

S O P D



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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

To mark the recent announcement of the 'Adaptive Army' by the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General K Gillespie, this month the Editors of the *Senior Officer Professional Digest* recommend ten articles drawn from professional and academic journals on the subjects of military transformation and innovation.

The 'Adaptive Army' initiative calls for a major reorganisation of the Army's high-level command structure, and will require equally large shifts in thinking and practice by Army's senior officers. The Australian Army is not unique in the path forward it has chosen, as other forces have also sought to implement equally bold organisational and cultural changes.

The articles recommended here represent the best on offer from the crème of the academic and professional communities. These pieces are drawn from journals and books published between the 1980s and today—this broader span of reference ensures that senior officers will have access to the finest contributions to the literature no matter when or where they were published. The number of well-known authors that have written on transformation demonstrates the great importance that both academics and military professionals attach to this topic, and ensures a depth to the literature that senior officers will find refreshing and helpful.

This issue marks a departure from the Editors' normal practice of recommending only the latest material of note. Accordingly, the usual 'Reflections' section of the *SOPD*, designed to present influential material from the past, will not appear in this issue.

The Editors hope that the works recommended here will help foster the spirit of inquisitive and critical thought that General Gillespie flagged as essential to his vision for an 'Adaptive Army'.

Enjoy
The Editors

Thomas K Adams, 'The Real Army after Next', in Thomas K Adams, *The Army After Next: The First Post-Industrial Army*, Praeger Security International, Westport, 2006, pp. 227–50.

The Future Combat Systems (FCS) are the key to the US Army's goal of transformation. Consisting of nineteen platforms that are designed to be networked together, the FCS program has been designed from the beginning to enable network-centric operations. Thomas K Adams uses the final chapter of his book *The Army After Next* to examine what he thinks FCS will look like when deployed. It can hardly have escaped the attention of senior Australian officers that this ambitious program has been under intense political scrutiny and has undergone numerous modifications. As a result of this oversight, Adams argues that the program will eventually become something far more modest after suffering 'a death from a thousand cuts'.

The author's conclusions are based on what he argues are essentially two major problems with FCS: one is that the equipment will not work and will be unsuitable for future operations, and the other is that the technology will be too complex for the average soldier. From these fundamental issues, Adams anticipates considerable problems arising that will ultimately see the demise of the project's grand vision.

Readers of the *SOPD* will recall that in Issue 64, the Editors recommended an article by Lieutenant Colonel Richard Leino, USMC, which warned against over-reliance on poorly understood technologies that promise much. While Leino's focus was on yet-to-be-developed systems,

'Critics of the Modular Army and Future Force see a similarity to the disastrous Pentomic Army scheme of the 1950s.'

Adams's chapter shows the concrete reality of similar technical naiveté: over US\$100 billion has been spent on the FCS program to date, but very little can be shown for it.

The Kinnaird Review and the more recent Mortimer Review point out the risks in relying on developmental technologies without first thoroughly understanding their basis. Among other measures, the Mortimer Review recommends buying more 'off-the shelf' equipment to alleviate this problem. However, military hardware exists in a highly demanding environment, and buying existing equipment means that it will become obsolete quicker than that which is newly-developed. The US Army's experience with the FCS, Adams argues, will likely end in failure and thus illustrates one extreme of this dilemma—an over-reliance on new and risky high-technology. Australian officers and policy-makers must take note of these lessons, study them carefully, and aim for the middle ground. Adams' article offers key decision-makers an opportunity to do just that.

Thomas K Adams is a national security consultant working in Washington DC. After serving in the US Army for 34 years in a variety of intelligence and special operations roles, he has published numerous articles and books, including U.S. Special Operations: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare.

Colin S Gray, 'RMAs and the Dimensions of Strategy', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Iss. 17, Autumn/Winter 1997–98, pp. 50–54, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/1117pgs.pdf>.

Colin S Gray is one of the foremost scholars of strategy working today. In this article, he offers readers the benefit of his many years of experience, study and reflection.

In essence, Gray's article reminds Australian officers that the enormous changes that they are witnessing in fields ranging from technology to operations are, after all, only details. The details are important, of course, but Gray advances the point that even Revolutions in Military Affairs cannot change the fundamental truths of war and strategy.

'Novel though each addition [to warfare]... is, however, we find that as we have proceeded ... the same rules govern strategic performance.'

As the Army embarks on the raft of changes associated with the 'Adaptive Army' project, Gray's article will provide officers with a concise and superbly crafted reflection that some values in their profession are enduring. The challenge now is to identify how to best engage with these truths and shape an institution that aligns with them rather than conflicts with them.

