems do not allow them to develop into well-rounded general officers. For the theorists the prognosis is worse and, with few exceptions, they will finish their careers as field grade officers. In an hierarchical system, such as the



army, this does not augur well for the upward flow of new and innovative ideas.

The article concludes with the author restating President Bush's call for a new spirit of innovation in the officer corps. The Army's leadership model, which stresses the man of action is doubtless correct, but the exclusion of people of intellect on the grounds that they have not negotiated the right course through the promotion system is wrong. It is time to acknowledge that the man of action and the contemplative man do merge in many people and that the Army has as much need for the latter as it does for the former.

**Article Title** Maybe It's Time to Reconsider Maneuver Warfare

**Author** Major Michael S. Chmielewski, USMCR analyst at the DD(X) program Naval Surface Warfare Centre

**Publication Details** Marine Corps Gazette, August 2002, Vol 86, No 8.

### **Synopsis**

This article aims to review the USMC's philosophy of warfighting, maneuver warfare, in the light of the US Defence Department's emphasis on transformation. As the author notes the philosophy of maneuver warfare, which was adopted by the USMC in 1989, is now in marked contrast to the attrition-oriented philosophies of war being pursued by the USAF and USN. Even the Army, with its reliance on precision fires, is more closely aligned with the air force and navy than with the USMC.

Transformation aims at creating 'differences in kind, as opposed to differences in degree.' The accepted vision of these differences is the now familiar description of how network-centric warfare might work. But this is a subject upon which the USMC has largely been silent because the marines have, as in the past, chosen to emphasise their differences to the other services. This approach will have to change as VADM Cebrowski, Retd, who heads the Pentagon's Office of Transformation, has warned that the services that weapons systems and operational concepts that don't support the goals of transformation will be subject to elimination. For the marine this is a direct threat to such



projects as the MV-22 Osprey and the advanced amphibious assault vehicle (AAAV).

Individual Marines, such as retired LTGEN Paul Van Riper, have been critical of RMA concepts, especially what they see as an over reliance on technology. Van Riper has also been critical of *JV2010* as being inconsistent with USMC doctrine. COL T. X. Hammes disagreed with Cebrowski's analogy between warfare and business. He also objected to the conclusion that network-centric warfare would change the nature of war. The USMC has not entirely eschewed network-centric warfare ideas. The HUNTER WARRIOR concept was an attempt to implement *JV2010* concepts. URBAN WARRIOR was another experiment employing networked communications down to squad level to see whether information superiority could reduce casualties in urban operations. The results of both experiments were not very promising and efforts have been refocussed to fielding promising technologies with the operational forces.

The USMC is not the only service struggling with transformation. While navy men such as Cebrowski and retired ADM Bill Owens have been prominent in advancing the vision of network-centric warfare, the USN has grappled with the Pentagon's emphasis on transformation. Of concern to the USMC and the USN, the DD21 'land attack' project has been cancelled for not being transformational enough. The replacement, DD(X) is not likely to satisfy the USMC's requirement for high volumes of NGS for expeditionary forces. Other projects are also likely to suffer a similar fate.

For the USMC to thrive in the era of transformation, the author believes that it should be conducting more experiments like HUNTER WARRIOR using the MV-22 and AAAV. However, if the transformation theorists are right the whole USMC might become obsolete in an era of sensor based warfare that delivers powerful precision fires. So, maybe it is time for the Corps to reconsider its philosophy of warfare. However, it just might be that the USMC has got it right and rigid adherence to the Pentagon's transformation goals is inconsistent with the current understanding of the fundamental nature of warfare. In which case, maneuver warfare is not such a bad idea.

**Article Title** Armor for Light Combat Vehicles**Author** R. M. Ogorkiewicz**Publication Details** Jane's International Defense Review, July 2002.**Synopsis**

Richard Ogorkiewicz, a specialist in armoured forces, provides an excellent update on the prospects for improved armour types for light combat vehicles. He points out that, because of a growing reliance on light combat vehicles by armies, much research is being devoted to the development of types of armours that combine improved ballistic protection with a minimum increase in vehicle weight. Ogorkiewicz discusses the following armour-types:

- **Steel armour:** High Hardness Steel Armour (HHS) has been employed since the 1960s for a range of IFVs. HHS is superior to rolled homogeneous steel armour (RHA). Some light vehicles such as the Brazilian Cascavel have used Very Hard Steel Armour (VHS). But in general, use of VHS has been inhibited by cost and weight and by the problem of placing dual hardness armour on light vehicles.
- **Aluminum armour:** A structural alternative to steel armour is aluminum armour, Alloy type, 5083, has been used on various M113 vehicles. A new lower weight aluminum armour type, 2519 alloy, is now being used on the USMC's Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV). Aluminum armour can be combined with outer layers of hard steel – as used by several European IFVs. The Israelis have employed effective spaced steel-aluminum armour using air gaps on their M113s to reduce both AP bullet damage and vehicle weight. The Swiss and Danish armies have also developed similar hard-steel/aluminum armour combinations.
- **Titanium armour:** Recent research suggests that titanium alloys represent a new form of armour that may provide much greater protection against AP bullets and projectiles. A good example is the Canadian Mobile Tactical Vehicle Light (MTVL), a 'stretched' version of the M113. The MTVL has a titanium-covered hull of 32 mm thickness. The new hull has *'converted it [the MTVL] from a*

*vehicle vulnerable to 7.62mm AP to one immune to 14.5mm AP at the cost of an increase in its weight of 1,800kg’.*

- **Composite armours:** various composite fiber-plastic armoured hulls such as that of the Bradley IFV and the US Composite Armoured Vehicle (CAV) are under development. The great attraction of fibre-plastic composites is one of weight savings of up to perhaps 35%. It is important to note, however, that such savings usually apply only to hulls rather than entire vehicles.
- **Ceramic-faced armour:** weight can be reduced by ceramic-faced armour which is lighter than steel but whose hardness can help to shatter attacking bullets. The difficulty is that hard ceramics are between 5 and 20 times more expensive than aluminum because of the cost of materials such as silicon carbide and high purity alumina. More successful has been the use of aluminum oxide ceramics by Swedish IFVs (Pbv 302) and Canadian M113s. The new American Stryker Interim Armoured Vehicle also uses a ceramic-tile armour (on top of HHS) which is twice as effective as RHA against severe attack. A combination of ceramic tiles with aluminum armour can be more effective, in relation to weight, than ceramic tiles and HHS. The drawback is that ceramic tiles are vulnerable from multiple hits. As a result, the Israelis and French have developed ceramic spheres or pellets, embedded in an elastomeric matrix called LIBA (Light Improved Ballistic Armour) to prevent shattering from successive fire. The US Marines have also adopted LIBA for their AAV.
- **Reactive sandwich armour:** has been employed to improve the protection of light combat vehicles against shaped charge weapons such as the RPG-7 that can penetrate 300mm of RHA. The most effective reactive sandwich armour is explosive reactive armour (ERA) used on the US M2 Bradley, the Israeli M113 and the Russian BMP-3. However, the new generation of rocket grenades, such as the PG-7VL grenade (with a larger diameter warhead) and the PG-7VR (tandem warheads) are designed to set off ERA sandwiches and so expose light vehicles to a main charge. One means of defence against the new threat from shaped charge weapons is tandem ERA (double sandwiches) and energetic but non-explosive interlayers (ENERA).

**Article Title** The Transformation Trident

**Author** Scott A. Gourley

**Publication Details** Armed Forces Journal International, May 2002

### **Synopsis**

This article examines the US Army's transformation strategy for armoured forces. The strategy is based on three prongs: the Legacy Force, the Interim Force and the Objective Force.

### **Armour for the Legacy Force**

Involves enhancement of the M1-Abrams via the Abrams Integrated Management (AIM) Program:

- 135 tanks are to be refurbished per year over the period 2002-2014
- Upgrades include expanded digital command and control capabilities, modernised infrared targeting, thermal sights and computer memory
- New Systems Enhancement Package including tactical voice-activation, digital wireless and helmet mounted display

### **Armour for the Interim Force**

Most Interim Force activities are centred around the Stryker Interim Armoured Vehicle (IAV) based on two designs: an Infantry Carrier Vehicle and a Mobile Gun System. There has been considerable criticism of the wheeled Stryker development on two grounds: air deployability and tire technology:

- The US Army already has M113A3 vehicles that can be transported by C130 whereas the Stryker studies have suggested restrictions on IAV movement by C-130.
- The Stryker project has also been criticised for maintaining pneumatic tire use as opposed to airless tire technology.