Colin S Gray is Professor of International Politics and Strategic Studies at the University of Reading in the United Kingdom. He has worked in advisory roles for the US and UK governments, and has published many books and articles. His latest book of note is Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare.

Paul H Herbert, 'Harnessing TRADOC, 1974' in Paul H Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DuPuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100–5, Operations, Leavenworth Papers, No. 16, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, 1988, pp. 37–50, <<http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/Herbert.pdf>>.*

Major Paul H Herbert's chapter 'Harnessing TRADOC, 1974' covers the decisive period in General William E DuPuy's campaign to modernise the US Army after the Vietnam War. For Australian officers, this chapter will be of value simply as an excellent historical review of this critical period in the military history of our closest ally. However, for an Army rapidly approaching major organisational and doctrinal changes of its own, this work demonstrates the power that a new organisation can have on an entire institution.

General DuPuy's goal to reshape the US Army around mobile, armoured, high-tempo warfare was a controversial one for a force that had just emerged from an infantry-dominated conflict. However, as Herbert shows, DuPuy's plan was carried through to concrete action through a combination of personal determination, mission-command directives and sound historical, factual and scientific analysis. Critical to DuPuy's plan was that he framed his doctrinal reforms in terms that battlefield commanders could recognise and take ownership of. He did this chiefly by involving field commanders at important—and calculated—times in the transformation process.

The changes mandated by the 'Adaptive Army' transformation are as significant to the Australian Army as those pushed through by DuPuy were to the US Army. Accordingly, Herbert's article will be of considerable interest to staff and senior officers entrusted with identifying and implementing the necessary innovations. However, even for senior field officers, DuPuy's experiences will prove instructive in how to effect major change quickly, with widespread support, all while under considerable stress.

At the time of writing, Major Paul H Herbert, US Army, was S3 for the 101 Airborne Division (Air Assault). He earned his PhD in History from Ohio State University.

Andrew Krepinevich, 'Cavalry to Computer: The Pattern of Military Revolutions', *The National Interest*, No. 37, Fall 1994, pp. 30–42, <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2751/is_n37?pnun=16&opg=16315042>.

Andrew Krepinevich's article for *The National Interest* stands as a brilliant and enduring contribution to the debate over military transformation and adaptation. Written in 1994—nearly fifteen years ago—it reads almost as if it were written yesterday.

'Military organizations that did not adapt in a rapidly changing, highly competitive environment have declined, often quite quickly.'

Krepinevich surveys seven centuries of military history and determines four features of 'military revolutions'. He then identifies the various military revolutions from these seven centuries based on his four criteria, and draws seven distinct lessons from them. He concludes his article with several recommendations for the US

Armed Forces. However, these recommendations are equally applicable to the ADF, and are thus worthy of all officers' close attention.

The lessons that Krepinevich lays out throughout his article have great relevance for the Australian Army's new 'Adaptive Army' initiative. Krepinevich's analysis demonstrates that extreme uncertainty has been a consistent feature of the development of military technologies and organisations, and that significant benefits have accrued to those groups that take advantage of the opportunity for radical change. By institutionalising a constructively critical approach to Army operations, organisation and equipment, the 'Adaptive Army' initiative will go a long way towards posturing the Australian Army for future success.

*When this article was written, Andrew Krepinevich was Director of the Defense Budget Project and adjunct professor of strategic studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He has published numerous articles and books on strategic matters, his most notable being *The Army and Vietnam*.*

Williamson Murray, 'Clausewitz Out, Computer In: Military Culture and Technological Hubris', *The National Interest*, Iss. 48, Summer 1997, pp. 57–64, <<http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/Clause&Computers.html>>.

Williamson Murray's article on technological hubris is a prescient warning of the dangers of embracing transformation too readily. Within this 1997 article, he warns that 'current trends suggest that the new military culture is already preparing our officer corps to repeat the Vietnam War, except that this time, at some point in the twenty-first century, we may lose even more disastrously.'

'The great tragedy of the post-Vietnam War experience of the American military is that its deeper understanding of war was never institutionalized.'

The accuracy of Murray's prediction sets the tone for an article of great utility and importance. He points out that, unlike the most prominent technological elements of transformation that promise to dissipate the fog of war and ease friction, it is the organisational and intellectual changes in armed forces that are the most important. Military technology is only as good as

the force that uses it, and a force improperly organised and educated will make poor use of even the best technology. The performance of the French Army in 1940 illustrates this point very well.