Despite these criticisms the IAV specifications are:

- Wheeled Infantry Carrier Vehicle will have eight configurations ranging from Commander's Vehicle through Fire Support Vehicle to NBC Reconnaissance Vehicle
- Protection against 14.5mm armour-piercing rounds and RPGs

### **Armour for the Objective Force**

A 'Unit of Action' (a brigade equivalent) is the main building block for a future multi-spectral force. The aim is to field Objective Force capabilities within a decade. Specifications are:

- The Objective Force must be deployable beyond CONUS
- Creating a Future Combat System (FCS) that is a networked system of systems
- FCS composition of manned and unmanned air-ground platforms
- FCS Unit of Action concepts supported by battle labs to promote mounted manoeuvre
- FCS Units of Action must be fielded by 2010 and be able to fit a C130 profile for tactical intra-theatre lift

**Article Title** Army Aviation and the Objective Force

**Author** MAJGEN John M. Curran, USA

**Publication Details** Armed Forces Journal International, May 2002

### **Synopsis**

Major General Curran, Commander of the US Army Aviation Centre at Fort Rucker, Alabama and chief of the US Army's aviation branch, presents the case for Army aviation in an age of full-spectrum operations. He highlights the US Army's core problem: *possession of light forces that can deploy rapidly but that lack mobility, sustainment, lethality and survivability to oppose heavy forces*. The future Objective Force must be designed for multi-modal operational manoeuvre from strategic distance. Army Aviation is integral to future success and the flagship of future aviation will be the RAH-66 Comanche helicopter. US Army Aviation must aim:

- To play an integral role in the transition towards a smaller, network-centric, multi-mission fighting force
- To conduct shaping and decisive operations; linked armed reconnaissance and attack operations
- To integrate manned and unmanned systems

Recapitalising legacy aviation such as the AH-64D Apache Block III upgrade (the main heavy attack platform), Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters was a key feature of Army transformation towards the

Objective Force. The role of the Comanche helicopter, once deployed by the Objective Force, would be to field 'time-compression' capabilities via network-centric warfare achieving integration of off-board and on-board sensors allowing aviation forces to see, understand and act first and attack decisively. Low observability was the key asset of the Comanche making it superior to both the Kiowa and Apache helicopters:

- Compared to the Comanche, the Kiowa Warrior helicopter is 34 times more visible to radar and the Apache Longbow 295 times more visible (frontal view)
- The Comanche is twice as quiet as the Kiowa and six times quieter than the Apache
- The Comanche has linkages to beyond-line-of sight systems Manned and un-Manned (MUM) sensors and the Joint Tactical Radio System

**Article Title** Formidable European Helicopters

**Author** Nicholas Fiorenza

**Publication Details** Armed Forces Journal International, May 2002

### **Synopsis**

This article is of interest in that it provides a useful perspective on the competition between European and American helicopter types – in particular the Tiger versus the Apache and the Comanche. Comparing the Tiger and the Apache is described as being '*like comparing apples and oranges*'. A major difference between the two machines is that of weight. The Tiger is built of composite materials and weighs 6 tons; the Apache is armoured and weighs 10 tons. In many respects, the European Tiger resembles the new US Comanche prototype rather than the older Apache. The Tiger's merits are listed as follows:

- Tiger will fly at tree-top level using stealth and agility to avoid detection
- Tiger infrared signature is reduced by mixing exhaust gases with cold air
- Tiger's narrow fuselage minimises visual detectability
- Tiger's anti-radar absorbent skin eliminates radar and IR reflections and waves

**Article Title** The Iraqi Quagmire: What Is Next?**Author** Gawdat Bahgat**Publication Details** Contemporary Security Policy, August 2002, Vol. 23, No. 2**Synopsis**

This essay analyses the pros and cons of military action against Iraq by the United States. It argues that the US has never possessed a cohesive Iraqi strategy and that a palace coup from within the Hussein regime remains the most likely scenario for regime change from within. There is no serious internal opposition and attempts to destroy Iraqi WMD capabilities have had modest success.

Iraq's efforts to acquire WMD capabilities are explained in terms of regional geopolitics – rivalry with Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia – rather than in terms of terrorism. Iraq's nuclear potential is described as being five years away, but its biological program is well-advanced. Iraq's missile delivery capacity has probably been 'sharply reduced'. The article goes on to suggest that, against the odds, Saddam has not only survived since 1991 but consolidated his power. He may be more in control of Iraq in the early 2000s than in the early 1990s.

Against this background, the debate on military action against Iraq has occurred in the US. The proponents of US military action against Iraq include Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld, Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul D. Wolfowitz, and President Bush's counter-terrorism chief, Wayne A. Downing. The opponents of military action include Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell, Deputy Secretary of State, Richard L. Armitage and General Anthony C. Zinni, President Bush's Middle East Envoy.