As the 'Adaptive Army' initiative is implemented, the Army will see major changes in its higher-echelon organisations. Murray's article advises Australian officers that a commensurate cultural and intellectual change must accompany these organisational ones if the full benefit of these—and future—adaptations are to be reaped by the Army.

At the time of writing, Williamson Murray held the Major General Matthew C Horner Chair of Military History at the Marine Corps University. He is the author of numerous articles and books, with his most noteworthy books on the transformation topic being Military Innovation in the Interwar Period, co-authored with Allan R Millett, and The Dynamics of Military Revolution 1300–2050, co-authored with MacGregor Knox.

Williamson Murray, 'Innovation: Past and Future', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Iss. 12, Summer 1996, pp. 51–60, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/1112.pdf>.

'Innovation: Past and Future' by Williamson Murray is an excellent corrective for the many 'technologically determinist' contributions to the transformation debate. It is, therefore, exceedingly relevant for a land force that must

'Efforts to institutionalize innovation will inhibit rather than foster the process.'

operate in environments that negate many of its high-technology advantages. Murray's article is also relevant to the senior officers of the Australian Army because of its critique of institutionalised innovation—an essential element of the 'Adaptive Army'.

Murray examines the military history of the past century, identifying the successful military innovators and revealing why they succeeded where others failed. From this brief yet masterful exposition, he concludes that the misuse of history and institutional/cultural rigidity are at the heart of many failures to innovate. Yet Murray also concludes that ‘specific, detailed plans to enhance innovation are probably a non-starter’ and that ‘Efforts to institutionalize innovation will inhibit rather than foster the process.’

At first glance, Murray’s conclusion to appear to doom the ‘Adaptive Army’ program. However, the Chief of the Army’s decision to implement ‘Adaptive Army’ through mission-command processes demonstrates awareness of the problems Murray raises, and a concerted effort to engage with and overcome them. While the success or otherwise of ‘Adaptive Army’ is yet to be seen, its method of implementation, its practically focused goals and its incremental approach ensures that it should avoid many of the obstacles to success that Murray identifies. However, avoiding failure is only one part of the equation—Australian officers would do well to read Murray’s article so that they can learn how to achieve success.

At the time of writing, Williamson Murray held the Major General Matthew C Horner Chair of Military History at the Marine Corps University. He is the author of numerous articles and books, with his most noteworthy books on the transformation topic being Military Innovation in the Interwar Period, co-authored with Allan R Millett, and The Dynamics of Military Revolution 1300–2050, co-authored with MacGregor Knox.

Stephen Peter Rosen, ‘New Ways of War: Understanding Military Innovation’, *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Summer 1988, pp. 134–68.

Previously in this edition of the *SOPD*, the Editors have recommended an article by Williamson Murray in which he condemns the institutionalisation of innovation. In this article, Stephen Peter Rosen argues that it may in fact be a positive thing.

‘Serious efforts to innovate will concentrate on identifying the careers [that] officers should pursue and on making it possible for them to pursue them successfully.’

Using three case studies of peacetime military innovation—the RAF’s adoption of radar, the US Navy’s adoption of carrier aviation, and the US Marine Corps’ adoption of amphibious assault doctrine—Rosen identifies what he believes are the critical factors in successfully implementing military innovations. At the heart of success, he argues, is the creation of a career path for junior

officers not yet ‘set in their ways’ and who can thus safely champion the new innovation. It is senior officers—and not ‘military mavericks’—who must do this because any other figure will simply not have the peer respect to carry out such changes to the personnel structures of a military force.

Rosen’s article, despite its age, it is still exceedingly relevant. Australian officers are now committed to constant vigilance of the contemporary operating environment, and are charged with making the adaptations that such observation will inevitably reveal. Rosen’s

article provides these officers with excellent ‘food for thought’ about how they may go about making such adaptations somewhat easier.

At the time of writing, Stephen Peter Rosen was a Secretary of the Navy Senior Research Fellow at the Naval War College. He has published many articles and books, including a book based on this article entitled Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military.

Roger J Spiller, ‘War History and the History Wars: Establishing the Combat Studies Institute’, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Fall 1988, pp. 65–81.

Today, the Combat Studies Institute is an internationally renowned organisation presenting some of the best studies of military history available. However, it was not always this prominent. The institute was born in troubling times for military history caused by oppressive budget cuts and a lack of interest within the Army and academia. However, despite all of the obstacles that it faced, it succeeded and has thrived. Roger Spiller’s article is an excellent review of how the institute was created, the personalities involved and the roles they played.