**The Argument for Military Action**

- The 'Afghan model' can be re-played in Iraq to secure regime-change
- The war on terrorism provides momentum and opportunity to crush pro-terrorist regimes



- Saddam Hussein is unpopular and US troops would be seen as liberators
- There is no need for credible evidence of Iraqi links to September 11. Hussein's enmity of America justifies military action

### **The Argument Against Military Action**

- Unilateral action against Iraq would destroy the international coalition against terrorism especially as there is no evidence of Iraqi links to September 11
- Despite its shortcomings, the sanctions regime has contained Saddam Hussein
- Toppling Hussein would create dangerous uncertainties including the disintegration of Iraq and possible disruption of Gulf oil supplies
- There are fundamental differences between Afghanistan and Iraq. The Iraqi Army is no Taliban militia and the Iraqi opposition cannot be compared to the Northern Alliance.

### **Article Title** Responding to Catastrophic Terrorism

**Author** Alice Hills

**Publication Details** Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 2002, Vol 25

### **Synopsis**

The author argues that conventional counter-terrorism doctrine is too restrictive to deal with the threat of mass-casualty terrorism. Catastrophic terrorism requires a clear strategic focus and at the operational level, innovative techniques of management. There is a need for a new conceptual approach that draws on insights from disaster management and escalation theory – particularly if nuclear, biological or chemical (NBC) weapons are eventually used. There is, concludes the author, '*no strategic focus to guide a response to terrorism involving the successful use of NBC*'.

Responding to the New Terrorism requires critical national infrastructure protection (CIP) based on disaster management and integrated emergency management similar to those that might be used to handle earthquakes and industrial disasters along the lines of Kobe, Bhopal and Chernobyl.

The logistics of large-scale evacuation and casualty-handling require careful analysis.

Much of this type of thinking builds on civil defence experience, emergency management and risk analysis. The military connection to terrorism, ‘the war connection’ is also relevant for three reasons:

- The physical effects of catastrophic terrorism are experienced in war
- There are civil defence implications that rely on a military style organisation
- Like wars, catastrophic terrorism, may accelerate socio-political change because a terrorist act is a political act

Hence, war-related thinking can provide an understanding of the general environment of catastrophe. However, this approach then needs to be supplemented and broadened by more modern disaster management concepts and by escalation theories drawn from nuclear strategy.

**Article Title** Al-Qaeda: One year on: Down, but far from out

**Publication Details** Strategic Comments, Vol. 8 Issue 7, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, September 2002.

<http://www.iiss.org/showfreepdfs.php?scID=233&type=iiss.pdf>

### **Synopsis**

This article is one of the periodic strategic commentaries issued by the London-based Institute for International Strategic Studies (IISS). It points out that despite the success of the international coalition against terrorism in Afghanistan, the Al-Qaeda terrorist network has survived and may yet take a generation to dismantle. It suggests that Al-Qaeda has become a classic ‘virtual’ entity and that it is ‘protean’ in form—that is, it is capable of assume a range of different forms and posing a myriad range of threats to the West. Its greatest advantage is its logistical and operational flexibility. The article notes that: ‘having no state to defend, it can maintain a flat, transnational scheme with minimal dedicated physical infrastructure’.

The IISS calculates that Al-Qaeda is present in up to 60 countries and that at least 20 000 jihadists have trained in its Afghan camps since 1996. Even the death and imprisonment of one-third of the organisation’s 30

senior leadership and approximately 2000 of its rank-and-file membership leaves it a potent organisation. Although many of the organisations assets have been frozen, it has managed to shield financial assets by converting them to gold and gems and moving funds through the informal *hawala* remittance system.

What makes Al-Qaeda particularly threatening is that it does not pursue an agenda that can be dealt with using traditional methods. Unlike most previous ethno-nationalist or ideologically driven terrorist groups it 'cannot be tamed or controlled through political compromise or conflict resolution'. It is an absolutist organisation and dealing with it requires 'an integrated containment strategy that incorporates military, intelligence, law-enforcement, and diplomatic and economic measures'. The IISS concludes that long-term political and economic cooperation is necessary to defeating Al-Qaeda. Resolving the Palestinian issue is necessary to remove one of bin Laden's key political pretexts. Furthermore, the US and its allies need to win over untrusting Muslim populations to the idea that they can co-exist with the West without being overtaken by Western cultural influences.