For Australian officers who are currently adapting the Army to meet today’s operational demands, this article will serve as an excellent object of study. Spiller offers many observations regarding how and why the officers and scholars involved in the creation of the Combat Studies Institute were successful. These observations will serve as a useful adjunct to the exhaustive thought and study that has already gone in to the ‘Adaptive Army’, and to the similar thought and study that will be needed in the future.

At the time of writing, Roger J Spiller was Professor of Military History at the US Army Command and General Staff College and Deputy Director of the Combat Studies Institute.

Donn A Starry, ‘To Change an Army’, *Military Review*, March 1983, pp. 20–27, <<http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/Repository/Materials/MilitaryReview-198303310001-DOC.pdf>>.

The remarkable transformation of the US Army from a conscript force to an all-volunteer, manoeuvre force was the result of the hard work of many different officers, NCOs and soldiers. However, few figures were as instrumental in this process as General Donn A Starry, and in this article he shares his view of the transformation process.

‘We would be well served in the future if [the] ... process [of transformation] could include more sound thinkers in uniform and fewer academic and amateur military strategic gadflies.’

Starry’s article is instructive for officers engaging in organisational change because he constantly reiterates the need for ‘maintenance of the objective’. It is easy for an organisation

as large and as complex as a modern Western army to lose sight of the point of change when engaged in the necessary bureaucratic minutiae. However, as Starry points out, all change must ultimately be measured against what it will contribute to strategic and tactical effectiveness. Starry offers many other lessons relevant to Australian officers, and they would do well to read this article and benefit from the experience—and mistakes—of the author. Indeed, this article is all the more relevant to the Australian Army as it prepares to accomplish the objectives of the 'Adaptive Army'.

General Donn A Starry was, at the time of writing, Commander in Chief, US Readiness Command. During the years 1977–81, General Starry served as Commanding General Army Training and Doctrine Command, where he oversaw the formulation of the famous 'AirLand Battle' doctrine. General Starry retired from the US Army in 1983.

Gordon R Sullivan and James M Dubik, 'Land Warfare in the 21st Century' in Gordon R Sullivan and James M Dubik (eds), *Envisioning Future Warfare*, US Army Command and General Staff College Press, Fort Leavenworth, 1995, pp. 1–28.

'One should be sceptical of any military strategist who claims certainty about the future of warfare, especially those who assert technology changes the fundamental nature of war.'

General Gordon R Sullivan and Colonel James M Dubik's essay represents an excellent précis of the many changes that have occurred on the land battlefield since the end of the Cold War. The authors' demonstrate how modern technology has led to a fundamentally new battlespace. Sullivan and Dubik delve into the increasing importance of non-state actors with clarity and brevity.

This work demonstrates to Australian officers the extremely high standard of quality and clarity of argument necessary to rally a large and diverse institution around the need for change. The information within this essay, while now canon, will also serve as a valuable reminder of the battlefield dynamics against which the utility of change within the Australian Army must ultimately be judged.

'Complex changes are never complete breaks from the past; evolutionary and revolutionary changes coexist, each shaping the other.'

At the time of writing, General Gordon R Sullivan was Chief of Staff of the US Army, having served operational tours in both Korea and Vietnam. Colonel James M Dubik was assigned to General Sullivan's personal staff, having previously served as commander, 5 Infantry Battalion, 25 Infantry Division.

Study Paper Series

The Land Warfare Studies Centre is pleased to announce the release of the latest volume in its Study Paper Series: Albert Palazzo's *Moltke to bin Laden: The Relevance of Doctrine in the Contemporary Military Environment*.

For contemporary Western military organisations doctrine serves as the basis of their members' intellectual unity. Doctrine is held in such high regard by military professionals that one senior officer termed it 'the heart of the army'.

While widely accepted now, doctrine did not appear until the mid-nineteenth century when the Prussian General Helmut von Moltke introduced it to devastating effect. What is forgotten by contemporary military professionals is that doctrine is not a timeless tool but rather a construct of a particular time period and a particular interpretation of state-against-state conflict.

In the twenty-first century, when the challenge of asymmetric war has risen to primacy, it is timely to question the continuing utility of doctrine. Palazzo's work will greatly assist officers in weighing up whether doctrine remains the best way to inculcate a spirit of adaptation throughout the army, or whether some new construct may prove superior.

Moltke to bin Laden: The Relevance of Doctrine in the Contemporary Military Environment is available from the LWSC website at http://www.defence.gov.au/Army/lwsc/docs/SP_315.pdf