**Article Title** Asymmetric Warfare and the use of special operations forces in North American law enforcement

**Author** Lieutenant Colonel Donald A. La Carte

**Publication Details** Canadian Military Journal, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 2001-02

### **Synopsis**

The author argues that 'the continued evolution of newly emerging asymmetric threats' means that military forces will increasingly be called upon to support law enforcement organisations in dealing with threats emerging from within the national borders. He suggests that while this requirement should not distract the military from its principal role of preparing to fight conventional inter-state conflict, military forces should develop concepts, doctrine and organisations to enable them to function across cultural, legal and fiscal boundaries.

The author believes that the strategic and lethal nature of the asymmetric threat and the need to combine military and police functions makes it

appropriate to use special operations forces (SOF). In the North American context SOF train for unconventional warfare, direct action, internal defence, special reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, civil affairs and psychological operations. In particular, SOF can carry out high-tech special reconnaissance and surveillance in cases where police and intelligence assets are ill-equipped or untrained. He points out that in the United States and in Canada there are a significant constraints on the use of military forces in internal operations. Nonetheless, the blurring of traditional lines of responsibility calls for innovative and creative policy for future joint and combined responses.

Although the author does not go into detail on how to amend the legislative and constitutional restraints on the use of military force without impinging on the separation of their powers from the police, he does make a good case for enlisting the capabilities of SOF. He points out that asymmetric warfare essentially targets the psychology of the victim. Accordingly, in responding to it 'we should seek to employ an economy of force and of resources'. The fact that the military contains certain relevant capabilities makes it important to consider how they may help the law enforcement establishment—even if that assistance is only in a training or advisory capacity.

**Article Title** The Asymmetric Threat: Listening to the Debate

**Author** Robert David Steele

**Publication Details** Joint Forces Quarterly, Autumn/Winter 1998-99

### **Synopsis**

This article was written before the events of September 2001 is an account of views aired at a 1998 conference held at the US Army War College on the topic 'Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically'. Although a great deal has happened since then, the article is worth revisiting as a touchstone to determine how much our attitudes have been shaped by the War on Terrorism as well as what are the enduring elements of conducting unconventional war.

The author reported that the most difficult question facing the high profile military and academic participants at the conference was not threat

identification or even response development, but the more ambiguous political question of determining organisational responsibility for dealing with asymmetric threats. The participants mooted several alternative models of ongoing supervision of national security—most of which anticipate the creation of something like the Department of Homeland Security since established by the Bush Administration. It is notable that Australia does not possess a similar standing organisation.

The most important observations made at the conference included:

- US vulnerabilities to asymmetric attack are largely in the civil sector.
- Enemies will succeed by waging war between the seams in our legal system, not our operational capabilities.
- The political, economic and technological climate favours both increased terrorism and asymmetric attack. This will lead to the privatization of security, militarization of police agencies, and gendarmification of the military.
- The US is vulnerable to campaigns that manipulate the international media and domestic perceptions.

The article suggests that national security concerns exceed simple questions of conventional defence and that the new strategic vision must encompass ‘four defence segments’. These are the capacity to simultaneously wage: a major regional conflict; a low intensity conflict; a major humanitarian relief operation and a major electronic campaign. It is suggested that these protean threats are more likely to arise simultaneously than the conventional ‘two major regional conflicts’ model.

**Article Title** Special Operations Forces in Peacetime

**Author** Colonel John M. Collins, USA (Ret.)

**Publication Details** Joint Forces Quarterly, Spring 1999

### **Synopsis**

This article argues the case for the increased use of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in peacetime. The United States definition of SOF is more extensive than the Australian one and includes: Army, Navy and Air



Force Special Forces; Rangers; Special Operations Aviation; Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) specialists. Accordingly, their use is not restricted to strike, reconnaissance, and counter-terrorism. It also includes foreign internal defence operations; strategic intelligence gathering; and counter-narcotics operations.

Given that SOF have a role in shaping opinion and nation building efforts, the author—a senior specialist in the Library of Congress—argues that they are best suited to non-traditional operations ‘whereas conventional combat formations gradually lose their edge when assigned similar missions’. The SOF require high standards of training, but not just in combat skills. Colonel Collins focuses on the ability of properly trained, linguistically proficient and culturally aware forces to shape security and enhance American influence. In examining SOF capabilities he gives equal weighting to CA, PYSOPS and combat capabilities. He also suggests that in the ‘twilight zone between peace and war’ SOF are likely to be more effective and efficient than conventional forces.

The article warns against over-extending SOF assets—as has happened in the US armed forces in recent years. He concludes that the quality of personnel assigned to SOF is more important than quantity and that in any case SOF cannot be mass-produced. His final warning is that the production of SOF takes time—they cannot be created after emergencies occur.